

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

**EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**7:00 p.m.**

**June 8, 2011  
reconvened from June 1, 2011**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Sandra Dika; Vice Chairman Richard Katz; Members John Wyckoff, Tracy Kozak, Planning Department Representative William Gladhill; Alternate Joseph Almeida

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Elena Whittaker; City Council Representative Anthony Coviello  
Alternate George Melchior

**ALSO PRESENT:** Roger Clum, Assistant Building Inspector

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**I. OLD BUSINESS**

A. Petition of **Carol J. Elliott, owner**, for property located at **143 Gates Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace windows) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 103 as Lot 99 and lies within General Residence B and Historic Districts. *(This item was postponed at the June 1, 2011 meeting to the June 8, 2011 meeting.)*

**DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

At the applicant's request, the Commission voted to postpone the application to the July 6, 2011 meeting.

**II. PUBLIC HEARINGS (CONTINUED)**

6. Petition of **Harbor Hill Condominium Association, owner**, and **James H. and Michele L. Swisher, applicants**, for property located at **77 Hanover Street, Unit #13, Terrace A**, wherein permission was requested to allow a new free standing structure (construct shed on roof top terrace) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 118 as Lot 29 and lies within Central Business B, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

**SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

Mr. James Swisher, owner of Unit #13 and Terrace A was present to speak to the application. Mr. Swisher presented a photo of the roof that was taken from the North Church during the church's steeple renovation. He said that his plan was to duplicate the enclosures already existing

on the roof but the size of the proposed shed would be smaller. The shed would be used to store outdoor patio equipment. He explained that the intent was to make the shed look as much like the existing enclosures as possible.

Mr. Wyckoff stated that the proposed shed was very compatible with what was existing on the roof. He asked if the shed would be painted. Mr. Swisher said they would try to match the same color of gray as the other structures that are currently there.

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**

Mr. Wyckoff made a motion to grant a Certificate of Approval for the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Almeida.

Mr. Wyckoff stated that the applicant had done a good job of duplicating the existing structures on the roof and felt the design was appropriate.

Mr. Almeida said that the submitted plans would serve as a good example for other storage unit proposals.

Chairman Dika commented that she went to many locations earlier in the day to try to see if she was able to see the structure and she could not. She felt the applicant was correct when he said it was not very visible.

Hearing no other discussion, Chairman Dika called for the vote. The motion to grant a Certificate of Approval for the application as presented passed by a unanimous (6-0) vote.

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7. Petition of **JEDA Revocable Trust, Darle Macfadyen and James Paolini, owners and trustees**, for property located at **272 New Castle Avenue**, wherein permission was requested to allow demolition of an existing structure (remove chimney) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 207 as Lot 37 and lies within the Single Residence B and Historic Districts.

**SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

Ms. Darle Macfadyen, co-owner and co-trustee of the property was present to speak to the application. She stated that she was seeking permission to demolish the chimney. She pointed out that photos were submitted and she passed out an additional photo that showed the chimney location from the rear of the property.

Ms. Macfadyen explained that the chimney started to collapse when they started to work on it. Chairman Dika asked Ms. Macfadyen if she consulted the City before she took down the chimney. Ms. Macfadyen replied yes.

Mr. Almeida asked Ms. Macfadyen if someone told her the chimney could not be rebuilt or did she just not want the chimney anymore. Ms. Macfadyen said she would prefer that it was in repairable condition but she was told that it would have to be totally rebuilt.

Vice Chairman Katz asked if the chimney still existed inside the house. Ms. Macfadyen replied yes.

Mr. Almeida explained to Ms. Macfadyen that the reason they had so many questions for her was because this was a row of very fine homes with a very important view from the water.

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**

Vice Chairman Katz made a motion to grant a Certificate of Approval for the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Kozak.

Vice Chairman Katz stated that the fact that the chimney was very difficult to view and that there was another chimney on the house made it a reasonable request.

Chairman Dika said that she went to the property earlier in the day and commented that the other chimney looked to be in good condition and older then the one that had collapsed.

Hearing no other discussion, Chairman Dika called for the vote. The motion to grant a Certificate of Approval for the application as presented passed by a unanimous (6-0) vote.

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8. (Work Session/Public Hearing) Petition of **Donald S. and Beth S. Margeson, owners**, for property located at **24 Marcy Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (construct rear entry addition and side porch addition) and allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace windows and misc. doors, install gas meter) and allow a new free standing structure (install condensing unit) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 105 as Lot 8 and lies within the Central Business and Historic Districts.

**WORK SESSION**

- Mr. Joe Paquet of Portsmouth Builders was present to speak to the application. He stated that the owners could not be present this evening but he read a letter from them to the Commission and submitted it for the record.
- Mr. Wyckoff stated that he was uncomfortable with the fenestration of the addition, specifically the large glass panels. He thought that it was a contemporary style that did not fit on a 1780 Georgian colonial. Mr. Paquet explained that the computer program he used was not able to show detail but that he would like having screening. There would be no glass fenestration on the screen porch addition. Mr. Wyckoff asked where the rail was. Mr. Paquet said that the rail would be dictated by code. He anticipated having a perimeter rail at chair rail height to make the screens more stable. Mr. Wyckoff asked Mr. Clum what the height of the falling hazard was. Mr. Clum said 30 inches. Mr. Wyckoff commented that there was a good foundation on the home so if a rail was needed, they would need rail details. Mr. Paquet felt that he would not need the rail because they would be below 30 inches. Chairman Dika explained that if he found that they were to need the rail, he would need to come back to the Commission for approval.
- Mr. Wyckoff asked about the area above the screen panels. Mr. Paquet said there would most likely be a divider so that it would not be a continuing expanse of screening material. He confirmed that there would be screening above the panels.
- Mr. Wyckoff commented that it appeared that the currently windows sashes were about 50 years old; however, the dormer windows in the attic looked older.
- Mr. Almeida asked if the foundation on the addition was actually higher than the existing foundation. Mr. Paquet replied no. He explained that the screen porch addition would be built on sonotubes and the water table would continue all the way around the structure.
- Mr. Almeida asked about the proposed windows and detailing. Mr. Paquet said that the proposal was to replace the windows with an aluminum clad Lepage window. He added that all detailing would be duplicated.
- Mr. Almeida asked if the shutters would stay. Mr. Paquet replied yes.
- Mr. Paquet explained that they were planning to match the existing windows by proposing a narrow grill and a fixed muntin with a spacer bar.
- Mr. Paquet said that they were originally going to propose imitation slate for the roofing material but have decided to go with real slate to match the existing roof. Mr. Almeida asked if he would be using a copper drip edge. Mr. Paquet said that the existing slate on the hip roof did not appear to have any copper. He added that at some point, someone did a very poor repair job by slathering roofing tar along the seams of the hip on the roof. He also pointed out that they were proposing to match the details of the garage for the screen porch addition because it was a smaller scale than the cornice detail. He said that he was agreeable to using the copper drip edge.
- Mr. Almeida asked about the material of the screening. Mr. Paquet said that the screening would be a charcoal color and could be of any material the Commission preferred. Mr. Wyckoff commented that it was difficult to use the nylon type of screen on such large panels. Mr. Paquet said they would want to go with a good quality metal screening.
- Mr. Wyckoff had a concern about dark full metal screens on such beautiful windows. Mr. Paquet said that there was a high quality invisible screen that was available for the windows and he could discuss that option with the owners. Mr. Wyckoff said that it did allow light to pass through it better. His concern was with the full screens. Mr. Paquet

stated that they were proposing the full screen option. Vice Chairman Katz asked if a half screen was available. Mr. Paquet replied yes. Vice Chairman Katz agreed with Mr. Wyckoff that the full screen really obliterates a lot of detail of the window. Mr. Almeida agreed also. Mr. Paquet said that a half screen was acceptable.

- Mr. Gladhill asked about the door being proposed for the small entry way. Mr. Paquet said that they would prefer a fiberglass door. Mr. Almeida commented that his preference would be wood. Mr. Paquet did not have a problem with using a wood door.

At this point, the work session ended and the meeting moved into the public hearing.

**SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

Mr. Paquet stated that they would like to replace the existing windows using a half screen with the clearest screening material available from the company. He also said they would construct a side screen porch addition that would have the existing trim and roof line details of the garage. The columns would match the front door details. The roof on the addition would be real slate instead of a synthetic material. Mr. Paquet also said that he would also like to construct a rear entry addition. The rear entry door would be a wood nine light over two panel door. There would also be three small awning windows on the rear elevation. A gas meter would be located on the Court Street side of the house and an AC condensing unit would be located on the State Street side. Lastly, the flashing on the screen porch would be copper.

Chairman Dika asked if the Commission had 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**

Mr. Wyckoff made a motion to grant a Certificate of Approval for the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Katz.

Mr. Wyckoff stated that the applicant had done a good job of copying the details from this beautiful historic building. He was happy with the final product.

Vice Chairman Katz said that very often they are presented with alterations to a building of some historical significance. He felt that in this instance, the alterations were very reasonable and the end result was a building that would be inhabited by a family and would be a good addition to the community.

Hearing no other discussion, Chairman Dika called for the vote. The motion to grant a Certificate of Approval for the application as presented passed by a vote of 5-1 with Mr. Gladhill voting in opposition.

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**III. WORK SESSIONS**

A. Work Session requested by **30 Maplewood, LLC, owner**, for property located at **30 Maplewood Avenue**, wherein permission was requested to allow a new free standing structure (construct 4 and 5 story mixed use building). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 125 as Lot 2 and lies within the Central Business B, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts. *(This item was postponed at the May 4, 2011 meeting to the June 8, 2011 meeting.)*

- Ms. Jennifer Ramsey, representing the owner was present to speak to the application. She stated she was last before the Commission with the project in November 2010. She said that at the last two work sessions, the discussion was about a three story building that wrapped around the VFW building and a four story building with a penthouse. Ms. Ramsey explained that since then their plans have changed. They were now eliminating the three story ell building and were just focusing on the four story building. Mr. Almeida asked why the changes were made. Ms. Ramsey said the building could be financially feasible with this new size and also, they wanted to retain some parking for the Hanover Market. She told the Commission that construction for the Hanover Market would begin in September. Mr. Almeida asked if this would leave the door open for another building at a later date. Ms. Ramsey said that it was a feasible option. Vice Chairman Katz asked if this proposed building would have any blank walls for a possible phased situation. Mr. Ramsey replied no. She confirmed that the building would be built as one phase. Ms. Ramsey also said that this building, although not as tall as the 51 Islington Street building, would be almost as large and would stand 55 feet high.
- Ms. Ramsey guided the Commission through the drawings beginning with the Maplewood Avenue elevation. She stated that the penthouse would be pushed back 16 feet from the edge of the building. There would be about a two foot parapet wall in front of it.
- Ms. Ramsey said that she tried to employ some of the old world design of the Hanover Market on the new structure but that the materials might be more contemporary. She pointed out that the mansard roof might be a metal standing seam roof but she would really like to see it as copper. Ms. Kozak suggested zinc also.
- Ms. Kozak asked what the parapet material would be. Ms. Ramsey said it would probably be EFIS with a smooth finish. Mr. Almeida commented that the Commission has not been successful with that product in the past. Ms. Kozak said that if it was done well, one could find a way to integrate it. Mr. Almeida asked about insulated metal panels. Ms. Ramsey thought that was an option.
- Ms. Kozak asked if a rail could be considered instead of the solid parapet wall. Ms. Ramsey replied yes. She pointed out that there might be the need for privacy for the penthouse owners so that was why she was proposing the wall.
- Mr. Wyckoff said that with regard to the massing, the penthouse would be the wild card.
- Mr. Almeida felt what was shown to date was very nice.
- Chairman Dika commented that she was hesitant about the penthouse.
- Mr. Almeida stated that he was not opposed to a tall building; it was just that they try so hard to make a building look shorter when if they had spent the energy into making it a better looking tall building, it might be more successful.
- Ms. Ramsey passed out some photos from various vantage points to show that the penthouse was not very visible. Mr. Almeida pointed out that it would be visible from hotel rooms.

- The Commission was in agreement that the applicant was heading in the right direction.
- Mr. Wyckoff commented that he was pleased with the massing. He added that he was more pleased with this location for the massing rather than the 51 Islington Street location. He also was pleased that at this time, they were not planning to extend the development and wrap it around the VFW building which he thought was very awkward.
- Ms. Kozak stressed the importance of defining the main entrance.
- Ms. Ramsey said she would like to be on a regular monthly schedule for work sessions.
- Mr. Almeida stated that he hoped the public would come out to speak to this project because it frustrated him to see and hear the negative comments about buildings after they are built.

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B. Work Session requested by **Lord House, LLC, owner**, for property located at **118 Pleasant Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (renovate barn for office space.) Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 116 as Lot 31 and lies within Mixed Residential Office and Historic District.

Chairman Dika informed the public that the Commission held a site walk at this property prior to the evening's meeting.

- Mr. Steve McHenry of McHenry Architecture, John Dodge of Dodge and Dodge Builders, Rodney Rowland of Strawberry Banke, and Janelle Harbeson of Commonwealth Dynamics were present to speak to the application.
- Mr. McHenry stated that they wanted to convert the outbuilding structures to office use. He explained that it was the inclination of the owner to keep the overall sense of what the buildings are and not to overdevelop the site. He added that there was a series of conveyances and restrictions associated with the property as a result of the purchase of the property from Strawberry Banke.
- Mr. McHenry then guided the Commission through the plans.
- Mr. Almeida asked if the north elevation was the only choice for the condensing units. Mr. McHenry explained that it was a very difficult decision in trying to place the condensers. They felt these locations were the best solution.
- Mr. Almeida commented that he thought it was wonderful that the structure was being reused. He noted how secluded the structure was. He felt the location of the condensers was unfortunate. He also asked if the foundation would be seen. Mr. McHenry explained that there would be some adjustment to grade and a new foundation would be needed under the entire structure.
- Ms. Kozak felt the look was successful from the courtyard but the back side of the structure was beginning to look like the back of a house. Vice Chairman Katz thought Ms. Kozak made a good point. Mr. McHenry said that it had been a good source of discussion with the owner to keep it looking like a barn.
- Mr. Wyckoff felt that the roof redesign on the garage was awkward. He said that the windows were so tall that they almost looked like a schoolhouse window.
- Vice Chairman Katz agreed that the windows needed to be broken up on the back elevation. Mr. McHenry agreed that the fenestration on the rear did not say barn.

- Mr. McHenry stated that he admired the owner's restraint because there was an opportunity to do something much larger but he had chosen to just build four offices.
- Mr. Almeida asked about gutters. Mr. McHenry said that they have not discussed that level of detail yet.
- Mr. Almeida asked if they would be proposing skylights. Mr. McHenry said yes and explained that they would be helpful in getting some good natural light.

In other business, there was considerable discussion concerning the street art around the City. The Commission had varying opinions on the street art but agreed that it did not fall within their purview to review it.

#### **IV. ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:40 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 August 3, 2011.