

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

EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

6:30 p.m.

**April 10, 2019
Reconvened from
April 03, 2019**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Vincent Lombardi; Vice-Chairman Jon Wyckoff;
Members Reagan Ruedig, Dan Rawling, Cyrus Beer; Alternates
Heinz Sauk-Schubert and Margot Doering

MEMBERS ABSENT: City Council Representative Doug Roberts; Martin Ryan

ALSO PRESENT: Nick Cracknell, Principal Planner, Planning Department

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Chairman Lombardi stated that both alternates Ms. Doering and Mr. Sauk-Schubert, would be voting that evening.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

*It was moved, seconded, and **passed** by unanimous vote to remove Items 2 and 7 for separate discussion.*

1. 42 Middle Street

The request was to clean up an array of refrigeration lines and to install a conduit that would be painted to match the building and would be hidden from public view.

2. 92 Pleasant Street

The applicant Patrick Lavoie was present and stated that he wanted to install a sign with lighting on his new barbershop. He distributed photos to the Commission showing options. He said he preferred Option 2, consisting of three lights above the sign. He said the conduit would be concealed. Ms. Ruedig asked how the sign differed from the boutique next door. Mr. Lavoie said the boutique had wires, whereas his would not and would look nicer.

(Note: the item was addressed and voted on separately from the others).

*Ms. Ruedig moved to **approve** Administrative Item 2, using Option 2. Vice-Chair Wyckoff seconded.*

3. 39 Gates Street

Mr. Cracknell stated that the item was approved the previous year but that the applicant missed the extension. He said there were no proposed changes.

4. 5 South Mill Pond Road

Mr. Cracknell said the mechanical mini-split condenser would be mounted to the back side of the building near the top of the stairs and wouldn't be visible from Marcy Street. He said the applicant would also add a screen railing on the Marcy Street side.

5. 73 Prospect Street

The request was to relocate a bulkhead to the side of the house, which was a better location.

6. 244 South Street

The request was to add a privacy chain-link fence at the rear of the property. Mr. Cracknell noted that the applicant already had several fences on the property and that the new fence would be a long way from the back of the house.

*Vice-Chair Wyckoff moved to **approve** Items 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6. Ms. Ruedig seconded. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote.*

(The Commission then addressed Items 2 and 7).

7. 410-430 Islington Street

Sarah Howard of Market Square Architects was present on behalf of the applicant to speak to the request. She noted that the changes related to exterior lighting, vents, mechanical equipment, window shutters, roofing material, trim material, an egress window change, and elevation changes. She stated that the City approved a new numbering system. She reviewed the packet in detail, comparing previously-approved versions with revised versions.

In response to the Commission's questions, Ms. Howard said the visible condensers would be screened by plantings. She said the units had slim profiles and were used for cooling only.

Ms. Howard said the gable over the garages was framed differently than intended, resulting in the ridge being 1'1" higher than previously approved, and she explained why and how the egress windows were enlarged. She reviewed the materials and said the applicant wanted to modify the roofing shingles because the previously proposed ones were no longer available. She also noted that the applicant wanted Hardiplank trim instead of the previously-approved Azek and that the shingles would be the same color.

Ms. Ruedig said she was fine with the changes but was concerned about the egress windows. She asked whether they would be bigger than the windows below them, seeing that the width was increased by two inches. Ms. Howard said she ensured that the modified windows were not over skinnier windows on the first and second floors and did not align on top of another window.

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

1. A landscape screen shall be added to 430 Islington Street.
2. The roof realignment shall be shown on 53R/54R.

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

II. PUBLIC HEARINGS (NEW BUSINESS)

1. (*Work Session/Public Hearing*) requested by **Market Wharf Condominium Association, owner, and Lawrence Day Jr. Revocable Trust, Lawrence Day Jr. & Kelli Lynn Day Trustees, applicants**, for property located at **250 Market Street, Suite 376**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (dormer in-fill and the replacement of 10 windows) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 119 Lot 1B-4C and lies within the Character District 5 (CD 5), Downtown Overlay, and Historic Districts.

Note: There was no work session.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Carla Goodknight of CJ Architects was present on behalf of the applicant. She stated that she had three options for the section of dormers on the Market Street façade that would add character and variation to the windows. She said the Market Street elevation would have its dormers jointed, noting that it was the only elevation that didn't. She showed photos of before-and-after infills and photos and of three dormer options. She said she also had Anderson window details.

Ms. Ruedig asked why the windows were being changed and why the new windows would be different. Ms. Goodknight said the new windows would add more diversity to the large building. Mr. Rawling said he could support the infilling but couldn't see how the proposed windows improved the building and wasn't comfortable with any of the choices. Ms. Doering agreed, noting that she didn't find any of the options better or worse.

It was further discussed. Vice-Chair Wyckoff said the building was such a mishmash of windows, styles, and forms that he wouldn't notice any changes anyway. He said if the people living in the units wanted the new windows, he couldn't come up with a reason to deny it. He said he was in favor of connecting the dormers, however. Ms. Ruedig said she could not support the window replacement because it would make the building stand out even more because of the difference in pattern. She said she might feel differently if all the windows were changed. Chairman Lombardi agreed that the proposal didn't work. He said the building was one of confusion and that the proposal just added to that confusion. He said he could support the infill.

Ms. Goodknight verified that the windows could be replaced in kind and that the infill would be improved.

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, with the following stipulation:*

1. That existing windows shall be replaced in-kind.

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

Ms. Ruedig said the proposal would conserve property values and be consistent with the special and defining character of the District.

III. WORK SESSIONS (OLD BUSINESS)

A. Work Session requested by **PNF Trust of 2013, Peter N. Floros Trustee**, owner, for property located at **266-278 State Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (278 State Street) and new construction to an existing structure (4-5 story addition at 266 & 270 State Street) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is located on Assessor Map 107 as Lots 78, 79 & 80 and lies within the Character District 4 (CD 4), Downtown Overlay, and Historic Districts. *(This item continued from the February 13, 2019 meeting.)*

WORK SESSION

The project architect Michael Keane was present on behalf of the applicant to address the project. He reviewed the changes, which included the following:

- The penthouse had 30 inches removed from the building height and also had a different design that wasn't as contemporary.
- The roofline screening was moved to the edge of the roofline and had a more traditional railing system that helped conceal the penthouse more.
- The dormers were changed to all single-wide ones and a shed dormer was added in-between them. The dormer rhythm was made more regular, as was the rhythm of the windows on State Street.
- The storefront was changed to better emulate the original building by picking up more of the pilaster and columns. The brickwork and windows of the Times Building were brought closer and a separate door was added.

In response to the Commission's questions, Mr. Keane said the reason the windows looked so tall was because the fenestration was changed. He said the existing brickwork would not need to be altered because they planned to remove everything under the sign band. He said the arches would remain.

Mr. Keane said the division of the windows was changed to be more accurate and was proposed to be 6/6 in the Times Building and 2/2 in the new building. He said that similar historic features from Pleasant Street were incorporated into the new building and he sight distances were increased by moving the fence line out to the edge of the roof. He showed perspectives of the building from various spots.

Ms. Ruedig asked what was proposed for the side of the Times building. Mr. Keane said there was the potential of having an overhead door to access underground parking but that they were having difficulties due to concerns about undermining foundations. He said they still showed a side door on Church Street. Vice-Chair Wyckoff asked whether cars could make the turn from Church Street into the basement for parking. Mr. Keane said they could get in and out with mechanical help, but that it was very tight and he didn't know whether it would happen. He said the parking garage would continue under the new structure if possible. Relating to materials, Mr. Keane said they would match the brick in the Times Building as best as possible and were proposing a composite material like Hardiplank and a wood composite for the first floor.

Ms. Ruedig said she liked the massing and the penthouse and thought the first-floor storefront was improved. She said she wasn't comfortable with a lot of the rest of the building, noting that the screening in the front with the regular dormer windows made it look 'fake Georgian' and that it wasn't the location for it. She noted that the Hardiplank installed on the Hilton ten years before had to be replaced and suggested that the applicant further research those materials. She said that trying to make the new building look too traditional could make it look fake and thought it should be more transitional in style. She said she couldn't support the Georgian style.

Mr. Rawling though in general that the project was going in the right direction. He said he preferred the two-bay version on the elevation facing the Customs House rather than just one building. He said the changes in the fenestration patterns and rhythms helped animate the street and give it interest, and that the building was more static if it was too regular. He said he liked the dormer concept and thought some irregular bay spacing would liven it more. He suggested that the fascia color of the recessed parts match the roof more instead of being white. He said the idea of a balustrade at the top being continuously horizontal might eliminate the breaks of the posts and de-emphasize the additional height. He suggested some pattern in the rails versus just being straight to add some interest. He said the applicant had to be aware of the flatness of a new building and said the new building reminded him of other new buildings that had a traditional style but appeared flat and fake. He suggested using brackets and hoods from old buildings to inspire something in the contemporary detailing that would help give the building more surface texture. For the Church Street elevation, he suggested honoring the rhythms of the original fenestration patterns a bit more as the building developed. He liked that the penthouse was more contemporary but felt that it could be even more contemporary.

Vice-Chair Wyckoff said he liked the penthouse improvement and didn't think it should be a contemporary style. He said he could understand the argument of the applicant's design versus going back to the pilaster and turning the State Street elevation into something that would look like two buildings, noting that it might have failed because the dormers didn't seem to line up. He said he had seen the Georgian style on hotels from the 1880s in other cities and could understand the reasoning behind the applicant's idea. He said he could also see Mr. Rawling's

concept of bringing back the pilaster and dividing up the State Street side. He said he liked the railings being forward and would prefer them with the cross design because it added interest. He liked the continuous storefronts and said he would like to see the bottom made of granite. He noted that the new building would eventually become an important one.

Mr. Beer said the new structure's massing still felt wrong to him and that, to someone walking up Pleasant Street, it looked like a 5-story building with a large brick wall, especially compared to the 2- and 3-story buildings around it. He suggested removing the fifth floor. He said the dormers looked larger than the rest of the windows and made the building look even bigger.

The fifth floor was further discussed. Vice-Chair Wyckoff said he remembered that the applicant was approved to bring the height of the building up to a fifth level. Mr. Cracknell said the fifth floor evolved from the penthouse. Mr. Keane said there was significant expense involved in keeping the existing brick building in place and not matching the floor lines. He noted that they were giving up the short fifth floor that was in the Times Building before the fire and that they would lose more square footage because the floors didn't match up, which was why they proposed lowering the building and adding a setback.

Some of the Commission's comments were:

- The added columns fit the building better but there was an opportunity along the street to go a little less regular.
- The elevation on the State Street side of the penthouse was liked but thought the railing could be more contemporary and look more like a new building's.
- On the Pleasant Street elevation, the building could have more detailing turning the corner, similar to a free-standing building.
- How close the firewall could be to the neighboring building so that it didn't look so much like a wall.
- The possibility of modifying the Pleasant Street façade so allow a division in the façade to alleviate such a drastic change from the corner massing view.
- The posts supporting the railing on the penthouse seemed too heavy.
- The section above the old Louie's restaurant would look like a blank wall.
- Using more brick patterns for the building would make a big difference.
- A stronger masonry base would help.

There was no public comment.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Mr. Keane asked whether the penthouse would work, noting that the applicant had to cross that threshold first because approvals from other land use boards were needed. Vice-Chair Wyckoff concluded that most of the Commissioners liked the penthouse and preferred that it be more contemporary, and that most of them thought the massing was fine.

*It was moved, seconded, and **passed** by unanimous vote (7-0) to **continue** the work session to one of the May meetings.*

IV. WORK SESSIONS (NEW BUSINESS)

1. Work Session requested by **Wentworth-Gardner & Tobias Lear Houses Association, owner**, for property located at **49 Hunking Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (demolish and replace rear shed addition with larger new shed addition and foundation) and miscellaneous exterior maintenance to the existing house as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 103 as Lot 39 and lies within the General Residence B (GRB) and Historic Districts.

Ms. Doering recused herself from the work session.

WORK SESSION

The project designer Brendan McNamara was present on behalf of the applicant, as well as the purchaser Stephen Foster and the trustee Karen Bouffard. Mr. McNamara said they wanted to convert the property from its museum status to a two-bedroom inn and expand the shed footprint for the new shed. He acknowledged that a lot of details had to be worked out, but they needed to know what was approvable. He reviewed the petition, noting that there would be a 3-foot expansion on the two sides of the existing shed.

Mr. Foster said the shed was attached to the kitchen, which could also be restored, and that the shed would be taller by almost two feet. He noted that the expansion and exterior renovations were straightforward and that the house would look better due to new paint and other renovations. He reviewed the history of the house, noting that it had a lot of the original fabric. He said the proposed changes included changing the roof to cedar and repairing the clapboards. He said the windows were relatively new and that the profile wasn't correct and that it would be a substantial cost to repair them, so he asked if reproduction windows would be acceptable. It was further discussed. Mr. Foster also suggested putting a stone wall on the property. Ms. Ruedig said she was concerned about finding and preserving artifacts if there was digging, but Ms. Bouffard said they had already consulted an archaeologist.

Mr. Beer said he had no problem with the shed proposal and the new roof material but had concerns about the windows. Mr. Rawling said that window restoration usually reflected what was most intact from a certain area, and he suggested the 1820s era. Chairman Lombardi said the highest priority was to preserve the windows, which meant including the 1930s. Ms. Ruedig said it would depend on the condition of the windows but agreed that a 1930s restoration window was a viable part of the house's history. She said she preferred that the windows be retained. Vice-Chair Wyckoff suggested wood windows in kind but said he was more concerned about continuing the clapboards on the new addition rather than cedar clapboards. Ms. Ruedig said the shed expansion was a good solution for finding a place to put modern amenities and to upgrade the house. Mr. Rawling agreed and suggested bringing the corner board down to let the shed read separately. Mr. McNamara said the applicant preferred to just continue it. They also discussed whether interior or exterior storms should be used.

There was no public comment.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

It was moved, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote (6-0) to continue the work session to one of the May meetings.

2. Work Session requested by **202 Court Street Property Group, LLC, owner**, for property located at **202 Court Street**, wherein permission is 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 (CD4-L1) and Historic Districts.

Ms. Doering resumed her voting seat.

WORK SESSION

The project designer Matt Silva was present on behalf of the applicant. He briefly discussed the history of the old firehouse and said they wanted to convert it from an existing garage to condominiums. He said they wanted to remove all four windows on the building's façade.

Mr. Silva reviewed the elevations:

- On the front elevation, it was proposed to remove the brick and replace it with a fresher one. He noted that the window about it was capped but said he would bring it back. He said they wanted replace the siding with a blue-colored fiber-cement product and paint the trim a cream color. He said the windows had to be removed because they were rotting.
- On the south elevation, he said they wanted to make the front match the fire station next door due to the right-of-way between the two buildings. He said the added deck over the parking lot was a beneficial safety access.
- The north elevation's third floor would have an added dormer for a needed egress access, with perhaps a cable rail, and a dormer would be added to a bedroom to balance the building.
- The rear elevation siding would be brought down, with a cinderblock foundation.

Ms. Ruedig said it was a good project that would preserve a lot and not make many major changes. She said she was concerned, however, that replacing everything would make the structure look like a brand new building and that she hated to see so much historic material replaced. She said the windows were in terrible shape but thought they were probably original due to the wavy glass and preferred that they be restored. She suggested wood for the front façade, noting that it would keep its texture and age appropriately. She said she was hesitant about having the dormer so close to the façade and wanted to do a site visit to see if it could be set back further.

Vice-Chair Wyckoff said he agreed with the comments about the front façade and asked why the applicant wanted to strip the siding off. Mr. Silva said it was aluminum siding with some deteriorated clapboard beneath it. He said he could do it in wood. Vice-Chair Wyckoff asked whether there was net energy on the building. Mr. Silva said he wanted to see it converted to

something that was net zero-ready. Vice-Chair Wyckoff said the front windows could be preserved and that internal storms could be used. He said the dormer on the front façade looked too heavy, especially facing Court Street. He also said a solar roof would be acceptable.

Mr. Rawling said he wanted the façade to be restored. For the south side, he said he would rather see blanks put in the window openings so that there was a visual history of the original windows and thought it was too plain as it was. He said the dormers seemed overwhelming. He suggested that the dormer scale the extra wing walls at the end where the decks were until it became a smaller dormer so that the visual was minimized. He thought a more opaque railing would give the decks more privacy. He questioned the use of blue Hardiplank on the building, noting that the Commission usually requested that it be field-painted. He said that using a manufactured color would make the building look brand new. He noted that the Court Street and south elevations were the most important ones and felt that the windows on the Court Street elevation should be restored. He suggested more discussion about keeping the chimneys.

Mr. Silva asked which era the Commission wanted the building brought back to. Ms. Ruedig said it was up to the applicant and that the brick was a major factor. They discussed whether the brick should be replaced or not, and the roof material was also discussed. Ms. Doering said she was concerned about removing the chimney and also thought the dormer was too big on the Court Street side and suggested pulling it back. She said she'd like to see photos of the front to see what it used to look like. She said she supported solar panels. Chairman Lombardi agreed that the dormer could be pulled back. He said he agreed with the window comments and that he always preferred wood siding rather than Hardiplank or Boral.

Mr. Beer asked whether the garage doors were mandated by code, seeing that there was a paved area in front of parking. Mr. Silva said the front would look a lot cleaner if they could park vehicles in the garage, and he liked the idea of matching the doors to the fire station next door. Mr. Beer said he preferred wood on the Court Street elevation because it was the most important side. He asked the applicant to submit historical photos. He suggested that copying the look of the fire station for the garage would make it look better. He thought it would help if the dormer could be brought in from the side of the wall and down the ridge.

Mr. Rawling remarked that the roof was probably a slate roof at one time. Mr. Silva said he wanted to do a synthetic slate roof. Ms. Ruedig recommended using one color for the shingles and slate. Mr. Sauk-Schubert noted that the siding touched the ground in some areas. It was further discussed. It was noted that some of the trim looked out of proportion. Mr. Silva said he would submit trim, header, and jamb detail at the next work session.

There was no public comment.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*It was moved, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote (7-0) to **continue** the work session to one of the May meetings.*

The Commission also scheduled a site visit for May 1 at 5:30 p.m.

V. ADJOURNMENT

*It was moved, seconded, and **passed** by unanimous vote (7-0) to **adjourn** the meeting at 9:30 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Breault
HDC Recording Secretary