

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

EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

6:30 p.m.

**May 13, 2015
reconvened from May 6, 2015**

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

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Nick Cracknell, Principal Planner

ALSO PRESENT: Vince Hayes, Land Use Compliance Agent

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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.*

Chairman Almeida read the Requests to Postpone into the record.

*Vice-Chair Gladhill made a motion to **postpone** Work Sessions A, B, H and I to the June meeting and to accept the withdrawal of Work Session C. Ms. Ruedig seconded the motion. The motion **passed** unanimously with all in favor, 7-0.*

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (CONTINUED)

A. April 29, 2015

*Ms. Ruedig made a motion to **approve** the April 29, 2015 minutes, and Mr. Lombardi seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously with all in favor, 7-0.*

II. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

1. 67-77 State Street

The architect Ms. Jennifer Ramsey of SOMMA Studios representing the applicant was present to speak to the petition. She reviewed the locations of the windows and doors that she said had not been clearly represented in the original public hearing due to the fact that they were renderings. She also pointed out other windows that had been slightly adjusted since the public hearing. Ms.

Ramsey discussed the various elevations. She pointed out that in the second elevation, the two J windows were adjusted inboard about 16 inches, and in the final elevation cut on Chapel Street, the GG windows on the 2nd and 3rd floors were approved in late 2014 but were slightly shrunk based on construction needs.

Mr. Wyckoff asked Ms. Ramsey questions about the F and GG windows relating to their narrowness and whether the 2/2 muntin would still be in place. Ms. Ramsey said she could adjust it by making the GG windows 4/4. Mr. Wyckoff said he was thinking in terms of them not having muntins at all because the glass size was only around 20" and the window seemed too narrow to divide it into two panes of glass. The windows and their manufacturers were further discussed. Ms. Ramsey told the Commission that she was considering replacing the Eagle model with LePage windows. Mr. Wyckoff asked her to provide them with cut sheets if she changed the windows. Chairman Almeida thought the change would be an excellent solution and perhaps even an upgrade. Ms. Ramsey also noted that she could get LePage wooden doors instead of the Eagle and Norwood ones. Ms. Ramsey discussed extending the parapet height at the two decks on the Chapel Street elevation. Mr. Wyckoff asked whether the material was the same and whether the cap had been approved. Ms. Ramsey replied that the material was still the precast gray and that the cap had been approved but was a bit lower. Chairman Almeida asked Ms. Ramsey whether the total height was 1'10", and Ms. Ramsey agreed that it was.

*Mr. Wyckoff made a motion to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the application and send it back to the Planning Department with the following stipulation:*

- 1) that windows F and GG have no muntins and that they be 1/1.*

*Ms. Ruedig seconded the motion. The motion **passed** unanimously with all in favor, 7-0.*

Councilor Kennedy advised that if the window styles were going to be changed, the Commission should review them.

III. WORK SESSIONS

A. Work Session requested by **44-46 Market Street, LLC, owner**, for property located at **44-46 Market Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (change exterior cladding, repair doors, windows) and allow new construction to an existing structure (construct one story rear addition, construct small additions on second floor) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 117 as Lot 31 and lies within the CD 5, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts. *(This item was postponed at the March meeting to the April meeting.)*

*This item was **postponed** to the June meeting (see page 1).*

B. Work Session requested by **Nobles Island Condominium Association, owner**, for property located at **500 Market Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (install solar panels) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 120 as Lot 2 and lies within Central Business A and Historic Districts. *(This item was postponed at the April meeting to the May meeting.)*

*This item was **postponed** to the June meeting (see page 1).*

C. Work Session requested by **Ronald C.J. Cogswell**, owner, for property located at **180 Islington Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow a discussion concerning the existing 2 story structure and options for site (including demolition) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 137 as Lot 19 and lies within CBB and the Historic Districts. *(This item was postponed at the March meeting to the April meeting.)*

*This item was **accepted as a withdrawal** (see page 1).*

D. Work Session requested by **Joseph J. and Jennifer Almeida, owners**, for property located at **101-105 High Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (alter roof line and front façade) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor 118 as Lot 22 and lies within the CD4-L, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

Chairman Almeida recused himself because he was the applicant, and Vice-Chair Gladhill conducted the work session. Mr. Almeida requested that the work session be postponed to the end of the meeting.

*Ms. Ruedig made a motion to **postpone** the work session to the end of the meeting. Mr. Wyckoff seconded the motion. The motion **passed** unanimously with all in favor, 7-0.*

E. Work Session requested by **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 (demolish existing garage) and allow a new free standing structure (construct new garage) 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.

Councilor Kennedy left at this point in the meeting to attend a neighborhood meeting.

Mr. Doug LeDuc representing the owners was present to speak to the petition. He stated that they wanted to tear down the existing structure because it was falling down. The new garage would have the same style but would be much bigger. The house had 3-1/2" exposure cedar boards, and Mr. LeDuc thought the peaks on the garage could be cedar shakes. Ms. Ruedig noted that it would be 4-1/2" on clapboards, and Mr. Wyckoff thought that was too much. Mr. LeDuc said it was an error and he would correct it.

Chairman Almeida thought the garage was a different architecture than the house, and Ms. Ruedig agreed and said the design mimicked the shed dormer of the house but was a bit different. She advised simplifying it as much as possible so that it wouldn't compete with the original house in terms of style and also wouldn't detract from the house. She felt that clapboards would be simpler, but if the exposure was painted, it would be okay. She asked how tall the garage would be compared to the original house, and Mr. LeDuc replied that the garage was 23 feet. Ms. Ruedig said that the garage should be significantly lower than the height of the

house and said it would be helpful to have a sketch outlined of what the garage would look like next to the house. She cautioned that the garage should look like a smaller, secondary structure. Mr. Wyckoff agreed with Ms. Ruedig about keeping the structure simple.

Mr. Rawling stated that they were seeing a Cape form next to a 1-1/2 story form, and the garage was a similar height to the house but the front wall was lower, and that gave it the Cape form. He suggested that doing something less than the Cape form next to the 1-1/2 story would be more appropriate. On the garage doors, instead of the four panels, a six-panel would be better to keep the rectangular proportions going around the house rather than introducing the square proportions. He thought that the shingles were over-detailed, and the clapboards were more straightforward. Mr. LeDuc asked if the Commission was opposed to flush garage doors. Chairman Almeida thought they would be too contemporary. Mr. Wyckoff thought Mr. LeDuc could get the appearance of four panels and have two vertical styles coming down to get better proportions in the doors themselves.

Mr. Rawling noted that the other windows seemed to have the same width carried around all over but had been shortened, and he felt that if there were some proportional relationship carried through on the lower windows, it would work better rather than changing it to different proportions. The lower windows would become narrower to match the proportions of the rectangular windows of the house and the upper floors. Mr. LeDuc said they did it to let more light in. The side close to the neighbor would only have one window up on the peak, so just the house side and the back would have the smaller windows. Mr. Wyckoff said there was a precedent for square windows and referred to the carriage house on a corner of Middle Street that had a Brosco barn sash. Mr. Rawling thought something more rectangular would work better.

Mr. Shea thought the roof pitch on the house was less than 12-12 and there might be a way to make the garage a bit shorter. He said he didn't mind the different textures if they were all painted white. On the front elevation, he thought it would be nice to have the frieze board sit on top of the trim of the garage doors, like the one on the side. Mr. Lombardi said he would rather see all clapboards because it was simpler. He also thought that the second story looked heavy and that lowering the pitch could help. Mr. LeDuc told him they had lowered the pitch already and shortened it a lot, and he believed that the house was tall enough next to the garage. He said that he would bring in numbers at the next meeting. Ms. Ruedig reminded him to also bring in a sketch showing the garage in relation to the house.

Chairman Almeida asked if the eaves on the garage were the same as those on the house, and Mr. LeDuc replied that they were almost the same. Chairman Almeida said that he would support matching the dimensions of the house overhangs. Mr. Wyckoff felt that the garage needed to be pulled back a bit on the style and that a 9 or 10 pitch roof would reduce the mass and not dominate the structure as much. Chairman Almeida thought if the garage had 8' walls, the overhead doors hanging from the ceiling would be one foot, and Mr. Wyckoff said that was pretty standard. They agreed that some of the mass of the roof had to be brought down a bit.

Chairman Almeida asked the Commission what they thought about the PVC trim, saying that typically the Commission didn't like exaggerated wood grain because it looked artificial. Mr. Wyckoff said there were other composition wood products available that were 1x6 or 1x8 and

had to be worked by a carpenter. Mr. Lombardi said he always preferred wood. They further discussed wood versus plastic. The windows were also discussed in detail. Mr. LeDuc said he would use Andersen 400 Series windows. He asked for comments about the narrowing of the smaller windows and whether they could be slide or crank-out windows. Mr. Wyckoff thought if the windows were narrower, their proportion would improve. Mr. Rawling offered another option for narrowing the windows.

It was decided that the petition would be continued to a work session/public hearing at a future meeting.

F. Work Session requested by **David White, owner**, for property located at **127 New Castle Avenue**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (construct two shed dormers to rear addition) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 101 as Lot 54 and lies within the General Residence B and Historic Districts.

Ms. Jennifer Ramsey of SOMMA Studios representing the owner showed the Commission the site plan and said they wanted shed dormers on each side of the addition for additional space. She went through the elevations and noted that they wanted to match the top sashes of the main house and all the trim details. She showed photos of other homes in the neighborhood with similar shed dormers. Mr. Shea asked whether the dormers could be pulled back so the head height could be higher. Ms. Ramsey thought the space was too tight. Mr. Wyckoff pointed out that there were structural problems with pulling support walls, especially with a cathedral ceiling roof, because all the weight was on the walls.

Ms. Ruedig said she was concerned about the dormer back because the examples shown where they came up and broke the eave line gave it a Craftsman style, and the house was a simple Colonial. The addition was very simple and didn't detract from the main house, so she was concerned that the dormer would stick out. She suggested doing away with the dormer on that side of the garage, saying that she could envision it more on the water side. Ms. Ramsey replied that the space was already so tight and asked if the Commission would be opposed to two dormers that were slightly different. Mr. Wyckoff thought it was possible that Ms. Ramsey didn't have to do anything at all and that she could just continue the roofline across because it would give the horizontal line and make the dormer appear like it was set in.

Mr. Rawling said that the heaviness and the paired units were disturbing to him and made it look like a whole different system with different punches and openings. He said he could not support it as it was but suggested getting rid of the siding and changing it to three openings to lighten it up. It would then be a lighter framed element on the top and would get away from the horizontal punched opening lines. Ms. Ruedig thought that it would be more of the Craftsman style to have the strong horizontality next to the end of the old house. Mr. Rawling replied the horizontal line carried through as it was, and the dormer read as an extension of it.

Vice-Chair Gladhill said that he would not support the application as presented and thought that the examples given as justification were not from the style Ms. Ramsey was working on. If dormers were added, they would have to fit more into the time period of the house. Ms. Ramsey

replied that they were going on the new back addition. Vice-Chair Gladhill agreed but said that the dormers were also designed to go with the main house, so it would still be prominent to see them on that particular road. He said that if Ms. Ramsey could find examples of that style of dormer on a house of that age, he might be convinced.

Mr. Wyckoff stated that he wasn't quite convinced about the driveway side dormer because it was really heavy. Ms. Ramsey said that they could experiment a bit with their fixtures. Chairman Almeida asked why the windows were so small and not the same as the ones on the second floor and suggested that they be brought down to match the sill conditions of the other windows. Ms. Ramsey said they could fix them but it would pose a challenge with the bathroom. Mr. Rawling found troubling the sudden change in the horizontality and asked if there was a way that the small windows could become lighter proportionally or broken up differently. Chairman Almeida asked if one window would be better, and Mr. Rawling said it could be tried, but he preferred single clear lights. Mr. Shea noted that the space between the dormers looked like 8" and very close, and the piece coming down would be awkward. The dormer, the connection, and the eaves were further discussed as far as issues such as making them simpler and less distracting. Mr. Lombardi noticed that the cornice trim looked heavy, and Ms. Ramsey said she could lighten it.

*Ms. Reagan made a motion to **continue the work session** to the June meeting, and Mr. Wyckoff seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously with all in favor, 7-0.*

G. Work Session requested by **Jamer Realty, Inc., owner**, for property located at **80 Hanover Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (install new siding, folding doors, new storefront, canopy, glass block, and fencing) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 117 as Lot 2-1 and lies within the CD 5, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

Mr. Kelly Davis and Mr. Evan Mullen of Port One Architects, and Mr. James Perin, owner of Jamer Realty, were present to speak to the application.

Mr. Davis told the Commission that a lot of work would be done on the inside. They wanted something a bit more contemporary but would keep the brick. He showed an overview of what was planned and had a sample of the vertical façade material that would be used. He noted that the billiard tables would be placed at the back of the new space, and an existing bar would be brought around. The space would be opened up with a telescoping door overlooking a patio. They planned to put in a new kitchen and bathrooms and install more seating than before in the areas that would serve food. He discussed the mansard, saying that it currently ran all the way across the structure but stepped up, and they planned to take it down where it stepped up. They would remove that entire piece of mansard. He further discussed the façade and ventilation space. Mr. Davis also had a sample and brochure of the cellulose insulation that they wanted to use. He mentioned an Andersen folding door that would be very inviting combined with the new bar set-up. They would reformat the storefront and keep the dark bronze. The signage would change and they would perhaps create a metal canopy with two lights on the underside of it. They would also change the metal fencing out.

Mr. Davis discussed eliminating the existing mechanical duct going up the side of the Coat of Arms building and bringing in new ventilation up to the roof instead. He also discussed the signage and how it would be the same size but different. He asked the Commission if they had a preference about how the dumpster could be shielded. Mr. Rawling suggested a continuation of a fence detail, and they discussed materials. Mr. Wyckoff said he had no problem with the façade addition but that it would hinge on the material and finish. Mr. Davis said they were considering mahogany. Mr. Rawling said he was comfortable with everything but was concerned about the material on top and the detail, and they further discussed it. Mr. Lombardi said he was happy to see the mansard roof go and liked the modern concept. Chairman Almeida thought it was a huge improvement, and Mr. Shea agreed. Ms. Ruedig thought the project would refresh the area

The applicant indicated that they would come for a public hearing at a future meeting.

H. Work Session requested by **Hayscales Real Estate Trust, owner**, for property located at **236 Union Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow demolition of an existing structure (demolish existing structure) and allow a new free standing structure (construct two family residential home) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 135 as Lot 22 and lies within the General Residence C and Historic Districts. *(This item was postponed at the April meeting to the May meeting.)*

This item was postponed to the June meeting (see page 1).

I. Work Session requested by **30 Maplewood, LLC, owner**, for property located at **30 Maplewood Avenue (46-64 Maplewood Avenue)**, wherein permission is requested to allow a new free standing structure (construct mixed use 3 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 postponed at the April meeting to the May meeting.)*

This item was postponed to the June meeting (see page 1).

At this point in the meeting, Work Session D for 101-105 High Street was taken up.

D. Work Session requested by **Joseph J. and Jennifer Almeida, owners**, for property located at **101-105 High Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (alter roof line and front façade) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor 118 as Lot 22 and lies within the CD4-L, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

Chairman Almeida recused himself and Vice-Chair Gladhill took his place.

The applicant Mr. Almeida distributed new packets to the Commission. He stated that he bought the property in 1994 long before Portwalk and 100 Market Street were built, so it was a different neighborhood back then. The inside of the house had been in horrible condition. Mr. Almeida showed photos of the existing condition of the property and noted that there used to be multiple structures on the site and that several additions had been made to the property. There had been

huge amounts of change on the site. He showed historic photos of a home that he said his renovation would be similar to, and he also showed context photos of nearby houses. Mr. Almeida said that he had a garden shop behind his home and wanted to transfer it the historic wooden storefront that he would build. He also noted that the large chimney was not the original chimney and that he wished to relocate it to the middle of the floor plan, rebuild it and make it a functioning fireplace and chimney that could be used within the retail space.

Mr. Wyckoff asked about the wall on the sidewalk and if it was part of the entrance to the basement of the house. Mr. Almeida replied that they would use the existing first floor plane and take out the interior first floor and drop it down for accessibility, allowing for a combination of a ramp and one or two steps. Vice-Chair Gladhill asked Mr. Almeida how he planned to carry the project out and whether he would raise the structure. Mr. Almeida said he would not raise the structure but would replace the existing roof with a new one, and the top floor would be brand new. Ridge to ridge, it would be a 5-1/2' height increase.

Mr. Lombardi noted that the storefront would be a significant change in elevation. Mr. Rawling asked how far back the house was from the sidewalk, and Mr. Almeida said it was four feet. Ms. Ruedig remarked that the project would change the house quite a bit and would change it into something that was historically precedent and appropriate but very different from existing.

Mr. Shea asked Mr. Almeida whether he had considered raising the house to put a level underneath it, and Mr. Almeida replied that he had not. If he did raise it, he would have to detail it from all the additions and extrude all the additions upward, which would be labor intensive. Mr. Wyckoff stated that 'the elephant in the room' was the third story and that he couldn't see it at all. The building was a focal one, and Mr. Almeida was radically changing it, which Mr. Wyckoff found shocking. He did not feel that storefronts belonged on that building, and he thought it was contemporary. He noted the molding heads over the windows and said he could not support removing them to put in a storefront. Mr. Almeida replied that he was the one who had put them on but that the windows had been different when he did so. Mr. Wyckoff thought Mr. Almeida had done such a convincing reconstruction job that it would be hard to change it.

Ms. Ruedig told Mr. Almeida that she'd like to see as much documentation of the house as possible, even photos of what it looked like when he bought it. She said she needed to know the history because Mr. Almeida would essentially demolish the building and recreate a new historic building, which she thought would be a fake. Mr. Almeida replied that he could show photos of the different foundations over the years to point out the several different buildings that were put together and now appeared to be one historic house. He had a business on the property, and since the building was in the CBB, its best use was business. He had to earn income in the building. Currently the business was a small structure in the back of the house that few people even knew about, and he also wanted to show that there was living space about the retail.

Mr. Wyckoff reminded Mr. Almeida that he had made a point about restaurants in the past, when he said 'the time has come when not all buildings downtown are suitable for restaurants due to the piping and ventilation systems.' Mr. Wyckoff thought that perhaps the house was not in a location that was suitable for such a drastic change. Mr. Rawling said that he didn't see much of anything that was related to the existing building, and while he was not averse to storefronts

added to buildings, they usually focused on the rear of the property and didn't change the elevations. Mr. Lombardi said he'd be happier if Mr. Almeida raised the building and put the storefront under it because it was such a huge change to the building and the house was very much in the Historic District. He thought it made for a much taller building and drastically changed the massing and the whole pattern of the building. Mr. Almeida said that it would not be possible to raise the building and that it would be too invasive to the other structures. He could, however, reconstruct all the details.

Vice-Chair Gladhill said that when he first saw the application, it shocked him because it was so drastic. However, after looking at the research and going through the photos, he realized that Mr. Almeida was the first applicant to appear before the HDC who was trying to restore what the North End was and, and what was lost. No developer in the past 40 years had ever proposed something like Mr. Almeida's project. He said that the building didn't have a prominent façade and, while he may not like the storefront design as it was, he might with a little more play. Mr. Almeida replied that storefronts on homes were very common in history, and he said he would bring in photo examples of the concept of storefronts on the first level.

Mr. Almeida stated that he didn't want to expand the building's footprint and thought there was only one expansion left for it. He also wouldn't encroach on the beautiful hidden garden behind the building. Vice-Chair Gladhill asked if only half of the façade could be commercial, and Mr. Almeida said he could work with that idea. Mr. Wyckoff said that he agreed with someone's prior comment that the building could remain the way it was and have one storefront, and he also didn't care for the Federal third floor on top of it.

Public comment:

Ms. Barbara DeStefano of 99 Hanover Street said she walked in that area all the time. She knew there was a precedent because the North End used to be full of houses with shops, and she didn't feel that it would affect the neighborhood from a height standpoint because there were tall buildings nearby. She said the front of the building faced Garden Way, so it was definitely a commercial space. Most people didn't know about the shop in the back because the steps were tricky to get to it. She felt that it made more sense to have an actual storefront and that it would be a great addition to the neighborhood.

No one else rose to speak, so the public comment session was closed.

Mr. Shea suggested doing a site walk to see the existing conditions, and everyone agreed. Chairman Almeida said that he would work it into the agenda. He also told the Commission that he would put in retractable awnings and mentioned that there was a beautiful old iron sign bracket that used to be mounted on the house that he would use. He said he would include those pieces in the Auto Cad drawings for the next work session.

Mr. Rawling stated that he was more inclined to support things that protected and preserved the historic house and allow the additions and alterations to be newer and not necessarily focus on creating on what could have been. He felt that the most important sections were the 1800 and 1830 ones, and he could see expansions from the 1850 and 1998 sections as well as the back half of the house relating to 1800 and 1830 sections. He said the gabled form and mass of the house

was important, and he could see modifications to the ground level for the storefront, but he had trouble with the whole conversion of the building into a new, taller building.

Mr. Almeida noted that raising the building and putting something underneath it would make it a 3-story building, and he said that there were 3-story gable buildings in the Historic District. He could reconstruct his house to match the gable buildings. Mr. Shea suggested taking out the foundation and making it a usable basement with natural light windows so the top of the building wouldn't be touched. Ms. Ruedig said she had no problem with the usage being changed, but her major issue was that Mr. Almeida could not build a new Federal building. He could either modify what he had or make a new structure, and a Federal building would erase all of what the house was before. Mr. Lombardi thought that the dramatic difference was changing the roof design and wondered how it would look with a gable instead of dormers.

Mr. Almeida said that the site walk suggestion was a good one and that he would come back with other options after doing more research. He said that his main intent was to bring a piece of the old North End back and draw from the history of the surrounding streets.

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

IV. ADJOURNMENT

*It was moved, seconded and passed unanimously to **adjourn** the meeting at 9:20 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Breault
HDC Recording Secretary

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