

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

EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

6:30 p.m.

September 5, 2018

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Vincent Lombardi; Vice Chairman Jon Wyckoff; City Council Representative Doug Roberts; Reagan Ruedig, Martin Ryan, Dan Rawling; and Alternate Cyrus Beer

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Richard Shea

ALSO PRESENT: Nick Cracknell, Principal Planner, Planning Department

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Chairman Lombardi noted that Work Session A was asked to be postponed by the applicant.

*It was moved, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote to **postpone** Work Session A to the October 3 meeting.*

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. August 1, 2018

*It was moved, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote (7-0) to **approve** the August 1, 2018 minutes as amended.*

II. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

Note: The Administrative Approval items were reviewed in the following order:

*It was moved, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote (7-0) to **postpone** review of Items B, E, G and I until after the less-complicated items were reviewed.*

The Commission then reviewed Items C, F, and H. *It was moved, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote (7-0) to **approve** Items C, F, and H.*

The Commission reviewed Item D, from which Ms. Ruedig recused herself. *It was moved, seconded, and passed by a vote of 6-0 to **approve** Item D.*

The Commission then reviewed the remainder of the items.

A. 135 Market Street, Unit C

The item was withdrawn by the applicant.

B. 25 Maplewood Avenue

The project architect Carla Goodknight and Steve Wilson were present on behalf of the applicant and reviewed some changes and clarifications pertaining to dormers, doors, grill patterns, louvers, windows, rooftop, and material selections. In response to questions from Mr. Rawling, Ms. Goodknight said the setback on the connecting dormer piece was six inches and was an Azek panel. Mr. Rawling advised that they match the shingles on the roof instead and receded visually as much as possible. Ms. Goodknight showed the Commission a color sample. The window muntins were also discussed.

Mr. Wilson stated that their mockup panel was finished, noting that some of the Commission members had asked for less flash on the brick but that he preferred not to eliminate the flash entirely. The Commission said that some of them would go on site to look at the panel. Mr. Rawling said he had already seen the panel and supported it. He recommended that the window framing for the storefront be heavier to give it some contrast and more emphasis. The Commission said the storefront profile was fine.

*Vice-Chair Wyckoff moved to **approve** the Administrative Approval Item, with the following stipulation: The recessed panel between the dormers shall be sided with the approved composite slate shingles.*

Ms. Ruedig seconded. The motion passed by unanimous vote, 7-0.

C. 100 Market Street, Suite 102

*It was moved, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote (7-0) to **approve** the request.*

D. 75 Humphreys Court

Ms. Ruedig recused herself from the vote.

*It was moved, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote (6-0) to **approve** the request.*

E. 46 Maplewood Avenue

The project designer Jennifer Ramsey was present on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Cracknell verified that the only request was to increase the building height by two feet to accommodate the drainage improvements. Mr. Rawling said it would improve the building and add more interest to it. Ms. Ruedig said it was a better compromise.

*Mr. Rawling moved to **approve** the request as presented, and City Council Representative Roberts seconded. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote (7-0).*

F. 73 State Street

*It was moved, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote (7-0) to **approve** the request.*

G. 180 Middle Street

Mr. Cracknell stated that the applicant wanted to add four replacement windows to the carriage house and three vents to the exterior wall. The applicant Charlie Seefried was present and said he also needed two vents to the driveway side of the house that would be field painted to match. He submitted samples of an old window and a replacement window. In response to the Commission's questions, Mr. Seefried said the two front windows were egress and that he was willing to do one egress on the front and one on the side instead. It was decided to have both egress windows on the front, with wavy glass.

*Vice-Chair Wyckoff moved to **approve** the request, with the following stipulation: The front replacement windows on the carriage house shall be wooden egress windows and use wavy glass.*

*Mr. Ryan seconded. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote, 7-0*

H. 98 Court Street, Unit 2

*It was moved, seconded, and **passed** by unanimous vote (7-0 to **approve** the request, with the following stipulation: Paint the storm door to match either the door casing or the front door.*

I. 98 Court Street, Unit 2

Mr. Cracknell said the applicant wanted to replace wood gutters with aluminum ones on three sides of the building. The applicant Steve Forte was present to speak to the request. The Commission suggested that the door be painted to match the house and that the storm door be either black or white to match the main door. Mr. Rawling said he would not support aluminum gutters on the historic building, and Ms. Ruedig suggested fiberglass or AZEK gutters. Vice-Chair Wyckoff felt that aluminum gutters would work as long as they were field painted or matched the trim. Mr. Ryan said the gutters were an architectural feature of the home and that an aluminum gutter wouldn't give the same appearance. Chairman Lombardi agreed and recommended fiberglass or other materials that had the right profile. Mr. Cracknell suggested approving a fiberglass gutter as a placeholder so that the applicant could move forward.

Ms. Ruedig moved to approve the request, with the following stipulation: The proposed gutters shall be either wood, fiberglass, or PVC and match the profile of the existing wood gutters.

*Vice-Chair Wyckoff seconded. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote, 7-0.*

III. CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL - REQUEST FOR EXTENSION

1. Petition of **46 Maplewood Avenue, LLC, owner**, for property located at **46-64 Maplewood Avenue**, wherein a 1-year extension of a Conditional Use Permit and a Certificate of Approval granted by the Historic District Commission on August 2, 2017 was requested to allow a new free standing structure (construct 3 ½ story mixed use 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 Character District 4 (CD 4), Downtown Overlay, and Historic Districts.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Vice-Chair Wyckoff moved to **grant** the Request for Extension, and Ms. Ruedig seconded.*

Vice-Chair Wyckoff stated that it was traditional for the Commission to allow residents time to complete their plans by granting a one-year extension.

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

IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS (NEW BUSINESS)

1. Petition of **Riversedge Condominium Association, owner** and **Edward Beckett, applicant**, for property located at **117 Bow Street Suite, 5A**, wherein permission was requested to allow the removal and replacement of windows and doors on both water and street elevations and add a new awning system as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 106 as Lot 57A and lies within the Character District 4 (CD 4), Downtown Overlay, and Historic Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

The project designer Jennifer Ramsey was present on behalf of the applicant to speak to the petition. She said they wanted to replace the door and window system with three French doors of equal size. She said they would also replace a single window with two double windows, add one single window, and replace the commercial door with a residential one.

Chairman Lombardi reminded Ms. Ramsey that they had discussed keeping the arched top over the windows on the first floor. Ms. Ramsey said the applicant decided to go with the simple soldier course vertical option. She also said that the awning system was a custom one.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR, AGAINST THE PETITION

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

DISCUSSION OF THE COMMISSION

Mr. Rawling said the project was consistent with the special characteristics of the neighborhood and surrounding properties, and several other Commissioners agreed. Mr. Rawling said the project would complement and enhance the architectural characteristics of the building and that the new design of the copper awning would be an addition of high quality. Chairman Lombardi said the building's value would also be enhanced because an uncomfortable office space would be made into a residential one.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Ms. Ruedig moved to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the petition as presented, and Mr. Ryan seconded. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote, 7-0.*

2. Petition of **Potter-Schwartz Family Revocable Trust of 2013, M. F. Schwartz & S. J. Potter trustees, owners**, for property located at **213 South Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow the replacement of three existing windows on the rear of the structure with new wood windows as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 111 as Lot 38 and lies within the General Residence B and Historic Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

The property owner and applicant Mike Schwartz was present and reviewed the petition, noting that the existing windows were not very old. He said that only one window was a casement window and that the others were all double windows.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR, AGAINST THE PETITION

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

DISCUSSION OF THE COMMISSION

Ms. Ruedig stated that it was a fine window replacement and that its design was consistent with the addition on the back of the house. She said the project would conserve and enhance the property's value and would be compatible with the current design. Mr. Ryan said it was just a simple replacement or recent windows with new windows, and Mr. Beer agreed. Mr. Rawling said he didn't find any historical significance in the existing windows and felt that the design of the new windows related to the architectural value of the existing structure. City Council Representative Roberts and Chairman Lombardi agreed.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Ms. Ruedig moved to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the application as presented, and Mr. Ryan seconded. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote, 7-0.*

3. *(Work Session/Public Hearing)* Petition of **Janet Zerr and David Simpson, owners**, for property located at **65 Rogers Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow the demolition of an existing garage, the construction of a new attached garage, the conversion of a 3-season porch with open deck above to a two-story structure, new third floor dormer and the expansion of an existing one story entry as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is located on Assessor Map 115 as Lot 2 and lies within the Mixed Residential Office and Historic Districts.

WORK SESSION

Juli MacDonald of DeStefano Architects and the applicant Janet Zerr were present. Ms. MacDonald reviewed the items that were discussed at the previous work session, including the new fence location and gate selection, the update of two front doors, trim profiles for the dormers and garage, third-floor dormer adjustment, and windows.

The windows were discussed in detail, as well as which original windows had wavy glass and whether or not the replacements should have it. Vice-Chair Wyckoff said he preferred not to see aluminum storm windows on the front. The new dormer was discussed. Mr. Ryan said the higher trim on the dormer worked. The porch was discussed. Mr. Beer said he didn't care for the new porch because it looked like an add-on at the top of the stairs. The faux door's functionality was discussed. Ms. MacDonald said it had storage within, and Ms. Ruedig said she thought it was an acceptable compromise because the look of the porch would be preserved.

The porch posts and columns were discussed as well as whether or not the porch should be infilled. After much discussion, the Commission said the porch could stay as it was.

There was no public comment.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Ms. MacDonald re-introduced herself and reviewed the petition that incorporated elements discussed and agreed upon during the work session.

The Commission noted that wave glass was normally included in every front window. Ms. MacDonald agreed that the six front windows would have wavy glass.

The roof color was discussed. Mr. Rawling suggested that the silver birch color be replaced with weathered wood colors, noting that the architectural shingle would bring more texture to the roof. The Commission agreed. Ms. MacDonald said she would consider weathered wood tones.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR, AGAINST THE PETITION

Ms. MacDonald submitted to the Commission a letter from a neighbor who approved the project. No one else rose to speak, and Chairman Lombardi closed the public hearing.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Mr. Rawling moved to **grant** the Certificate of Approval, with the following stipulations:*

- 1. The 10 front windows on front façade shall use wavy glass.*
- 2. The rear decking shall be mahogany.*
- 3. The roof shingles shall be of a weathered wood tone or an alternative shingle may be submitted for Administrative Approval.*
- 4. A piece of flat trim (1' X 5") shall be added between the existing and proposed porch windows.*

*Mr. Ryan seconded. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote, 7-0.*

Mr. Rawling said the project would conserve and enhance the property's values and values of surrounding homes, and that it would complement the architectural and historic character of the house and the District as well as maintain its special character.

4. Petition of **Islington Street, LLC, (CVS Pharmacy), owner**, for property located at **674 Islington Street** wherein permission was requested to allow the replacement of 3 existing internally, neon-illuminated wall signs with 3 internally, LED-illuminated wall signs and the replacement of 1 existing window vinyl with similar design as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is located on Assessor Map 155 as Lot 3 and lies within the Character District 4-W (CD 4-W), and Historic Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

The applicant's representative Gary McCoy of Poyant Signs in New Bedford, MA was present to speak to the petition. He said they wanted to replace three existing signs that were internally illuminated with neon with the new CVS logo sign. He said the sign would be smaller in square footage and height and would use a low-voltage LED fixture instead of neon.

In response to the Commission's questions, Mr. McCoy said the graphics on the windows would be replaced with the new logo design and minor patching or repairing would be done if necessary. He said they would not repaint the building.

Chairman Lombardi said that internally-illuminated signs were generally not allowed in the Historic District. Mr. McCoy pointed out that the footprint of the signage would be reduced, there was internally-lit signage in surrounding stores, and CVS has no freestanding sign on the street. He said the lightning behind the sign would not be any brighter.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR, AGAINST THE PETITION

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

DISCUSSION OF THE COMMISSION

The Commission said the building used to be part of the Frank Jones complex, even though the store's façade was modern, and noted that the City was doing a major upgrade of Islington Street and trying to comply more with the District, which applied to internally-illuminated signs. He said that a more sedate sign would be appropriate. Vice-Chair Wyckoff said that, no matter what happened, the color and logo would remain, so he was torn. Ms. Ruedig said she could go either way because the building had a very contemporary storefront and usage and had no historic features left. She pointed out that the store was next to a mini-mall, with other stores that had illuminated lights and had a very different character than the downtown District or the south end.

Mr. McCoy distributed photos of various similar surrounding signs to the Commission. It was further discussed. Mr. Rawling said signage impacted the character of a neighborhood and that the upgrade of the Islington Street corridor would improve the area's aesthetics. He said the new sign would be out of character. City Council Representative Roberts said he didn't like many of the area's existing signs but found that the CVS sign was a replacement in kind and, while he didn't think it would improve the existing sign, he thought it would upgrade the brand and save money in electricity. Mr. Ryan said it was a commercial strip mall and that he assumed that a replacement in kind was a replacement in kind, with grandfathered rights. Mr. Cracknell said it was not a replacement in kind but was rather a change in the design and a reduction in size. He said the project also had to go before the Board of Adjustment (BOA) because it was not a replacement in kind. Chairman Lombardi agreed and said the building was still in the District, even though it was on the edge, and that the Commission should do whatever they could to bring buildings in the District up to the expected standard, even if the building was a new one or a reconfigured one that looked new. He emphasized that the City had put a lot of effort into upgrading Islington Street and that it was the Commission's job to foster the compliance with their guidelines. Mr. Cracknell noted that the application would also go before the BOA because it was an existing non-conforming sign that was internally illuminated.

The applicant indicated that he would continue his application to the October 3 meeting.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*It was moved, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote to **continue** the application to the October 3 meeting.*

V. WORK SESSIONS (OLD BUSINESS)

A. Work Session requested by **46 Maplewood Avenue LLC, owner**, for property located at **46-64 Maplewood Avenue**, wherein permission is requested to allow amendments to a previously approved design (adjustments to the size and configuration of the 4th floor) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is located on Assessor Map 125 as Lot 2A and lies within the Character District 4 (CD 4), Downtown Overlay, and Historic Districts. *(This item was continued from the August 1, 2018 meeting.)*

*It was moved, seconded, and **passed** by unanimous vote (7-0) to **postpone** the petition to the October 3 meeting.*

VI. WORK SESSIONS (NEW BUSINESS)

A. Work Session requested by **James C. Lucy Revocable Living Trust, James C. and Kimberley A. Lucy, trustees and owners**, for property located at **127 & 137 High Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (construct rear additions to both structures) and allow a new free standing structure (construct single family dwelling at rear of #137) and allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (miscellaneous renovations to both structures) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said properties are shown on Assessor Plan 118 as Lots 20 and 21 and lie within the Character District 4-L1 (CD 4-L1), Downtown Overlay, and Historic Districts.

The applicant James Lucy and the project designer Brendan McNamara were present to speak to the petition. Mr. McNamara said the project was essentially the same and comprised a total of five parcels joined into one lot. He reviewed the site plan in detail.

Ms. Ruedig asked if there was a staircase from the first to second floor. Mr. McNamara said the staircase was not original and that the main entry to the residential unit would be through the garage. Vice-Chair Wyckoff asked that second floor go down six stairs to make the garage more subservient and also suggested that the roofline from the addition to the coach house drop down a bit. Mr. McNamara said they would keep the second floor as low as possible and that the ridgeline to the rear was as large as they could make it.

Page Trace of 27 Hancock Street (and a member of the Colonial Dames) noted that the northwest corner of the property was five feet from the property line and asked whether stormwater runoff would be an issue when the basement-level windows were dug out, especially since the new house would be built on a hill that went down to the abutting property and had a long roof pitch. Mr. McNamara said that a stormwater plan had to be approved by the Planning Board. He said gutters would be placed on all the buildings. Ms. Page asked why the project didn't have room for more parking. Mr. Cracknell said the parking depended on the size of the unit and that the property had a credit of five spaces because it was in the Downtown Overlay District. Ms. Trace said she felt that the carriage house was not appropriate for the spot it was being placed in because the red building was circa 1820.

Barbara Ward of 16 Nixon Park said she was the Director and Curator of the Moffatt-Ladd House and also a Portsmouth Advocate. She asked whether the footprint of the new construction house had changed from the previously-proposed one. Mr. McNamara said it was previously 20'x40' but was now 20'x38'. Ms. Ward said it was not a subordinate building and wasn't a historically appropriate size for a structure at that location and thought it would change the nature of the area. She said the paving would disturb areas of archaeological resources as well. She said the applicant's property had a significant drop-off to the Moffett-Ladd House and was much higher than the properties around it, and that changing the natural grade at the back of the property would be an issue.

Ms. Ruedig said she was also concerned about the archeological digging. Mr. Lucy said he just wanted to upgrade the property in the spirit of the City. Mr. Rawling said he thought there was a

lot more breathing room on the site and liked the scale of everything. He suggested raising the ell on the red house to break up the roofline, and it was further discussed. City Council Representative said he felt it was more of an issue of whether the back building detracted more than whether it was not subordinate. Mr. Rawling agreed and suggested that there be more embellishment on the yellow house. The windows were also discussed. Mr. Ryan said he liked the complex of the three buildings and didn't feel that there needed to be one to be subordinate. He said he liked the density and wished there were more of it throughout the city, noting that it would add to the character. Ms. Ruedig said she was excited to see the front two buildings brought back and thought the new construction was much better than the previous proposed one.

The applicant indicated that he would return for another work session at the October 3 meeting.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*It was moved, seconded, and **passed** by unanimous vote to **continue** the work session to the October 3 meeting.*

VII. ADJOURNMENT

*It was moved, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote to **adjourn** the meeting at 10:45 p.m.*

Respectfully Submitted,

Joann Breault
HDC Recording Secretary

These minutes were approved at the Historic District Commission meeting on October 3, 2018.