

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

EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

6:30 p.m.

**January 13, 2016
reconvened from January 6, 2016**

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

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

ALSO PRESENT: Nick Cracknell, Principal Planner

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Chairman Almeida stated that the applicants for Work Sessions A and B had requested a postponement.

*It was moved, seconded, and **passed** unanimously (7-0) to postpone Work Sessions A and B to the February meeting.*

Mr. Cracknell stated that there was an Administrative Approval for 126 State Street and said the owner wanted to install a gas line in the upper-floor unit. He noted that the Commission had previously approved it and that the gas line would be relocated from the side of the building and tucked inside the building envelope where it would be out of view.

*Mr. Wyckoff made a motion to **grant** the Administrative Approval, and Ms. Ruedig seconded the motion.*

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

I. PUBLIC HEARINGS (REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS, CONTINUED)

1. Petition of **Hanover Apartments, LLC and Portwalk HI, LLC, owners**, for property located at **7 & 23 Portwalk Place**, wherein permission was requested to allow amendments to a previously approved design (retain apartment doors per original approval, retain two precast capitals from mock up, and add second bronze plaque) 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.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Tim Levine representing the applicant was present to speak to the petition. He stated that there were three issues: the doors to the apartment building, the column capitals, and the bronze plaque. He said that the apartment doors were changed due to their residential nature and that they were large doors with electronics. He showed a photo of the two column capitals, noting that the Commission had done a site walk and thought that the capitals were perhaps not the right thing, so he had not put up any more but had left only those two. He thought they were unique and felt that the two capitals should remain. He also thought it would be beneficial to install another bronze plaque as a street-level piece of art rather than consider more precast capitals.

Ms. Ruedig asked whether the band detail on the Deer Street and Maplewood Avenue sides would continue around the side instead of the capitals. Mr. Levine replied that the band continued and was painted in. Chairman Almeida reminded Mr. Levine that, as a mitigation factor, the Commission had insisted on some changes at the horizontal band by adding another piece across the bottom of it to separate it from the columns. He didn't see it in the photo but Mr. Levine insisted it was on the building and was painted a darker shade.

Chairman Almeida asked the Commission whether the two capitals should be removed. Vice-Chair Gladhill asked whether the bronze plaque was an exchange for the capitals. Mr. Levine replied that the plaque was a suggestion that he thought would have pedestrian-level interest and would be a beneficial use of funds than removing the capitals. Vice-Chair Gladhill asked where the second window would go and Mr. Levine said it would go on the larger column.

Chairman Almeida said he didn't know whether the capitals would add or detract from Portwalk Place. Mr. Wyckoff thought the capitals were subtle and indicated the growth of the building and he didn't feel they needed to be removed and risk damaging the fascia. Mr. Shea agreed that the capitals wouldn't be noticed by someone walking down the street. Councilor Pearson said it would be beneficial to the existing art in the City. Mr. Rawling said the plaque would be an enhancement to the area. Vice-Chair Gladhill said he had no problems with the capitals, design-wise. Mr. Mayer agreed that leaving the capitals in place was a simple act and supported it. He suggested having a modern plaque so that people could see the differences in the landscape. Ms. Ruedig agreed that most people wouldn't notice the capitals and wouldn't care but she felt as a matter of principle that the capitals were put up as a test and the applicant had agreed to take them down and make the building more unified. She thought it seemed funny to have an exchange of a bronze plaque for the removal of the capitals, yet she felt it was positive. She also said she'd like to see more artwork.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION

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

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

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

Mr. Lombardi stated that the capitals were not really capitals because they were not on top of the columns but were more of a design element and he did not find them offensive. He felt they were not intrusive and that they created a unique piece of the building. He added that the building would continue to preserve the integrity of the District and would enhance the property values. The plaque would be a big enhancement as well as a good community piece for the surrounding area.

Mr. Wyckoff said that he had preferred a set of mahogany doors but thought the new doors matched well with the surrounding details and would match well with the building because they had contemporary handles. He felt that it would work better than a lot of people thought it would and would make for a pleasant place to walk in the City.

Vice-Chair Gladhill agreed that the door handles were very modern and that he also would have preferred something different, but he felt it was a minor detail.

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

II. WORK SESSIONS

A. Petition of **City of Portsmouth, owner, and Prescott Park Arts Festival, applicant**, for property located at **0 Marcy Street (Prescott Park)**, wherein permission is requested to allow demolition of an existing structure (demolish existing stage, relocate and construct new stage, construct new control booth) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 104 and lies within the Municipal and Historic Districts.

B. Work Session requested by **Kimberley A Lucy Revocable Living Trust, owner, Kimberley A. and James C. Lucy, trustees and James C. Lucy Revocable Living Trust, owner, James C. and Kimberley A. Lucy, trustees**, for properties located at **127 and 137 High Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow extensive renovations to an existing structure (misc. renovations) and allow new construction to an existing structure (construct two new buildings at rear of buildings) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plans 118 as Lot 20 and 21 and lies within the CD4, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts. *(This item was postponed at the December 2, 2015 meeting to the January 6, 2016 meeting.)*

It was voted unanimously (7-0) at the beginning of the meeting to postpone Work Sessions A and B to the February meeting.

III. 2016 WORK PLAN

Mr. Cracknell stated that he had distributed the 2013-14 Work Plan so that the Commissioners could decide what they wanted to add or remove from the list. He said he omitted completed items, noting that half the items on the 2014 Work Plan had been removed and felt that there were not many items to work on or add. Mr. Cracknell said he had 14 items for review, some of

which were ongoing, and he noted that the Commission had done a good job over the past few years in referring to the Project Evaluation Form.

Chairman Almeida suggested that the Commission discuss what they had done over the past few years. They discussed the Design Review Toolkit, and Mr. Cracknell noted that they had 400 textured buildings and a total of 600 buildings in 3-dimensional form. He said the Commission had recently received a grant from the State to do disaster mitigation planning for historic resources and had \$13,000 to expand the 3-D model along the shoreline. He said that the consultant was almost finished reviewing the third-party comments and was re-formatting the document to meet the budget requirements. He said the bidding was held off until the National Register nomination was completed and that the Commission would receive a comprehensive list and forms from the State within the next few months and then round out the project. Ms. Ruedig noted that becoming State-certified would open up a lot of opportunities for funding.

Mr. Mayer suggested that the HDC could become a Certified Local Government (CLG) community, and it was further discussed. Mr. Cracknell discussed workshops on windows and masonry mortars and thought it would be a good idea to continue that type of thing. Chairman Almeida agreed and thought the Commission could give presentations if someone had an idea.

Mr. Cracknell discussed using stipulations to address project changes during public hearings instead of approving petitions as represented, saying it was an important change that simplified things. He said that every project was audited by the Land Use Compliance Agent and that the Administrative Approvals had gone up 400% as a result. He thought more could be done by having a better relationship with the Inspection Department because there were still applicants who did not follow stipulations, and the Letter of Approval could be required to be posted with the approval. It was further discussed. The Commission also discussed the process of using a Disclosure Form for local realtors and Building Permit Application Fee issues. Mr. Cracknell noted that the Inspection Department and the HDC had taken a more liberal view of replacement in kind in the past, and it was further discussed.

Vice-Chair Gladhill brought up the Board of Adjustment's *de novo* hearings on HDC approvals, saying that the BOA members might not have the same experience as the HDC members or know why the HDC members had made particular decisions. It was discussed in detail.

The Board also discussed the City Council's funding of tools and HDC attendance requirements.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved, seconded and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Breault
HDC Recording Secretary

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