

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

**EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**6:30 p.m.**

**March 12, 2008**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Sandra Dika; Vice Chairman Richard Katz; Members John Wyckoff, Tracy Kozak, Elena Maltese; City Council Representative Eric Spear; Alternate Joseph Almeida

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** George Melchior

**ALSO PRESENT:** Roger Clum, Assistant Building Inspector, David Holden, Planning Director

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Prior to the meeting, the Commission held a work session to discuss possible extensions to the Historic District. Areas discussed were Hanover Street from Vaughn Mall to Bridge Street, Islington Street to Bartlett Street, Middle Street to South Street, South Street to Lafayette Road, and Dennett Street to Woodbury Avenue. After extensive discussion, the Commission reached consensus on recommending the extension of the Historic District in the following locations: Hanover Street from Vaughn Mall to Bridge Street, Islington Street to Bartlett Street, Middle Street to South Street, and South Street to Lafayette Road. They also agreed that the Middle Street properties in the Historic District should be changed to include only the lots with frontage on Middle Street. Mr. Holden explained that these recommendations would need to be approved by the City Council. He said that the Planning Department would redraft the Historic District map so they could see the proposed changes. The Commission agreed to hold another work session on Wednesday, March 26 at 6:30 p.m. to continue their discussion.

**I. OLD BUSINESS**

A. Approval of minutes – February 20, 2008

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

February 27, 2008

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

B. Request for one year extension of 82-86 Congress Street application - submitted by 82-86 Congress Street, LLC

It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to grant a one year extension of the Certificate of Appropriateness for the project.

C. Request for one year extension of 7 Islington Street/40 Bridge Street application – submitted by 7 Islington Street, LLC

It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to grant a one year extension of the Certificate of Appropriateness for the project.

D. Petition of **304 Maplewood LLC, owner**, for property located at **304 Maplewood Avenue**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (add stone veneer to front façade, replace windows on front façade) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 140 as Lot 7 and lies within the Mixed Residential Office and Historic A Districts. (*This item was postponed at the March 5, 2008 meeting.*)

### **SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

Mr. Wyckoff made a motion to recess from the public hearing into a work session. The motion was seconded by Mr. Almeida. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Mr. Doug LaChance was present to speak to the application. He explained that the applicant has discarded the stone proposal because of the Commission's dissatisfaction and were now proposing water struck brick. He brought two samples for the Commission to view.

Mr. LaChance explained that the windows had a center mullion that is serving as a support mullion. Internal work that has already been completed makes it impossible to go with a three window configuration that was previously suggested. Mr. LaChance said that the windows would have to be either two windows that have an eight over eight light patterns or keep the existing windows as is. He pointed out that the existing woodwork would not change but the new windows would be slightly narrower so they would need to add 1 ½" on both sides of the window openings.

Mr. Almeida asked why the proposed windows were chosen. Mr. LaChance replied that they wanted to go with double hung windows with divided lights because they felt they were more attractive and more historic looking. Mr. Almeida thought that the way the building looks now was handsome enough. Mr. LaChance said that the window choice was at the request of the owner. Ms. Kozak commented that she would hesitate to put eight over eight lights in a building like this one. She felt it would look residential. Mr. Wyckoff said that he agreed with Ms. Kozak and that maybe eight over one lights would be better. Mr. Almeida said he would rather see no lights. Vice Chairman Katz stated that he had no problem with the way the building looks now. He added that he liked the eight over one pattern.

Ms. Maltese pointed out that what was personally aesthetically pleasing to the Commission should not be the determining factor but instead, whether the look was appropriate. She felt that the one over one light pattern would be appropriate.

Chairman Dika asked the applicant what he preferred. Mr. LaChance replied that he had no preference and he did not think the owners had a preference either.

Chairman Dika asked the Commission how they felt about the brick façade. Mr. Almeida thought it was a bit awkward. Mr. LaChance explained that they would wrap the brick around the building and bring the columns up on the sides. Mr. Wyckoff commented that he thought the brick added a nice element to the structure.

Ms. Kozak stated that she thought it was an interesting project because it is set in a residential neighborhood. She said that she had a little concern of the “brickification” of Portsmouth and having the residents think that by putting red brick on something it is going to immediately make it acceptable. She felt that with this building, there is the concept of a storefront because it is commercial. Mr. Almeida stated that he preferred to see no brick on the front façade. Ms. Maltese agreed with Mr. Almeida. She felt the brick did not function architecturally with the building.

Vice Chairman Katz said that where something just doesn’t fit any of the perimeters that the Commission uses; he has a tendency to defer to the applicant because he is afraid of making an aesthetic subjective judgment. He said that he did not see anything objectionable with this application.

Mr. LaChance reiterated that he would continue the brick around the corner along with a corner board going all the way up the side of the structure on the side at the corner. He said that it would look like two columns, one on the front and one next to it on the side.

Mr. Wyckoff commented that that was a significant improvement to the property.

There being no more discussion, Mr. Wyckoff made a motion to return to the public hearing portion of the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Kozak. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Chairman Dika asked if anyone from the public wished to speak to, for, or against the application. Seeing no one rise, she declared the public hearing closed and awaited a motion.

### **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

Mr. Wyckoff made a motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the application with the following stipulations:

- 1) That the windows are a one over one pattern.
- 2) That the brick veneer extends around the building the width of the front corner boards on both sides and that the side corner boards duplicate the front exposure.

The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Katz. Chairman Dika asked for discussion.

There was discussion regarding the type of brick and the color of the mortar.

Mr. Wyckoff amended his motion to include the stipulation that the applicant use Vermont Red water struck brick with a natural color mortar. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Katz.

The motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the application with the following stipulations passed with a 6-1 vote with Mr. Almeida voting in opposition:

- 1) That the windows are a one over one pattern.
- 2) That the brick veneer extends around the building the width of the front corner boards on both sides and that the side corner boards duplicate the front exposure.
- 3) That Vermont Red brick is used with a natural color mortar.

## II. PUBLIC HEARINGS

8. Petition of **Riveredge Condominium Association, owner,** and **Tom and Susan Galligan,** applicants, for property located at **117 Bow Street, Unit A1SU,** wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (add 20' X 22' rooftop deck, add structure to enclose access stairway) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 106 as Lot 57A-1 and lies within the Central Business A, Historic A, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

### SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Ms. Jennifer Ramsey, representing the applicant was present to speak to the application. She presented a letter from the condominium president giving the applicant permission to move forward with the project. She also added that she had a handout for the Commission that was to replace Page 3 of her previously submitted plans.

Ms. Ramsey walked the Commission, page by page through the packet. She noted that they have decreased the size of the deck so as not to encroach on a neighboring condominium association. She pointed out that the stair enclosure was as tight as it could be to maintain head room. It will be a simple clapboard structure with a heavy eave band with a mahogany rail system, cedar corner boards and painted clapboards. Ms. Ramsey stated that the condominium association would like the deck and stairs to be painted a burnt red color.

Ms. Maltese wondered why the plans showed bringing the deck toward Bow Street. Ms. Ramsey replied that this new location provided a better view and the staircase allows them some privacy from a penthouse condominium located close by.

Mr. Almeida asked why the applicant chose clapboard at that elevation because he did not see any other clapboard in that area. Ms. Ramsey said they could look into alternatives. Vice Chairman Katz added that he did think the mahogany rail system fit in where there is currently a steel rail system.

Ms. Maltese asked the Commissioners if a work session was needed. Chairman Dika asked Ms. Ramsey if she would be open to a work session. Ms. Ramsey replied yes, and asked if would be possible to have a work session/public hearing. Chairman Dika replied yes.

Mr. Almeida stated that he felt the rooftop deck was too small. Other Commissioners agreed. Mr. Almeida also suggested she try to incorporate a trellised pergola structure into the design.

Chairman Dika asked for a motion to postpone. An abutter in the audience asked if she could speak to the application. Chairman Dika explained that there would be public input at the next meeting. The abutter asked if she could submit a letter that she brought with her. Chairman Dika replied yes and that the Commission would review it in preparation for the next meeting.

### DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Councilor Spear made a motion to postpone the application to the April 2, 2008 meeting for a work session/public hearing. The motion was seconded by Ms. Maltese. The motion passed by a unanimous (7-0) vote.

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9. Petition of **Michael B. Myers and Stephanie G. Taylor, owners**, for property located at **700 Middle Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (add frosted glass to front double doors, replace existing transom over front doors, replace kitchen window, replace rear door, add window to rear addition, replace and realign second story side window) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 148 as Lot 29 and lies within General Residence A and Historic A Districts.

### **SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

Mr. Michael Myers, owner, was present to speak to the application. He stated that he recently purchased the house at 700 Middle Street and would like to bring back some of its original features.

Mr. Myers explained the changes he was proposing. He said that with regards the front door, he would like to take out the wooden panels and replace them with frosted glass. He also pointed out that he would like to change the stained glass transom above the front door with a four light frosted transom. He also would like to replace a kitchen casement window with a double hung window, two over two pattern to match the existing windows on that façade. On the rear façade in the mudroom area, he would like to add a first floor window directly below the second floor window to allow for more light. It would be the same size as the window above it. He added that all new windows would match the existing windows. Mr. Myers also said that he would like to change the back door. It would be custom built and a design was included in the Commissioners packet. He also explained that he would like to drop down a small bathroom window on the side façade so that it lines up horizontally with the other second floor windows.

Mr. Almeida asked if the new back door would be larger than what is currently there. Mr. Myers replied yes because that would be the main entrance to the house. Mr. Almeida asked if he would be feathering in the vinyl siding where it will be disturbed. Mr. Myers said that his goal is to remove the vinyl siding at some point in the future.

Mr. Almeida asked if he would be keeping all of the detail on the front door. Mr. Myers replied yes, that he was just removing the wooden panels.

Mr. Almeida said that with regard to the stained glass transom, he felt it was the right thing to do. Ms. Maltese felt that the transom window was original to the house. Mr. Myers thought that it wasn't. Ms. Maltese thought it was a wonderful historic addition to the house. Councilor Spear wondered how much impact, light-wise, the frosted glass would allow versus the colored glass. Mr. Myers responded by saying that any additional light in that area would be an improvement. Mr. Wyckoff said that he was troubled by the removal of the stained glass. He thought that the stained glass probably let in as much light as the frosted glass. He asked how the other Commissioners felt about it. Mr. Myers offered to do some research to see if the window was original to the house.

Mr. Almeida wondered since they were talking about color, was it within their purview. Chairman Dika said that she felt they were talking about the possible removal of an original

feature. She said she did not know anything about the history of this type of stain glass. Mr. Wyckoff replied that it was appropriate for the age of the house.

Mr. Almeida stated that a compromise might be to just replace the glass in the transom window. Mr. Wyckoff was agreeable to that. Mr. Myers was also.

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 declared the public hearing closed and awaited a motion.

### **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

Ms. Maltese made a motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the application with the following stipulation:

- 1) That the transom window above the front door retain the same light pattern.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Wyckoff. Chairman Dika asked for discussion.

Ms. Maltese said that she felt that the applicant had brought forth a way to improve this historic home by referring to the historic and architectural value of the building. Mr. Wyckoff agreed and said that it was a great improvement to the front door and the proposed window in the mud room.

Hearing no other discussion, Chairman Dika called for the vote. The motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the application with the following stipulation passed by a unanimous (7-0) vote:

- 1) That the transom window above the front door retain the same light pattern.

### **III. WORK SESSIONS**

B. Work Session requested by **Argeris N. and Eloise M. Karabelas, owners**, and **Charles Hoyt, applicant**, for property located **461 Court Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (construct 13'7" X 15'6" addition to rear of house). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 105 as Lot 7 and lies within the Central Business B and Historic A Districts.

- Mr. Charles Hoyt, architect for the project was present to speak to the application.
- The owners were proposing a small addition on the back of their home. The size would add about 198 square feet to their current living space.
- Mr. Hoyt walked the Commission through the plans. He added that they would like to include in the plans the addition of a metal rail system on the front steps.
- He pointed out that the rail design was previously approved by the HDC but it was never implemented.
- Mr. Hoyt explained that he tried to incorporate elements of the existing house into the new addition.
- He brought a sample of the brick - a historic water struck brick. He also said that he was proposing to use Marvin windows.

- Mr. Almeida stated that he loved the addition. The other Commissioners agreed.
- Mr. Hoyt pointed out that it would have a copper roof. Mr. Almeida asked if there was a gutter. Mr. Hoyt replied no.
- Ms. Kozak asked what the cap detail would be on top of the brick. Mr. Hoyt replied that he was planning to use copper, although he said he had not really thought about it. Ms. Kozak thought he needed to use more than copper. Ms. Kozak suggested roll lock brick.
- Ms. Maltese thought that the brick did not work since it did not show a clear addition. She wondered if the brick was even needed. Mr. Hoyt said that the brick was preferred by the owner. Chairman Dika stated that she did not have a problem with the brick. Mr. Wyckoff said that it looked sharp. Ms. Maltese added that it is important to know what the owner prefers.
- Ms. Kozak noted that the plans stated “match existing fascia”. She wanted to know which fascia he would be matching. Mr. Hoyt replied the kitchen fascia. He said it would be constructed as drawn on the plan.
- There was detailed discussion concerning various detailing on the house and addition. Most of the Commissioners felt that the detailing shown on Page 1 was the most appropriate.
- Chairman Dika said that they would see Mr. Hoyt at the next HDC meeting.

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C. Work Session requested by **Baer Real Estate, LLC, owner**, for property located at **51 Islington Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow demolition of an existing structure (demolish building) and allow a new free standing structure (construct mixed use, multi-story building). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 126 as Lot 33 and lies within the Central Business B and Historic A Districts.

- Ms. Jennifer Ramsey, representing the applicant was present to speak to the application. She stated that the property is currently the Kline’s Furniture lot. She said that what she wanted to discuss this evening was massing and how it would relate to the surroundings.
- Ms. Ramsey presented a graph that showed different heights and massing. The chart showed the surrounding area with a 3-4 story structure and a 4-5 story structure on the lot.
- She explained that they were looking to construct a mixed use building with retail on the Islington Street side and townhouses on the Tanner Court side. She also said that they were exploring the option of having more stories on the front of the building (Islington Street) and lesser stories at the rear of the building (3 ½ stories). She felt this was respectful of the neighborhood and was in keeping with the 40 Bridge Street project.
- Ms. Ramsey showed the Commission various pictures of the buildings surrounding the site. She also showed them for their review some possible building designs for the site.
- She said that they would like to be able to provide parking and a tree lined street on Tanner Court by pushing back the building.
- Ms. Maltese asked if the applicant was choosing to demolish the existing structure for future development. Ms. Ramsey replied yes.
- Vice Chairman Katz asked if the proposed size buildings were within the zoning height limitations. Ms. Ramsey replied yes.

- There was discussion concerning which design was more appropriate for the site.
- Ms. Kozak felt the Commission was getting ahead of themselves. She felt they should have discussion on the demolition of the building and its historic merits or lack thereof.
- Mr. Wyckoff did not think there was anything to discuss concerning the building. He said that it was a 30 year old cement block building with cracks all over the place.
- Chairman Dika pointed out that the applicant should be reporting to the Commission the history of the building, its previous owners, and the condition of the structure. She said that should be presented at the time of the public hearing.
- Mr. Wyckoff felt that the five story building scenario fit very well on the site, especially with the Victorian house next door. He also liked the four story building scenario.
- Vice Chairman Katz felt the massing was appropriate for the area.
- Chairman Dika felt that the designs seemed to be respectful of the Tanner Court homes. Mr. Wyckoff felt the buildings were a bit high on the Tanner Court side.
- Councilor Spear agreed and pointed out that the slope on the street accentuated it.
- Mr. Almeida asked if they were looking at schemes to approve in the very near future or were they looking at schemes to validate the demolition of the building.
- Ms. Ramsey said it was the intent to proceed with building something new on the site after having had several work sessions and a public hearing.
- Chairman Dika pointed out that they really need a procedure for dealing with demolition.
- Mr. Wyckoff pointed out that at this point there is nothing to keep the Commission from approving a new building on the site, only to have it torn down and then the property go up for sale. Vice Chairman Katz did not think there was anything that they could do about that.
- Ms. Ramsey asked the Commission what they would like to see for the next work session.
- Chairman Dika replied that she would like to know the history of the building, its significance, if any, and why the building is coming down. She also said that a site walk could be requested. Mr. Wyckoff did not think a site walk was necessary yet.
- Mr. Almeida asked if shadow studies could be provided. Ms. Ramsey replied yes.
- Mr. Wyckoff said that the flat roof option should be eliminated.
- Ms. Ramsey indicated that they were looking to use a mix of materials, such as brick, clapboard, and possible paneling. She said that she would like to come back for another work session in April.

#### **IV. ADJOURNMENT**

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

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Good  
HDC Recording Secretary

These minutes were approved at the Historic District Commission meeting on April 9, 2008.