

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

EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

7:00 p.m.

**February 17, 2016
reconvened from February 3, 2016**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Joseph Almeida; Vice Chairman/Planning Board Representative William Gladhill; Members Dan Rawling, Vincent Lombardi, City Council Representative Nancy Pearson; Alternate Richard Shea

MEMBERS EXCUSED: John Wyckoff, Reagan Ruedig; Alternate John Mayer

ALSO PRESENT: Nick Cracknell, Principal Planner

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I. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

1. 687 Middle Street

*It was moved and seconded to **continue** the Administrative Approval to the March 2, 2016 meeting. The motion **passed** with a unanimous (6-0) vote.*

*Vice-Chair Gladhill made a motion to **postpone** Work Session A to the March 2, 2016 meeting. Councilor Pearson seconded the motion. The motion **passed** with a unanimous (6-0) vote.*

II. PUBLIC HEARING (OLD BUSINESS)

A. 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. *(This item was postponed at the February 3, 2016 meeting to the February 17, 2016 meeting.)*

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Jennifer Ramsey representing the applicant was present to speak to the petition. She reviewed the fencing gates and arch, and she also passed around a sample of the fence. Mr. Rawling said he still thought the site needed a more refined design because it was very prominent. Ms. Ramsey said the style had been used in several places in that area and was better

than the previous wooden understructure. She also noted that it was a private space, but Mr. Rawling said it was a very public view. Mr. Lombardi agreed, saying he preferred a more substantial material, like wrought iron. Mr. Shea said the renovation was fairly new and was seen in other applications throughout the District, and he thought the arch was appropriate.

Chairman Almeida said there was still a lack of detail in the drawing and asked whether the arch had a radius. They further discussed it. Chairman Almeida expressed concerns about where the mount would be centered, the wide spacing in the vertical bars not relating to the other fence, and the square rail that seemed to be segmented.

Robert Mittelholzer, President of the Harborplace Condominium Association, stated that the wrought iron material would be cost-prohibitive. He stressed the importance of privacy.

Chairman Almeida said the design could be simplified. Mr. Rawling agreed and suggested a design with gates as tall as the fence behind it. He also recommended removing the overhead clutter to make the design cleaner.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION

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

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

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

Vice-Chair Gladhill said the fence design was fine and felt that, although the fence would look better in wrought iron, it would enhance the area and not detract from it.

*The motion **failed to pass** (3-3), with Mr. Rawling, Mr. Lombardi and Chairman Almeida voting in opposition for the following reasons:*

- 1) It was felt by some of the commissioners that the fence design did not relate to its location. Additionally, although the fence was in a private space, it was in full public view.*
- 2) Some commissioners thought a more substantial material, such as iron, should be used which was more reflective of Portsmouth.*
- 3) Some commissioners felt the design was overly elaborate and should be simplified. It was suggested that the gates be as tall as the fence line behind it and that the arch should be eliminated.*
- 4) The fence plan lacked many details and the submitted drawings were too conceptual to fully assess the proposed fence design and location.*

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS (REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS)

1. Petition of **Hayscales Real Estate Trust, Robert Krieger, owner and trustee**, for property locate at **236 Union Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow demolition of

an existing structure (demolish existing building) and allow a new free standing structure (construct a new two story, two unit building) 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 February 3, 2016 meeting to the February 17, 2016 meeting.)*

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Richard Lo representing the applicant was present to speak to the petition. He summarized the packet and passed around samples of the proposed clapboards and roof and door trims.

Vice-Chair Gladhill expressed his surprise that Mr. Lo had a public hearing instead of doing a work session because the project was a demolition. He asked why there were not more photos of the building or research about who previously owned the building. He noted that the drawings were missing a lot of dimensions and technical components. Mr. Lombardi said he was glad Mr. Lo was bringing the front of the house up to the street because it was more consistent with the neighborhood, and he agreed that the building's history should be known before tearing it down.

Mr. Rawling said the design was identical to the one previously presented and that several of the Commission's comments were not addressed. He said the detailing on the front block of the building would resemble a shell of a building. He said he could not support the casement and lack of detail, and he felt that there should be trim elements on the façade and that the entryway's proportion should be adjusted. Mr. Shea said he was happy to see a contemporary design that had the streetscape massing. He said that the front façade's windows seemed small and the entrance was underwhelming, and he felt that the amount of pavement foundation on both sides of the house didn't give it a continuous residential look like the rest of the street had. Chairman Almeida still he was still excited about the project and liked the design but wanted to see some details worked on. He appreciated the contemporary interpretation of the context but wanted to make sure it was a true interpretation. He agreed that the front entrance was not welcoming enough, and he had issues with the drip line. He felt the spacing of the windows in the front was not quite right and that the windows were undersized.

Mr. Rawling suggested a work session. Vice-Chair Gladhill agreed, noting that the architect was ridding the historic gable home of any ornate details. He felt it was too minimalist and needed more detailing that tied into the neighborhood. He recommended double hung windows for the front instead of casings. He emphasized the need for more detailed drawings and photos.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION

Mr. Lo stated that there were other buildings on Middle Street that were closer to the ground and had similar window spacing as well. He addressed other concerns that the Commissioners had.

Rick Beckstead of 1395 Islington Street addressed the building's history and said it used to be the old Portsmouth Building, with three offices and a conventional type of broad space. No one else rose to speak, and Chairman Almeida closed the public hearing.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Vice-Chair Gladhill moved to **postpone** the application to the March 9, 2016 meeting as a work session/public hearing. Mr. Lombardi **seconded** the motion.*

*The motion **passed** with a unanimous (6-0) vote.*

2. Petition of Thirty Maplewood, LLC, owner, for property located at 36 Maplewood Avenue, wherein permission was requested to allow a new free standing structure (install free standing sign) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 125 as Lot 2 and lies within the CD 4, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Jennifer Ramsey on behalf of the owner was present to speak to the petition and noted that the sign was on the Maplewood Avenue side and would be the only free-standing sign.

Mr. Cracknell asked whether the sign had already been installed, and Ms. Ramsey said yes. He said the sign did not meet the dimensional setback and asked whether the sign would be moved. Ms. Ramsey said they would move it if necessary. She then explained the history of the sign and why it was installed without HDC approval. Mr. Cracknell stated that it wasn't implied that free-standing signs had to go to the HDC for approval unless there were exemptions, and if a new free-standing sign required BOA approval, it would not be exempt. He recommended that the Commission decide how free-standing signs would be called out in their Ordinance.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION

No one rose to speak, and 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 and advertised. Mr. Rawling **seconded** the motion.*

*The motion **passed** with a unanimous (6-0) vote.*

IV. 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 as Lot 1 and lies within the Municipal and Historic Districts. *(This applicant has asked to postpone review of the application to the March 2016 meeting.)*

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Vice-Chair Gladhill made a motion to **postpone** Work Session A to the March 2, 2016 meeting. Councilor Pearson seconded the motion.*

*The motion **passed** with a unanimous (6-0) vote*

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 property located at **127 & 137 High Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to existing structures (construct new building at rear of 137 High Street, construct roof deck at rear of 127 High Street, both with associated parking and landscaping) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said properties are shown on Assessor Plan 118 as Lots 20 and 21 and lies within the CD 4, Historic and Downtown Overlay Districts. *(This item was postponed at the January 13, 2016 meeting to the February 17, 2016 meeting.)*

Chairman Almeida recused himself from the petition and Vice-Chair Gladhill assumed his seat.

The owner Jim Lucy introduced Kevin Roy of Kevin Roy Builders and his designer Galen Doscher. Mr. Lucy gave a brief history of the project.

Mr. Doscher showed a Powerpoint presentation pertaining to the application. Mr. Lucy said that they received feedback from various parties, including the Portsmouth Advocates, the Moffatt-Ladd House, and the Colonial Dames, and that there were massing and encroachment concerns. He said they went through many versions to complement the surrounding areas.

Councilor Pearson asked what the new building's ridge height was. Mr. Doscher said it was less than four feet taller than the historic building in front of it. Mr. Rawling suggested that they make a two-gable piece on the facade to make it more consistent with surrounding homes and reduce the 'high wall' look of it. He said the building looked more massive because it was all in red, and he suggested that it be broken down into units with different colors. Mr. Shea said the scale looked smaller than previously presented and that the gable end made the building look shorter. He suggested that the dormers step in to break up the building's three-story appearance. He also said it looked like a hotel and didn't fit in with the structures on The Hill. Mr. Lombardi said the house was higher and more massive than the original house, and he didn't think the ridge of the new building should be above the height of the historic house in front of it.

Councilor Pearson asked whether the building was larger than the Moffatt-Ladd house. Mr. Doscher replied no. Vice-Chair Gladhill suggested that the applicant focus more on the style of the North End. Mr. Doscher said the North End context was more rugged than upscale. Vice-Chair Gladhill suggested a building with a converted barn feeling. They further discussed the roof and chimneys, the gable return, and the gambrel breaking up the façade.

Vice-Chair Gladhill said that Ms. Ruedig had sent an email regarding the project, stating that she thought the proposed building in the rear was too big and that it could not be taller and larger

than the primary historic buildings in front, especially in such a sensitive area. She also thought it was important to respect the gardens of the Moffatt-Ladd House, an important setting that should be preserved and needed a considerable setback from its property line.

Mr. Lucy submitted a letter from the neighbors, the LaCroixs, who were in favor of the petition.

Public Comment

Rick Beckstead of 1395 Islington Street said that the 3-story building didn't comply with the Character-based Zoning map. Mr. Cracknell said the building was 2-1/2 stories.

Kerry Vaultrot, Chair of the Portsmouth Advocates, gave some of the history of Portsmouth's black heritage relating to the project site and urged the Commission to pursue the archaeological survey. Her suggestions included lowering the height of the rear building and grade.

Joe Almeida of 103 and 105 High Street said he applauded Mr. Lucy for reaching out to the neighbors and did not think the height of the rear structure was excessive. He said Mr. Lucy had already given up a significant amount of lot coverage and emphasized that the structures in the back should be considered new structures that complemented the old ones.

No one else rose to speak, so Vice-Chair Gladhill closed the public comment session.

Mr. Doscher noted that the windows on the façade facing the Moffett-Ladd House were 8/8 windows and asked whether they should carry that look around to the street façade. Mr. Shea suggested 6/6 or 9/6 windows. Vice-Chair Gladhill asked Mr. Doscher to bring more photos to the next work session. The connection to the front building and whether or not the height should be lessened for visual impact were further discussed.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*It was moved and seconded to **continue** the work session to the March 9, 2016 meeting. The motion **passed** with a unanimous (6-0) vote.*

C. Work Session requested by **Thirty Maplewood, LLC, owner**, for property located at **46-64 Maplewood Avenue**, wherein permission was requested to allow a new free standing structure (construct new mixed use, 4 to 5 ½ story building) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 125 as Lot 2 and lies within the CD 4, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

Chairman Almeida resumed his seat.

Jennifer Ramsey, representing the owner was present to speak to the application. She distributed additional notes and dimensions to the Commission. She gave a brief history of the project and said they would have to apply for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) due to the building's height.

Mr. Lombardi asked whether the project consisted of individual buildings, and Ms. Ramsey said it was one building but they were trying to break it up by having it connect internally. She further described each part of the building and the connections.

Chairman Almeida asked Ms. Ramsey what the applicant's interpretation of the previous massing discussion was. Ms. Ramsey replied that the comments were well-received, with the exception of the columns supporting the entry awning. She said the bay was dropped all the way to the ground so that the awning would swing around. They could change the color of the green clapboards, and they omitted the firewall and reworked the elevations of Building A. Due to the mixed review of the brick penthouse structure, she said it was changed to a metal penthouse. Ms. Ramsey said they also changed the roof of the corner building to metal.

Chairman Almeida said the building had to step down gradually because it was next to a very large building. They further discussed it, and the comments from the Commissioners were that it was important to have the corner higher because it was a gateway, it was preferred that the building be addressed as one building rather than 5-6 buildings, and it was preferred that the façade be broken up and made contemporary. Additional comments were that the building could be taller and didn't have to be scaled with a mansard and that the building's sculpture and modulation were nice compared to the nearby block buildings.

Vice-Chair Gladhill asked Ms. Ramsey to bring a rendering of the view in front of the Academy Building for the next meeting. He said he was okay with the overall massing but thought some parts of the façade didn't work. He suggested continuing the roofline to a straight parapet. Mr. Lombardi agreed that the building needed to be stepped down to the neighborhood and suggested using a bigger amount of other materials, including glass. Councilor Pearson said the area would eventually have new buildings and would make a nice transition between brick and contemporary. Mr. Shea said the masses did not have to be different architectural styles.

The Commission discussed how to make the area more pedestrian-friendly and also referred to contemporary buildings within a historic context, like Boston's Nike Building and Portwalk.

Public Comment

Rick Beckstead of 1395 Islington Street stated that the building would be the last to have the CUP granted due to the character-based zoning and that it was situated toward the more historical part of Portsmouth. He said he preferred that the building be 2-1/2 stories to three stories and also noted that future buildings would have to be less than 40 feet.

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

Chairman Almeida advised Ms. Ramsey to identify the CUP components for the next meeting.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*It was moved and seconded to **continue** the work session to the March meeting. The motion **passed** with a unanimous (6-0) vote.*

D. Petition of **Harbour Hill Condominium Association, owner**, for property located at **77 Hanover Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace composite siding, trim, and panels, re-flash masonry veneer walls, window and door openings) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 118 as Lot 29 and lies within the C 5, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

Arthur Carakatsane, owner and President of the Harbour Hill Condominium Association, was present and introduced the project engineer Tim Little of Noblin and Associates. Mr. Carakatsane briefly discussed the building's materials and said Mr. Little would discuss the technical aspects.

Mr. Little discussed the hardi panel and trim materials of the white bays and said they were not holding up well due to water infiltration and paint failure. They wanted to replace them with a PVC panel and trim system that would match the aesthetics of the corner bays. He explained how it would be done and showed photos of other windows as examples.

Mr. Rawling asked how low the street level was. Mr. Little said the bays stopped at the ground floor level but the storefronts on Hanover Street would be the same material, so the upper floors would not be noticed. They discussed the fasteners, whether to paint the Azek, and whether to replace the clapboards with a waterproof system or use an alternate cladding system that would change the aesthetics of the building. They also discussed metal panel systems. Vice-Chair Gladhill said he would need to see visual examples of what it would look like on the building.

Mr. Rawling suggested that Mr. Carakatsane hire a designer to help with materials. Mr. Little asked whether the Commission would be in favor of Alucobond, noting that it wouldn't have fastening issues like clapboard would. Councilor Pearson asked whether they would keep the same color scheme, and Mr. Little replied yes.

Public Comment

Rick Beckstead of 1395 Islington Street recommended that Azek be used instead of the hardi panel because it was more durable.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*It was moved and seconded that the work session be **continued** to the March meeting. The motion passed with a unanimous (6-0) vote.*

V. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business to come before the Commission requiring action.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

*It was moved, seconded and passed unanimously (6-0) to **adjourn** the meeting at 11:00 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Breault
HDC Recording Secretary

These minutes were approved at the Historic District Commission meeting on March 9, 2016.