

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

EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

6:30 p.m.

**May 6, 2015
to be reconvened on May 13, 2015**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Joseph Almeida; Vice Chairman/Planning Board Representative William Gladhill; City Council Representative Esther Kennedy; Members John Wyckoff, George Melchior, Dan Rawling, Reagan Ruedig; and Alternates Vincent Lombardi, Richard Shea

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

ALSO PRESENT: Nick Cracknell, Principal Planner

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*The Board's action in these matters has been deemed to be quasi-judicial in nature.
If any person believes any member of the Board has a conflict of interest,
that issue should be raised at this point or it will be deemed waived.*

Councilor Kennedy was not present at the beginning of the meeting due to a concurrent meeting but was present for the last petition.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. April 1, 2015

*Mr. Rawling made a motion to **approve** the April 1, 2015 minutes. Mr. Lombardi seconded the motion. The motion **passed** unanimously with all in favor, 7-0.*

II. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

1. 262-264 South Street
2. 86 Pleasant Street
3. 7 Portwalk Place
4. 30 Maplewood Avenue

Items 3 and 4 were addressed first.

*Mr. Melchior made a motion to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for Administrative Approval Items # 3 and #4. Ms. Ruedig seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously with all in favor, 7-0.*

Item #2, 86 Pleasant Street: Mr. Cracknell stated that the City's Electrical Inspector notified him that the condenser was located on the roof of the building and that it had not been approved. Mr. Cracknell said he had the applicant relocate the condenser to the lower roof so that it would be less visible from the window in the Customs House.

*Councilor Kennedy made a motion to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for Administrative Approval Item #2 with the following stipulation:*

1) that the condenser be moved from the upper roof to the lower roof.

*Vice-Chairman Gladhill seconded the motion. The motion **passed** unanimously with all in favor, 7-0.*

Item #1, 262 – 264 South St: Mr. Cracknell stated that some adjustments had been made to 262 South Street, including the basement windows and the lights to the deck. Granite steps were installed without permission. The Land Use Compliance Agent had gone to the site and noted that a lot of changes had occurred, such as brackets added to the gable and minor changes to the bay window panel. The applicant had told him that they did not want to install the gutters and downspouts that they said they would install. The basement windows were also smaller.

Mr. Cracknell suggested postponing the petition to the June 6 meeting so that he could visit the site and see the changes and products used. Chairman Almeida felt that the changes were very minor. Mr. Cracknell said there was no harm in waiting to approve the petition because all the changes had already been done.

*Councilor Kennedy made a motion to **postpone** the application to the June 6 meeting. Vice-Chairman Gladhill seconded the motion.*

*The motion **passed** with 6 in favor and Chairman Almeida opposed, 6-1.*

III. OLD BUSINESS

A. Petition of **North End Properties, LLC, owner, and Deer Street Development Company, Inc., doing business in NH as HarborCorp of Portsmouth, applicant**, for property located on **Russell Street, Deer Street, and Maplewood Avenue**, wherein permission was requested to allow a Conditional Use Permit (construct a multi-story, mixed-use building where the height exceeds the 45' maximum height restriction) 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, Assessor Plan 124 as Lot 12, Assessor Plan 119 as Lot 1-1A, Assessor Plan 119 as Lot 1-1C, and lies within the Central Business B, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Mr. Cracknell stated that the Planning Board was given a referral by the HDC and held its meeting a few weeks prior but decided to continue the application to their May 21 meeting. Since the Planning Board could not submit written documentation back to the HDC until after May 21, he recommended that the HDC continue the application to the June meeting.

*Mr. Lombardi made a motion to **continue** the application to the June meeting. Ms. Ruedig seconded the motion. The motion **passed** unanimously with all in favor, 7-0.*

IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS (CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS)

1. Petition of **Michael R. and Denise Todd, owners**, for property located at **262-264 South Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow an amendment to a previously approved design (install 6' cedar privacy fencing) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 111 as Lot 5 and lies within the Single Residence B and Historic Districts.
2. Petition of **Mark Wentworth Home, owner**, for property located at **346 Pleasant Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow an amendment to a previously approved design (change to style, size, and material of door) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 109 as Lot 10 and lies within the General Residence B and Historic Districts.
3. Petition of **Hanover Apartments, LLC and Portwalk HI, LLC, owners**, for property located at **11 Portwalk Place**, wherein permission was requested to allow a new free standing structure (install mechanical equipment on roof) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 125 as Lot 1 and lies within the CD 5, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.
4. Petition of **Hanover Apartments, LLC and Portwalk HI, LLC, owners**, for property located at **15 Portwalk Place**, wherein permission was requested to allow a new free standing structure (install mechanical equipment on roof, install exhaust louver, install sidewall vent, install fresh air duct) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 125 as Lot 1 and lies within the CD 5, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.
5. Petition of **Worth Development Condominium Association, owner**, and **Gerry Hunter, applicant**, for property located at **121 Congress Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (install wall mounted sign, replace existing canvas awning with new canvas material with signage, install panels on lower half of storefront) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 126 as Lot 6 and lies within the CD 5, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.
6. Petition of **National Society of Colonial Dames, owner**, and **Eport Properties I, LLC, applicant**, for property located at **154 Market Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow a new free standing structure (construct dumpster) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 118 as Lot 8 and lies within the Civic, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

7. Petition of **William T. and Annelise Ellison, owners,** and **Doug LeDuc, applicant,** for property located at **687 Middle Street,** wherein permission was requested to allow demolition of an existing structure (remove existing fencing) and allow a new free standing structure (install new fencing) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 148 as Lot 34 and lies within the General Residence A and Historic Districts.

Chairman Almeida read all the Consent Agenda Items into the record and asked if there was a desire to pull any of them out. Mr. Wyckoff asked if the HDC had had a work session on the Colonial Dames fence enclosure (related to Item #6), and Mr. Cracknell stated that it was an approved application but had expired, therefore the applicant had returned.

There was no public comment.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Ms. Ruedig made a motion to **grant** a Certificate of Approval to all seven Consent Agenda Items. Vice-Chair Gladhill seconded the motion. The motion **passed** unanimously with all in favor, 7-0.*

V. PUBLIC HEARINGS (REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS)

8. Petition of **Michael Brandzel and Helen Long, owners,** for property located at **39 Dearborn Street (also known as 39 Dearborn Lane)** wherein permission was requested to allow demolition of an existing structure (remove various sections of the structure, remove chimney) and allow new construction to an existing structure (construct misc. additions, dormers, decks, and shed) and allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace remaining windows, doors, siding, and trim) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 140 as Lot 3 and lies within the General Residence A and Historic Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

The applicant was not present so Chairman Almeida asked that it be postponed to later in the evening.

*Vice-Chair Gladhill made a motion to **postpone** the application until later in the evening. Mr. Wyckoff seconded the motion. The motion **passed** unanimously with all in favor, 7-0.*

(The applicant arrived after Petition #12).

The architect Mr. Robert Rodier and the owners Mr. Michael Brandzel and Ms. Helen Long were present to speak to the application. Mr. Rodier asked if they could split up the application, stating that they wanted to begin with just the storage shed that had been previously approved by the BOA. Mr. Rodier said the materials were cedar shingles with AZEK corner boards, glazed windows, and a custom wood door with a small trim piece, a flat rake trim, and a 4" overhang at the eave.

Mr. Shea asked about the foundation and Mr. Brandzel replied that it was concrete floating slab. Chairman Almeida asked Mr. Cracknell how the HDC should proceed because the applicant wanted approval for only the shed and a work session on the rest of the application. Mr. Cracknell suggested that the HDC go into the work session and separate the components rather than voting on the shed first. Chairman Almeida agreed.

*Ms. Ruedig made a motion to **enter into a work session**. Mr. Lombardi seconded the motion. The motion **passed** unanimously with all in favor, 7-0.*

WORK SESSION

Mr. Rodier stated that the Commission's prior comments were heeded and the project was redesigned and the Cape rediscovered. They removed the deck on the front elevation and replaced it with a garden terrace leading to the front door and the side door of the kitchen. The existing dormer was kept and balanced on the left. The entrance door would stay where it was. There would be a 3-foot bump-out and the roof would cascade. A window seat area would mix the old and the new and would also anchor the end of the house.

Mr. Rawling stated that he thought the project was great and felt that the additions were compatible but still distinct. Mr. Shea stated that it was far superior to what the applicant had before, but he was still concerned about the front elevation and wondered if there was a more traditional way to bump out an old Cape facade instead of a salt box at the end of the house. Mr. Wyckoff said that he agreed with Mr. Rawling and was generally pleased. He also noted that there was a precedent for the 3-foot bump-out with a historical roof over, citing the Jackson House. Ms. Ruedig agreed with Mr. Shea and also noted that the Jackson House had the bump-out in the rear and not the façade. She said that she would like to see the façade restored as a Cape but felt that the new addition was not trying to be different. She thought the deck over the double doors was a bit awkward and could be refined.

They further discussed the window sizes. Mr. Rodier said that they differentiated the Cape by using clapboards and putting shingles on the addition with corner boards and taking the clapboards all the way down the back. Vice-Chair Gladhill asked if they were continuing the fieldstone, and Mr. Rodier agreed. Vice-Chair Gladhill thought it was much better than before but was still uneasy about the 3-foot bump-out. Mr. Lombardi agreed, saying that he'd like to see the Cape still be a Cape, but he was also sensitive to the applicant's interior needs. Mr. Rodier said they had given up improving one of the bedrooms due to the new scheme, and the rear dormer was not extended to the end of the house. He further discussed how they would hold the dormer back from the roof's edge. Mr. Lombardi noted that the small balcony did not relate to the doors underneath it, which was further discussed.

Chairman Almeida said he thought it was a vast improvement because the front door was now exposed and the Cape form could be read. He thought the changes were appropriate and that the bump-out was interesting. He felt that the fact that the historic building was being restored was enough of a concession. The dormers were further discussed. Mr. Rawling stated that the 3-foot traditional bump-out was difficult to see and was almost in the shadows because the Cape form was strong, so it seemed like an insignificant change to the building. Mr. Wyckoff agreed and

cautioned the applicant about the second-floor cutaway balcony, saying he had built one on his house and after 3-4 years the snow built up and there were no gutters. The front view was the side and not as important to the look of the house, so he was for it. Mr. Brandzel noted the removal of the other chimney and the new bump-out in the kitchen and discussed wrapping the foundation with the old brick. Ms. Ruedig thought it was great that the old chimney would still be used. Since there was an existing precedent on the shingles and clapboards, she thought the clapboards on the side would be acceptable. She asked Mr. Brandzel if he needed the shed approval faster than the rest of the application, and he agreed.

Chairman Almeida suggested meeting again at the June meeting and addressing the trim, siding, deck and railings, lighting, windows and doors, steps to the front door and building materials. Mr. Wyckoff noted that the 'pork chops', which was a contemporary look to finishing rakes, did not work on the building.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION

Mr. Michael Stasiak of 31 and 41 Dearborn Street stated that he was impressed with the work that was done on the house but was waiting on the shed. He said that the shed required a variance and that he had agreed with the BOA to give up his setback and have the shed located 5 feet from his property. The mitigation was a view easement. He also handed out copies of a letter. Chairman Almeida asked him if he had any issues with the shed's design, and he said that he did not. Mr. Cracknell told Chairman Almeida that the letter was included in the BOA decision and all the other abutters had signed it, so it was an agreement between the two parties with the consent of the abutters. He encouraged the HDC to recognize the letter as a stipulation so that it would be consistent with the BOA. Mr. Wyckoff asked Mr. Stasiak whether he was okay with the size of the shed and the fact that it had no windows. Mr. Stasiak said he was because any light coming through windows would impact him.

Mr. Wyckoff added that it was important that the rake go down to the soffit boards and the corner board meet it, and that the pork chop section be removed.

No one else rose to speak, so Chairman Almeida closed the public hearing.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Vice-Chair Gladhill made a motion to go into a public hearing. Mr. Lombardi seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with all in favor, 7-0.

Vice Chair Gladhill stated that since 2/3 vote was necessary to approve the shed, he suggested a motion to grant a waiver to hear a partial approval. They would address the shed first and then work for a better conclusion for the house in order to serve the public interest.

Vice-Chair Gladhill made a motion to grant a waiver to hear the partial approval. Mr. Wyckoff seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with all in favor, 7-0.

Mr. Wyckoff made a motion to issue a **partial approval (shed)** as presented with plans dated 5-6-15 and submitted at the May 6, 2015 meeting with the following stipulations:

- 1) That the pork chop returns on the eave of the gable on the shed shall be removed.
- 2) That the shed design shall be consistent with the stipulations listed in the letter submitted to the Board of Adjustment dated 3-30-15.

Ms. Ruedig seconded the motion.

Mr. Wyckoff stated that the changes preserved the integrity of the District and maintained and complemented its historical and architectural character.

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

9. Petition of **Haven School Condominium Association, owner, and John and Joan Burnap, applicants**, for property located at **50 South School Street, Unit 2**, wherein permission was requested to allow demolition of an existing structure (demolish existing deck) and allow new construction to an existing structure (construct new deck with composite materials) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 101 as Lot 60 and lies within the General Residence B and Historic Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

The owners Mr. and Mrs. John and Joan Burnap were present to speak to the application. Ms. Burnap said they wanted to demolish the existing deck because the Inspector stated that it didn't have sufficient support and that the railings around the exterior were rotting. They wanted to use composite so that the deck would last. The deck would not be visible to the public except for the rear neighbors.

Vice-Chair Gladhill agreed that it wouldn't be seen because he had gone out to look at it. Ms. Ruedig thought the design was fine, She had trouble with the AZEK on a focal building but because the deck wouldn't be that visible, she was more flexible. Chairman Almeida asked that the exposed cuts on the edges not be seen, and the Burnaps' builder Brad (no last name given) stated that he would do a border.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION

No one rose to speak, so Chairman Almeida closed the public hearing.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Vice-Chair Gladhill made a motion to **grant** the Certificate of Approval as presented. Mr. Rawling seconded the motion.

Vice-Chair Gladhill stated that the project would enhance and conserve property values by not having a rotted deck and that it would be compatible with surrounding properties by using something that would last.

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

10. Petition of **Nancy K. and Gary I. Gansburg, owners**, for property located at **89 New Castle Avenue**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (convert closed porch to open porch, install fire escape) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 101 as Lot 51 and lies within the General Residence B and Historic Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

The contractor Mr. Robert Ouellette representing the owners was present to speak to the petition and provided a brief summery. Ms. Ruedig asked him explain the removal of the enclosed porch. Mr. Ouellette replied that it would just be an open porch.

Vice-Chair Gladhill asked if the side door would have sidelights on one side. Mr. Ouellette agreed and said they just wanted to maintain existing, noting that there would be a 36" door. Vice-Chair Gladhill commented that there were no dimensions on the plans and asked if it were possible to do two smaller sidelights. Mr. Ouellette said that he could. Mr. Shea asked if the exposed door had original sidelights, which was further discussed. Vice-Chair Gladhill noted that the sidelights were on the right side of the door on the plans, but other drawings showed it on the left side. He didn't think the sidelights were appropriate. Ms. Ruedig said she wanted to see better dimensions on the drawings and also did not feel that the sidelight design was appropriate. She questioned the vinyl door. Mr. Shea addressed the hip roof on the porch, saying that it looked like it was laying on the existing roof and the gable end facing the street. He asked if the roof would be put over the top of the existing roof, and Mr. Ouellette said that it would not, even though that's what the drawing showed.

Chairman Almeida asked whether a site walk was necessary. Mr. Rawling said they needed clearer drawings, and he asked Mr. Ouellette about the casings and the window and door trim because they weren't specified. Mr. Ouellette stated that the same look would be maintained and they would match the second-floor windows to the first floor ones. Mr. Wyckoff didn't agree, saying that he simply saw an outside stoop and a window sill. The existing windows all appeared to have sills. Vice-Chair Gladhill stated that the Commission needed more dimensions on the drawings. Mr. Shea agreed that they needed a site walk. Mr. Cracknell said that revised drawings would have to be submitted. Mr. Wyckoff noted that the chosen door style was fiberglass, and Ms. Ruedig said she preferred not to see a vinyl door. Mr. Rawling noted that the primary difference was the grain pattern and that once it was installed, it had to be field painted. Mr. Ouellette agreed that one could not tell that it wasn't real wood unless it was touched.

Chairman Almeida suggested continuing the application to another work session/public hearing after a site walk. Mr. Ouellette said he would submit drawings showing the proposed. Chairman

Almeida told him to work with the City to agree on the details and also to schedule the June work session with Mr. Cracknell.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION

No one rose to speak, so Chairman Almeida closed the public hearing.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Vice-Chair Gladhill made a motion to **schedule a site walk** before the third meeting in May and to schedule a work session/public hearing at the June meeting. Mr. Wyckoff seconded the motion.*

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

11. Petition of **Martingale, LLC, owner**, for property located at **99 Bow Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (expand existing fixed pier) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 106 as Lot 54 and lies within the CD 5, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Vice-Chair Gladhill made a motion to **postpone** the application to the June meeting and Mr. Lombardi seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously with all in favor, 7-0.*

12. Petition of **143 Daniel Street, LLC, owner**, for property located at **143 Daniel Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow amendments to a previously approved design (change to mechanical vent locations, change PVC gutters to copper gutters, remove transoms at balcony doors, and add windows and doors to balcony side walls) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 105 as Lot 19 and lies within the CD 4, CD 5, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Mr. Bill Bartell of CJ Architects representing the owner was present to speak to the application. Mr. Bartel stated that minor amendments had come up related to mechanical venting, gutters, the balcony, and so on. He pointed out the removal of previously-approved rooftop vents and proposed fireplace vents. He went through the elevations and said they would relocate some vents and add fireplace sidewall vents. He also addressed the gutters.

Vice-Chair Gladhill asked why the fireplace vent wasn't on the roof because it could be seen from the outside. The owner Mr. Steve Wilson approached to address the question, saying that the mechanical and electrical plans were prepared after the HDC decision and they eliminated six stacks on the roof by going to a boiler instead of a furnace. The City's Mechanical Inspector had

pointed out the length of run of the gas fireplace chimneys and the restrictions on them, coupled with the fact that the previously-approved plan showed six more chimneys on the roof. They felt that it would be more aesthetic to put two of them on the low slope and would eliminate having three on each side. Vice-Chair Gladhill noted that they were not far off the wall, and Mr. Wilson said they were 4-12" off the wall. Vice-Chair Gladhill asked if it would match brick, and Mr. Wilson said it would.

Mr. Rawling asked about the finish on the stacks, and Mr. Wilson said they were the factory black finish. Chairman Almeida said he thought it was tastefully done with wonderful materials and was a continuation of a high-quality application.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION

No one rose to speak, so Chairman Almeida closed the public hearing.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Vice-Chair Gladhill made a motion to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the petition as presented. Mr. Wyckoff seconded the motion.*

Vice-Chair Gladhill stated that the changes would preserve the integrity of the District, would be compatible with innovative technologies because there would not be a huge stack of chimneys, and would complement and enhance the architectural character. Mr. Wyckoff said that the Commission did not often see a PVC gutter being changed to copper and thought that the balconies were a great improvement and that putting the doors on the side simplified the design.

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

At this point, Councilor Kennedy arrived and Mr. Melchior left the meeting.

The Commission then addressed Petition #8, 39 Dearborn Street. See page 4.

13. **Petition of North End Master Development, LP, owner, and Deer Street Development Company, DBA Harborcorp of Portsmouth, applicant,** for property located at **Deer Street, Russell Street, and Maplewood Avenue,** wherein permission was requested to allow a new free standing structure (5 story mixed use development to include a hotel/event center, parking structure, condominiums, and retail space) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plans 118, 119, 124, and 125 as Lots 28, 1-1A, 1-1C, 4, 12, and 21 and lies within the Central Business B and Historic Districts.

Mr. Cracknell stated that the project had been before the HDC for a year and a half under a work session and a public hearing was held the previous month for the CUP regarding the additional height. The HDC referred the CUP to the Planning Board for their review, and the Planning Board held a meeting two weeks before, where they continued the application to the May 21 meeting. Therefore, the Planning Board had not given written comments on the CUP but planned to take it back up at the May 21 meeting. Mr. Cracknell said that the site plan review

process would continue. The HDC and the Planning Department expected that the Planning Board would provide written comment to the HDC after their meeting, and if the HDC received the comments by June, they would continue the sessions for the added height. He stated that the first public hearing would be held that evening and that the applicant would give a full presentation of the project. There would be public comment and questions from the Commissioners. He felt that the CUP should precede the Certificate of Approval but it would make sense to have both approved together sometime in June. He further suggested that the HDC have a third meeting in May dedicated to HarborCorp.

Ms. Susan Duprey asked that it be the May 27 meeting. Vice-Chair Gladhill said that if the Planning Board got their recommendation to the HDC, he asked if the HDC could review it before the meeting and act upon them based on the Planning Board's suggestions.

Ms. Duprey mentioned the back of the building issues and said they were ready to talk about them. Councilor Kennedy said she wanted to ensure that the HDC acknowledge that the public hearing could be continued to stay open for each process, so the public hearing would not be closed that evening. Chairman Almeida suggested that the Commissioners take time to review it and put comments in writing, as well as the public. Ms. Duprey asked if they could have the comments as soon as possible because they needed to file by May 20 to be ready for the 27th.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Mr. Chris Thompson, Ms. Susan Duprey, and Ms. Carla Goodknight were present to speak to the application. Ms. Duprey stated that they would do a high-level presentation because their application filing was their formal legal document and contained all the information.

Mr. Thompson stated that they were delighted to be back again, and he briefly went over the history of the public review process. He noted that the project would provide a building that would enhance Portsmouth and would pay more than \$700,000 in property taxes. It would contribute to the public spaces and green space as well. He stated that they several design changes at a considerable cost and achieved their goals, thank to input from the Commission, other Boards, the City, and the public. The building would be esthetically pleasing and bring in millions of dollars as well as pay homage to the people who used to live in the neighborhood.

Mr. Thompson addressed a critique received from Mr. Jerry Zelin, who was at the Planning Board meeting for the CUP and suggested that Mr. Thompson made a promise that he reneged on. Mr. Thompson said he objected to that claim and that it was far from the truth because it was taken out of context. It was a representation of the project as it stood at the time, but the project had gone through many changes and it was a better building. They kept the height low and removed a lot of the mass, and they met or exceed all the HDC criteria and zoning regulations. He said they would present additional options for the north end of the building that evening after having incorporated comments from the Commission.

Ms. Goodknight went through the history of the project, saying that they began looking at the surrounding context and then arrived at a consensus that the style should be traditional and modern, aggressive, light and airy, and have lots of brick, glass and granite elements. They broke the building into eight separate expressions and would use high-quality materials such as

real brick, granite sills, operable windows, and wood and aluminum cladding. They did a lot of stepping back and scaling and addressed the pedestrian experience.

Ms. Goodknight then went through the entire packet, starting with the site plan and overview and finishing with the building analyses, and explained it in great detail.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION

Mr. Rick Becksted of 1139 Islington Street thought that the Commission should comment about the back of the building before going into public comment. Chairman Almeida said they could discuss it at a certain level of detail. Councilor Kennedy said they could just get the public's comments about the overall presentation that Ms. Goodknight had just given.

Ms. Dixie Tarbell of 25 Driftwood Lane stated that she wished the project could just get started right away because it was a beautiful one and great for the economy and the quality of life in Portsmouth. It would expand the downtown and not divide the City. She could not find fault with it at all and said she would elaborate more in a future letter.

Ms. Patricia Bagley of 213 Pleasant Street said they needed to focus on the back of the building and noted that the previous week's presentation diverted the view up Maplewood Avenue so that the public didn't see the whole back of the building nor the length of the building on each side. She felt that the Commission needed to spend more time on it. She also suggested that the Planning Board, the City Council, and the HDC do a site walk with the Planning Department.

Mr. Jerry Zelin of 70 Kensington Road distributed hard copies of a booklet he had assembled. He preferred that the building be broken up into 2-3 buildings with pedestrian bridges and more height diversity. He agreed that a site walk with the Planning Board and the City Council should be done and encouraged that it not only include the perimeter but also an equal length down Congress Street so that when the CUP was done, the mass and pedestrian scale could be assessed. He addressed his statement that Mr. Thompson had earlier referred to and said it was taken out of context. He noted that the building was almost entirely over 45 feet. Mr. Zelin further discussed the building volume, saying it was the opposite of what the CUP prescribed for keeping most of the building no higher than 45 feet.

Ms. Barbara DeStefano of 99 Hanover Street stated that she had come to every meeting, where she said every time that it was a great building. She felt that the building didn't look taller than or as large as Portwalk because parts of it were pulled back, and it had pitched roofs and different styles. She felt that there was no real 'back side' and that the garage was more attractive than the Hanover Street garage. As far as the CUP, she said that people thought the City Council erred and should have left the building height the way it was.

Mr. Dick Bagley of 213 Pleasant Street said that the applicants had put in a lot of work. He felt that it was a 3-step process that included the CUP, the Certificate of Approval, and the City Council agreeing to the land swap. He asked Councilor Kennedy if the City Council had agreed in advance that the land exchange was appropriate because he felt that they should see the site and understand what the HDC and the Planning Board were doing. He also asked why the

building was being held to height limits when the 111 Maplewood Avenue had passed (Mr. Cracknell replied that there was no design criteria for that particular area). Mr. Bagley noted that the project as one huge building would abut a big traffic circle, but if it were broken up into two buildings, there would be three traffic circles, and he said it wasn't too late to consider it.

At this point, Ms. Ruedig left the meeting.

After some discussion, it was decided to discuss the back of the building immediately rather than wait until another meeting. Ms. Goodknight handed out the information to the Commission. She said that she thought the parking garage's 1920s architecture was appropriate and noted that they had received a lot of support from the City for parking. They discussed the lighter canopies, the masonry and steel elements, and the more open connection to Portwalk Place. She concluded by saying that the three major points were the awnings, the treatment at the top floor of the garage, and the use of steel versus brick elements on the ground floor.

Mr. Lombardi asked whether the steel arches carried through to the front, and Ms. Goodknight agreed. Chairman Almeida asked what was behind the screens and was told it was the transformers. Councilor Kennedy asked if there was a walkway behind it, and Ms. Goodknight replied that it was just a service drive. Mr. Shea felt that it was a big improvement because it was more open, and he was happy that it would carry on to the front. Mr. Lombardi agreed.

Chairman Almeida said that he had been advocating for a more pedestrian invitation at the back of the building and felt that it was positive on the end building with the canopies, but he found it awkward that the canopy was broken up near the storefront and thought it should wrap the detail with the awning. He didn't think in general that the total back side of the building was inviting because it didn't have a high quality and made him think of Copley Place. He thought the solid wall would look better with some kind of entrance under the porte l'oeil. He didn't care for the tiny windows because they didn't show anything, and he suggested glass or spandrel instead of the solid wall. He suggested making the wall taller and bringing the masonry up. He addressed the breaking up of the building and felt that one should be able to walk through where the parking garage cut. He discussed the tall platform and suggested making it an elevated plaza that the public could frequent to make it more inviting.

Councilor Kennedy stated that the white canopies in the back bothered her and also discussed something to honor the Italians in the park. Mr. Rawling said he felt that the steel arches did a great deal to open the building up, but money would be better spent on something other than the white canopies. He discussed the simple forms on the garage and thought that the arch pattern was out of sequence. Mr. Wyckoff said he liked the parking garage and thought it could be the finest one he had ever seen. He noted that things kept changing, like the canopies that kept going up and down, and he couldn't figure out where they were going next.

Mr. Rick Becksted of 1395 Islington Street said it was a huge improvement. He noted that the canopies made the building look more like a train section, and he thought the small windows looked like they had been morphed and were more elegant before. He liked the pedestrian touch.

Mr. Jerry Zelin of 70 Kensington Road thought it was an improvement, considering the mass. He thought the 'clock radio' and the balcony on the far left looked awkward.

Mr. Dick Bagley of 213 Pleasant Street stated that the garages in South Carolina looked exactly like the piece in the middle and felt it was far better than what they were originally. He suggested improving the walkways if the buildings couldn't be divided.

With no one else rising, Chairman Almeida closed the public hearing.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Councilor Kennedy made a motion to have a site walk prior to the May 27th meeting and invite the City Council and the Planning Board to attend. Vice-Chair Gladhill seconded the motion. Councilor Kennedy also told Mr. Bagley that the City Council didn't realize it was a vote and it would be a good thing to have them at the site walk and get information on the bridge.

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

*Councilor Kennedy made a second motion to **continue** the application to the May 27 meeting and to keep the public hearing open. Vice-Chair Gladhill seconded the motion. The motion **passed** unanimously with all in favor, 7-0.*

VI. ADJOURNMENT

*It was moved, seconded and passed unanimously to **adjourn** the meeting at 10:25 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Breault
HDC Recording Secretary

These minutes were approved at the Historic District Commission meeting on June 10, 2015.