

**MEETING OF  
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

**ONE JUNKINS AVENUE, PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**6:30 p.m.**

**January 6, 2016  
to be reconvened on January 13, 2016**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Joseph Almeida; Vice Chairman/Planning Board Representative William Gladhill; Members John Wyckoff, Dan Rawling, Reagan Ruedig; City Council Representative Nancy Pearson; Alternates Richard Shea and John Mayer

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Vincent Lombardi

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

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**I. ELECTION OF OFFICERS – Chairman, Vice Chairman**

*It was moved, seconded, and **passed** unanimously (7-0) to re-elect Chairman Almeida and Vice-Chairman Gladhill to their respective positions.*

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. December 2, 2015

*It was moved, seconded, and **passed** unanimously (7-0) to approve the December 2, 2015 minutes.*

**III. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS**

**1. 687 Middle Street**

Mr. Cracknell read the petition. The building return and the gutters were discussed. Mr. Wyckoff requested that it be made clear that the gutters would cover up the open end of the crown molding. Mr. Cracknell stated that he would add it as a stipulation. Mr. Shea noted that the three rear windows were significantly different. Vice-Chair Gladhill stated that there were a lot of design changes for an administrative approval, and most of the Commissioners agreed.

Mr. Cracknell suggested denying the petition and scheduling a public hearing at the February meeting so that the applicant could address all the changes that were inconsistent with the original approval. Mr. Wyckoff also suggested that all administrative approval petitions and stipulations, in accordance with HDC guidelines and the approval process, be made available to the project's general contractor in the future and perhaps posted with the permit.

*Mr. Wyckoff made a motion to **deny** the Administrative Approval, and Mr. Rawling seconded.*

Vice-Chair Gladhill requested that the applicant also provide photos showing the four sides of the building from a short distance away, along with a better description.

*The motion **passed** with a unanimous (7-0) vote.*

- 2. 102 State Street**
- 3. 30 Maplewood Avenue**

Administrative Approval Items #2 and #3 were briefly discussed.

- 4. 77 State Street**

Mr. Cracknell read the petition and suggested that the meter bank be placed within the parking lot and that the gas regulator remain.

Mr. Rawling asked whether the lighting globes on the side of the building would shine onto the adjacent properties. Jennifer Ramsey of SOMMA Studios approached the podium and stated that the globes were dark-sky compliant and met the specifications of the Ordinance. Mr. Wyckoff said it was important that the bulbs in the globes be color-warm. Chairman Almeida stated that he could not support the bank of meters in the parking lot.

It was agreed by the Commission that the Administrative Approval would be granted with the stipulation that the meter bank be removed from the approval for future consideration so that it could be relocated to the inside of the garage.

- 5. 143 Daniel Street**

Mr. Cracknell read the changes to the Commission. He said that a granite screen would be used to shield the gas regulator.

*Mr. Wyckoff made a motion to **grant** Administrative Approval Items #2, #3, #4 and #5, with the discussed stipulations. Mr. Rawling seconded the motion.*

*The motion **passed** with a unanimous (7-0) vote.*

#### **IV. OLD BUSINESS**

A. (Work Session/Public Hearing) Petition of **Joseph J. and Jennifer Almeida, owners**, for property located at **103/105 High Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (modify front elevation by adding a storefront, with access stairs and landing) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 118 as Lot 22 and lies within the CD4-L, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts. *(This item was postponed at the December 2, 2015 meeting to the January 6, 2016 meeting.)*

## **WORK SESSION**

Vice-Chair Gladhill assumed Chairman Almeida's seat and read the petition.

The owner Joe Almeida passed out revised drawings to the Commissioners. He noted that he had included the historic sign hanger that used to be on the building. He discussed the changes and emphasized that the inspiration for the storefront was from historic neighborhood storefronts, which he showed photos of. The Commissioners' questions about the molding, awning, panels below the window and signage were discussed. Mr. Shea asked about screens, and Mr. Almeida said they would be built into the jambs.

There was no public comment.

*It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to go into the public hearing.*

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

### **SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

The owner Joe Almeida stated that his intent was to introduce a small wooden storefront onto his home that reflected the historic context of the neighborhood and briefly went over the history of the neighborhood storefronts. Mr. Almeida noted that the storefront would be all wood, with custom windows and doors. There would be a small stairway, gate and new fence, and three additional light fixtures would be mounted on the storefront.

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

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

## **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

*Mr. Wyckoff made a motion to grant the Certificate of Approval for the application as presented, and Ms. Ruedig seconded the motion.*

Mr. Wyckoff stated that the wooden storefront was a very high-quality one and consistent with the special defining characters of surrounding properties. It had compatibility of design and some innovative technology, due to the new light fixtures. He said the building was significant and noted that the front of it was a storefront when Mr. Almeida bought it. He believed it would

help nearby property values. Vice-Chair Gladhill said he was excited about the project because Mr. Almeida researched the north end to recreate the storefront aspect and bring back something to the north end that was once common, and he felt that he had done it well for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

*The motion passed with a unanimous (7-0) vote.*

## **V. PUBLIC HEARINGS (CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS)**

1. Petition of **David A. and Joyce C. Marr, owners**, for property located at **1B Jackson Hill Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace asphalt roof shingles with cedar shingles) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 141 as Lot 30 and lies within the General Residence A and Historic Districts.

Chairman Almeida resumed his position.

The contractor Mr. Eddie Sunshine of Veterans Roofing was present to speak to the petition. He asked the Commission whether he could sheathe the roof with plywood, noting that it would not be seen and that the building's integrity would increase tenfold.

Ms. Ruedig said she was concerned about using cedar because it must be allowed to breathe. Mr. Sunshine explained how he would do it, and Ms. Ruedig said it was fine. Mr. Shea asked what the no-drip edge would be replaced with and whether the flashing around the chimney would have to be replaced. Mr. Sunshine said he would use a poplar shadow board and that the roofing would be doubled on every bottom edge. As for the chimney, Mr. Sunshine said he would work with the flashing and replace it in kind if he had to. He also said he would probably remove the flat dormer on the back. Mr. Rawling discussed gutters with Mr. Sunshine, who agreed with Mr. Rawling that gutters should be placed on the house.

Chairman Almeida asked whether only the overhang of shingle would be seen and not plywood. Mr. Sunshine explained how he would make it so that no plywood would be seen, noting that there would be no drip edge on the rake side. He said everything would be in cedar.

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

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

### **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

*Mr. Wyckoff made a motion to grant the Certificate of Approval for the application as presented. Ms. Ruedig seconded the motion.*

Mr. Wyckoff stated that it was the correct way to do the roof and that it would preserve the integrity of the District and maintain its special character. It would be consistent with the special

and defining character of surrounding properties. He noted that it was nice to see wood shingles and the window problems resolved.

*The motion passed with a unanimous (7-0) vote.*

2. Petition of **Harbour Place Condominium Association, owner**, for property located at **135 Bow Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow a new free standing structure (install fencing with gates) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan105 as Lot 2-1 and lies within the CD 4, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

Jennifer Ramsey of SOMMA Studios was present to speak to the petition and reviewed the application. She also had a sample of the fence.

Ms. Ruedig asked what function the gate would serve. Ms. Ramsey said it would protect the courtyard from people going in with dogs or skateboards, emphasizing that it was a private area that had to be maintained. Mr. Wyckoff asked how the over-arch with the sign was constructed. Ms. Ramsey said the arch would be at the same location as the original wooden arch and explained what it would look like. Mr. Wyckoff thought the posts seemed undersized, and Ms. Ramsey said they met the condominium association's preferences. City Council Representative Pearson thought it was a delicate touch that was not imposing and asked whether there would be private property signage, and Ms. Ramsey said there would not. Mr. Mayer asked about the design inspiration, remarking that the design looked more residential than industrial. Ms. Ramsey noted that other condominiums had similar fences and that the design had been used multiple times. Mr. Shea pointed out that the generator would be more visible and suggested a stipulation that the transformer be painted black to match the fence.

Mr. Rawling said he thought the arch was weak and didn't see beauty in it at all. Chairman Almeida said the importance of the application was worthy of a refined design because there were many details that could make or break it. He noted that it wasn't obvious where the fence fell on the cap. He felt the project could use more design and documentation. Ms. Ramsey stated that she would follow up with the fabricator.

Chairman Almeida summarized that there were questions about the top of the gate and other details that had to be addressed by the final design. Mr. Rawling agreed, reiterating that the overhead entrance arch design was weak and needed to be an overall design rather than just installing parts. Ms. Ruedig also agreed, noting that the location was a very prominent one. Mr. Wyckoff said he was uncomfortable with the top of the top arch and felt that the posts should stand proud and project up 3-4" higher than the horizontal piece.

Chairman Almeida asked Ms. Ramsey to also address exactly how the bluestone cap would be dealt with. Mr. Wyckoff asked how it would hide the fasteners. Vice-Chairman Gladhill said the top of the arch bothered him because it drew his eye upward, but all he saw was a flat bar going across. He suggested a design element on the top.

**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 **postpone** the application to the February meeting, and Mr. Wyckoff seconded the motion.*

*The motion **passed** with a unanimous (7-0) vote.*

**VI. PUBLIC HEARINGS (REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS)**

3. Petition of **Andrea L. Ardito and R. Bradley Lebo, owners**, for property located at **121 Northwest Street**, wherein permission was 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 122 as Lot 1 and lies within the General Residence A and Historic District.

**SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

The owner Bradley Lebo and his contractor Brian Gold of Solar City were present to speak to the petition. Mr. Gold explained how and where the ten solar panels would be installed. He said they would meet all utility requirements. Mr. Gold noted that they preferred the blue panels instead of the black panels because they were more efficient.

Chairman Almeida asked how much more efficient the blue panels were, and Mr. Gold said each panel was more efficient by 15 kilowatts and a percentage of 7%. Mr. Gold added that the panels had a high-gloss finish with no silver diamonds and would be set back about a foot from the roof. Mr. Shea asked whether the metal material on the frame and the mounts was black, and Mr. Gold said the material was black but the mounts were brown and would not be seen. He said the silver conduit could be painted black and would go into the house from the equipment on the back side of the house so no one would see it.

Mr. Wyckoff said he was in favor of the visible blue panels because they would be on the back of the building facing the Route One Bypass. Chairman Almeida said the panels would be seen but wouldn't be a problem because they would be streamlined. He said the Commission wanted to encourage that kind of energy generation yet be sensitive to the Historic District, which he felt the project did. Mr. Rawling asked whether the panels would be on the roof shingle itself, and Mr. Gold said they would not. Mr. Mayer asked why there would only be ten panels. Mr. Gold said they were trying to get close to 100% of usage. Vice-Chair Gladhill said he liked solar panels outside of the District but not so much within the District because they were modern technology on top of a roof. Ms. Ruedig said it was a modern addition to a house, which worked in its favor, and the panels would not be placed on the main façade and would not be seen from a general street. She said she preferred black, but the low visibility made the blue acceptable.

Chairman Almeida noted that he received a brief on solar installations from City Councilor Josh Denton, which he passed on to the Planning Department.

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

Josh Denton of 116 Middle Street stated that he was in favor of the project and was a fan of solar panels in the Historic District. He referenced the report that he had given to Chairman Almeida, noting that it was created by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and had guidelines that allowed building-integrated cells to be visible from primary street fronts.

A representative for Solar City said the Commission would be seeing more solar panels in the future. Since there were no guidelines as yet, she asked what they would look for.

Chairman Almeida stated that the Commission could share information with the public to help develop future guidelines. He felt that the amount of panels on a roof was important, including how close they came to the roof's edge and how they were fed with conduits. Vice-Chair Gladhill suggested that the Commission hold a small work session on solar panels.

### **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

*Ms. Ruedig made a motion to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the application as presented, with the following stipulation:*

- 1) That blue solar panels are permitted.*

That Mr. Shea seconded the motion.

Ms. Ruedig stated that the project met the innovative technology of surrounding properties criteria, and she noted that the Commission was seeing more solar panel applications. The panels would be minimally visible from the rights-of-way on the main street. They would be on the back of the house and visible on Route One, but she didn't feel that was really the Historic District. The panels would be placed on a modern addition, so it was an appropriate use and location for the innovative technology and would preserve the character of the neighborhood.

Mr. Shea noted that solar panels were not permanent and would not take away from the history of the house nor destroy the fabric of the structure.

*The motion **passed** with a unanimous (7-0) vote.*

### **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

*It was moved, seconded and passed unanimously to **adjourn** the meeting at 8:20 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Breault  
HDC Recording Secretary

These minutes were approved at the Historic District Commission meeting on February 3, 2016.