

**MINUTES OF
RECONVENED MEETING OF THE
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
ONE JUNKINS AVENUE
PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

7:00 p.m.

**October 10, 2007
reconvened from October 3, 2007**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Sandra Dika, Vice-Chairman John F. Golumb, John Wyckoff, Tracy Kozak; City Council Representative Edward Reynolds, Alternates Elena Maltese and Joseph Almeida

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Richard Katz, Planning Board Representative Jerry Hejtmanek

ALSO PRESENT: Roger Clum, Assistant Building Inspector

I. OLD BUSINESS

A. Approval of minutes – September 12, 2007

It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to approve the minutes as presented.

B. Petition of **B. Allen and Barbara B. Rowland, owners, and Bruce Oronte, applicant,** for property located **33-35 Richmond Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace entrance gates) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 108 as Lot 17 and lies within the Mixed Residential Office and Historic A Districts. *(This item was postponed at the October 3, 2007 meeting to the October 10, 2007 meeting.)*

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

No one was present to speak to the application.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Vice Chairman Golumb made a motion to postpone the application to the end of the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wyckoff. The motion passed by a unanimous (7-0) vote.

II. PUBLIC HEARINGS

8. Petition of **Nicole L. Abshier and Deborah S. Abshier, owners, and Chris Goodell, applicant,** for property located at **31 Dennett Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow

exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace windows on front and left side facades) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 141 as Lot 5 and lies within the General Residence A and Historic A Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Ms. Nicole Abshier, owner of the property, was present to speak to the application. She stated that she would like to replace seven windows in her house. She explained that five of the windows were on the front of the house and the other two were on the side. She thought the existing windows were original to the house and as a result, not very weather tight. She said that she would like to replace them with Andersen wood windows with aluminum cladding.

Mr. Wyckoff asked if the grill pattern would be two lights over two lights. Ms. Abshier replied yes, that she would like to keep them original to the house.

Mr. Almeida asked if they would be replacement sashes or would the entire window be replaced. Ms. Abshier replied that they would be replacement sashes.

Councilor Reynolds asked if there were currently storm windows in place. Ms. Abshier replied yes and her plan was to remove them.

Chairman Dika asked if there were any more questions for the applicant. Hearing none, she asked if anyone from the public wished to speak to, for, or against the application. Seeing no one rise, she awaited a motion.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Ms. Maltese made a motion to approve the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman John Golumb. Chairman Dika asked for discussion.

Ms. Maltese said that she felt that the applicant had looked at the current and historic conditions of the house and she has chosen to preserve the integrity of the look of the window. She felt it was complimentary and an improvement to the house.

Chairman Dika called for the vote. The motion to approve the application as presented passed by a unanimous (7-0) vote.

9. Petition of **Worth Development Corporation, owner**, for property located at **123 Congress Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (provide openings and install new windows at rear of building, replace existing exit door at rear of building) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 126 as Lot 6 and lies within the Central Business B, Historic A, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Mr. Kelly Davis of Sumner Davis Architects was present to speak to the application. He gave the Commission a handout with additional information pertaining to the project.

Mr. Davis said that over the last 18 months, the building has changed quite a bit. He explained that most of the first floor has been condominiumized. They are starting to do that upstairs as well. He pointed out that the exterior changes that they are proposing reflect the changes that are happening in the interior of the building.

Mr. Davis explained that the current owners would like to reconfigure some floor space on the second floor. He said that the plan was to relocate a corridor to accommodate office space. He added that that was the reason for proposing the new upper windows. Mr. Davis said that the proposed windows would look exactly like what is in the building now. He pointed out that on the lower level; there was no precedence for anything so they are proposing a window for commercial use. The proposed door would match a lot of the other glass doors at the back of the building.

Mr. Almeida asked for clarification as to where the work was taking place on the back of the building. Mr. Davis pointed out the area to the Commission from the submitted plans. He added that there was a larger condominium for sale currently and he said that he could foresee them coming back at a later date for additional changes.

Mr. Wyckoff asked if the first floor windows are projecting like the windows on the side of the building. Mr. Davis replied no.

Ms. Kozak asked what the sill would be on the first floor windows. Mr. Davis said that it would be a false stone and would match as closely as possible the other sills.

Chairman Dika asked if there were any more questions for the applicant. Hearing none, she asked if anyone from the public wished to speak to, for, or against the application. Seeing no one rise, she awaited a motion.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Mr. Wyckoff made a motion to approve the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Kozak. Chairman Dika asked for discussion.

Mr. Wyckoff felt that the proposed windows were an exact replica of what was there now. He pointed out that the building had no historical value.

Ms. Kozak stated that the changes were an improvement to the building. She felt that the windows were sympathetic to the rest of the windows and that it was a more inviting look.

Chairman Dika called for the vote. The motion to approve the application as presented passed by a unanimous (7-0) vote.

10. Petition of **Catalpa Realty Trust, LLC, David Short, and Red Maple Realty Trust, LLC**, owners, for property located at **249 Islington Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow demolition of an existing structure (demolish rear addition) and allow new construction to an existing structure (construct a 41' x 61' three story rear residential addition) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 138 as Lot 43 and lies within the Central Business B and Historic A Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Ms. Carla Goodknight of CJ Architects was present to speak to the application. She gave the Commission an updated elevation copy. She explained that they had to add an egress door to the garage.

Ms. Goodknight stated the first four pages contained photos of the existing building. She said that they are proposing removal of the rear portion building leaving the original section of the building facing Islington Street intact.

She pointed out that page 6 showed the parking conditions. Ms. Goodknight said that they were also proposing an exit out the rear of the building with a small retaining wall in that location. She also said they were proposing a retaining wall planter on the Cornwall Street side. She explained that it would be of similar proportion to the original planter on the front of the house.

Ms. Goodknight also pointed out in the plans the siding that was being proposed for the lower half of the building. She also explained in detail the parapet roof system with an upper level deck and access stairs.

Ms. Goodknight explained the proposed double column entryway. She said that it was inspired by the original building. She also explained that they were planning to use Andersen 200 series windows with interior and exterior applied grills, carriage house garage doors, and Jeldwen oak exterior entry doors.

Ms. Maltese complimented the applicant on addressing every one of the Commission's concerns and suggestions from the last work session.

Mr. Wyckoff noticed that there were no sills underneath the window casings on the first and third floor windows. Ms. Goodknight explained that on the second floor there was a horizontal banding and so they were trying to maintain the proportion of the upper windows. She said that they would be open to putting in sills on the first and third floor windows. The Commission was in agreement to making that change.

Mr. Almeida stated that this was one of the most beautiful buildings in the City. He pointed out that there is a large amount of granite on the site. He asked if the applicant would consider a granite planter instead of a concrete one. Mr. Wyckoff thought that was a legitimate point.

Mr. Almeida asked if there would be any roof penetrations for chimneys or mechanical equipment. Mr. Goodknight said that the only roof penetration was with regard to the deck.

Mr. Almeida asked about plumbing penetrations. Mr. Clum explained that most of the plumbing penetrations would be exempt from the ordinance.

Mr. Wyckoff asked about the first floor siding option. Ms. Goodknight explained that they would be using varying widths with the siding. She said the reason for doing this was because there was a wide expanse of space. She thought this would make the distinction between the old portion and the new portion. Mr. Almeida pointed out that the width of boards is varied on the Moffatt-Ladd house.

Vice Chairman Golumb asked if wood clapboards would be used. Ms. Goodknight replied yes.

Ms. Kozak asked what the proposed roofing material on the front entry portico would be. Ms. Goodknight replied that it would be flat asphalt paper shingle. Mr. Almeida asked what was proposed on the main building. Ms. Goodknight replied that they would use 30 year architectural asphalt shingles.

Mr. Almeida asked about guttering. Ms. Goodknight replied that there was a very nice crown detail banding and so the gutter was internal.

Vice Chairman Golumb asked the Commission if they thought the garage door was appropriate to the building. He thought the transom overpowered the left side elevation. Ms. Goodknight said it was the owner's choice. Ms. Kozak said that the door that was chosen seemed to go well with the rest of the fenestration of the building.

Mr. Wyckoff felt that the proposed roofing material on the front portico did not give the front entryway enough importance. He felt it would be very visible driving down Islington Street. Ms. Goodknight said that they could use a standard seamed copper material.

Ms. Maltese stated that she would not like to see the copper material draw the focus away from the front entry door. Councilor Reynolds agreed. Ms. Kozak pointed out that the material did not have to be copper; it could be any metal type material. Ms. Goodknight said that she would like to steer away from the copper and the standard seamed profile. She would rather see a flat seamed, bronzed, steel roof.

Chairman Dika stated that she would like to discuss further the proposed concrete planter. Ms. Goodknight said that they could do a veneer on the front planter with concrete on the back side of the building. The Commission was in agreement with that change.

Ms. Kozak commented that it was a nice, sensitive design that respected the history of the original building and it incorporated some of the details without overpowering the house. She thought it would be a great addition to the street.

Chairman Dika asked if there were any more questions for the applicant. Hearing none, she asked if anyone from the public wished to speak to, for, or against the application. Seeing no one rise, she awaited a motion.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Mr. Wyckoff made a motion to approve the application as presented with the following stipulations:

- 1) That a granite veneer be added to the front planter.
- 2) That a flat seamed, bronze toned metal roofing material be used on the front portico.
- 3) That window sills and casings be added to the first and third floor windows.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Maltese. Chairman Dika asked for discussion.

Mr. Wyckoff stated that he agreed with Ms. Kozak’s comments. He said that it was an improvement over the ell that was there now. He felt the applicant had done a good job of matching compatibility. He said that he was very much in favor of the project.

Ms. Maltese said that she remembered the work session for the project very well. She pointed out that all of the comments and suggestions by the Commission during that work session have been addressed. She added that adding on to a historic building always has to be done showing history and this project demonstrates that and brings respective architectural detail to the original language. She felt it was a great improvement.

Chairman Dika stated that she agreed with Ms. Maltese. She said that the project had come a long way.

Chairman Dika asked if there was anymore discussion. Hearing none, she called for the vote.

The motion to approve the application as presented with the following stipulations passed by a unanimous (7-0) vote:

- 1) That a granite veneer be added to the front planter.
- 2) That a flat seamed, bronze toned metal roofing material be used on the front portico.
- 3) That window sills and casings be added to the first and third floor windows.

III. WORK SESSIONS

A. Work Session requested by **Cristina Galli and Martin F. Kurowski, owners**, for property located at **111 New Castle Avenue**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (add dormer, add a two story addition over an existing one story). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 101 as Lot 53 and lies within the General

Residence B and Historic A Districts. *(This item was tabled at the September 12, 2007 meeting to the October 10, 2007 meeting.)*

Vice Chairman Golumb made a motion to remove the application from the tabled status. The motion was seconded by Ms. Maltese. The motion to remove the application from the tabled status passed by a unanimous (7-0) vote.

- Ms. Anne Whitney, architect for the project, spoke to the application. She stated that the house was located on the corner of New Castle Avenue and Marcy Street. The house was a story and $\frac{3}{4}$ New Englander with a couple of bays. It had a one story addition with a narrow porch. Ms. Whitney thought the addition was added in the early 1980's. She said that it created an in-law apartment and two additional apartments. She added that the owners would be turning it into a single family residence.
- Ms. Whitney pointed out that the second floor was fairly small due to a 4'6" knee wall so they are proposing to put a dormer on either side. That would give some head room for the bedrooms in that space. She said that on the opposite side she would make adjustments as well for more head room.
- Ms. Whitney explained that the second addition would involve taking the one story connector/porch section of the house, infill where the porch is and bring it up into a cross gable. She said that the gables were different widths so she would have the peaks match.
- Mr. Wyckoff said that the returns do not align with the fascia board. Ms. Whitney said that they don't on the original structure. She explained that a crown was used and wrapped around. Mr. Almeida commented that he had never seen anything like it and that it was quite unique. Ms. Whitney said that she would use crown molding with the same detail.
- Ms. Whitney said that on the other side of the house, they would be eliminating a small window. She also pointed out that the rake would match the eave. Vice Chairman Golumb stated that he was having a problem with the rake on the left side elevation. He felt it looked awkward. Ms. Whitney replied that part of the problem was that he was looking at the elevation straight on. The reality was that one could not see this elevation straight on because of surrounding buildings.
- Ms. Maltese felt that the original house was being lost with the new additions. Mr. Wyckoff said that he thought the left side elevation was very awkward. He felt that it was wiping out the original house. He wondered if it was a specific window that was causing the problem.
- Mr. Almeida thought that it was the intent to lose the original house and make it a new building. He said that he could see the details of the original house that has been carried over. He added that he sees an extension of the existing house and he thought it was very elegant.
- Ms. Kozak stated that she understood both points of view. She pointed out that with the general massing of the roofs, she said she did not think she had seen in the Historic District two gables right next to one another with a space between them.
- Mr. Wyckoff asked if the Commission was okay with the three windows in the cross gables. Mr. Almeida stated that he thought they all flowed very elegantly.

- Chairman Dika commented that she agreed that the left side elevation was awkward but she did not have any suggestions on how to fix it. She wanted to be able to give Ms. Whitney some direction.
- Ms. Whitney said that she was trying to not move existing windows. She recognized that if she did do that however, it would improve the asymmetry. Mr. Wyckoff felt that would help.
- Ms. Whitney explained that the windows were replaced fairly recently. They are one over one grill patterns with snap-ins. She suggested that they get rid of the grills entirely and go with one over ones, or permanently affix grills to the outside of the windows. She explained that the new windows would be simulated divided light with a true muntin.
- Ms. Maltese pointed out again that she loses the original house with this addition. She said that she sees a brand new house. Mr. Almeida interjected that the Commission has heard the difficulties of living in the house with it being only 1 ¾ stories. Ms. Maltese complimented Ms. Whitney on her respectful approach to the project.
- Ms. Whitney explained that she would like to get rid of the snap-in grills and make the entire windows one over one.

B. Work Session requested by **Elizabeth Wohler-Berry, owner**, for property located at **774 Middle Street, Unit 1**, wherein permission was requested to allow demolition of an existing structure (remove chimney) and allow new construction to an existing structure (rebuild new chimney). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 153 as Lot 9-2 and lies within the General Residence A and Historic A Districts.

- Ms. Elizabeth Wohler-Berry, owner of the property, and Mr. Charlie LeMay, treasurer of the condominium association were present to speak to the application.
- Ms. Wohler-Berry stated that she would like to replace the chimney. She pointed out that the chimney has not been used for many years. She added that it was cemented up and does not go all the way down to the basement. Ms. Wohler-Berry explained that on the first floor there was just a beam that was supporting the existing chimney.
- She indicated that she would like to do some renovations on the second floor to make two small rooms into one large room.
- Ms. Wohler-Berry explained that she would like to remove the existing chimney and rebuild it with cultured brick. It would be built identical to the one that was removed and would match the other chimney on the structure. She pointed out that the same process had been used at Strawberry Banke with the Carter Center.
- Ms. Wohler-Berry stated that the roof was slate so they have not wanted to walk on it to get measurements. She said in the attic the chimney measures 24"x24".
- Mr. Wyckoff complimented the applicant for going the extra mile to make sure it looks the same.
- Chairman Dika said that the chimney was dangerous the way it is.
- Ms. Maltese stated that it was a great preservation technique and was used very successfully at Strawberry Banke.
- Chairman Dika said that dimensions of the chimney would be helpful if possible.

C. Work Session requested by **One Middle Street, LLC, owner**, for property located at **154 Congress Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace and reconfigure second floor windows, add new window, re-stucco second floor exterior facade) and allow new construction to an existing structure (add canopy over entrance). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 126 as Lot 11 and lies within the Central Business B, Historic A, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

- Mr. Kelly Davis and Mr. Ron Riley, architects, spoke to the application. Mr. Davis said that they were proposing larger windows on the second floor, lowering the sills, re-stuccoing the second floor and adding a large canopy over the front entrance.
- Ms. Maltese asked if the plan was to have the upper windows evenly spaced but to have no relation to the lower windows. Mr. Davis replied that was correct.
- Mr. Riley stated that Mr. McSharry, the owner, was trying to get the best use of the building. He also would like to make it more attractive. Mr. Riley pointed out that the interior of the second floor was dark. He said that the idea was to get more light in the second floor area by adding bigger windows. He felt it would create a much better street façade. The windows would be a commercial aluminum window that would be operable. He said that the proposed round window was to relate to the proposed canopy. He added that the stucco finish that was on the building now was not done well. Ms. Kozak asked what the substrate was behind the stucco. Mr. Riley said that he was not sure and they do not want to rip it off to find out without the ability to fix it. He felt it was plywood.
- Mr. Wyckoff said that he realized that the corner of the building was important. He wondered if they had thought of adding some height to the corner, similar to the third floor addition proposed for the Bull Moose building. Mr. Riley said the difficulty with the building was that it is seen from three different vantage points. Ms. Kozak agreed that the corner of the building IS the building.
- Mr. Davis did not feel that adding to the building was the way to go. Mr. Wyckoff explained that the building was so horizontal that something needs to be added to the corner to accent it more.
- Ms. Maltese stated that she was not in favor of the canopy. She thought a fabric canopy would be better.
- Ms. Kozak agreed that a fabric canopy would better suit the design of the building.
- Mr. Riley said that part of the structural issues that they will run into is what they have for a header. He added that they envision it as a light frame construction, probably a clean metal that is painted with cut letters into it that is lit from behind. Mr. Clum pointed out it could not be lit from behind.
- Vice Chairman Golumb asked if the sills would all remain. Mr. Riley said the sills would be articulated in the material. He explained in detail how they would work with the stucco system.
- Mr. Almeida pointed out the dripping and the back splashing of water against the building and hoped that something would be done to alleviate that.
- Mr. Riley explained his ideas for how the signs would be designed and attached. Mr. Almeida asked him if they could show the sign designs when they come for a public hearing. Mr. Riley replied yes.

- Chairman Dika asked the Commissioners their thoughts on the proposed round window.
- Ms. Kozak pointed out that it was floating a little higher than the other windows. Mr. Riley said that the intent was to have the mullion middle of the round window centered on the mullions of the other windows.
- Ms. Kozak asked if they were planning to have any control joints on the stucco. Mr. Riley replied that at this point, no. He said that there was no rhythm to the spacing wall and the system did not require it so they would like to make it as clean as possible from one end to the other.
- Vice Chairman Golumb said that he was on board with the windows; however, he thought that the round window was too large. Councilor Reynolds and Chairman Dika agreed.
- Mr. Clum pointed out that the only lighting that is allowed is exterior lighting. Backlit lighting is not. He added that signage is not something that the HDC regulates as long as it lines up with some architectural detail.
- Mr. Davis explained that he had a conversation with Lucy Tillman about the canopy projecting over the City right-of-way. He said that whether the canopy will happen or not, they do not know.
- Mr. Davis told the Commission that they would be back next month for a public hearing.

In other business, Mr. Wyckoff brought up the subject discussed last month about the use of composite material when replacing deteriorating wood trim. He suggested that the Commission vote to recommend to Mr. Clum and the Inspection Department that using composite material to replace wood trim be exempt from HDC review and approval.

Mr. Clum pointed out that the current zoning ordinance is in the process of being rewritten so if the Commission so wishes, it could be written into the new ordinance.

Chairman Dika asked if the Commission had a chance to read Ms. Kozak’s guidelines for the use of composite materials. Many of the Commissioners said they had not had a chance to review it yet. Mr. Almeida mentioned that the Commission would have to be very clear about the material because there was a lot of poor quality composite material available. He added that some of it looked like plastic.

Chairman Dika suggested that the Commissioners review Ms. Kozak’s guidelines and then discuss it at the upcoming orientation meeting at the November meeting.

Ms. Kozak said that she could order samples of different brands of composite materials to look at. Chairman Dika thought that would be very helpful.

Mr. Clum said that if it is a painted material, what did it matter if the composite material had a plastic look to it. Ms. Kozak pointed out that it does not always get painted. Mr. Clum said that he was just making suggestions.

Mr. Wyckoff stated that as a carpenter, he uses the material a lot. He said that it comes in exactly the same sizes of wood and is worked with the same as wood. He felt that most people would not be able to tell the difference if they went up close to look.

Mr. Wyckoff asked about how the Commission might want to handle chimney caps. Chairman Dika stated that she was waiting on a legal opinion and the City attorney could be asked at the next meeting.

Mr. Clum explained that the State of New Hampshire requires individuals to replace old furnaces with energy efficient furnaces. Many of the more efficient furnaces require a chimney cap. The chimney cap slows down the amount of induced draft.

Mr. Wyckoff said that stainless steel chimney caps can cost as little as \$60 where as bluestone chimney caps can cost \$1,500. He felt the Commission was adding a regulatory nightmare to installing a new furnace.

Ms. Maltese asked if some of the Commissioners still have their pictures of the chimney caps that a prior applicant submitted to the Commission. She felt that was helpful

Mr. Clum reminded the Commission again that the ordinance was being rewritten so if the Commission was comfortable exempting anything, it could be written into the ordinance.

Chairman Dika stated that know one had shown up to speak to the 33-35 Richmond Street application that was tabled earlier in the evening.

Vice Chairman Golumb made a motion to postpone the application to a time indefinite. The motion was seconded by Ms. Maltese. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

V. ADJOURNMENT

At 9:30 p.m., it was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Good
HDC Secretary

These minutes were approved at the November 14, 2007 Historic District Commission meeting.