

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

**EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**6:30 p.m.**

**October 02, 2019**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Vincent Lombardi; Vice-Chairman Jon Wyckoff; City Council Representative Doug Roberts; Members Dan Rawling, Reagan Ruedig, Martin Ryan, and Cyrus Beer; Alternates Heinz Sauk-Schubert and Margot Doering

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

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**I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

1. September 04, 2019

*It was moved, seconded, and passed to approve the September 4, 2019 minutes.*

**II. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS**

Item 5 (206 Court St) and Item 12 (56 Middle St) were pulled for separate discussion. The remainder of the items were reviewed and voted on, with separate votes for Items 5 and 12.

- 1. 333 New Castle Avenue**

Ms. Ruedig recused herself from the vote. The request was to replace a bay window with one picture window and two casement windows.

*Mr. Ryan moved to **grant** the request, and Vice-Chair Wyckoff seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously, 7-0.*

- 2. 199 Middle Street**

The request was to replace an old door with a wooden door.

- 3. 566 Islington Street**

The request was to renew previously-approved metal awnings for a commercial building.

- 4. 39 New Castle Avenue**

The request was to replace three broken windows with similar wood windows. It was stipulated that the new windows would be 2/1 windows and that half-screens would be used.

**5. 206 Court Street**

Mr. Cracknell said the previously-approved petition had a stipulation that the applicant take another pass at the side entryway and roof detail. He noted that a round window was added. Ms. Ruedig said the third-floor windows on the right elevation should be 3/3 and not 6/6.

*Ms. Ruedig moved to **grant** the request, with the following stipulation:*

- 1. The side windows shall be 3/3 muntin pattern.*

*Vice-Chair Wyckoff seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously, 7-0.*

**6. 80 Hanover Street**

The request was to install a permanent black metal fence around the Vaughan Mall seating area.

**7. 15 Pleasant Street**

The request was for minor modifications to the bank project.

**8. 125 South Street**

The request was to add an Azek rail system to a new wooden deck.

**9. 63 Congress Street**

Mr. Cracknell said the applicant wanted to modify previously-approved HVAC equipment that would be smaller in area and located seven feet above the ground area. He said the applicant would return with a request to lower the height of the gates and the fencing along Vaughan Mall.

**10. 366 Islington Street**

The request was to remove planking on the garage and install cedar shakes, a corner board, and trim. Mr. Cracknell said he didn't think the garage doors would be changed.

**11. 99 Gates Street**

The request was to build an enclosure for recycling and trash instead of the recently-approved shed and to also install a fence. Mr. Cracknell said the setbacks would be complied with.

*Vice-Chair Wyckoff moved to **grant** all the Administrative Items with the exception of Items 5 and 12, including the stipulation on Item 4e, 39 New Castle Avenue. City Council Representative Roberts seconded. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote, 7-0.*

## 12. 56 Middle Street

The applicant's representative John Tuttle was present. He stated that they wanted to rotate the roof ridge on the new addition, add basement access to the building, and adjust the shed dormer on the State Street façade. He said they received approval from the Board of Adjustment (BOA) to convert the former single-family home to a duplex. He reviewed the changes.

Several Commissioners agreed that the roof rotation improved the design. Mr. Sauk-Schubert recommended several stipulations, as noted in the motion.

*Vice-Chair Wyckoff moved to **grant** the request, with the following stipulations:*

- 1. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor windows on the addition shall be in alignment.*
- 2. The door shall be centered on the peak of the vertical timber framing.*
- 3. The 1<sup>st</sup> floor windows on the southwest side shall be aligned with the Tudor timbers and the right side window shall be realigned to match the spacing of the other window from the corner.*

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

## III. PUBLIC HEARINGS (OLD BUSINESS)

A. Petition of **Gregory J. & Amanda B. Morneault, owners**, for property located at **137 Northwest Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (demolition of existing side porch to be replaced with deck) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 122 as Lot 2 and lies within the General Residence A (GRA) and Historic Districts. *(This item was postponed at the September 04, 2019 meeting to the October, 2019 meeting.)*

## DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Chairman Lombardi noted that the applicant had requested to postpone several times and would have to re-advertise.

*Ms. Ruedig moved to **remove** Public Hearing A, and Mr. Ryan seconded. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote, 7-0.*

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B. Petition of **Drew & Brittany Schulthess, owner**, for property located at **15 Mt. Vernon Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (extend roofline of the existing house over the attached garage) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 111 as Lot 33 and lies within the General Residence B (GRB) and Historic Districts. *(This item was postponed at the September 04, 2019 meeting to the October, 2019 meeting.)*

Mr. Beer recused himself from the petition.

### **SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

The project architect Carla Goodnight was present on behalf of the applicant. She said they received approval from the BOA for the project and were seeking approval for the second-story addition to the existing garage footprint and had incorporated the Commission's previous suggestions. She reviewed the changes to the project.

Mr. Rawling said the garage addition still seemed cluttered with the banding change of materials. Vice-Chair Wyckoff asked about a continuous roofline across the two structures in the back elevation. Ms. Goodnight said it was all on the same plane. They discussed terminating the roof eave where it existed on the garage section and letting the taller addition read as such. Ms. Doering said the garage door style didn't seem to fit. Ms. Ruedig said she was fine with the design because it was a new-construction house. Chairman Lombardi agreed. Mr. Ryan said he was satisfied that the design met the District's requirements.

### **SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION**

Mary Lou McElwain of 205 South Street said the back of the house was visible from her backyard, and she thought it was a lovely improvement as long as the roofline wasn't any higher.

Jean Spear of 49 Mt. Vernon Street said she was in favor of the project and excited to see the applicant modify their home to accommodate their growing children.

Brendan Cooney of 57 Mt. Vernon Street said the proposed addition fit well with the other houses in the neighborhood and was appropriate and attractive.

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

### **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

*Vice-Chair Wyckoff moved to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the application as presented, with the following stipulation:*

1. All exterior lighting shall be submitted for Administrative Approval.

*Ms. Ruedig seconded.*

Vice-Chair Wyckoff said the project would preserve the integrity of the District, help preserve property values, be consistent with the special and defining character of surrounding properties, and relate to the historic and architectural values of the historic structure that were hidden with.

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

## **IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS (NEW BUSINESS)**

1. Petition of **Brendan Cooney and Megan Tehan, owners**, for property located at **57 Mt. Vernon Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (construct a front deck and add a second story addition to the rear of the structure) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 111 as Lot 31-1 and lies within the General Residence B (GRB) and Historic Districts.

Mr. Beer and Ms. Ruedig recused themselves from the petition.

### **SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

The applicant Megan Tehan was present to speak to the petition. She introduced her husband Brendan Cooney and her architect Liz Nguyen. Ms. Tehan briefly reviewed the property's history and said the project would fit in with the eclectic nature of the street. Ms. Nguyen said significant adjustments were made to the design based on the Commission's feedback during the previous work sessions, and she reviewed all the changes

Mr. Sauk-Schubert said the applicant did a great job in improving the original design. Mr. Rawling said he fully supported the design but recommended making the entrance canopy more of a porch element because it seemed undersized. City Council Representative Roberts said he liked the revised design better. Vice-Chair Wyckoff agreed and said the applicant could return for an administrative approval for a larger canopy over the door. Mr. Ryan said there had been nothing wrong with the previous design disharmony because it was tension and told a story, but he thought the new design was safer and could be approved.

### **SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION**

Mary Lou McElwain of 259 South Street said her backyard overlooked the home's side, and she thought the project would be a nice addition to the street.

Jean Spear of 49 Mt. Vernon Street said she was excited for the applicant to finish the renovation and remain in the neighborhood.

Drew Schulthess of 15 Mt. Vernon Street said the house would look fantastic.

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

### **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

*Mr. Ryan moved to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the application as presented, and Mr. Rawling seconded.*

Mr. Ryan said the project would preserve the integrity of the District and be consistent with the special and defining character of the surrounding properties.

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

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2. Petition of **Jeffry S. Mann Trust, Jeffry S. Mann Trustee, owner**, for property located at **129 Daniel Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (construct a three-story addition to the rear of the structure) and exterior renovations to an existing structure (new windows and shutters) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 107 as Lot 1 and lies within the Character District 4 (CD 4) and Historic Districts.

### **SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

The architect Timothy Giguere was present on behalf of the applicant. He reviewed the petition in detail, noting that all the replacements would reflect the house's historic nature.

The Commissioners agreed that it was a great project. Mr. Rawling said it was a treat to see such a considerate, sensitive, and thorough renovation project and also appreciated all the minor details, like the roof vents being painted dark to match the roof. Mr. Beer agreed, noting that he liked the shutter doors. Ms. Ruedig said it was a great job of restoring the building and bringing it back to what it probably looked like originally. Vice-Chair Wyckoff said he appreciated the monotone gray of the fake slate roof. Chairman Lombardi said he had been waiting for the house to have some care and thought it was a beautiful design. He asked if the brick would be repointed, and Mr. Giguere said they didn't plan to because the bricks were in good shape.

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

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

### **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

*Ms. Ruedig moved to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the application as presented, and Vice-Chair Wyckoff seconded.*

Ms. Ruedig said the project would preserve the integrity of the District and maintain its special character, would be consistent with the special and defining character of surrounding properties, and would relate to the historic and architectural value of the existing structure and improve it.

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

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3. Petition of **202 Court Street Property Group, LLC, owner**, for property located at **202 Court Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (new dormer addition to the north elevation) and exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace siding, roofing, windows and doors) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 116 as Lot 35 and lies within the Character District 4-L1 (CD 4-L1) and Historic Districts.

### **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

*The applicant wasn't present. It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to **postpone** the petition to the end of the Public Hearings. When the applicant still had not appeared, it was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to **continue** the petition to the November 6 meeting.*

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4. Petition of **Perley Lane, LLC, owner**, for property located at **55 Lafayette Road**, wherein permission was requested to allow the construction of a new freestanding structure (single-family home with attached garage) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 151 as Lot 10-1 and lies within the General Residence A (GRA) and Historic Districts.

Note: The applicant was not present for the Commission's initial consideration, and it was moved, seconded, and passed to postpone his petition to the end of the Public Hearings. The applicant later arrived and the petition was heard out of sequence.

### **SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

The applicant Joe Caldarola reviewed the petition in detail, noting that his revised design reflected several of the Commission's recommendations from previous work sessions. He showed two samples of proposed windows.

Ms. Ruedig asked what the building's height was. Mr. Caldarola said it was around 32 feet. Ms. Ruedig said it was difficult to envision what it would look like without seeing the heights of neighboring houses. She asked how much ledge would be removed. Mr. Caldarola said as much as necessary. Mr. Sauk-Schubert said he was surprised that the Commission didn't have dimensions for the abutting houses to the left and right. Ms. Doering said she drove past the property and still felt that the house's design was inappropriate for the size of the lot and the neighbors and that the house would stand out. The ledge was discussed. Mr. Caldarola said he would remove ten feet of the ledge at the high point and that there would be no blasting.

Mr. Rawling noted that the context of the site on Middle Street included smaller-scale houses that were built on lots that were sold out from larger properties. He said the rhythm followed down the street to the ranch house and then picked up again after a few houses. He said the ledge was a reason why the house was a higher and prominent one and thought it was in context with the street, even though it wasn't with the side abutters. Mr. Sauk-Schubert said the elevation on the first floor didn't vary as much as the structures themselves in height and that the house would be like a structure on a little hill that would affect the neighbors. Mr. Ruedig said it was helpful to see the footprints, and she thought the building's footprint lined up with the neighboring buildings. She said she had not changed her mind about the design's appropriateness and wasn't comfortable with the prairie style windows that were inconsistent with the street's character. She said there was no wood or other natural material and thought the house would look very different and stand out as the new plastic house with a very different design and style from everything around it. Chairman Lombardi agreed and asked what the foundation material would be.

Vice-Chair Wyckoff noted that the applicant had several prior work sessions for a faux Colonial design that the Commission had not found appropriate and then returned with a more appropriate design. He said it was unfortunate that the house to the left was an on-the-grade ranch house, which he felt was the most incongruous property on Middle Street, and that it should not be used as the basis for a new design. He said the applicant's design was very appropriate but was too high and recommended bring the house down a few feet. He said he would prefer to see all wood as material but noted that he, nor others, wouldn't be touching the house to feel the cement siding. He said the house was on the very edge of the District and that he was willing to let the siding work. Mr. Ryan agreed and said he didn't think the ranch should dictate the applicant's design. He said the Commission should look at the larger context of the whole street and see that there was a lot of variety throughout. He agreed that even a few feet of elevation pulled down would make a huge difference. He said there was a lot of faux material and suggested improving the front entrance by using historic materials and craftsmanship. He also said he would like to see elevations of the houses to the left and right to the applicant's house for context, but in general, he didn't see the Commission not moving forward.

Mr. Rawling said the changes improved the house but thought there could be finer detailing on the porch columns because their proportions and detailing seemed to be off. He thought the prairie style windows were fine, noting that the house was referential to context and a time period but wasn't an interpretation of anything in particular. He said the rear elevation had improved quite a bit but recommended straightening out the angled garage elements and running the siding across. He suggested putting a painted finish on the foundation to upgrade it from exposed concrete. He said he didn't care for the little faux window. He thought the garage elevation was acceptable and that the front parts of the wall against the living and dining room spaces were fine. He said he appreciated that the fireplace was moved into the house but had trouble with the windows to the left side of it. He said the top window was in a shower and could be shifted over to the side. He suggested eliminating the dining room windows across on each level. He said that shifting the tower made the front elevation of the house more welcoming. He said the synthetic materials would be somewhat indistinguishable once they were painted and thought the vinyl fence could be improved by adding more natural materials to it.

City Council Representative Roberts agreed with Mr. Ryan and Mr. Rawling. He said the mass and scale were okay but thought it would help if the applicant could lower the building a bit to make the house fit better with the street's context. He suggested using more traditional wood materials to enhance the entrance, and he preferred the simpler picket fence. Mr. Beer said he liked the proportions of the house and thought a wooden entryway and front door would be a good compromise. Vice-Chair Wyckoff agreed, adding that the rail should also be in wood. Mr. Sauk-Schubert said his main concern was the elevation of the first floor compared to the dwelling next to it. Chairman Lombardi said it would help to have a foundation and no siding. The window options were discussed and the Commission preferred the Matthews window with Azek trim. Mr. Ryan asked for more detail on the porch columns and also for street elevations for the front façade as well as the front facades of 59 and 91 Middle Street.

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

Tim Malinowski of 91 Lafayette Road said the lot was cleared and the ledge was about eight feet and ran under his house. He was concerned with the scale because it was right up against the allowable zoning envelope. He said the house would be seen by a lot of people, especially because of the new bike trail. He strongly recommended that the Commissioners visit the lot so they could see the narrowness between the houses and the way the lot was situated.

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

### **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

*Mr. Ryan moved to **continue** the application to the November 6 meeting, and Vice-Chair Wyckoff seconded. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote, 7-0.*

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5. Petition of **Alan W. and Wendy G. Wong, owners**, for property located at **179 Pleasant Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow the construction of a new free-standing structure (garden pergola) and new construction to an existing structure (replace roof and structures of existing ells and expand middle ell) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 108 as Lot 15 and lies within the Mixed Research Office (MRO) and Historic Districts.

### **SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

Architect Tracy Kozak was present on behalf of the applicant. She reviewed the petition in detail and distributed cut sheets and a brick sample to the Commission. Landscape architect Terence Parker discussed the landscape features, including the pergola, reflecting pool, retaining walls, and terracing. He showed samples of the aged granite for the stone walls. He said the driveway paving would most likely be granite and brick. In response to questions from Ms. Doering, Mr. Parker said the original wood fence was similar to the Langdon House's fence. Ms. Kozak said a chimney would be added to the carriage house because of the wood-burning fireplace.

Ms. Ruedig said the applicant did an excellent job in improving the design beyond simple preservation by making the spaces inhabitable in the best way as well as maintaining the street appearance and as much of the façade's original material and elevations as possible. She said all the changes were respectful to the original house. She said it was a wonderful project with high-quality materials and that she would change nothing. Mr. Ryan agreed. Mr. Rawling said the applicant did a great job in cleaning up the place and adding elegant accessory spaces. Chairman Lombardi said it was a fabulous project and thought the landscaping piece would bring the whole project together. Mr. Sauk-Schubert agreed with all the comments.

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

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

### **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

*Ms. Ruedig moved to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the application as presented, and City Council Representative Roberts seconded.*

Ms. Ruedig said the project would preserve the integrity of the District, conserve and enhance property values, and relate to the historic and architectural value of the existing structure.

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

## **V. WORK SESSIONS (OLD BUSINESS)**

A. Work Session requested by **Dagny Taggart, LLC, owner**, and **Mark A. McNabb, applicant** for property located at **Daniel Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow the construction of a new free-standing (4-story, 50,000 ± s.f.) commercial structure as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown in Assessor Map 107 as Lot 27 and lies within the Character District 4 (CD 4), Downtown Overlay, and Historic Districts. *(This item was postponed at the September 04, 2019 meeting to the October, 2019 meeting.)*

Project architect Tracy Kozak was present on behalf of the applicant and introduced the landscape architect Robbie Woodburn and the applicant Mark McNabb. Ms. Kozak said her team responded to the Commission's previous comments about the project. She reviewed the site's history and the Master Plan. She reviewed the revisions in detail.

Vice-Chair Wyckoff asked why the window system was chosen when it didn't seem to be very popular and whether there was anything else that could hold the glass together. Ms. Kozak said that steel would make it busier. Vice-Chair Wyckoff asked why the vertical wood elements couldn't hold the glass. Ms. Kozak said the panes had a slight curve to them and the applicant wanted them to be smooth, round, lightweight, and see-through.

Ms. Kozak said the horizontal wavy bands were changed to a copper diamond shingle, the same material as the roof. She said the storefront system was detailed more and that the back courtyard and Daniel Street corner elevations were simplified. She showed two-dimensional elevation drawings and several details. Chairman Lombardi asked whether all the storefronts opened to the common market in the middle and back of the property. Ms. Kozak agreed.

The garage design was discussed. Ms. Doering asked about the wood slats. Ms. Kozak said there would be no glass, just wood slats with air, and that a car wouldn't be seen going down the ramp. City Council Representative Roberts asked whether the ramp would be wide enough for cars going in opposite directions, and Ms. Kozak agreed. He said he thought the previous design was more successful because of the recessing and stronger band across the top.

Ms. Kozak discussed the west elevation and reviewed the wood and copper details. Mr. Ryan said the vertical timbers looked very rough. The fasteners were discussed. Ms. Kozak said they were galvanized and painted a multi-layer coating. She said the parking garage grills were solid wood. She showed a sample of the granite.

Ms. Woodburn reviewed the updated landscape plan.

Mr. Rawling said he had been excited about the building's design and thought it would add a strong vitality to the City, but he felt that the courtyard design had regressed to the point that it was starting to take on the appearance of a bank building. He said the previous design was nicer and more exciting. He noted that all the different elements of the building came together at the Penhallow Street elevation. He said the recessed garage entry was important but that it took on a rustic northwoods country look and lost its polished urbanism, which he felt was probably due to the narrow horizontal siding. He said the previous vertical elements were important because they were woven together by the horizontal bands and added contrast. He thought the left side could go with the blockier horizontal slabs but differentiate a bit. He said the main piece was the similarity and width to the real timber fronts but felt that it was starting to look like log cabin construction. He noted that the earlier renderings had more differentiation in color, so the timber element stuck out more and the siding was lighter and more vibrant, making the building look flatter and more polished and the wood more of an accent. He said the fish scale material patterning on the horizontal didn't work because it was distracting. He said the earlier softer patina banding had been more successful because all the other forms and details were so 'cool'. Ms. Kozak said there were a few options for texture and showed some photos. Mr. Rawling said it was difficult without seeing the real thing. He also remarked that the central tower wasn't as strong an element as it used to be. Mr. Ryan agreed that the design looked more rustic and said he would prefer seeing more deco than log cabin. He said the storefronts still reminded him of ones seen in other places and thought they could be more glazed or transparent to draw people in. He said the sidewalk was fantastic and that it was great to see more trees in the landscaping but thought the fountain was a misuse of space because it wouldn't be used much during the year.

Vice-Chair Wyckoff said the flatter fish scale would make sense but thought it was way too much. He said the building reminded him of a L. L. Bean structure on steroids because it had so much going on. He asked why the curved glass on the corner couldn't be used between the vertical upright and set into the wood like normal. He said he couldn't take all the things stuck all over the glass and asked how a line of silicone added transparency. Mr. Beer said his opinion about the project hadn't changed and the fact that he liked the project or not wasn't relevant because the Commission's charge was to foster the architectural and historical character of Portsmouth. He said the building and the tower did not do that.

Mr. Sauk-Schubert asked how the applicant arrived at the design, saying he had no idea what the reasoning was behind it or whether they had considered other options. It was further discussed. Chairman Lombardi said the Commission was not part of the applicant's process and that they had to accept the process or not. He said the design had evolved but thought the horizontal wood made the building look less classy. He said the design and pattern were a return back to the sea glass that was discussed before. Relating to the appropriateness of the design, he said history was not stagnant and that Portsmouth was an evolving city. He said the project was an experiment in art, and he thought people would come to the City to look at the building but wouldn't come if building brick blocks continued to be built.

Ms. Ruedig said she agreed with Mr. Beer that it wasn't an issue of whether the Commission liked the design or not but whether it was appropriate and met the criteria. She said she had a hard time seeing the design fit in with the District, even though she liked the building and viewed

it as a contemporary high-style one that was rich and full of detail and texture. She said she still found the design too busy and thought the curved corner entry piece was the focal point and drove most of the design. She said the curved windows on the side pushed it a little too much and thought the alleyway elevations were more successful because they were simpler. She said she wished the big glass curved entryway could have double or wider doors because it looked puny with the smaller doors. Mr. Sauk-Schubert clarified that he liked the building and appreciated all the energy the applicant had put into it but that his objection was that the design was the only option the applicant might have considered for a project of such financial and visible magnitude.

Ms. Doering said the most important feature to her was the architecture and whether it was good for the District. She thought it was a whimsical building that at some point tipped from whimsey to wedding-cake-over-the-top, with so many curves, details, and textures. She said she liked the banding being inside the building because it didn't detract any longer from the heavy beams. She also found it interesting how different the building looked during the day versus the night. City Council Representative Roberts agreed that the design tipped toward rustic and that the smooth version was better than the diamonds. He said he was ambivalent about whether the building was the appropriate one for the site because it depended on whether it could be turned into a handsome, creative building instead of a rustic one,

### **Public Comment**

Esther Kennedy of 41 Pickering Avenue said the building should be in the north end and not the historic center. She cited an excerpt from the HDC regulations, stating that all new construction should be compatible with the property's surrounding context. She said the building's design, especially viewed at night, would detract from the historic wooden structures around it. She said the building's wood and the big banding around it did not celebrate the other buildings on that street. She noted that she heard many comments by the Commission that evening that she had heard at the first work session, and she urged them to look at their criteria and consider whether the design supported the surrounding historic buildings or would be the District's focal point.

Rick Becksted of 1396 Islington Street said the design had changed but thought it needed to be brick because it was a focal point among the buildings across the street and behind it. He said he met a lot of visitors who were astounded by the City's preservation of the historic buildings. He said the proposed building would stand out and detract from the historic buildings, pointing out that the aerial views of the building proved it. He said the mass and scale were still too big.

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

### **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

*It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to **continue** the work session to the November 6 meeting.*

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At this point, City Council Representative Roberts left the meeting.

B. Work Session requested by **John J. Roese Revocable Trust of 2016, John J. Roese Trustee, owner**, for property located at **14 Mechanic Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow the partial demolition of an existing structure (removal of additions and 1 chimney), new construction to an existing structure (relocating house to new foundation and adding a 1-story addition), and exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace siding, windows, and trim) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 103 as Lot 10 and lies within the General Residence B (GRB) and Historic Districts. *(This item was postponed at the September 04, 2019 meeting to the October, 2019 meeting.)*

Project architect Juli MacDonald was present on behalf of the applicant. She introduced the applicants John Roese and Jim Copeland and the preservationist and consultant Aaron Sturgis. Ms. MacDonald reviewed the petition, noting that the project took a big shift because they discovered that new buildings or excavation in the cemetery buffer were not allowed.

Mr. Sturgis noted that the house was an eighteenth-century structure and the epitome of vernacular housing. He showed photos of the house and old street maps and said it was unusual for the house to be set back that much on that particular lot. He said the original facades of the house were three sides clapboard, with shingles on the back side, and that the house had the original window fenestration and timber frame. He said they had a lot of original material to emulate and that they wanted to take the house apart, move it, and rebuild it on a code-compliant foundation. Ms. MacDonald said the chimneys would be rebuilt with more appropriate bricks. She reviewed the design, noting that the addition would be contemporary but with similar massing and rhythm, a lot of glass, and wood vertical siding. She said the new location would bring the house up to the street and allow the 25-ft buffer to be the setback.

Ms. Ruedig thanked the applicant for doing such thorough research and for revealing so much original material. She said she didn't have a problem with the house being moved because there was so much work to be done anyway. She suggested making the glass connection lighter but thought having a glass connection to differentiate the historic house from the new addition was good and had been used successfully in other projects. She said the design of the contemporary addition could be tweaked a bit but thought it was a good start. Mr. Rawling said it was a big change from what was previously presented and that there was a lot to consider. He said he could support the change of location because it fit the neighborhood's context and could approve the glass connector. He said he had trouble with the addition and suggested turning the gables and not having the long rambling house that sort of threw it out of character. He said turning the gables would put it into a separate house block and relate it to the connecting link. He said he had a hard time with the casement windows on the front elevation and the vertical siding and suggested larger glassy spaces like the back elevation. It was further discussed. Mr. Rawling said the building was reading as two buildings connected by something.

Vice-Chair Wyckoff said the addition was not subordinate and thought the front windows might be a shock to the neighborhood. He said the back reminded him of an office building built on a small Colonial house. He said he could envision putting the addition on the side with the roof in the same direction but would want to see a more traditional finish on it and more play with the glass connector. He said he also had no problem with the house being moved. Mr. Ryan said moving the house was for the better, and he liked the fact that the house was pulled up and supported the street. He said the glass connector had a commercial look of a storefront window

that wasn't appropriate to the area, and he thought it should be more traditional. He said the two massings presented themselves as equals to the street, and he thought that another way besides turning the gables would be to step the glass connector back so the addition would step back even farther, which would downplay the more modern piece and the connector. Ms. Doering agreed with the subordination comments and said her concern was that the west elevation would be prominently seen from Marcy Street and from across the cemetery as a traditional house with a thing sticking out and asked whether it would be the right thing for people to look at. It was further discussed. Mr. Sauk-Schubert suggested that the windows on the north elevation of the addition could be moved slightly away from the corner and that something more could be done to separate the addition, like a third element for a connector. Otherwise, he thought the project was going in the right direction. Chairman Lombardi said the preservation of the structure was of the highest level and that he had no problem moving it.

Mr. Sturgis said they would hire an archaeologist to assess any artifacts found.

There was no public comment.

#### **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

*It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to **continue** the work session to the November, 2019 meeting.*

#### **VI. ADJOURNMENT**

*It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to **adjourn** the meeting at 12:10 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Breault  
HDC Recording Secretary