

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

EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

6:30 p.m.

August 21, 2013

MEMBERS PRESENT: Vice Chairman Tracy Kozak, Members Richard Katz, John Wyckoff, Planning Department Representative William Gladhill; Alternates Dan Rawling, Reagan Ruedig

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Chairman Joseph Almeida; City Council Representative Esther Kennedy; George Melchior

ALSO PRESENT: Nicholas Cracknell, Principal Planner

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Vice-Chair Kozak mentioned that, at the end of the evening, she wanted to discuss a packet of proposed preliminary guidelines that were prototypes from other cities. For the last year, the HDC and the Planning Department had talked about developing design guidelines that would assist the HDC in reviewing projects, so she wanted to discuss the features and how they might benefit the process.

I. WORK SESSIONS (CONTINUED)

G. Work Session requested by **Ryan P. and Crystal L. Cronin, owners**, for property located at **180 Gates Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (construct rear addition) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 103 as Lot 18 and lies within General Residence B and Historic District. *(This item was continued at the August 14, 2013 meeting.)*

The architect Mr. Dennis Maccarone of Somma Studios told the Commission that he and Mr. Cronin had considered all the Commission comments from the previous meeting and had redesigned their plan. They originally had a trimmed-out 1st floor that the Commission had found inappropriate, so they did a full clapboard addition. The Site Plan showed the location of the addition and a few photos of the house to give a better idea of what it actually looked like. He also showed the back elevation of the addition and the proposed windows on the 1st and 2nd floors that matched the size and style of the exiting house windows. He took Mr. Katz's previous suggestion about the offset to the windows on the 1st floor matching the existing. The porch showed the side elevation on the driveway, the relocated electric meter and the windows. Mr. Maccarone also showed the elevation from inside of the back yard and the two window types and said they had all the window specifications.

Mr. Wyckoff said it was a great improvement. Mr. Katz said it conveyed the essence of the house's architecture and was a real improvement. Mr. Gladhill said it was much better than the previous one.

Mr. Gladhill asked about the foundation. Mr. Maccarone showed the left side of the house where the clapboards ran close to the grade. The corner of the driveway was about 10" off the ground, so their plan was to match the existing elevation of the foundation. Mr. Gladhill asked what the material was, and Mr. Maccarone said it was concrete but would not be noticeable because most of it would be hidden by shrubs. Mr. Rawling asked if gutters were put on the addition. Mr. Maccarone said a gutter presently ran across the back of the house and they would put a gutter on the addition that would match it. Ms. Ruedig said the addition was appropriate and blended in nicely with the house.

Mr. Maccarone said they also eliminated the skylights. Vice-Chair Kozak noted that they maintained the narrow detail at the top of the 2nd floor window where it hit the eave and said it was important to match the existing context. She said it was convincing and made for a great addition. She asked about the roofing, and Mr. Maccarone said they would match the existing roof. Vice-Chair Kozak said the application was very complete.

The Commission recommended a public hearing.

H. Work Session requested by **Middle Street Baptist Church, owner**, for property located at **18 Court Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (remove vinyl siding, replace with wood siding, replace/restore windows and misc. trim) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 127 as Lot 2 and lies within Mixed Residential Office and Historic Districts. *(This item was postponed at the August 14, 2013 meeting to the August 21, 2013 meeting.)*

The architect Lisa DeStefano and Richard Johnson of Pine Brook said they were before the Commission to discuss the restoration. They did a site walk on June 15 with some of the Commissioners. The goal of the church was to repair the leaking from the cupola that was causing issues with the custom mill work and detailing on the building's interior. The major item was the cupola itself and the need to repair the flashing and the leaking from the upper windows. The second item was the façade restoration.

Ms. DeStefano said they wanted to replace the cupola windows. There was a balustrade above the eave and lots of trim. The eave detail work would remain, but the problem was above the eave. They wanted to make it low maintenance because it was difficult to get up that high. They would use AZEK as replacement material that would be similar to what they had done at the Kearsarge Building when they restored the façade. They had some issues with the balustrade and the tiebacks holding it up, so they would work with the balustrade itself. They had discussed painting the wooden balustrades, as the HDC had requested.

Mr. Wyckoff asked what percentage of the balustrades was rotted. Mr. Johnson said the individual balustrades were less of a problem than the actual post-ups, of which 80-90% was

failing. Mr. Wyckoff asked if they were encased, and Mr. Johnson said they were just trim wrapped. Mr. Wyckoff asked the type of roof they were putting on and Mr. Johnson said they would replace it with rubber. Ms. DeStefano said the pieces were all flat casing trimmed around, and if they replaced the balustrades, they would replace them in kind with wood so they would match. The structural posts were flat stock, so they would replace them with AZEK.

Ms. DeStefano said all of the fascia below the eave would remain as wood and had been well protected. Their proposal was to take off the vinyl siding and the existing wood underneath and replace it with new wood siding. She showed a book that illustrated the original corner boards that were removed to put the vinyl siding on. When they removed the vinyl from the corner, they would see what was left to use as infill and would replace them in wood.

Mr. Johnson said it was a half round corner detail. Ms. DeStefano asked the Commission if the material should be part of their application even though it did not exist before. Mr. Wyckoff asked her if she expanded her exploratory work or peeled any more layers off. Ms. DeStefano said they looked into paint and lead and found a few odd things like holes in the siding, so the vinyl was ready to come off.

Ms. Ruedig asked if they would salvage any of the siding. Ms. DeStefano said it had a lot of lead paint and they would have to wrap the building to remove it. The cost to remove the lead from the wood would be expensive at \$240,000, and she said the wood was not worth saving. Vice-Chair Kozak said she did not know if there was a regulation for paint, if it was a mandate or if they just preferred to take it off in one piece. Mr. Katz asked if there was a liability factor for various layers of lead paint. Mr. Johnson said they had all the requirements they needed to take care of the lead abatement and would need to protect the inside as well. The system they used would fully encapsulate it and take it away.

Vice-Chair Kozak asked what type of wood they were going to use. Ms. DeStefano said there was real wood between the arches that would show what the exposure was. They could do a straw poll to make sure they were matching it so it would have the thickness, reveal and shadow lines it was meant to have.

Vice-Chair Kozak thought it would be important to replicate the profile of the clapboards that had tapered claps with the feathered edges and make one last pitch to save any good wood that they could. The old wood was a tighter, denser grain and better than the new stuff, and it could last longer than something new that would fail in 30 years. Mr. Wyckoff said most of the window casings and sills had a lot of lead paint on them, but were in good shape.

Ms. DeStefano moved onto the topic of windows and said she would like to remove the windows and replace them. She had to find examples and get more specifics on windows that the Commission preferred. Her preference was to remove and replace them so they could get an insulated glass and not lose the shadow line detail or the muntin behind a storm window. It would allow them to fill in the weight pockets to get insulation in them.

Mr. Gladhill asked how old the windows were. Ms. DeStefano said they were not the original windows and were replaced so long ago that even the oldest church elder could not remember. Mr. Rawling said the building's significance should not allow new windows to go in. Ms. Ruedig

said she would be reluctant to remove the windows. Even though they were not original, they were still old. Ms. DeStefano thought she meant thermal single glaze glass and not insulated glass. Mr. Johnson said he was puzzled because the windows were true divided light and 3/8" insulated light, and they were making new sashes and using insulated glass so the muntins would be identical. Ms. DeStefano said it would be a wood window matching muntins to what was there and eliminating the aluminum storm panel.

Mr. Wyckoff said the Commission should be able to look at the existing windows. They had not gone inside during their site walk. He also wanted an example of a pre-made new window. Ms. DeStefano said she thought she had been honest about the window. Mr. Wyckoff said the Commission had to go inside the building and look at it to see how it hung and to look at the casing, sashes, and bands around the window. Mr. Gladhill said it would be difficult to get all nine Commissioners on a site walk on a Saturday and that maybe one or two members could investigate.

Mr. Wyckoff said he could go inside the church and see if it was a Federal window or a 20th century reproduction. He thought that the windows would be 2/2 windows, not 6/6 if they were replaced in the late 19th century. Ms. DeStefano asked what the difference would be in replacing them in kind, with a wood sash and wood muntin that matched in profile. Vice-Chair Kozak said the glass would be the only difference, and if it was antique glass, the Commission did not want to lose that. Mr. Wyckoff said if the windows were original and removed, they would be gone forever. From that moment on, the 2013 windows would be installed and the building was too important to make that kind of decision. Ms. DeStefano asked how one could see wavy glass beyond a storm window.

Vice-Chair Kozak said another issue with double insulated glass was that the depth of the muntin got thicker. She said 3/8" was a thin glass and usually old Federal sashes were 1-1/8" in total width, so the window profile would be a 1/4" and the numbers did not add up. She thought a drawing of what they were proposing would help instead of an actual sample, or maybe a Commissioner could stop by and look at the actual building rather than have another site walk. Mr. Gladhill said he would like Mr. Wyckoff and Mr. Rawling to take a closer look at the windows. Ms. DeStefano said she would coordinate it and pursue options.

Mr. Rawling asked how Ms. DeStefano was addressing the leaking in the cupola windows. Mr. Johnson said when the windows were looked at closely, they revealed that they were not made windows but a couple of sashes originally put up in the form of a window. Vice-Chair Kozak said the window was so far up and set back that it was hard to see unless you were standing far away from the building. She said it could be replaced in kind and would not need to be insulated glass, and asked if they had considered refurbishing and weather-stripping the windows with an operable interior storm. Ms. DeStefano said that was why she wanted the Commission to go inside to look at it and she wanted to get it in for the September meeting because the deadline was in a day and a half. They could do an easy diagram for the areas they were discussing, like replacing the flat with AZEK. The window would take more time, especially if they had to make a custom-made one. She said they may have to separate the windows below the eave and make them a separate item so they could get more direction for October before the bad weather started.

Mr. Wyckoff said the feather-edged clapboards were pine clapboards and difficult to find. They were not off-the-shelf cedar clapboards from Home Depot. Mr. Johnson asked if that was a requirement. Vice-Chair Kozak said it was if they were replacing them in kind. She needed to see it because she was treating the building as if it were a museum-quality building. She asked if the horizontal trim band that went above the 1st floor level was still there. Mr. Johnson said he didn't know but would check. Vice-Chair Kozak said it would be nice to restore or replicate it.

Mr. Wyckoff asked if the clapboards were similar in price with other replacement clapboard. He said Western Red Cedar did not hold paint well and was not as great as people thought. Ms. DeStefano said that was her challenge because the church membership worried about maintenance and some said just to leave it as vinyl or re-vinyl it.

Mr. Rawling asked if there were grants available. Vice-Chair Kozak said there were, and to check the New Hampshire Preservation website because it would be a great candidate for it. There were also substantial tax incentives that applied to non-profits. Ms. DeStefano said they would see them the following month with more window information. She wanted to get the work above the eave done. Mr. Rawling told her that any information about the age of the existing windows would be helpful. Mr. Wyckoff added that she did not have to make anything special for a window but could just make a bit of the window and use plywood as an imitation sash to see how the putty would work in a Federal window.

The Commission recommended another work session.

I. Work Session requested by **Dale W. and Sharyn W. Smith, owners, and Green and Company, applicant**, for property located at **275 Islington Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow demolition of an existing structure (demolish building) and allow a new free standing structure (construct new building). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 144 as Lot 8 and lies within Central Business B and Historic Districts. *(This item was continued at the July 17, 2013 meeting.)*

Steve McHenry of McHenry Architecture, Brandon Holben, project architect, and Michael and Rick Green, option holders, were present.

Mr. McHenry reminded the Commission that he and his team had come before them the previous month with very preliminary ideas, and they had made considerable progress in developing different options for massing. They also had restarted the project with a new design team. Mr. McHenry said he was there to discuss two main items, 1) the removal of the New Englander, and 2) eight modalities showing different versions of massing as shown on the plan elevations and renderings in the packages. They had constraints because the current Zoning Ordinance was in a state of flux, and even though they were in a CBB zone, they were at the edge of a residential zone, so their building's height, setbacks and lot coverage varied from what would normally be in the CBB. The Commission would see that their options were all within the 40' building height, and setbacks and lot coverage would not require a variance unless stated specifically.

After a lot of discussion with the Commission about the removal of the New Englander, they examined the Zoning Ordinance criteria that would make a case for removal for their project or for the Commission to make a decision on any significant project. The criteria that the HDC used in their decisions were elements such as the integrity of the Historic District, maintaining the special characteristics of the District, the historical value of the house, enhancement of property values, and so on. He felt that he had made a straightforward position on their building and each of the criteria that they would discuss after the presentation. He asked the Commission if they would rather go through the presentation or have a discussion first. The Commission said it was up to him. Mr. McHenry said he would prefer to talk about the removal of the New Englander first because the removal issue was critical to the design. If they were not allowed to remove the structure, it would completely change the picture as to what was developable on the site. Vice-Chair Kozak told him they were missing three Commissioners that night. Mr. McHenry said he still wanted to have the conversation because he planned to come back for another work session.

Mr. Wyckoff said he had mentioned before that the house was a low-level vernacular of the New England style. It had none of the bracketed returns, soffits, bay windows, and so on, and he had never seen one clapboarded like that. Consequently, he saw it as a building that could be removed. There were four New Englanders left on the street, but the whole area was full of New Englanders, and removing one did not pose a problem for him.

Mr. Katz said he had looked on the Internet for information on New Englanders and their architectural characteristics, and he hadn't had any luck. The term 'New Englander' was more of a real estate term and a catch-all phrase that characterized that ubiquitous house type. Midwesterners called it a homestead house. It was a vernacular with no architectural influence or value. There were plenty of New Englanders around, but he did not think the New Englander in question had any importance other than an article of faith or a sliding slope designation that said if the HDC let this one go, they would all be gone. Mr. Katz wondered who would want to live in a house that was in the back part of a multifamily residence. He himself would not want to try to sell that house to someone. Consequently, he was not against the demise of the house.

Ms. Ruedig said the New Englander was usually called a sidehall or an end gable type of house, and calling it a New Englander didn't really mean anything. However, it was a prolific and very common vernacular type of building for that particular time period in Portsmouth and was not without architectural value. She could understand that the house was not meant to be put into the Historic District because it did not contribute to it as the HDC had outlined in their guidelines. The Historic District included Islington Street, but the house was not typical of Islington Street and not protected by the HDC. For that reason, it did not maintain the special character of the District and she could not make a strong argument against its removal.

Mr. Rawling said the value of the house was its placeholder to the pattern and rhythm of the neighborhood. The adjacent streets and many others were characterized by small gable ends to the street. He found it important to the project and felt it should be expressed in the new construction as part of a contextual issue and design.

Vice-Chair Katz said she had looked at the house and she did not support its removal because she felt that it contributed to the street's sense of place. The street was cohesive with the four gable end houses. The house was part of the HDC purview, and they had to apply the same factors for review as they would any property in the district. Replacing the house with a large multi-story apartment building would negatively affect the sense of place at that end of the street.

Mr. Gladhill agreed that the house had a sense of place. Although it was not as ornate as other New Englanders in Portsmouth, it was still historic, like the other simple houses in the neighborhood. Being the Planning Board representative, he said he could get the pushback of larger buildings abutting a residential neighborhood, but the New Englander was a buffer. If the house were demolished, there would be a larger building moving further into a residential neighborhood and he could not support that. Even though the proposed building was residential, it could change in the future and switch over to commercial.

Mr. Green asked what difference it made whether it was the New Englander that had the proposed building next to it or whether it was the house next to the New Englander. Wherever that line was, there would be a multi-story building next to a residential structure, whether it was next to the one in a commercial district or next to one that was not protected by the HDC. Mr. Gladhill asked Mr. Green if he had talked to the neighbors about the design or asked their opinion. Mr. Green said he had only talked to the neighbors who had approached them, and they were supportive.

Mr. Gladhill said, from a planning context, it had an effect of not showing the neighborhood support of the project. If the neighbors were all in favor of it, it could be an influence. He had not received letters of approval or objection from the residents, so he had to go by the interpretation in the Ordinance.

Mr. Rawling thought the closest contextual building was 51 Islington Street and said originally there was supposed to be a group of modest-scale houses in the empty parking lot behind the proposed building. The building design was meant to have some median-scale townhouses in that parking lot, and if those had been built, they would not have been seen behind the large building. Mr. Katz recalled that it was a Planning Board decision. The townhouses were going to be built first, but the Planning Board did not want the townhouses, just the commercial building on Islington Street. After the building was built, the neighbors behind it complained that it didn't look right to the back of the neighborhood. Mr. Rawling said his point was that the scaling, setbacks and sightlines were important.

Mr. Wyckoff asked Mr. Green if he had considered excavating under the New Englander and then incorporating it into the project. Mr. Green said it was not feasible.

Mr. McHenry thought the point of work sessions was to start with a broad discussion of alternatives and hone in on a few, but if the house could not be removed, there would not be developmental analysis of the site. He thought the Board was split and they could not get a full consensus because there were absent Commissioners. Mr. Katz told him that he would not get a lot of solace from the absent Commissioners. Mr. McHenry said he did not need solace. He pointed out the picture of a house in the packet and gave an example of whether it was better to

look out the window and see the neighbor's house just a few feet away, or to look out and see a tall building further away. A big issue was assessing the character of a house and whether it was a significant contributor to the Historic District's fabric when in fact, its contextual neighbors were not even in the Historic District. He hoped to address the issue again to see if they made progress on some of the massing options that they could pursue. Mr. Katz asked if the HDC could take dwellings not in the Historic District into consideration when determining the compatibility of the house. Mr. McHenry said the zoning definitions always referred to the character of the Historic District.

Vice-Chair Kozak said they had not discussed the demolition of the Old Port Building. Any demolition in the District was taken seriously. The Old Port had been there a while and had history. She was not opposed to losing it because it was not an icon or style that represented a significant era.

Mr. McHenry said the same issues applied to the New Englander. The removal of the larger building would show that they complied with the current zoning, and the setbacks on the side and front would allow for more visibility.

Mr. Wyckoff told Mr. McHenry he could design a second or third floor on the building. Mr. Cracknell said he would need variances because he would be expanding a non-conforming use.

Mr. McHenry showed the next two slides that illustrated the character-defining features of the neighborhood in terms of scale, mass, and height of the neighborhood. He also showed how the more significant structures on McDonough, Cornwall and Islington Streets defined the neighborhood and how tall they were to the eave line. In terms of scale, they were close to his proposed building and were 30' from the eave line to the sidewalk. Mr. McHenry then showed the Modalities page. The first page showed eight very different massing options. The graph showed an elevated view and thumbnail versions on Rockingham, Islington, and Cornwall Streets. Mr. McHenry said the modalities were a valuable tool to show various options because they showed the elevation, general location and footprint, and renditions in context with neighborhood massing buildings.

He guided the Commission through the massing models.

Modality 1: J-shaped like a footprint, open space to be centered on the massing. Three and 3-1/2 stories, under 40', built to current zoning setbacks.

Modality 2: Similar shape with more articulation on the side streets of Cornwall and Rockingham. Bays protruding out and recesses between the building masses to break it up.

Modality 3: Larger footprint, J shape with a center open space. Articulated on the elevations of Cornwall and Rockingham Streets where residential-scale bays protrude out.

Modality 4: Old Port Traders Building version where the larger massing is pushed along Islington Street and an alley way between the two building masses letting light in. Shifts the entries to the side streets and stays closer along Islington Street. Dormer-shaped version above

the 2-story height helps bring the eave line down, with continuous front elevation along Islington Street.

Modality 5: Donut shaped with courtyard scheme open at the center with main entries on side streets.

Modality 6: U-shaped building similar to # 5 with an important portico feature. Islington Street 1st floor allows for deep expression shadow line to help lift up the building mass and make it look lighter. Open space to the center and a bay shape on the corner facing Islington Street.

Modality 7: Asymmetrical U shape. Buildings are not identical left and right. Has a center courtyard. Side streets along Cornwall and Rockingham show residential bays and stepping to the roof line. Scale is broken down by 2-story and 3-story eave lines.

Modality 8: Center axial open space, asymmetrical. Buildings' footprint don't mirror images of one another but is an attempt to break down the massing into four distinct shapes to make it close to the residential scale of the neighbors. Same criteria applies, no more than 40' and respects the zoning setbacks.

Vice-Chair Kozak thanked Mr. McHenry and said it was the most complete massing study she had seen and represented the options and thought process very well.

Ms. Ruedig was still concerned that the massing and the rhythm were not contextual to the rest of Islington Street and felt that the little blockings were a little too busy for the street. Modalities #1 and #2 had faceted angles not seen anywhere else. She also hoped there would be other entries because the main entrance to the building plus the traffic would take away from the street presence on Islington Street.

Mr. Gladhill said Modality #8 looked like you could see through the buildings and they were not connected. He felt it was a good aspect and liked the separation. He thought the massing issue needed more work. Mr. Katz liked #8 also because the spacing deviated from the monolithic aspect and avoided the large building impression. He thought the massing was great.

Mr. Rawling said #8 had interesting aspects to it. He liked the sightlines across the street and the setbacks, but thought the building made a shift in the rhythm of the streetscape. The scale melded well with the street elevation, and they built up to the park across the street. He saw some discrepancies in how the building was portrayed in some places, especially wider setbacks. On the Site Plan, the building came out closer to the street edge, so it did not seem to match the massing study. Mr. McHenry said the rhythm of the street did not denote symmetry and had a great deal of variation, which was an outstanding characteristic of Islington Street. Mr. Rawling said it was important that the building setbacks meet the street setbacks, which had porches and bays. Mr. Green said they did respond to the variations of setbacks on Islington Street.

Vice-Chair Kozak said the main issue they were focusing on was whether certain modalities stood out more than others as better options.

Mr. Wyckoff thanked the team for including four or five modalities that showed the Commission what they did not want, such as bringing the building out to the sidewalk. He thought #8 made the most sense. Like the modalities that had the center courtyard facing Islington Street, it had the angled corner on it but also pointed toward the downtown area in a welcoming way. He liked #8 but agreed that it should not come out to the edge of the sidewalk. He said the basic design was good and the separation between the buildings had value.

Vice-Chair Kozak said she was not crazy about #8. The footprint was fine, but the massing was rigid and symmetric. She liked Modalities #6 and #7, even with the angle on #6. A significant feature on Islington Street was all the front stoops flanked by planting beds. Modality #6 had the formal steps in the entry at the angled corner that related to the park across the street. She also liked the center courtyard in the back but wasn't sure it had to go completely through to the back because the shadow line would make it look like two different buildings. She said the columns and the brackets were a cool design but did not tie in to the street. She liked the formality of Modality #7, with the asymmetrical projecting bays, the nice rhythm, and the scaling that matched the end gable houses.

Ms. Ruedig agreed about the formality on Islington Street. There was a rhythm but plenty of variation, and all the buildings had a strong symmetry that the proposed building should tie into. She asked why the roof line information had been left out. Mr. Green said they were looking at projections from floor to floor and would address roof lines as the next level.

Mr. Rawling said that Modality #7 best brought in the scale of the neighboring houses on Cornwall and Rockingham Streets and re-established some of the street rhythm on the side streets.

Mr. McHenry said he got some good comments and could discuss with his client the options that would be best to pursue. He saw a preference for Modalities #6, #7, or and #8. They were still in the process of developing submittals for work sessions and if they got pushed to the 3rd session of the month, which was the following week, they had little time to develop their plans. He asked if it was possible to submit a week before the meeting. Mr. Cracknell said they could stick with one week from the agenda and give other people an extra week for their submittals. When there were only a few days to meet the deadline, it made sense to have an additional week, which would be two weeks in advance of the next meeting.

*Ms. Ruedig made a motion to **continue** the application to the September 4, 2013 meeting. Mr. Wyckoff seconded the motion, and it **passed** unanimously with all in favor.*

J. Work Session requested by **143 Daniel Street, LLC, owner**, for property located at **143 Daniel Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (add second story to gymnasium section, construct multi-story building at rear of lot). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 105 as Lot 19 and lies within Central Business B, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts. *(This item was continued at the July 17, 2013 meeting.)*

Ms. Ruedig recused herself.

Carla Goodknight of CJ Architects, and owner Steve Wilson presented to the Commission. Ms. Goodknight said she had a lot of additional information. They had encountered the same structural and retail street access obstacles on Option 1 as previously discussed but they looked at it again through the interface with the Army Navy Building. She said windows were moved down from the original location. Mr. Wilson said they did a façade renovation that brought the retail down closer to grade. He reviewed the architectural plans with the structural engineer, who said any further penetrations to the building including the new entrance represented significant problems with retaining the façade. One problem was the structure's composition of un-reinforced vertical masonry, but there were other important considerations such as the mass of the block, the sharpness of the corner coming out to the curbing, and the narrow sidewalk. The rendering in the package included very negative information from subsequent meetings with engineers and architects.

Mr. Gladhill got the impression that Mr. Wilson meant they should just leave the building as a gymnasium because of its structural integrity and design. Mr. Wilson said it was a single-purpose building that could not be remade into a gymnasium because the roof and floors did not meet code.

Vice-Chair Kozak said that the majority of the historic buildings downtown had un-reinforced masonry. Whenever someone changed walls and doors to more than 50% of the building, they had to do seismic reinforcement which was usually more expensive than building a new building. By using that as a precedent, it would allow the demolition of most of downtown. It was not unique to the building and applied to any brick building's renovation. Mr. Wilson said it was built as a gymnasium and therefore had a 25' high wall with no intermediate structure, so it was unique in that regard. There was a change in use. It was designed as a utilitarian gymnasium and the reasons to not adapt it were the structural considerations but also the separation of the block into separate buildings. The retained continuity, pedestrian alleys and connection between Chapel and Daniel Streets and freeing up the Army Navy Building were important. Mr. Wyckoff said if Mr. Wilson was trying to save the gymnasium with those two designs, anyone who wanted to see the gymnasium retained would not be happy. No matter what Mr. Wilson was trying to accomplish, it wouldn't work. He suggested moving on and said there was no reason to discuss it.

Ms. Goodknight started with Page 1 of the presentation and said their intention was to keep the building back from the property line and more in line with the existing Army Navy Building. There was a significant amount of area in front of the building and they still had site issues in getting a parking ramp. The elevated portion illustrated that it was all contained on the property and created some separation from the storefront areas to the sidewalk. The baseline documentation that had been done prior to the building sale addressed what was important to the building and what they should keep. The roof was deteriorating, and the exterior masonry was deteriorating from the water coming off the internal gutters and downspouts. Some of the items were just maintenance items and others were crossover items. The front elevation dormer windows were not original sashes. The brick façade ones were original and would be restored. The basement windows were a mix of different applications and would need to be replaced with iron grating or a storm application of some sort. She showed a picture of the front door in the

new front entry and said there were original features that still remained. The interior vestibule door was well preserved, and they would recreate it in the final application on the exterior using the same proportions and taking cues from the raised paneling of the exterior. Mr. Rawling mentioned The Rosa Restaurant and how they put in the exterior solid doors but were now putting in glass panels, which he thought would be better so people would not push the door onto someone else. Mr. Wilson said there would be six apartment dwellers and their visitors accessing the door, and it would also bring in natural light.

Mr. Wyckoff said most of the work could be done with a building permit. Mr. Wilson said they had already submitted the permit but wanted to discuss things with the Commission. They didn't want to vary from the baseline application and run the risk of not getting approval. Ms. Goodknight said they did some demolition work to see how the wall would separate. Mr. Wilson said the window was gone, but the brickwork seemed to be preserved and they might get an opening that would allow a window that matched the old window. Ms. Goodknight said she would do a replacement sash and proposed a storm screen application. One of the Commissioners asked about dormer replacement sashes. Mr. Wilson said the old window frame and trim were still there and they removed the old sash and left the mechanism for the original windows. The current window was probably a Rivco 1972 single-pane window with low integrity. They would replace it with a higher quality sash but would preserve the trim on the inside and outside. The inside trim was uncommon and they would submit a cottage-style window with the same pattern shown on the original photos.

Mr. Wilson talked more about windows on the upper and lower portions of the building. The lower portion had divided light windows and glass block windows. There were a variety of applications, but the true divided light with diamond grills would remain. The diffused light that came through the glass block windows was pleasant, and the windows could be cleaned and would not need wire screens. He suggested that the Commission look at the windows and give him feedback.

Ms. Goodknight spoke about Page 2 of the presentation and told the Commission that the circular windows in the gables were missing so they would recreate them and do a fixed unit. On the east elevation, they would replace a door that opened to the gymnasium roof. The west elevation had similar concerns as the front elevation. The top floor windows had partial replacements, and the 2nd floor windows were restored but needed storms and screens.

Moving on to Page 3, Ms. Goodknight said that the window conditions were documented and the fire escape would be removed. Mr. Wilson added that there were missing Palladium windows and he would look into it. Vice-Chair Kozak said it was careful restoration and she was excited that they were restoring the windows and replicating other parts. Ms. Goodknight said they had a few options on Chapel Street and showed a proposed mass for the Chapel Street structure with 1st floor porches and an enclosed glassed-in area on the 2nd floor, and dormers across the roof, a 2-1/2 story with a brick foundation, and stairs going up. She showed a side view of how vehicles would get into the buildings, a garage on the Chapel Street structure and a garage in the subterranean level entering the new area.

Ms. Goodknight said they broke the massing down into two smaller volumes and showed a picture of a house that used to be in the exact spot. They were going to use it as inspiration because it showed beautiful detailing, a recessed entryway, and the balcony application broke the mass up. She showed an alternative roof structure on the Chapel Street side and initial massing, front porches, balconies breaking the mass, and stairway. Mr. Gladhill noted that it was different than what was submitted to the Planning Board a while back and asked why. Mr. Wilson said it was a new architectural view because he was unhappy with the other one. He liked the varied stairs in the front and the private entry to the units. The footprint was the same. They had not gone to the Planning Board for an approval. He thought the changes were positive.

Mr. Wilson showed Sheets 2a and 1b as the fairest views and asked the Commission which one they preferred. Mr. Katz liked 2a. Mr. Gladhill did not like the projecting bays. Mr. Rawling said he didn't like the dormer widths on 1a because the window seemed too wide for the building, but the porch component gave an interesting vernacular so he preferred the porch on 1a.

Mr. Wilson thought the projections were identical on the two plans. The real difference was the four small dormers and the two larger dormers with a different roof line in the front. He liked the porch and the room above it because it buried the stairs and was unique. He liked the roof line continuity on 2a and preferred 2a in general. Mr. Wyckoff liked 2a.

Vice-Chair Kozak said they hit the mark with their scale and massing. She liked the similar sizes and proportions of the major elements. The grand stair to the street was successful. Flanking porches could work. She didn't care for the stacked porch because it was on the front and not on the back and made the front door secondary to it. The front door should be formal and match the rest of the buildings in the neighborhood. She said cornices were built back then over the front door on the eave side to prevent water from going downstairs, which they would have to deal with because they had just a flat wall. The other issue was the side shutters that she thought should be used for real and not just a style, and there should be no shutters on double and triple windows. Mr. Wilson said on 2a, two windows were melded together and one was separate. If they were all separated, it would improve the symmetry to the side of the building. There was also a big water problem for the two bigger dormers, and the stairs had to be covered. There was no place to put the downspout. He said they would come up with solutions.

Ms. Goodknight then discussed their further development of the original submission and said they had done some widening for additional access to develop the exterior space. They were reviewing plaza development and bringing it to the next level. They introduced the balcony form into the original window form and had addressed proposed dormers, and they had gotten rid of the double dormer over the centerpiece.

She moved on to Page 4, which showed the Wright Avenue view of the building and said they created an entrance piece and had wrapped around the building carrying a lot of the same elements. The round window on the elevation was eliminated and they limited the form a bit on the doorways and the new entrance to the side retail space. Mr. Wyckoff said she went to a lot of trouble with the multi-pane windows, but the French doors were so plain that they stuck out. He felt she had to continue the element from the windows, but it might be very busy on the front view due to the three windows. Ms. Goodknight said they might do a grill treatment to tie it

together but not fill the entire glass, given the view in that area. Mr. Wyckoff added that his home had multi-pane windows that did not obscure the view.

Vice-Chair Kozak asked Ms. Goodknight if she had drawings that showed the height dimensions or elevations of the surrounding buildings. Ms. Goodknight said they had been showing it in context on Daniel Street and would show it soon with the proposed Wright Avenue Building. Vice-Chair Kozak said it would be helpful to see images of the other side of Daniel Street in a 360-degree context.

Mr. Rawling found the top band cutting through the center line of the 3rd floor windows disconcerting and said he wondered what it would look like brought down to the sill line. He asked why the band was there. Ms. Goodknight said it was meant to be a scaling element carried through from the Connie Bean Building. Mr. Wyckoff said he had the same objection to the wide line because it made the building look too busy.

Mr. Rawling said that the storefront glass looked too expansive on the new version of the building. The early studies for the Connie Bean Building showed elegance at the street level. The other versions did not have that and he wondered if they could tuck it back or break it up a little. It reminded him of a garage door in-filled with storefront material. The door with the transom and the half round over it was not resolved yet, and he thought the lines could be brought down. Mr. Wyckoff said if Chairman Almeida were present, he would remind them that the Wright Avenue Building was a landmark building. He thought Palladium windows should replace the horizontal storefront windows to bring out the front of the building.

Mr. Gladhill said if they were discussing an empty lot, he would love to talk about the building; however, they had not discussed the demolition of the gymnasium, and if it were decided that the gymnasium would be demolished, he would want in its place a building that paid homage to the gymnasium. He said he could not wait to get public opinion because it was a building with a lot of history in Portsmouth. Ms. Goodknight said one of the biggest detriments with the gymnasium other than the floor elevation being 5' above street level was that the windows could not be seen in or out of. They could achieve more of the vertical look but still needed the glass area for pedestrians and tenants. Mr. Gladhill said if there were a straw vote with full membership that went against him, then he would have to give more input, but until then, he felt that he would be leading them on. Mr. Wilson told Mr. Gladhill that if he looked at Option 3, he would see two extremes. The option Mr. Gladhill was concerned about did not work because the windows were not evenly spaced, but the other option could not have more glass. The storefront could look like separate windows by having 18" of masonry between them, but from the inside continuous windows would not look good. He used Kmart and Trader Joe's as examples of continuous windows and said they did not need continuous windows for their type of retail scale. He himself did not care for the 30' band of glass and thought they should be separated. Mr. Katz said he had not considered that aspect and thought the window resolution could satisfy a number of situations on historical and emotional levels. Ms. Goodknight and Mr. Wilson talked more about windows, doors, and the loss of the arch and said they would work on it and bring snapshots to the next meeting.

Vice-Chair Kozak said she remained very opposed to demolishing the gymnasium for reasons that she previously stated and she referenced the Zoning Ordinance because the existing structure contributed, had a history, and needed to be preserved. The arched window was one of the iconic features of the addition, and to replace that with 3 stories of punched windows and a storefront would not work. Mr. Katz felt that one could say the original gymnasium was incompatible with the neighborhood or out of character because of its monumentality. Mr. Wilson said the situation had positive and negative benefits, but he did not like the vision of a monument. He liked the windows, brickwork, and granite, but he hated the building's squareness and felt it was utilitarian, not monumental. He wanted to build a façade that was as significant but looked appropriate. When the gymnasium was built, the developers made it 28' and used a steel truss and built it like a solid government building. He thought the tall windows were unique but did not see how they were special, and said he would do more studies on penetrations.

Mr. Wyckoff asked if he could still use the windows if the gymnasium were demolished. Mr. Wilson said he would check into it and get back to him. The windows were almost 12' tall and he would have to do deck-to-deck elevations. Vice-Chair Kozak said he could use spandrel and there were ways he could have floors behind the windows and still have the façade read a larger window.

Mr. Wyckoff said the Commission was still troubled with massing and demolition. When the time came to design the Palladium windows, he hoped they would not make it one window with just a Palladium grid because it would seem fake. The whole window could be divided lights with a Palladium top, but should not be storefront windows with the Palladium item stuck on top. It had to be a separation between the storefront glass and the Palladium glass, even a structural separation of 3" so it looked like the window was placed in there separately.

*Mr. Gladhill made the motion to **continue** the application to the September 4, 2013 meeting. Mr. Rawling seconded the motion. It **passed** unanimously, with all in favor.*

K. Work Session requested by **Thirty Maplewood, LLC, owner**, for property located at **30 Maplewood Avenue**, wherein permission was requested to allow a new free standing structure (construct new, mixed use, four story structure) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 125 as Lot 2 and lies within Central Business B, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

Jennifer Ramsey of Somma Studios presented on behalf of the applicant and told the Commission she was there mainly to talk about the building's height. She had met with the Board about three years before and had gone through five favorable work sessions, and most of the issues at that time were landscaping issues. The building did not comply with the current height ordinance, and she also had questions about how a variance would work or which Board would grant it because she had heard that the HDC could not grant the variance. Vice-Chair Kozak said the HDC could still voice an opinion about how they felt about the height of any building regardless of what was happening with the other Boards.

Ms. Ramsey said her client asked her to present the drawings from 2011, which was why it did not represent Phase 1 but instead were working drawings of a series of building elevations. The idea at the time was to have the building jog in and out along the elevation to create prominent brick structures and make it look like individual buildings. They were trying to maintain the setbacks with the existing building on the lot and had a lot of public space and green space and were 53' back from the intersection, so the landscaping had been important. They were set back 12' from the site line on Deer Street and 10' from the VFW Building. A few Commissioners previously had height concerns because the VFW Building was a 1-story building, but they had been unanimous that the height was appealing. Mr. Katz noted that the building across the street would be 60' tall. Ms. Ramsey said her building would still be shorter.

Mr. Katz said if they still had the authority that they used to have, they would need to see how the height would enhance the area and significantly contribute to the City's welfare. Vice-Chair Kozak said she would like to see the building in context of what was around it. What struck her was that the penthouse did not seem to belong on the building, and even though it was set back 16' from the street, it would be very visible. Penthouses had become big issues on every project.

Ms. Ramsey said she was trying to decide if the additional height with the penthouse was worth pursuing.

Mr. Rawling said it would be useful to show the site lines and how the setbacks worked from the opposite side of the street. They could also look at it as a transitional building, with medium and large buildings around it.

Mr. Wyckoff said he was probably one of the only people on the different Boards who remembered that they had to get variances to construct the 1-story building on the corner because it was only one story high. At the time, any building in downtown Portsmouth had to be at least two stories. As a result, they got a variance to build the corner building and now they had to use it as context, which he found disturbing. So, if Ms. Ramsey wanted to have a successful project in today's world, he suggested that she consider taking off a floor and putting something that resembled a sloped roof.

Ms. Ruedig said she first thought that a 5-story building was much too tall, but with the recent zoning changes, the City did not want to do another Portwalk building for a while. Ms. Ramsey's building was a transitional building, and a 5-story building on that tiny corner lot would seem like a skyscraper or a tower. It would make Maplewood even more of a corridor, and she suggested that the building have at least one story removed and maybe even three. Mr. Gladhill commented that they were also moving away from flat roofs. Ms. Ruedig said the building did not have a lot of context around it but the style was more modern, and doing a mansard roof or brackets would not give it a historic concept.

Ms. Ramsey said she was drawing from the details approved on the adjacent building during Phase 1, so it was more contemporary. The mansard was not true mansard, and the skylight windows were well received, so they took those traditional details and spun them into a modern look. Their lot was an entire block and wrapped around the VFK Building. They previously had a C-shaped building that they eliminated to put in a parking lot. She said the height would comply with the new ordinance, and if the penthouse were approved, they could proceed. Mr.

Rawling thought they had pretty much agreed to get rid of the penthouse and make the mansard roof a sloped roof. He could see a series of townhouses or three stories.

Mr. Gladhill asked if there would be underground parking. Ms. Ramsey said it was at grade parking at the back of the lot, with access from a side street. The City had warned her that underground parking would not be allowed.

Mr. Katz suggested that she present the building as a positive contribution to the context, quality, and historic character of the neighboring properties and the District when she met with the ZBA, along with the supporting documentation.

Ms. Ramsey felt that they could make it work if they didn't give such generous setbacks and made the building's footprint larger. She also thought it could work without the penthouse.

*Mr. Rawling made the motion to **continue** the application to the September 4, 2013 meeting. Mr. Gladhill seconded the motion. It **passed** unanimously with all in favor.*

Design Guidelines

Vice-Chair Kozak told the Commission that Mr. Rawling had a packet of design guidelines that he wanted to give to them. She asked them to take it home and review it so they could discuss it in a more formal session.

Mr. Rawling said he put different guidelines together that addressed relevant issues and was using it himself to critique projects. He thought they could share it and use it as a topic of discussion. He found some segments that had specific wording that made a difference. The guidelines also had excerpts of guidelines from different cities and towns such as Leesburg, VA, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., and miscellaneous urban planning books. He thought it might help in getting projects closer to the approval stage at the beginning.

Mr. Wyckoff asked if it included Mr. Almeida's submission of New Orleans guidelines. Mr. Rawling said the New Orleans ones were written by the same person who did the Philadelphia one. A particular piece that he found very convincing was a statement that spoke of the differentiation of compatibility. It was a design concept that said construction should differentiate itself and when consistently applied, would lead to the gradual erosion of the historic character's inevitable consequence of the preservation effort itself and was an unacceptable contradiction of contemporary preservation practice.

Mr. Wyckoff said all the buildings presented to them now, compared to 150 years ago, were residential, condominiums, or hotels, and they were built in similar styles because the floors were continual due to elevator banks. In the past, there was more variety of buildings because people would build a multi-floor department store or a church. Now everything was similar, and that was part of the problem.

Mr. Rawling asked the members to review the guidelines so they could discuss them more at a future meeting.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

At 10:10 p.m., it was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Joann Breault
Acting HDC Recording Secretary

These minutes were approved at the Historic District Commission meeting on March 12, 2014.