

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

**EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**7:00 p.m.**

**September 12, 2012  
reconvened from September 5, 2012**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Richard Katz; Vice Chairman Joseph Almeida; Members John Wyckoff, City Councilor Esther Kennedy; Planning Board Representative William Gladhill; Alternate Daniel Rawling

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Tracy Kozak; Alternate George Melchior

**ALSO PRESENT:** Nicholas Cracknell, Principal Planner

.....

Prior to the public hearings, Chairman Katz read a letter submitted to the HDC by Frank and Irja Cilluffo and Blair and Jan McCracken into the record. The letter included a petition signed by 241 individuals in opposition to the Parrott Avenue site as the location for a new parking garage.

**I. OLD BUSINESS**

A. Petition of **Port Walk Residential, LLC, owner**, for property located at **99 Hanover Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (install two awnings, replace storefront windows with entrance door) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 125 as Lot 23 and lies within the Central Business B, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts. *(This item was postponed at the September 5, 2012 meeting to the September 12, 2012 meeting.)*

**SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

Mr. Tim Levine, representative for the owner was present to speak to the application. He stated that they were requesting two awnings and the addition of a door. The first awning was to be over the entrance to the apartments that were located on the upper floors of the building. Mr. Levine explained that it would be a curved awning that extended out four feet from the face of the building. The second awning was on the side of the building that faced Port Walk Place. The awning was for a proposed tenant. They were also proposing to install a front door system in place of windows for the same tenant. The door system would be of the same material as the rest of the storefronts of in the building. Neither of the awnings would have any lighting on them but they did have graphics, which were represented in the submitted plans.

Mr. Almeida commented that he thought the design was very appropriate to the building. He asked Mr. Levine if he intended to continue the design further down and around the building as other tenants moved in. Mr. Levine stated that it would be hard to say because they were trying

to give some latitude to prospective tenants but he assured the Commission that the owner had final approval before submitting to the HDC so they would make sure it was appropriate before it was submitted to the Commission.

Mr. Almeida asked what would be seen underneath the awning. Mr. Levine said it was a canvas awning with an aluminum frame.

Mr. Wyckoff stated that he too thought it was a very appropriate awning. He pointed out; however, that he did not see a light fixture proposed for the new door. Mr. Levine said that they were proposing to install the same light as what was located by the other doors.

Councilor Kennedy asked if the graphics proposed would need to go through a different process. Mr. Cracknell stated that if the awnings extended into the right-of-way then they would need to go to the City Council for approval. Mr. Levine confirmed that the awnings did not extend into the right-of-way.

Mr. Almeida asked Mr. Levine to specify to his installers to use stainless steel fasteners. Mr. Levine stated that he thought that was a reasonable request.

Chairman Katz asked if there were any more questions for the applicant. Hearing none, he asked if anyone from the public wished to speak to, for, or against the application. Seeing no one rise, he 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 with the following stipulation:

- 1) That a door light is also permitted with the application. The door light shall be the same fixture that was previously approved.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Almeida. Chairman Katz asked for discussion.

Mr. Wyckoff stated that the proposal was appropriate to the building and was a good addition to the back of the structure.

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

- 1) That a door light is also permitted with the application. The door light shall be the same fixture that was previously approved.

## **II. PUBLIC HEARINGS (CONTINUED)**

11. Petition of **Mark Wentworth Home, owner**, for property located at **346 Pleasant Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace storm windows, shutters, gutters, roofing at porticoes and bay, misc. window, install downspouts, reconstruct balustrade on front portico) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 109 as Lot 10 and lies within General Residence B and Historic Districts.

**SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

Ms. Tracy Kozak of JSA, Inc. was present to speak to the application. She stated that this property was known as the Governor John Wentworth house. She said the scope of the project was to rehabilitate the exterior of the mansion house in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior’s standards for rehabilitation. She then guided the Commission through the submitted plans. In addition, she highlighted the fact that the original portico at the front door had a balustrade so they would like to recreate that.

Mr. Almeida asked how many shutters would be replaced. Ms. Kozak said it was just the two windows on the east side of the building so it would be a total of four shutters. Mr. Almeida noted that the proposed shutters were different than the historic shutters on the front of the building. He said that it would be nice to try to match them.

Mr. Wyckoff asked if the storm panels would have a one over one configuration. Ms. Kozak replied yes. Mr. Wyckoff asked which gutter pattern would be used. Ms. Kozak said it would #12, the New England style.

Chairman Katz asked if there were any more questions for the applicant. Hearing none, he asked if anyone from the public wished to speak to, for, or against the application. Seeing no one rise, he declared the public hearing closed and awaited a motion.

**DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

Mr. Almeida made a motion to grant a Certificate of Approval for the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gladhill. Chairman Katz asked for discussion.

Mr. Almeida stated that this was a wonderful application with very appropriate and beautiful details in the proposal.

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

\*\*\*\*\*

12. Petition of **Summit 501 Islington, LLC, owner**, for property located at **501 Islington Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (changes to the existing cornice, frieze, and soffit) as per plans on file in the Planning

Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 157 as Lot 6 and lies within the Business and Historic Districts.

### **SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

Mr. Todd Baker, representing the owner of the building was present to speak to the application. He stated that they would like to renovate the exterior of the façade by adding a colonial crown to replace the wood bands on the building. Two options were submitted but Mr. Baker said that he preferred the second option.

Mr. Almeida asked if it was the intent to paint the new trim details. Mr. Baker said yes and explained that the color could be customized at the factory. He said the color would be a lighter cream color.

Mr. Rawling commented that he thought the renovation would be an attractive one; however, he felt the first option was the better solution. Mr. Baker explained that they looked around the neighborhood and found a lot of examples of the colonial crown. He said that personally, he liked the second option better. Mr. Almeida said that he could go with either design so he thought he would leave the choice up to the applicant. The other Commissioners were okay with option two.

Chairman Katz asked if there were any more questions for the applicant. Hearing none, he asked if anyone from the public wished to speak to, for, or against the application. Seeing no one rise, he 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 with the following stipulation:

- 1) That the trim color shall be cream and not white.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Almeida. Chairman Katz asked for discussion.

Mr. Wyckoff stated that he felt the change would soften the building and he felt it was appropriate for the other buildings in the area.

Mr. Almeida noted that color was not within the Commission's purview but when there was a substitution of it, he felt the Commission could weigh in on the choice.

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

- 1) That the trim color shall be cream and not white.

\*\*\*\*\*

With the public hearings completed, Ms. Kozak joined the meeting to participate in the work sessions.

Councilor Kennedy recused herself from the first work session, 25 South Mill Street.

\*\*\*\*\*

**III. WORK SESSIONS**

A. Work Session requested by **South Mill Investments, LLC, owner**, for property located at **25 South Mill Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow demolition of an existing structure (demolish structure) and allow a new free standing structure (construct new home). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 102 as Lot 16 and lies within General Residence B and Historic Districts.

- Mr. David Witham, architect for the project, and Mr. Jim Sanders, owner of the property were present to speak to the application. Mr. Witham reminded the Commission of a prior work session and site walk. He also informed them that the project had received Board of Adjustment approval. The scope of the project was to demolish the existing building and rebuild a replica with an addition off of the rear of the building.
- The proposed front elevation showed that it would match the existing front elevation. Originally there were two chimneys and the plan was to put the two chimneys back.
- The left side elevation had grade changes to consider. Mr. Witham pointed out that there would be two different types of siding. One type on the original part of the structure and another type on the addition. He felt the structure “told a story” by doing that.
- The rear elevation showed a skylight.
- Mr. Wyckoff expressed concern about the 60 degree angle brackets on the front entrance and commented that he has not seen that feature used on an old house or used historically. Ms. Kozak pointed out that the John Paul Jones house presented one for their back door overhang. Mr. Wyckoff said that he felt the front door required a little something more.
- Mr. Almeida said that the proposed plans were a vast improvement to what was currently there. He added that he was happy with it as presented and felt it was appropriate.
- Mr. Witham pointed out that on the right side elevation; a few of the windows were off balance because of an internal stairwell.
- Mr. Almeida asked if there would be a brick face foundation on the addition as well. Mr. Witham said he was not planning to because of the grading issues and the financial cost.
- Ms. Kozak asked if there would be any venting or louvers. Mr. Witham said he was still working on a lot of the details and would have those at the next meeting.

\*\*\*\*\*

B. Work Session requested by **City of Portsmouth, owner**, and **Players’ Ring, applicant**, for property located at **99 Marcy Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior

renovations to an existing structure (replace windows, doors, and masonry work). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 104 as Lot 3 and lies within the Municipal and Historic Districts.

- Mr. Joel Plagenz, Mr. David Mauriello, and Ms. Barbara Newton of the Players’ Ring were present to speak to the application. He stated that they have been the City’s tenants in the historic building for the past 21 years. He said that they were about to set out to raise funds for some much needed improvements.
- Mr. Plagenz stated that the Pella Company had indicated that they could match the appearance of the building with 6/6 windows but that the Commission might have some questions regarding the materials. He said that Pella recommended an aluminum clad window in an appropriate color because of the building’s close proximity to salt water.
- Mr. Wyckoff stated that he did not have a problem with clad windows and would like to see them in a slightly darker color.
- Mr. Gladhill, Mr. Almeida, Ms. Kozak, and Mr. Rawling indicated that they would prefer to see a wood window because of the building’s location and prominence to Prescott Park.
- Ms. Kozak asked about the possibility of restoring the windows. Mr. Plagenz said that they were told that the windows were about 25 years old and in very poor condition. Mr. Rawling stated that it was difficult for him to accept modern windows in this building. He thought a historic window was needed and that more research needed to be done.
- Chairman Katz asked if a site walk would be helpful. Mr. Almeida said a site walk would not hurt. Councilor Kennedy agreed that a site walk would help. She too thought a wood window was the best solution.
- Ms. Kozak said that the most historic window would be a single pane true divided wood window. She added that to get the thermal performance of a new window, storms would need to be added.
- Mr. Wyckoff pointed out that all of the suggestions made would save the applicant money.
- Chairman Katz asked how old the building was. Mr. Plagenz stated that it was built in 1833 as the Portsmouth Marine Railway building.
- Ms. Newton pointed out that the windows in the building were all different sizes. She asked if there was a standard for the size of the framing. Mr. Almeida said that fitting the window to the existing opening was definitely more appropriate.
- There was detailed discussion on the existing doors and the possibility of refurbishing them. Mr. Wyckoff noted that he thought the center door was the only original remaining door.
- Chairman Katz commented that being on site would be very helpful in answering many of the Commission’s questions.
- Mr. Plagenz added that the final piece of the proposal was mortar repair.

\*\*\*\*\*

C. Work Session requested by **Mara K. Khavari, Suzanne M. Brown, and A.T. Michael MacDonald, owners, and Jay McSharry, applicant**, for property located at **65 & 67 Mark Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure

(major restorations). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 116 as Lot 51 and lies within Mixed Residential Office and Historic Districts.

- Mr. Brendan McNamara, designer for the project was present to speak to the application. He stated that they were proposing to restore the building since it was in pretty decent shape. The building was a two family unit and they would like to get some parking space so they were proposing to demolish the rear addition. He pointed out that the addition was not original to the building. He then guided the Commission through the submitted plans.
- Mr. Wyckoff commented that it was a simple restoration.
- Mr. Almeida asked Mr. McNamara if he was confident the clapboards underneath the existing asbestos were in good shape. Mr. McNamara said that some of the asbestos had been removed at the bottom of the structure to reveal the clapboards and they were in surprisingly good shape. He said that if some of the clapboards were rotted, they would replace them.
- Mr. Almeida asked if there would be penetrations through the roof for internal ventilation. Mr. McNamara said that should not be necessary. He stated that they were keeping the chimneys but would remove a skylight.
- Mr. Wyckoff asked about the two doors on the Mark Street side of the building. Mr. McNamara stated that they would both be restored as is.
- Mr. McNamara said that a section of the house may still have the original windows. They planned to restore all of the windows and would use Green Mountain windows for the new construction. He pointed out that they may not need to use new windows since the porch section that will be removed had internal windows that could be salvaged.

\*\*\*\*\*

D. Work Session requested by **Mara K. Khavari, Suzanne M. Brown, and A.T. Michael MacDonald, owners, and Jay McSharry, applicant**, for property located at **46 Mark Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow demolition of an existing structure (demolish existing structures) and allow new construction (construct single family home). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 116 as Lot 52 and lies within Mixed Residential Office and Historic Districts.

- Mr. Brendan McNamara was present to speak to the application. He pointed out that the lot was fully developed, from fence to fence. He said that the intention was to demolish all of structures because they were in pretty bad shape. The proposal was to build a single family home on the lot.
- Mr. Gladhill asked if the existing garage was tied in with the neighbor's garage. Mr. McNamara explained that the garage was on the neighbor's property so the plan was to demolish the garage so that the neighbor's garage would be free standing.
- Mr. Almeida asked Mr. Cracknell about the demolition process. Mr. Cracknell said that the Commission could either do a two step process within the application or act on it in two separate applications. He did not think there was a right or wrong way of doing it. Mr. Wyckoff recalled that in the past, demolition was just part of the application. Mr. Cracknell said that the criteria were different for both so they needed to be acted on separately. He added that the process needed to be tightened up.

- Mr. Wyckoff asked the age of the house. Mr. McNamara said the house was probably built around 1895.
- Mr. McNamara said that they would engage the services of a geotechnical engineer to do an assessment of the site.
- Chairman Katz asked the Commissioners if they had any objections to the demolition of the structure, in concept, at this point in the presentation.
- Ms. Kozak said that she was hesitant because she felt this was a good example of showing the sequence of buildings starting with the main house, then the small house, and then the barn. Mr. McNamara felt it was just the opposite. He felt it developed because of the commercial enterprise, then into residential. Ms. Kozak commented that it would be interesting to see the old Sanborn maps to show how it progressed. She said there was clearly a sequence.
- Mr. Almeida stated that he did not have a problem with the demolition. He just wanted to make sure that there was proper documentation of the property. He asked Mr. McNamara to do more research on it before they lost it for good.
- Mr. Wyckoff felt a site walk was necessary because he was starting to agree with Ms. Kozak that this might be important for its location. He thought the barn might have a story to tell.
- Mr. Gladhill stated that he would not like to see a barn leave the historic district and the city but he felt that the barn was deciding it wanted to go down on its own.
- Councilor Kennedy said that the Commission should do everything they can to save barns in the community.
- Mr. Wyckoff stated that a package of historical information about a property should be submitted and on file in the library before the building was demolished.
- It was determined that a site walk would be helpful and would be set up for the next meeting.

\*\*\*\*\*

E. Work Session requested by **CWAE, LLC, owner**, for property located at **41 Market Street**, wherein permission is requested to **Withdrawn** on to an existing structure (install fire escape ladders). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 106 as Lot 29 and lies within the Central Business B, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

This item was withdrawn at the applicant's request.

\*\*\*\*\*

F. Work Session requested by **State Street Crossings, LLC, owner**, and **Orange Door, Inc., applicant**, for property located at **218 State Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow a new free standing structure (install chiller and enclosure). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 107 as Lot 68 and lies within Central Business B, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

- Mr. Bob Sena, project manager for the Orange Leaf Frozen Yogurt Shop was present to speak to the application. He stated that the proposed chiller would be located at the rear

of the building next to a stairwell. The chiller would be five feet tall and three feet wide and 4 ½ feet in length and would be used in the production of yogurt. He showed the Commission a photo of the unit. Mr. Sena acknowledged there would be noise from the unit so he was proposing to install a SimTek fence which was a “rock-like” fence.

- Mr. Almeida cautioned that the wall might draw more attention to the area than the actual unit. Ms. Kozak asked if the unit would be visible from a public way. Mr. Sena replied no. It was noted that the pipes would run underground and into the space.
- Councilor Kennedy asked if there would be a gate to access the unit and if so, what would it be made of. Mr. Sena replied yes and explained that the gate would be made of the same material.
- There was detailed discussion about whether a barrier was needed given its location. There was also discussion about the sound it would produce and if a barrier to muffle the sound was required but it was pointed out that sound was not within the Commission’s purview but aesthetics were.
- Mr. Wyckoff suggested a wooden, solid board fence with a cap on top. He stated that it would not need to be too tall since the unit was sitting down lower than grade. The rest of the Commission was fine with that solution.

\*\*\*\*\*

Mr. Almeida suggested that the Commission have another work session soon to improve the functioning of the Commission. Suggested topics to discuss were building height, demolition, and review criteria for various areas of the historic district. There was also discussion about noise and how it might affect the historic district. It was decided that a date be set in the very near future.

\*\*\*\*\*

**IV. ADJOURNMENT**

At 9:45 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 February 6, 2013.