

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

**EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**7:00 p.m.**

**August 13, 2014  
reconvened from August 6, 2014**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Joseph Almeida; Vice Chairman Tracy Kozak;  
Members John Wyckoff, George Melchior, Dan Rawling; City  
Council Representative Esther Kennedy; Planning Board  
Representative William Gladhill; Alternate Regan Ruedig

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:**

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

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**I. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS**

A. Clarification of Certificate of Approval for 112 Mechanic Street (granted August 6, 2014)

Mr. Melchior recused himself from the vote.

Mr. Cracknell stated that the petition for 112 Mechanic Street was placed under Administrative Approval and that it was a clarification for the HDC's review. The petitioner had clearly stated that the windows were a replacement in kind to match the original wood windows. The petition was not on the Consent Agenda because the new windows were composite Fibrex windows and not identical, and that was why the petition had been scheduled for a public hearing. Mr. Wyckoff noted that the existing windows were 30-year-old windows and not original, so it should be easy for the HDC to approve the Andersen windows. Mr. Cracknell said that none of the Commissioners had noted that the application had composite windows on it, and the petitioner was mistaken and thought the windows were replacement in kind when they were not. Chairman Almeida noted that the specifications were the same but it was just the material that was different. Councilor Kennedy felt that the petition needed to come forward again. Mr. Wyckoff was willing to clarify the approval to include the Andersen 400 Series window. Mr. Gladhill was concerned with the issue from a procedural standpoint, stating that there had been a public hearing and it was understood that wood windows would be installed.

Ms. Michelle Duval, the other owner of 112 Mechanic Street, approached the podium and stated that she had been unable to attend the previous meeting due to illness and that her partner had not known much about windows and thought they were wood, even though the application stated that they were composite. She asked why it would supersede what was in writing. Chairman Almeida replied that two stipulations were made, one of which was that the two wood windows would be replaced in kind, and he added that it was not uncommon for clarification to be made at

the podium. Ms. Duval's partner had repeated the fact that the windows would be replaced exactly in kind several times. Mr. Cracknell stated that no member of the public had objected to the petition and the application had been submitted and posted on line that the windows would be composite. He said that the Commission could make a clarification to the Certificate of Approval. Because it fell under an administrative approval, the petition would not require a new hearing unless the Commission decided that it warranted a modification. The change was relatively minor, so the Commission had the procedural latitude to clarify the application.

## **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

*Mr. Wyckoff moved to **grant** the modification of the application for an administrative approval and that the windows be Andersen 400 Series as submitted. Vice-Chair Kozak seconded the motion.*

Mr. Wyckoff stated that Ms. Duval's partner had not known much about window and the Commission may have confused her by asking if they were the same windows. He understood that it was a natural mistake, and it had been advertised as Andersen composite windows, so the clarification made sense. Mr. Gladhill was concerned more about the procedural aspect because he felt that it could set a precedent. Mr. Cracknell stated that an administrative approval would not be implemented unless it was approved. Any decisions made by him came back to the Commission. Councilor Kennedy disagreed.

*The motion **passed** by a vote of 6-1 with Councilor Kennedy voting in opposition.*

## **II. OLD BUSINESS (PUBLIC HEARINGS)**

11. Petition of **Benedict McGuinn Revocable Trust, owner**, for property located at **17 Gardner 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 14 and lies within the General Residence B and Historic Districts. *(This item was postponed at the August 6, 2014 meeting to the August 13, 2014 meeting.)*

### **SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

Mr. Jack Kane was present to speak to the application. He stated that the product was more in line with what the Commission had requested and it was an all-wood window.

Mr. Wyckoff noted that the liner was beige instead of white but thought it would work. Chairman Almeida thought that the replacement window was ideal for the Historic District. Councilor Kennedy clarified for the public that the applicant was removing the aluminum window and replacing it with wood. Mr. Kane stated that it was a different window that was all wood, including the exterior muntin bars, whereas the previous window was aluminum.

### **SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION**

There was no one to speak to the petition, so Chairman Almeida closed the public hearing.

## **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

*Councilor Kennedy moved to **grant** a Certificate of Approval for the application as presented with the following stipulation:*

- 1) That the Green Mountain window as presented shall be used.*
- 2) That no screens shall be used.*

*Mr. Wyckoff seconded the motion.*

Mr. Wyckoff felt that the application fit in with the Historic District, taking into account the structure's age. Chairman Almeida stated that it was not a full window replacement, thereby alleviating the Commission's typical concerns about glass. He hoped to see similar applications because it would be a fast approval for anyone wanting to replace windows. Mr. Rawling agreed and hoped that the Commission saw it as a model for future window replacements.

*The motion **passed** unanimously with all in favor, 7-0.*

2. Petition of **Arthur L. and Deborah C. McManus, owners**, for property located at **115 South Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (construct first floor addition with deck and pergola) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 110 as Lot 10 and lies within General Residence B and Historic Districts. *(This item was postponed at the August 6, 2014 meeting to the August 13, 2014 meeting.)*

## **SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

The owner Mr. Arthur McManus was present to speak to the application. He said that, because the drawings had not been clear enough, he separated the permanent structure from some of the non-permanent structure. He pointed out the notch on the structure, which was five feet deeper than before, and said he was trying to match it to the other side of the house. He showed various views of the house and said that the trim work and roof were identical to the other side. He showed how the 5-foot bump-out would look with the seven-inch slider and the pergola and deck removed. He noted that on the original application, the pergola and deck were in place, with stairs coming down to the patio and columns supporting the pergola. The rails would match the front of the house and the lattice work would match existing. There would be a fenced-in location for the air conditioning unit. He also pointed out the bulkhead and the new foundation.

Councilor Kennedy asked for clarification about the windows. Mr. McManus stated that it would be an Andersen 7-foot slider with a 1-1/2-foot wood transom on top. Mr. Wyckoff cautioned that the structure had a good foundation, but to get the floor height the same meant lowering the foundation. He told Mr. McManus to ensure that his framer knew about notching the floor joints into the sill. Mr. Rawling asked what the pergola material was. Mr. McManus

said it was a composite fiberglass. Mr. Rawling asked what the color of the decking material would be, noting that the photos of the house seemed to have a darker weathered wood. Mr. McManus said that the front deck was stained to match throughout, and the color was a bit lighter than the color in the photo. Chairman Almeida thanked him for matching so many of the house's details and stated that it was a very straightforward application.

### **SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION**

There was no one to speak to the petition, so Chairman Almeida closed the public hearing.

### **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

*Mr. Wyckoff moved to **grant** a Certificate of Approval for the application as presented. Councilor Kennedy seconded the motion.*

Mr. Wyckoff stated that the applicant had done a good job of matching the existing on the house. The pergola was a nice touch. The changes were consistent with the special and defining character of the surrounding properties, and the relationship of the architectural value of the existing structure was well documented, so it was compatible with the area.

*The motion **passed** unanimously with all in favor, 7-0.*

### **III. WORK SESSIONS**

Chairman Almeida acknowledged the receipt of letters from the Colonial Dames, Mr. Carl Hyatt, Mr. Greg Whalen, Ms. Clare Kittredge, Mr. Jerry Zelin, Ms. Karina Quintans, Ms. Carol Clark, Mr. Tom Waterman, Mr. James Beal, Mr. Chris Ostrom, Ms. Catherine Jones, and Ms. Kerry Vautrot.

Mr. Wyckoff wanted to discuss a matter of procedure from a previous meeting and stated that, when the Building Inspection Department required that a change be made to a development (especially a large project like Portwalk) that had already been approved by the HDC, they should notify the Commission or Mr. Cracknell via a written letter stating that they had made a change on an approved project so that the HDC was aware of it. Mr. Cracknell thought it was a great idea and said that the two new hires in the Inspection Department were taking a sensitive approach to all new approvals, trying to improve the quality assurance of plans in respect to permits, land use requirements, and so on. When inspections were made concerning the skin of the building and the rough openings that were established on the windows and doors, the HDC called for a framing inspection. At that point, extra care should be taken by the Building Inspection Department to check everything before it got to the points of no return. Mr. Cracknell said that he would convey Mr. Wyckoff's concerns to the Building Department.

A. 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 existing structures (demolish existing buildings, construct two multi-family structures) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 144 as Lot 8 and lies within Central Business B and Historic Districts. (*This item was postponed at the July 16, 2014 meeting to August 13, 2014 meeting.*)

The architect Ms. Wendy Welton, assistant Rachel Jones, and Mr. Michael Green were present to speak to the application. Ms. Welton stated that she had brought some new views and also that they were continuing to develop the articulation pieces. Mr. Green stated that the project had come down to three units from 13 or 14, and they had listened to people's concerns about continuing the residential quality of the neighborhood. They wanted to do a 2014 rendition instead of a piece-by-piece reconstruction or identical reproduction. They were willing to be flexible but wanted an appropriate style. They had the neighbors' support and were at the point where they needed to make it work or walk away. According to recent news articles, there was not a lot of love for the brownstone, which was normally seen in row houses, and it was not appropriate for the location. They did not have a strict gambrel or Federal rule, so there was a lot of flexibility.

Ms. Welton showed the Commission a new overview, saying that the Frank Jones Building was three feet too short and the context of the overview of the new buildings was more accurate. One of the differences from the prior design was that the building had looked much smaller before, and she realized that the gap between the buildings was much larger than what was on the site plan, so it was now shown accurately. There was 28 feet from the back to the front, and the feedback from the Commission would indicate if they should begin an instrument survey. In the previous design, the buildings in the back were three feet from the property line and she did not want to be that close to the abutters, so they reduced the building from 48 inches to 32 inches so that the buildings were brought back to the full 10 feet from the property line. The New Englander sat on the property line. Another change in one building was the A dormers. She was asked to look at the proportions of the gambrels because if a building was 46 feet deep, it posed a struggle for the gambrel because of the steep joint and height limits. Another change was the Cornwall Street structure. Originally, it was three units in one building, but she realized that they needed a 24-foot car backing space. Mr. Green had suggested that it become a single side load so that each unit had a place for their car. Consequently, the end unit was able to have full living quarters on the first floor and the building was stepped back from the back and the front.

The building on Rockingham Street, which was the site of the existing New Englander, was a triple instead of a quad, making the building have more hierarchy. A potential redesign could also be the group of three on the other street. It was still three units but had a center focus and side wings. If the same concept was applied to the other building, the windows would have to be casements. Ms. Welton showed the Islington Street buildings and stated that she went overboard on the windows and might revisit the overall window placement. She was exploring the same kind of hip roof that the Frank Jones Building had and also a water table separating the upper story because the bedrooms did not need as many windows. She recommended that a mansard be done to the brownstone building because it was three stories and the neighbors were concerned about height. They also stepped it back two inches. Another reason for replacing a certain building was from the community feedback and the fact that her client didn't like the brick row house. When she had examined Islington Street, she didn't see a lot of brick buildings

like there were in the downtown area. There was a break coming up Islington Street, with a lot of wood siding, bit corner boards, big trim, high third floors, tall windows, and no shutters.

Mr. Gladhill asked if he would see the cars in the garage through the windows and was told that he would. Chairman Almeida asked if the applicant wanted to hide the parking, and Mr. Green said they had eliminated the garages on the roadway but they needed garages. Ms. Welton suggested frosting the windows. Mr. Wyckoff asked if the back windows on the Islington Street and Cornwall building were for a garage. Ms. Welton said they were on the side elevations and that the back of the building was 28 feet from the other building.

Vice-Chair Kozak thought the applicant was on target with the massing and that the footprint was in keeping with the neighborhood. There was not a broad context view of the street rhythm, so the Commission would need it. The height was sympathetic to its surroundings, but she wanted to see more global modeling. Additionally, the site plans did not show the park, which was very important to the project because it was a formal park with a heavy presence. She hoped that the corner building across the park would express the park's grandeur. Ms. Welton replied that it was the reason she put the mansard in that location. Vice-Chair Kozak thought it could be appropriate because the mansard was typical of the area. However, she felt that the three asymmetrical doorways on the front were atypical because most of the buildings on Islington Street were single-family homes with a prominent front door and stoop. The gable and hip house also had multiple doorways, and she thought the entries should be a bit grander. A lot of the houses were businesses and there was a sense of a commercial street which the multiple little doorways on the front of the project's buildings might depart from. Ms. Welton agreed that it needed to be treated differently. They had wanted the buildings to look like homes and not duplexes. Mr. Gladhill suggested having an entrance on the front and on the side. Chairman Almeida said it was uncommon to see multiple doors on Islington Street.

Ms. Ruedig agreed with Vice-Chair Kozak's comments and noted that the Commission had discussed simple entrances on Islington Street. She appreciated the use of the gambrel building because it modernized older forms, but she didn't see how a gambrel was contextual because there weren't any gambrels on Islington Street in that area. She advised Ms. Welton to take another look at the predominant styles. Ms. Welton said she had devoted half of her time on the project to the Rockingham piece, especially saving the New Englander and having the dominant form of the building. They had space for an 8-foot wide strip of green. She said that the shape of the gambrel was one that she inherited and worked with to get the better shape. There had to be enough mass to hold three units, plus parking. There were not many gambrels, but the place had evolved. She said they had been limited in the number of building styles and choices. Ms. Ruedig thought that introducing the different historic styles and language would be confusing because McDonough Street had large buildings with a basic gable roof.

Councilor Kennedy thought the front of the building overlooking the park could be a more cultural structure. Because McDonough Street was a blue collar community, she didn't mind a gambrel. The hip house needed to get rid of some windows, and she was worried about its height next to the other buildings. She was not in favor of getting rid of the New Englander. She had hoped that they could incorporate the New Englander into the plan and was willing to look at another structure to save it. She did not want to start a precedent of taking down houses. Mr.

Green replied that the immediate New Englander abutter approved its demolition, as well as two people across the street from it. He said there wasn't a shortage of New Englanders along the street. Mr. Wyckoff said he had no problem with the New Englander's demolition and thought an advantage of it was that the next house down the street was significantly more important, with more intricate details than the plain New Englander. He suggested that the gambrel on the corner have one door on the side. The double doors had identical pediments and two sets of granite stairs were busy. He referred to the buildings next to the park that had double doors and Greek square columns with iron railings. He liked the Rockingham Street second revision. He agreed that the Federal-looking 3-story building had a lot of windows and looked like a schoolhouse. He was happy with the massing and the way the buildings were put together. He asked Ms. Welton to bring more complete drawings for the next meeting and suggested that she have a neighborhood meeting to get more support.

Mr. Rawling asked about the buildings that were set back 10 feet. Ms. Welton said they were set back 10' from the street front and said they would seek a variance on three setbacks because the historical alignment was important. Mr. Rawling told her that she didn't have to go for the variances. Ms. Welton said they would address the issue when the surveyor's report was complete. Mr. Rawling thought that the relationship to the neighborhood context was a starting point for designing the buildings, meaning their texture and scaling. He had said that he would vote for the demolition of the New Englander if it supported an improved context with the neighborhood, but from what he saw, he would not vote for its demolition. He urged that more pattern and scale from the neighborhood be brought forth because he felt that it was being eroded. Islington Street was once an elegant street, but those elements were not expressed in the project's buildings, and there should be some expression relating to the park. The new buildings' greatest asset was its location across from the park. He and Ms. Welton discussed the concept of rhythm. Mr. Rawling said there was a regular bay rhythm on Islington Street. One of the prevailing things was how a certain bay or block lined up all around the block and repeated, and they were starting to shape them into buildings. He felt that the drawings had a lot of repeating bays and asked that they refine it into a distinct look of individual buildings.

Mr. Melchior felt that the massing and scale on Islington Street was close to what was proposed. He could support the demolition of the New Englander, but not for a structure of less quality. Mr. Gladhill thought that the Islington Street side was moving forward nicely, but the buildings on the side streets didn't fit into the neighborhood. For him to approve the demolition, the developer would have to put something of better quality with an architectural feeling.

Chairman Almeida stated that he was in full support of the truly separate buildings rather than one mass and felt that the Islington Street rhythm had come a long way. The limited visibility of the garage doors was a huge improvement. There were still height issues, but not as many as previously. The Commission had worked so hard to push the buildings down on Islington Street that the buildings on the secondary streets had become much larger and would resemble the other new development. He thought that the building was very positive but was not ready to get into the architectural style yet. He liked the different roof planes on the various buildings and the fact that no mechanical systems were seen. He agreed with the comments about the front doors as well as Mr. Rawling's concern about the park across the street. Its formality was important, and he saw formality in the front of the building. He found the first dozen items on the criteria sheet

positive and believed that the project was moving in the right direction. He cautioned that the two back buildings could be overwhelming in size.

**Chairman Almeida opened the public comment.**

Mr. James Beal of 286 Cabot Street stated that he was in favor of the project. He understood the Commission's concerns about New England architecture but noted that gambrels were in use throughout Downtown Portsmouth. He thought that the 10' setback from Islington Street would help reduce the volume in height and that the five-building structure separating Islington Street would allow light and air movement and keep it as a residential area. He commended the developers and architect for the amount of work done with the community of the McDonough Street family-oriented area. He mentioned that traffic would be increased on McDonough Street due to other developments with condominiums.

Mr. Jeff Griffin of 249 Islington Street stated that he liked the multi-building approach and the cars in the back of the building, which was definitely a step in the right direction.

Mr. Chris Ostrom of 40 Cornwall Street stated that he and his wife were the owners of the adjacent property and were in favor of the project. They liked the scale and that it had been reduced to fourteen units and felt that the architecture was pleasing. They did not feel that the Cornwall Street building affected them negatively. He emphasized that the Old Port Trader's building was not architecturally pleasing and had a lot of trash and graffiti due to the 18 months of waffling about the project. The property was not maintained. He hoped compromises could be reached so that the neighborhood could be enhanced with a nice new project.

Mr. Rick Becksted of 1395 Islington Street stated that the scale and size were what the neighborhood was asking for, although the gambrels looked taller. The biggest issue was the New Englander, and he felt that the Commission would set a precedent if it was demolished because it could not be taken back, and other developers would be watching. The lack of chimneys was a big factor because chimneys were part of the City's heritage and they were being phased out. He realized that the City moved with the times, but it needed to keep what it had.

Mr. Joe Caldarola of 170 Dennett Street stated that any progress made was lost with the new plans. He was irritated about the threat of leaving the furniture store as it was as well as the traditional and contemporary debate. He saw it either as a quality distinctive character or not. He agreed that the massing, the internal parking and separate buildings were positive. Goodwin Park could stand a very impressive building across the street, and it would increase the neighborhood character. Presently there was confusion about what was dominant, the Greek or the gambrel. The three doors in the front of the gambrel had no grandeur to them, and the grandeur needed to be increased. The side streets were the most troublesome because the buildings looked confusing and were not reflective of the neighborhood's texture. It was repetitive and out of context. The planner's professional analysis about the breakdown of good and bad that noted lots of things had gone downhill from May; for example, the building's footprint had been positive before but was no longer positive because the Greek building was too tall, there were redundant window patterns and an overall weak relationship to the park.



Ms. Kerry Vautrot, Chair of the Portsmouth Advocates, spoke of a 1991 survey taken in the West End that evaluated the integrity of the New Englander. The building retained its integrity in material and form, and the Advocates felt that the New Englander should remain. No one else rose, so Chairman Almeida closed the public comment.

He asked for feedback from Ms. Welton and Mr. Green. Ms. Welton stated that she heard a lot of good ideas and knew that the two gambrels were a volume issue, so she would see if there was another option. She believed that they received the level of feedback that they had come for,

## **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

*Mr. Wyckoff moved to **continue** the work session to the September meeting. Mr. Gladhill seconded the motion. The motion **passed** unanimously with all in favor, 7-0.*

B. Work Session requested by **Kristina Logan, owner**, for property located at **220 South Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow demolition of an existing structure (demolish existing storage shed, construct 15' x 30' artist studio) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 111 as Lot 1 and lies within Single Residence B and Historic Districts.

The owner Ms. Kristina Logan stated that she was an artist who worked in the basement and the garage but was outgrowing the space. She wanted to have the garage space retain the little building feel. The existing building was 12' x 3' x 18' and would go to 15' x 30' but still look like a garage. The existing door swung open, but the new door would be a slider. She would retain access on the side of the building. She would prefer shingles instead of the existing clapboards in order to have an outbuilding feeling. The corner boards would remain, and she wanted to keep the roofline thin and have bead board under the rafters.

Councilor Kennedy asked if the stairwell would remain and was told that it went to the house. Chairman Almeida noted that there were five windows in a long line on the east elevation that crowded the door and asked Ms. Logan if she could reduce it. Ms. Logan stated that she would talk to her architect. Councilor Kennedy asked what the windows would be made out of. Ms. Logan said they were Marvin clad exterior windows with wood interior and a 5/8 muntin. Vice-Chair Kozak thought that the structure was in scale with surrounding and had a barn look. Councilor Kennedy asked if the barn doors were staying and was told that they were.

Chairman Almeida opened up the public comment session. No one rose, so he closed the public comment session.

## **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

*The Commission voted to continue review of the application at the September meeting.*

C. Work Session requested by **Working Stiff Properties, owner**, for property located at **92 & 94 Pleasant Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (install solar panels on roof of main building and rear addition) as per plans on

file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 107 as Lot 76 and lies within the CD5, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

Mr. Steve Condon of ReVision Energy and Mr. Matt Beebe, the owner of Working Stiff Properties were present to speak to the application. Mr. Condon stated that they wanted to improve the energy performance in the building envelope because it was a huge absorber of energy, and they wanted to increase the comfort level for residents. The building also needed a new boiler, so they wanted to tie it all in by decreasing the current footprint. They had worked on a plan to use the roof for solar energy and to replace the gas boiler with a steam boiler.

Vice-Chair Kozak asked where they proposed to put the panels. Mr. Condon showed a rendering of the building's south side and said they wanted to use a low-profile flush-mounted solar array. They would take the pitch of the roof on the east and west sides and utilize the space. To get more power per square foot, they would use a high-efficiency 300 watt module, which was a thinner module with a black thin frame. The system would be mounted on the roof surface, with nothing standing out of taking on different angles. Mr. Wyckoff asked if the panels had a reflective look. Mr. Condon replied that it was a mono module, so the cells are a flat black, with a more uniform look. Councilor Kennedy asked Mr. Condon to bring in a sample for the next work session, and Mr. Condon agreed. Vice-Chair Kozak asked if the electric array on the larger building faced Pleasant Street and was told that it did. She asked if the array was on the south half of the ridge and along the rakes along the gable, and Mr. Condon stated that it was. Vice-Chair Kozak stated that she preferred that it not be seen on Pleasant Street and asked if it could be on the west slope instead. Mr. Condon replied that they were limited by the ownership of the roof structure. They had chosen the black module out of concern of being in the Historic District and wanted to integrate it into the roof surface. Councilor Kennedy asked which portion of the roof the applicant owned, and Mr. Beebe replied that it was the lower portion.

Mr. Rawling stated that he had a hard time with the system coming down to the drip edge on Pleasant Street because it would be prominent. Mr. Condon said that he could work with different designs to try and lose five modules on the east side and five on the west side. Mr. Rawling asked about the poles, transformers and wire locations. Mr. Condon replied that they had adjusted to all those components but felt that people would notice the building's historic trim and windows and would not be looking at the roof. Mr. Gladhill stated that he would vote favorably if the panels were hidden from public view. Chairman Almeida said the Commission was very supportive of solar panels, but he agreed with Mr. Rawling that bringing the panels down along the drip edge was unfortunate and advised that they be placed on the back side of the building. Vice-Chair Kozak asked if the solar water panels were tubes. Mr. Condon replied that they were black 4' x 7' rectangles and were pitched because there were no wind-loading issues. They would be less visible to public and would also eliminate 80% of the hot water demand. He thought it was a 25-degree pitch on the roof but said that it could be reduced if the Commission wanted it to be. Mr. Rawling asked how tall the solar hot water collectors were, and Mr. Condon told him they were seven feet tall and three inches off the roof surface itself.

Vice-Chair Kozak asked Mr. Condon to bring in dimensions drawings of the panels and the building, including the supporting bracket. Chairman Almeida also mentioned a previous application where the Commission had insisted that what went on and off the structure be black.

Mr. Condon stated that he would bring in photos and details. He mentioned that the hot water collectors were white, but he could get a different color.

Chairman Almeida opened up the public comment session. No one rose, so he closed the public comment session.

## **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

*The Commission recommended a work session/public meeting at the September meeting.*

D. Work Session requested by **30 Maplewood, LLC, owner**, for property located at **30 Maplewood Avenue (46-64 Maplewood Avenue)**, wherein permission was requested to allow a new free standing structure (construct mixed use, 3 ½ to 5 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 the Central Business B, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts. *(This item was continued at the July 16, 2014 meeting to the August 13, 2014 meeting.)*

The architect Ms. Jennifer Ramsey was present to speak to the application and told the Commission that she had a revised mass and model. They had worked on the window sizes and scale and the grill patterns and tried to distinguish each individual building. They were still at the massing level but were starting to develop the back of the building. She spoke about a public walkway and also talked about the space and access between the buildings. They were continuing to develop a series of different buildings wrapping around the site. Pre-TAC work would be done in September. The penthouse was reduced as much as possible, and they also reduced some chimneys and simplified the roof structure. They were still working on simplifying the Federal-style buildings and their pitches. The smaller buildings on Bridge and Hanover Streets would wrap around. There would be deck areas on the upper floors, concealed parking on the first floor, and open public space. The details would be refined. Regarding the massing, angles had been slightly changed out so that more of the Maplewood Avenue elevation showed, along with the fenestrations and so on. Ms. Ramsey showed a photo of the main building and the adjacent buildings and mentioned that they were still working on the chunky eaves of the corner piece, which would involve a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). The buildings on Maplewood Avenue would be three distinct buildings, and because it was beginning to look like the front of a ship, they would perhaps pare back the awning's overhang.

Mr. Wyckoff stated that the elevation was confusing because it made it look like one long building. Ms. Ramsey replied that they could do a Maplewood Avenue intersection elevation and break it out. Vice-Chair Kozak agreed that it would help and asked about the separate corner intersection elevation showing the bull nose.

Chairman Almeida reminded the Commission that they had to grant a CUP and did not want to go too far without determining whether the additional height was warranted. He read aloud a section of the CUP regulations about building height and stated that those were the requirements needed in the applicant's design. He said the CUP was not a given that it would be granted, but that it had to be earned. Councilor Kennedy brought up the fact that some necessary materials may be missing. Ms. Ramsey stated that they were refining the massing models on Deer Street.

In some images, the roof on the lower addition looked like it was missing and the mass looked too large, so they were working on it. A building on Maplewood Avenue would be recessed, and more of a Georgian character would be placed on the Maplewood Avenue side.

Ms. Ramsey brought up the penthouse and showed a photo of a mansard rendering, noting that the center portion could be a modernized version with a metal cap. Chairman Almeida asked where the mansard would be located. Ms. Ramsey told him near the bull nose. They were considering a brick penthouse structure with brick chimneys and possibly removing the ornate eave bands or the cap bands. Vice-Chair Kozak said that it would help to slope the roof back and decrease the mass. She preferred to see the bull nose pitched back and less of a third story. It needed to make that transition due to the smaller buildings around it. She felt that the penthouse was still too tall and too busy, and changing the ornateness would not make a difference.

Ms. Ruedig stated that, from the beginning, she had said that the site would be a huge context, with Portwalk and the small buildings around it. She preferred to move away from the mansard, which was a sort of historical fantasy creation, because nothing around it gave it context. She felt that moving it toward a contemporary translation would be positive. She also agreed that the penthouse was too tall, especially for the transitional area. She advised Ms. Ramsey to keep it simple and a 21<sup>st</sup> Century interpretation. Vice-Chair Kozak suggested that Ms. Ramsey look at photos of a former 3-story brick mansard house on Bridge Street for ideas.

Chairman Almeida stated that he was comfortable with the contemporary interpretation of the roof as shown. He thought the development had a responsibility to begin the transition of stepping down. There was not much opposition to transitioning it down to match the neighborhood, but if it went down too fast, it would exaggerate the present building height. Mr. Wyckoff asked about the Commission's upcoming 3-dimensional tool. Mr. Cracknell told him that they would be able to load it into the model by the next work session.

Mr. Rawling stated that the penthouse was an important transition development, and he had not seen an authentic mansard building with a penthouse. He thought it might give the building more form and definition. Mr. Wyckoff stated that he was happy with the transition of the 24' - wide building on Deer Street but was hesitant about the 2-story square bays because they hovered too close to the sidewalk. The bull nose seemed to stick out, even looking at it from the side, and was a disparate element. He didn't have a problem with the height of the 53' penthouse but was concerned that it would give the project trouble. As far as the transition to the smaller buildings, he suggested that the Commission consider the fact that Gary's Beverage might be a parking garage in the future, so the building's context would dramatically change.

Councilor Kennedy stated that Portwalk was five stories tall and she wouldn't want to see it with a penthouse. She worried about the transition to the VFW and surrounding properties. As for the CUP, she wanted to know about the green space and the architectural designs that would give it integrity because she was concerned about the quality of materials on the structure. She felt that the original plans were smaller in vision, so both sides of the building had to be looked at as to how they would be stepped down. She wasn't in favor of a 5-story building, and the penthouse would make it five stories, mimicking what was across the street. Mr. Gladhill agreed with Mr. Wyckoff that the bays looked awkward. As for the CUP, he would be looking at the quality of the materials. If the mansard roof was kept, he felt that slate would be perfect as an

historic material. Mr. Wyckoff agreed that the quality of the materials had to be exceptional. Mr. Rawling noted that the bays would have a much different appearance if they were columns and pier because the columns would anchor them. Chairman Almeida stated that certain items, such as the round corner, the exaggerated overhang, and the bays, suggested a contemporary building. He was glad to see both contemporary and traditional elements.

**Chairman Almeida opened up the Public Comment session.**

Mr. Rick Becksted of 1395 Islington Street stated that he agreed with Councilor Kennedy about the green space and the transition to the little houses. There was a parameter that had to be considered. He mentioned the project's scale and size and compared it to Portwalk. He thought a 4th-floor penthouse and a CUP wouldn't have to be involved. He urged the Commission to consider what conformed to the area.

No one else rose, so Chairman Almeida closed the Public Comment session.

**DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

*Mr. Gladhill moved that the work session be **continued** to the October meeting. Vice-Chair Kozak seconded the motion. The motion **passed** unanimously with all in favor, 7-0.*

E. Work Session requested by **HarborCorp LLC, owner**, for property located **Deer Street, Russell Street, and Maplewood Avenue** wherein permission is requested to allow a new free standing structure (construct mixed use building to contain hotel, conference center, condominiums, supermarket, and parking) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 125 as Lot 21, Assessor Plan 118 as Lot 28 and Assessor Plan 124 as Lot 12 and lies within the Central Business B, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts. *(This item was postponed at the July 16, 2014 meeting to the August 13, 2014 meeting.)*

*At the applicant's request, Councilor Kennedy moved to **postpone** the application indefinitely due to the need for re-advertising. Mr. Wyckoff seconded the motion. The motion **passed** unanimously with all in favor, 7-0.*

F. Work Session requested by **7 Islington Street, LLC, owner**, for property located at **40 Bridge Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow demolition of an existing structure (demolish building) and allow a new free standing structure (construct three story mixed use building with below grade parking) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 126 as Lot 53 and lies within the CD4, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

*At the applicant's request, Mr. Wyckoff moved to **postpone** the application to the September meeting. Ms. Ruedig seconded the motion. The motion **passed** unanimously with all in favor, 7-0.*

**IV. OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Cracknell showed a demo of the 3-dimensional model, which was a large-scale model of 800 properties in the core areas of the Historic District, 400 of which were textured. He said that Tangram provided an interactive web portal that the public would be able to access, which would give a 360-degree view of all 800 buildings. The Commission would eventually have its own site license and the ability to use the City Engine to access project buildings and assess their volume, scale and massing.

The Design Guidelines RFQ was complete and due on September 22. Mr. Cracknell hoped that the HDC would hold two public meetings, one to take input from interest groups and another to present the findings. He suggested that the Commission look at the Newton guidelines for windows and doors for ideas on handling their window struggles, and he also noted the masonry and stucco repair chapter. Mr. Cracknell said that a meeting would be held on August 22 for inventory discussions with Ms. Virginia Adams from the New Hampshire Historical Preservation, who would explain their full scope so that he could access the gaps of properties that were not surveyed.

A kick-off meeting was scheduled for September 23 to discuss *Character-Based Zoning*, with a Charette scheduled for September 10.

## V. ADJOURNMENT

*At 10:20 p.m., it was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting.*

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Breault  
HDC Recording Secretary

These minutes were approved at the Historic District Commission meeting on Sept. 3, 2014.