

**MINUTES OF THE
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
PORTSMOUTH, NH**

Remote Meeting Via Zoom Conference Call

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Per NH RSA 91-A:2, III (b) the Chair has declared COVID-19 outbreak an emergency and has waived the requirement that a quorum be physically present at the meeting pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order 2020-04, Section 8, as extended by Executive Order 2020-5, and Emergency Order #12, Section 3. Members will be participating remotely and will identify their location and any person present with them at that location. All votes will be by roll call.

6:30 p.m.

June 03, 2020

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

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

ALSO PRESENT: Nick Cracknell, Principal Planner, Planning Department

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I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. May 07, 2020
2. May 13, 2020
3. May 20, 2020

*It was moved, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote (7-0) to **approve** all three sets of minutes as presented.*

(Note: The Commission next addressed the Certificate of Approval Extension Request for 152 Court Street).

II. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

1. **133 Islington Street**

The request was to add three decks to the multi-family structure. Mr. Cracknell said construction drawings would be submitted to the Inspection Department and that the condominium association had approved the alterations.

Chairman Lombardi asked about the window over the condensers. The owner Paul Jackson said it was an oversized air vent for the parking garage.

*Vice-Chair Wyckoff moved to **approve** the request, and Ms. Ruedig seconded. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote, 7-0.*

(Note: the motion was made out of sequence).

2. 14 Mechanic Street

Mr. Cracknell stated that the project was approved the previous month with a stipulation that the owner address the front entryway design. He said a minor discrepancy was also found with the columns under the porch that were set back from the frieze instead of being flushed with the trim board above. He said there were a few other minor items that the applicant fixed by going back to what was originally approved, like the copper roof.

Vice-Chair Wyckoff said it was inappropriate to have dental moldings underneath the frieze of the simple Colonial entryway. Mr. Sauk-Schubert said the column in the entry porch deck changed and made the deck look like it was chopped off. Mr. Rawling agreed with both comments and thought the details still needed refinement. Ms. Doering said the storm door looked very modern. City Council Representative Trace agreed and said she also had a problem with the front panel door's horizontal pieces of glass. Vice-Chair Wyckoff said the door was an off-the-shelf one that didn't have the design that the Commission required, and he suggested that the door be divided up into four smaller lights. Ms. Ruedig said she was fine with the proposed door because the house was being totally renovated and would remain close to its original mass, form, and style. She pointed out that the door was new -- like the new windows, entry, and the addition itself -- and she thought it was appropriate. She agreed that the porch roof needed to extend over the column edge a bit. It was further discussed. Chairman Lombardi said the door looked strange. Vice-Chair Wyckoff suggested removing the column from the approval because it wasn't clear whether it was a round or square one.

The applicant's representative Joseph De Serrano was present and said the columns were intended to be square and were the same proportion as the pilasters at the front entrance. As for the roof projecting past the column, he said they thought that bringing the eave lines in made more sense but that they could extend it back to where it was originally. Regarding the dental molding's removal and the lights in the door, Vice-Chair Wyckoff said it wasn't a deal breaker, and others agreed. Ms. Trace said she didn't find the storm door too modern but found the front door odd. Chairman Lombardi agreed. It was further discussed.

The sconces were discussed and it was decided that they would be placed on a panel affixed to the clapboards instead of on the pilasters.

*Vice-Chair Wyckoff moved to **approve** the administrative approval item, with the following stipulations:*

- 1. There shall be no dental molding on the front entryway.*
- 2. The front entryway lighting fixtures shall be mounted on blocks and incorporated into the clapboards.*
- 3. The roof of the porch shall extend over the column as previously approved.*

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

3. 140 Court Street

Ms. Ruedig recused herself from the vote, and Alternate Doering took a voting seat.

Mr. Cracknell said the applicant wanted approval for Hardie board siding and that the size of the appurtenances was reduced in some locations and slightly taller in other locations. He said the sign board over the ground floor of the building facing Court Street made it heavier on the base and more consistent with what the building would be with the commercial storefront at the bottom. He said the balconies in the back had been removed from the design and a canopy had been added over the garage door entryway. He discussed other minor changes including adjustments to the egress stairs, louvers for the garage, and planters.

Vice-Chair Wyckoff said the siding's exposure wasn't specified. The applicant's representative architect Carla Goodknight was present and said the exposure would be kept at seven inches. Mr. Rawling said he was fine with the changes, except for the large panels over the glazing on the Court Street elevation. He suggested that they be differentiated in color and material to break the façade up more into infill panels. Ms. Doering said she was disappointed that the balconies had been removed. Ms. Goodknight was it was a structural issue because the balconies projected out over the driveway and had a significant cost associated with it. She said they retained the outdoor space on top of the liner building so it seemed like a lot of decks and that the back decks weren't very deep or useful and would have been too large of an investment.

Mr. Ryan said he approved the changes and thought the spirit of the project was still present. Ms. Trace agreed and said it was time for the project to move on. Mr. Sauk-Schubert agreed that the elevation had changed dramatically because of the balconies being removed, and he asked if there was another way to bring some life back to that elevation. Ms. Goodknight explained how the removal of the balconies would help retain the integrity of the project's design and detail. Vice-Chair Wyckoff said the changes were acceptable and that he was happy the extended cornice around the outside of the building was retained. As a solution to the removal of the balconies, he suggested having a different colored siding in the middle that would add some interest to the back of the building. Several Commissioners agreed.

*Mr. Ryan moved to **approve** the administrative approval item, and Vice-Chair Wyckoff seconded.*

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

4. 142 Congress Street

The petition was withdrawn by the applicant.

III. CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL EXTENSION REQUESTS

1. Petition of **ED PAC, LLC, owner**, for property located at **152 Court Street**, wherein a 1-year extension of the Certificate of Approval granted by the Historic District Commission on July 10, 2019 was requested, to allow new construction to an existing structure (rebuild original wall on previously demolished rear façade) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 116 as Lot 37 and lies within the Character District 4 (CD 4) and Historic Districts.

Ms. Ruedig and Mr. Beer recused themselves from the vote, and Alternates Ms. Doering and Mr. Sauk-Schubert took voting seats.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Vice-Chair Wyckoff moved to **approve** the extension request, and Mr. Ryan seconded. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote, 7-0.*

IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS (OLD BUSINESS)

A. (*Work Session/Public Hearing*) requested by **Maher Family Revocable Trust of 2018, John R. and Sky W. Co-Trustees, owners**, for property located at **50 Austin Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (add an enclosed porch on the rear of the structure) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 136, Lot 1 and lies within the General Residence C (GRC) and Historic Districts. (*This item was postponed at the May 07, 2020 meeting to the June 03, 2020 meeting.*)

Mr. Rawling recused himself from the petition, and Alternate Ms. Doering took a voting seat. There was no work session.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

The applicant Skye Maher reviewed the petition, noting that the windows were the same but were non-ventilating and the mulled units would be as shown. She also stated that the garden elevation panels would be a composite material; the column was a round PermaCast one; the detail above the windows would match the front portico's detail; the garden elevation fiberglass doors would match the other two doors; the roof material would match; the decking would be AZEK; and the garden steps would be granite.

Vice-Chair Wyckoff said everything was perfect and very complete and that the molding was appropriate. Mr. Ryan and Ms. Ruedig agreed.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR, AGAINST THE PETITION

No one was present 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 petition as presented, and Mr. Ryan seconded.*

Vice-Chair Wyckoff said the project was appropriate for the architecture of the building and would increase surrounding property values.

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

B. Petition of **John S. Guido Jr., owner**, for property located at **35 Howard Street, #35**, wherein permission is requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace (10) existing windows on the structure) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 103, Lot 83-2 and lies within the General Residence B (GRB) and Historic Districts. *(This item was postponed at the May 07, 2020 meeting to the June 03, 2020 meeting.)*

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*It was moved, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote (7-0) to **postpone** the petition to the July 1, 2020 meeting.*

C. Petition of **Jeffrey L. and Dolores P. Ives, owners**, for property located at **44 Gardner Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (remove rear porch and replace with sunroom and expand kitchen bay) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 103, Lot 42 and lies within the General Residence B (GRB) and Historic Districts. *(This item was postponed at the May 07, 2020 meeting to the June 03, 2020 meeting.)*

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*It was moved, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote (7-0) to **postpone** the petition to the July 1, 2020 meeting.*

V. WORK SESSIONS (OLD BUSINESS)

A. Work Session requested by **132 Middle Street LLC and 134 Middle Street, LLC, owners**, for property located at **132-134 Middle Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (re-pointing brick, roof replacement, add ADA accessible entry, and front entrance renovations) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 127 as Lots 11 and 12 and lies within the Character

District 4- L1 (CD 4-L1) and Historic Districts. *(This item was postponed at the May 13, 2020 meeting to the June 03, 2020 meeting.)*

WORK SESSION

The project manager Tim Upton representing the applicant/owner was present to review the petition. He said the roofing material was the biggest issue, pointing out that the right side of the roof had slate tiles and the left had asphalt shingles, and that the applicant wanted either a fish scale asphalt scale or a faux slate. He said faux slate was very expensive, so he found a carriage house shingle that looked like slate but had variation in color to give it a stone look.

Ms. Ruedig asked whether any of the original material would be salvaged. Mr. Upton said it was only half the building and that it was in bad shape, so they wanted to replace the entire mansard roof with the carriage house shingle. Ms. Ruedig said they had discussed replicating the polychrome or the two colors. She said the carriage house shingles looked good from a distance but didn't know if a color could be chosen because the shingles had a random variation in them. She said she preferred the appearance of the faux slate composite because there was more control in replicating the different stripes and colors. She said it looked more normal than the asphalt even though it wasn't a fish scale shape. Mr. Rawling agreed. He said the faux slate would be a better option than the polychrome, even if they had to lose the scalloped shingle look, and it was a higher quality product. He said it was difficult for the carriage house shingles to pull off an authentic slate look. Mr. Ryan said it was a choice between fake and really fake, but he also suggested that a metal shingle would go a long way in getting the shape.

It was further discussed. Vice-Chair Wyckoff said he could envision the carriage house style if another color could be chosen but that he could go either way. Mr. Sauk Schubert preferred the composite faux slate. Mr. Upton said he could use two different colors and that the polychrome had variation. He said he could also look for a custom color. Ms. Ruedig noted that the Commission previously discussed rebuilding and replicating the mansard corner edging from the right side of the roof and doing it on the left. Mr. Upton said the carriage house shingle would allow them to rebuild the boxes on the corners. Ms. Ruedig said she preferred to see the restoration of the corner board and the details with the scalloped shape shingles. She said the Boral shingles would look better but would be less prominent. Several Commissioners agreed.

Mr. Upton said they wanted to restore the front doors and remove the existing storm doors. He said the stairs would be a cement mixture with a dye and sand for texture and would replicate the existing stairway's tread and stair profile. The Commission agreed.

Mr. Upton said Eversource would provide new electrical service to the building. He said the existing service came in on the side of the building but that it wouldn't give them the clearance that they needed, so the new electrical service would have to go up the front of the building. Vice-Chair Wyckoff said that was not acceptable and that it had to be underground. It was decided that Mr. Cracknell would have a meeting with meet the applicant and Eversource and perhaps Public Works to discuss it.

Vice-Chair Wyckoff summarized the Commission's requests:

- the majority of the Commissioners were satisfied with the notched shingle if the applicant rebuilt the trim on the mansard roofs like it was on the right side;
- the stairs would be replicated to match existing but would be a dyed concrete material;
- the storms would be removed and the wooden doors would be restored; and
- Mr. Cracknell would meet with the applicant and Eversource to resolve the electrical service.

Mr. Cracknell said the Commission should also see a sample of the concrete steps for color and texture. Ms. Doering said the details of the shingling were still unclear and asked if the applicant could return with choices and perhaps consider the metal product. Mr. Cracknell said it would be easy to Photoshop and evaluate roof schemes.

There was no public comment.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Vice-Chair Wyckoff moved to **continue** the work session to the July 1, 2020 meeting, and Ms. Ruedig seconded. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote, 7-0.*

B. Work Session requested by **St. John's Church, owner**, for property located at **105 Chapel Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (construct new addition for ADA compliant entrance) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 106 as Lot 62 and lies within the Civic, Downtown Overlay, and Historic Districts. *(This item was continued at the May 13, 2020 meeting to the May 20, 2020 meeting.)*

WORK SESSION

The project architect Michael Campbell was present as well as the church representative Barry Heckler. Mr. Campbell reviewed the petition, noting that the Commission's previous comments were considered. He reviewed the following:

- There would be no changes to the Thaxter Hall doors;
- The limestone keystones on the addition were removed and more detail was shown on the façade;
- the details of the large cornice on Thaxter Hall and the small alcove between the two buildings were copied onto the addition, and the gutter was modified to be a copper one; and
- the ramp was lowered and had a metal railing on top of it.

Mr. Campbell said the railing could have more historic details. He said the church preferred to maintain the present design concept.

Ms. Ruedig said the refinements were very good, especially simplifying the arches and moldings. She asked that actual photos of the different moldings from the smaller building be shown at the next meeting to clarify them. Mr. Rawling said he was very pleased and thought the addition was nicely scaled, fit in comfortably with the main building, and added to the streetscape. Ms. Doering said the changes made to the keystones and arches made the addition more subordinate to the other two buildings. She said she had hoped there would be room to bring in some details

from the back to the front, but she respected that the church liked the chosen plan. She asked how the molding at the top dove into the wall of the old church. Mr. Campbell said he changed the cornice but not the detail and that it would meet the existing pilaster. Vice-Chair Wyckoff said he was very satisfied with the changes and especially liked the metal railing because it was more successful than the former masonry 'cattle path'.

Mr. Ryan said he still had the same concerns, namely that the design competed with the other two historic structures and that it crowded the entrance to the fellowship hall. He said it was awkward because it was a prominent entrance, and the way the cornice crowded over wasn't subordinate. He suggested making the corner 90 degrees and pulling the wall back a bit instead of making two new walls at a slight angle, which would bring the structures together more artfully. He noted that it would be difficult to match the coursing and brick finishes, however, and hoped that the right type of brick could be found. He said a reveal between the new structure and the other two would also help with the cornices. It was further discussed. Mr. Campbell said it was difficult to match 200-year-old brick and that he'd try to match Thaxter Hall. Mr. Sauk-Schubert suggested making the connector a right angle corner to create an inside corner less than 90 degrees, which would gain more space between the vestibule entry and the exterior wall of the new connector and reduce the space between the accessible lift and the exterior wall. Mr. Campbell said it was a good idea, and it was further discussed.

Chairman Lombardi said he agreed with all the comments and thought there were tremendous improvements.

There was no public comment.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*The applicant stated that he would return for a **public hearing** at the July 1, 2020 meeting*

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Breault
HDC Recording Secretary