

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

6:30 p.m.

**May 11, 2016
reconvened from May 4, 2016**

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

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Alternate Richard Shea

ALSO PRESENT: Nick Cracknell, Principal Planner

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City Council Representative Nancy Pearson was not present and arrived later in the evening.

Chairman Almeida read the petitions with requests to postpone into the record. Motions were made on each one and are noted under the respective petitions.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. April 6, 2016 (*Postponed at the May 4, 2016 meeting to the May 11, 2016 meeting.*)

Mr. Cracknell clarified the issue that prevented the approval of the minutes at the previous meeting. No corrections were necessary.

*Mr. Lombardi made a motion to **approve** the April 6, 2016 minutes as presented and Ms. Ruedig seconded.*

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

II. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

- A. 28 Dennett Street

Mr. Cracknell stated that he was missing some information and would address the petition later on in the meeting. (See Page 11)

- B. 135 Bow Street

The project designer Jennifer Ramsey on behalf of the applicant stated that they were requesting general approval for any areas of window trim on the building that needed replacement. Mr. Wyckoff said that as long as the details were the same, he felt that the applicant should be allowed to do the repairs as needed. Mr. Cracknell recommended a stipulation that all replacement trim with Azek be field painted and match the existing profile.

*It was moved and seconded to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the petition, with the following stipulation:*

- 1. That all replacement trim with Azek shall be field painted and shall match the existing profile.*

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

C. 91 Lafayette Road (*Postponed at the May 4, 2016 meeting to the May 11, 2016 meeting.*)

Mr. Cracknell stated that the issue of the egress windows remained as presented in the window schedule, and all other field changes were approved. He said there were three options presented: 1) the existing trim on the lower windows would be removed and the windows would be widened; 2) shutters would be used; and 3) the lower window would be removed and replaced with a similar size window to be the same width as the dormer window.

Vice-Chair Gladhill referenced the letter from the contractor Steve Entenmann, noting that usually when things had not gone to plan, applicants used the Commission's wording or the ordinance as justification for going forward. He said the letter had nothing about how the windows could fit into the District, and instead seemed about blame.

Mr. Wyckoff said a mistake had been made and recommended that the change be allowed to stand, considering that the windows were egress-capable and that the family would be inconvenienced. Mr. Rawling said he would prefer Option 3, the enlarged lower window. Vice-Chair Gladhill said that removing the original window sizing and installing large windows detracted from the historic character of the house. Ms. Ruedig said she didn't feel that any of the options satisfied the problem. Mr. Lombardi said he agreed with Ms. Ruedig and noted that the Commission was presented with many changes after the fact. He said that living in the District was a privilege that came with responsibility, and the District was one of the largest economic forces in Portsmouth. He said the more that the District was corrupted, the more the economic engine was diminished. He stated that he preferred to see the upper windows replaced.

Ms. Ruedig asked the project architect Tom Emerson about the statement that the home was not part of the District when it was bought, and Mr. Emerson said it was true. Mr. Cracknell argued that the applicant went before the Commission with full knowledge that they were in the District.

Mr. Mayer asked what would happen if the Commission rejected all three options. Chairman Almeida said the windows would have to be ripped out and replaced, and if the applicant refused, they would appeal to the Board of Adjustment. Mr. Emerson noted that the applicant never asked permission to install egress windows.

Chairman Almeida said he fully agreed with Mr. Wyckoff and asked the Commission for a final decision.

Mr. Wyckoff made a motion, for the purposes of discussion, to leave the windows as they were and Ms. Ruedig seconded.

Mr. Wyckoff reiterated that the contractor made a mistake and that the decision to leave the windows alone was a kinder thing to do for the family. He also noted that the view would only be seen briefly from driving on Lafayette Road. Vice-Chair Gladhill argued that the view was quite prominent. Ms. Ruedig said that the issue was the Commission keeping their decisions and what they did as a Commission consistent. She noted that the drawings that were approved were not constructed and said the house was an important one. Chairman Almeida said there was a differentiation between new and old, that the dormers were not original to the structure, and that the windows just continued the same language. He said he didn't recall ever forcing a homeowner to rip windows out of his house, especially with a gray area of whether or not the windows were on the window schedule. He felt that nothing underhanded was done.

Mr. Rawling asked what the dimensional difference would be between the upper and lower windows if a sash replacement window was put on the lower windows. Mr. Emerson said it would be five inches.

*Mr. Rawling made a motion to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the application, using the **option 3** of installing a sash replacement in the lower windows, with the following stipulations:*

- 1) That a half sash shall be used on the lower windows with a 2/1 muntin pattern, SDL to match upper floor window style; and*
- 2) A detailed sketch shall be submitted to the Planning Department prior to installation.*

Ms. Ruedig seconded the motion.

Mr. Rawling said that five inches was a big difference and, though it didn't go back to the original approval where the windows matched, it came closer than anything else presented in the package. Vice-Chair Gladhill said he would not vote for it because there were no drawings. Mr. Wyckoff disagreed, saying that a sash kit replacement would suffice.

Ms. Ruedig said she thought it was a reasonable way to mediate the problem but felt that it was difficult to oppose a design change without getting an okay from the contractor. She asked whether the contractor could get back to Mr. Cracknell, and Mr. Cracknell agreed.

*The motion **passed** by a vote of 6-1 with Vice-Chair Gladhill voting in opposition.*

D. 114 Mechanic Street

Mr. Cracknell said the applicant wanted to replace the clapboard siding with cedar shingles and modify the window casing and trim details around the existing windows on the side and rear to match nearby historic structures.

The applicant Clayton Emery was present to speak to the petition. Mr. Lombardi asked Mr. Emery whether there was evidence of the trim on the windows that existed before. Mr. Emery said there wasn't, noting that they were just flat 3-2/3" boards. He said the casings were good but the surrounding was rotten. He said he found a standard casing at Strawberry Banke with the same width but with a narrower look. They further discussed it. Mr. Emery offered to install a casing so that the Commission could look at it. Ms. Ruedig asked how old the house was. Mr. Emery said it was built after 1813 but probably made from two of the oldest parts of a structure from the 1600s. Chairman Almeida confirmed that Mr. Emery would build a mockup that looked like the one at 210 Gates Street, and Mr. Emery agreed.

Mr. Lombardi asked why Mr. Emery wanted to replace clapboards with shingles. Mr. Emery said he liked the look better and also noted that there was brick foundation on the front and the fieldstone on the side.

Mr. Wyckoff noted that there were too many important changes for the petition to be an administrative approval and thought a site walk was necessary.

Mr. Emery decided that he would remove the request for the shingles and focus on the window approval.

*It was **moved** and seconded that Mr. Wyckoff, Mr. Shea, and Mr. Lombardi would view the window mockup. The motion **passed** by a unanimous (7-0) vote.*

E. 428 Pleasant Street

Mr. Cracknell stated a brief history of the petition and said it was to approve the removal of the chimney above the roofline and replace the historic brick with restoration brick.

The owner, Jay Prewitt was present to speak to the petition. He had a sample of the brick that matched the other chimney.

Ms. Ruedig asked whether the brick was soft like historic brick or hard like modern brick. Mr. Pruitt said it was a waterstruck brick made of clay that degraded over time.

Mr. Wyckoff said that the Commission had forced Mr. Pruitt to use the existing bricks, and the architect had said he'd use the foundation bricks, so the Commission let it go. However, Mr. Wyckoff said the bricks were internal ones and should not have been used for outdoor bricks.

*Mr. Wyckoff made a motion to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the petition by accepting the removal of the existing chimney and replacing it with the new brick. Mr. Mayer seconded the motion.*

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

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS (OLD BUSINESS)

1. Petition of **Stephen Lichtenstein and Karen Jacoby, owners**, for property located at **35 Wibird Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (remove and replace seven windows) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 134 as Lot 38 and lies within the GRA and Historic Districts. *(This item was postponed at the May 4, 2016 meeting to the May 11, 2016 meeting.)*

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*It was moved, seconded and unanimously **passed** (7-0) to postpone the petition to the June 1, 2016 meeting.*

2. (Work Session/Public Hearing) Petition of **303 Islington Street, LLC, owner**, for property located at **303 Islington Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (construct third floor gable dormers, construct second story on rear façade) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 144 as Lot 11 and lies within the General Residence C and Historic Districts. *(This item was postponed at the May 4, 2016 meeting to the May 11, 2016 meeting.)*

Work Session

Jeremiah Johnson of McHenry Architecture on behalf of the applicant stated that the minor changes were the result of the previous work session. He briefly described the changes.

Mr. Rawling said the setback set off the structure just right. Chairman Almeida said that the elevation and rendering for the stairway and landing seemed different, and he asked which one was correct. Mr. Cracknell stated that Sheet 11 was the correct elevation.

There was no public comment, and they went into the public hearing.

SPEAKING TO THE COMMISSION

Mr. Johnson stated that the applicant wanted a recess to the two exterior walls to offset the new construction from the existing construction and noted that the other items were self-explanatory and had been discussed during the work sessions.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE COMMISSION

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 as presented, with the following stipulations:*

- 1) Sheet 11 shows the correct elevation and shall be revised as presented.*
- 2) All other plan sheets shall be revised to reflect the revised renderings submitted and presented at the May 11, 2016 meeting. They shall be submitted and approved by the Planning Department prior to construction.*

Ms. Ruedig seconded the motion.

Mr. Wyckoff stated that they were minor changes to an already-approved building and that the petition would preserve the integrity of the District and maintain its special character, especially considering the new construction next door.

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

At this point, City Council Representative Nancy Pearson arrived at the meeting.

IV. WORK SESSIONS (OLD BUSINESS)

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 to a time indefinite.)*

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*It was moved, seconded and **passed** unanimously (7-0) to postpone the petition to a time uncertain.*

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 continued at the April 13, 2016 meeting to the May 11, 2016 meeting.)*

Chairman Almeida recused himself Vice-Chair Gladhill assumed his seat.

Work Session

The owner Jim Lucy stated that he had three different revisions and two additional design concepts beyond what was included in the package. He reviewed the changes and showed diagrams of the three building concepts, and he distributed hard copies of original renderings. Mr. Lucy asked for the Commission's feedback regarding the three concepts.

The Commission decided to focus on the new building first. Mr. Wyckoff said he preferred the concept with the split dormers and the actual shed roof. Ms. Ruedig said she didn't know whether she favored one over the other and said she was still hesitant about the massing but appreciated that the roof line had been brought down. She asked Mr. Lucy whether he was still working with the Colonial Dames of America and the Portsmouth Advocates. Mr. Lucy said he was and noted that he had pulled back one building to address their concerns. Ms. Ruedig said she preferred the other two concepts instead of the 'House of 7 Gables' concept. Mr. Mayer asked Mr. Lucy whether he considered modifying the grade change toward the back of the lot. Mr. Lucy said he was concerned about the parking, and they further discussed it.

Mr. Rawling said the gable roof forms reflected the character of the surrounding neighborhood a lot more but thought they felt a bit unbalanced with the second floor overhanging the garages and bays. He asked whether the two top gable supports could be brought down, and Mr. Lucy said he could consider it. Mr. Rawling also suggested that the bays be angled to soften the boxy look. He thought the window treatments could be differentiated. He said he preferred the gable option but didn't care for the boxiness of the bays. Mr. Lombardi said he agreed, noting that the gable image tended to break the building up but that the boxes seemed to be hanging in the air. City Council Representative said she thought the gable version would be understood by the average person to be more historic. Ms. Ruedig said she thought the gable approach could work but suggested reflecting the gentler angle of the gables of the historic house next to it. Mr. Rawling suggested eliminating the panels on the side of the glazing to lighten up the bays.

Mr. Mayer asked whether the cantilever was a way to maximize volume and also suggested recessing the garage doors, but Mr. Lucy thought parking would be an issue. Mr. Cracknell said he thought the issue was whether the right section of the building could be dropped to help the massing of the building. Mr. Wyckoff suggested getting rid of the multi-cantilever look and also said he agreed with Mr. Rawling about the box bays. He recommended that the bays be dropped entirely to have just 2-3 windows. He said he didn't feel that the building was massive. Acting Chair Gladhill said he wasn't in favor of the continuous shed dormer and liked the gable version. He said he felt that the gable was not contrary to the architecture in Portsmouth but was something that had not been seen in decades.

The Commission then discussed the red historic structure and the addition. Acting Chair Gladhill asked whether the second story was brought in. Mr. Lucy said they wanted to go wider for more kitchen space. Mr. Wyckoff asked whether the chimney would be eliminated, and Mr. Lucy agreed. Mr. Wyckoff said he didn't support losing the chimney. Mr. Mayer and Ms. Ruedig agreed. Ms. Ruedig said the chimney was an historic part of the structure. She said if a second floor was added to the back piece, she'd prefer to see the footprint remain and the

ridgeline dropped a bit. Acting Chair Gladhill recommended that the original addition be kept because it was unique. Mr. Lombardi said he agreed with everything that had been said. Mr. Rawling asked whether Mr. Lucy had space in the third-floor gable addition. Mr. Lucy said the third floor space was usable for office or storage space but wasn't critical. Mr. Rawling said the attached shed concept might be more in character than the gable shown.

Public Comment

Joseph Almeida of 103 and 105 High Street said he lived one door down and thought Mr. Lucy had shown great patience. He said the project had gone through a lot of changes in response to various comments. He said he appreciated the gable design and the fact that the ridge had been brought down, and he believed that the gable addition was a common addition and lessened the impact of the new structure.

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

Mr. Lombardi said the May 13 letter from Mike and Edie Lacroix that was sent to the Commission needed to be acknowledged.

Mr. Cracknell confirmed that the height of the new structure was in contrast to the historic structure and that the preference was for the gable version, which went above the height of the historic building.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*It was decided to **continue** review of the application at the June meeting.*

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. *(This item was postponed at the April 13, 2016 meeting to the May 11, 2016 meeting.)*

Chairman Almeida resumed his seat.

Jennifer Ramsey of SOMMA Studios on behalf of the applicant asked for the Commission's reactions to the 3-dimensional renderings shown.

Chairman Almeida said he thought it was exciting. Vice-Chair Gladhill and Mr. Wyckoff said they didn't care for it. Mr. Rawling said it had a lot of good things but he didn't love it. Mr. Mayer said he felt that the step progression rising to the rounded corner may be too extreme and suggested stepping down the façade at the corner and lowering it a story so that it didn't feel as massive. Ms. Ruedig said she thought it was interesting but felt that the top floor of the curved part could be brought back. Mr. Wyckoff said he wasn't against the design concept but felt that it didn't relate to Portsmouth and looked more European. He agreed that the top floor should be

pulled back a bit and liked the fact that there was only one projecting bay window over a sidewalk on the Deer Street side. He thought it was nice the way the wider building was set back and thought the overall concept was good. Vice-Chair Gladhill said he liked the building itself because it was unique but he didn't like it for the District.

Chairman Almeida referenced an earlier discussion about massing and the importance of recognizing that Portwalk had a high mass and that buildings had to start stepping down, and he appreciated the way it was done on Maplewood Avenue. Mr. Lombardi noted that if a building was a quality building in 2016, it would be historic in fifty years, and he had to respect the current architecture as being part of the fabric of Portsmouth. Mr. Rawling said he supported it in general and liked the texture relief on the building and the way the scaling elements worked. He felt that the building was at its weakest at the tall end and should stand proud and have a lot of detail. He suggested more traditional materials, especially on the lower levels, and said some transitional elements on the curved piece could be refined. Chairman Almeida said he liked the smooth finish but realized that, in reality, it would be segmented. He thought the bays pulling out and the delicate rails were nice touches. Ms. Ramsey asked about removing a floor and a half, and they discussed it. Mr. Rawling said he thought the building looked out of place downtown. City Councilor Pearson said the Deer Street elevation made Portwalk look better. A garden roof was discussed.

Mr. Wyckoff asked about the current zoning requirements and Conditional Use Permit requirements. Mr. Cracknell replied that character-based zoning was in place for the parcel but didn't allow for a building that tall. He said the applicant was still vested under the submitted site plan. They further discussed it.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*It was decided to **continue** review of the application at the June meeting.*

At that point in the meeting, Ms. Ruedig left.

D. Work Session requested by **Michael De la Cruz, owner**, for property located at **75 Congress Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (rebuild historic parapets, add series of gabled dormers, add series of roof walkways and decks, add series of windows) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 117 and Lot 5 and lies within the CD 5, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts. (*Applicant has asked to postpone to the June 2016 meeting.*)

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*It was moved, seconded, and **passed** unanimously to postpone the application to the June meeting.*

E. Work Session requested by **St. John's Church, owner**, for property located at **100 & 101 Chapel Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow demolition of an existing structure (remove and rebuild retaining wall and stairs, remove existing shed) and allow exterior renovations (resurface and re-stripe pavement) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 106 as Lots 2, 60, 61 & 63 and lies within the CD 4, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts. *(This item was continued at the April 13, 2016 meeting to the May 11, 2016 meeting.)*

Parishioners Doug Greene and Gary Simpkins were present to speak to the petition. Mr. Greene said they selected a product with different sizes of stones and a rough texture that would look good against the existing stone wall. The Commission said they liked it.

Mr. Greene said they wanted to renovate the parking area on the Tebbetts house next door and said there was an existing barn they wanted to replace with a smaller utility barn to allow a bigger paved surface for handicapped parking. Mr. Wyckoff said he was hesitant to remove that structure and suggested a site walk to examine whether or not the building had historical context. Mr. Greene asked for recommendations about a parking area for handicapped access. Vice-Chair Gladhill said they could have a subcommittee visit the barn and if it was deemed historic, it could be turned to allow for handicapped parking. It was decided that the subcommittee would view the structure the following Tuesday at noon. Vice-Chair Gladhill asked that photos be taken and sent to Mr. Cracknell.

Chairman Almeida asked about the shed. Mr. Greene said they used taller proportioned windows and a steeper roof to create a tall-looking building. Vice-Chair Gladhill asked whether the proposed 2/2 window was also the house window pattern. Mr. Simpkins said one of them was 6/6 and the other was 2/1. Mr. Rawling said he appreciated the shed design and asked what the foundation was. Mr. Greene said it was a concrete slab foundation. Chairman Almeida thought the barn structure was much smaller than the previous photo shown. Vice-Chair Gladhill asked that more photos of the shed be provided if it was deemed historic.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*It was decided to **continue** review of the meeting to the June meeting. The applicant indicated that he may move forward with a work session/public hearing.*

F. Work Session requested by **355 Pleasant Street, LLC, owner**, for property located at **355 Pleasant Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow a new free standing structure (construct a two unit dwelling) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 103 as Lot 64 and lies within the General Residence B and Historic Districts. *(Applicant has asked to postpone to the June 2016 meeting.)*

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*It was moved, seconded, and **passed** unanimously to postpone the application to the June meeting.*

V. WORK SESSION (NEW BUSINESS)

G. Petition of **Shaines and McEachern Co. Portsmouth, LLC, owner**, for property located at **25 Maplewood Avenue**, wherein permission is requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (construct new storefront entry, install ADA lift, machine room, new stair and entry space) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 126 as Lot 2 and lies within the CD 5, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

The designer Brandon Holben was present on behalf of the applicant and distributed two sheets of diagrams. He said Option 2 was further developed because the tenants wanted an accessible front entry.

The Commissioners all preferred Option 2. Vice-Chair Gladhill recommended keeping the addition to the 1970s look. Mr. Rawling said he liked the height, texture, and change in pattern and the emphasized entrance. Mr. Lombardi said he wanted to see the design in relation to the buildings around it, and Mr. Holben agreed. Mr. Holben noted that there would be landscaping, and he then reviewed examples of materials.

Vice-Chair Gladhill asked if the current occupant would stay, and Mr. Holben said the building was empty and the current sign was gone.

Chairman Almeida said he thought the applicant was ready for a public hearing and asked Mr. Holben to bring more details and information on size.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

The Commission recommended a public hearing at a future date.

F. 28 Dennett Street (Administrative Approval)

Mr. Cracknell addressed the Administrative Approval that was postponed from the beginning of the meeting. He said he could not find the drawing but knew that it matched the detail.

*Mr. Rawling made a motion to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the petition with the following stipulation:*

- 1. That the two windows shall have the same profile, style and details as the previously approved windows.*

*Mr. Wyckoff seconded the motion. The motion **passed** by a unanimous (7-0) vote.*

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Demolition review discussion

There was no discussion.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

At 10:15 p.m., it was moved, seconded, and passed to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Breault
HDC Recording Secretary

These minutes were approved at the Historic District Commission meeting on June 1, 2016.