

**MINUTES OF
THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE
EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

6:30 p.m.

January 3, 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Jon Wyckoff; Vice-Chair Margot Doering; City Council Representative Rich Blalock; Members Reagan Ruedig, Martin Ryan, Dr. Dan Brown, Dave Adams, and Alternate Larry Booz (via Zoom)

MEMBERS EXCUSED: None.

ALSO PRESENT: Izak Gilbo, Planner 1, Planning Department

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Chair Wyckoff called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

City Attorney Susan Morrell reviewed and summarized the NH Right-to-Know law and how it affects the HDC as a quasi-judicial body. There was also a question and answer period. [Video timestamp 4:56]

Chair Wyckoff apprised the Commission that former HDC member Heinz Sauk-Schubert passed away in October, and the Commission had a moment of silence in his memory. Chair Wyckoff stated that Alternate Karen Bouffard resigned from the Commission.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. December 06, 2023

*Ms. Ruedig and Councilor Blalock recused themselves. Mr. Adams moved and Dr. Brown seconded to **approve** the minutes as submitted. The motion **passed** unanimously.*

2. December 13, 2023

Councilor Blalock recused himself. Ms. Ruedig asked that a correction be made on the 66 South Street, Unit 2 petition by changing the 36'x36' (36 ft x 36 ft) granite landing to 36"x 36" (36 inches x 36 inches) to read as follows:

"The request was to remove the existing entry door and replace the two windows to the right of it, and to remove the picture windows and replace them with a single 36" French door that would lead down to a 36"x36" granite landing with stairs."

*Ms. Ruedig moved to **approve** the minutes as amended, seconded by Mr. Ryan. The motion **passed** unanimously.*

II. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

1. **466 Marcy Street- Request to Postpone**
2. **425 Islington Street- Request to Postpone**
3. **95 Court Street- Request to Postpone**
4. **182 Market Street- Request to Postpone**

*Mr. Adams moved to **postpone** Items 1 through 4, seconded by Councilor Blalock. The motion **passed** unanimously.*

Item 5 was reviewed and voted on separately from the other administrative items.

5. **140 Court Street**

Mr. Ruedig recused herself. Mr. Gilbo said the proposal was to add eight HVAC units at four locations on the roof, with one installed on the ground, and to install eight line sets with four on each side. Vice-Chair Doering said the photo showed eight line sets running on each side as well as the ends instead of four. She asked if the applicant planned to use the same coloring on the line sets as shown in the photo of the Derry, NH project. Mr. Gilbo said the applicant wanted a bronze aluminum cover on the line sets. Vice-Chair Doering said it was difficult to imagine what it would look like without a sample. She asked if there would be screening for the ground unit. Mr. Gilbo said it wasn't discussed but could be stipulated. Vice-Chair Doering said she had an aesthetic concern about how the lines were running on the building, and it was further discussed [timestamp 45:13]. Several Commissioners agreed that the vertical lines would help the building and the dark bronze would work well. They discussed stipulating that the metal on the sides would be coped to the building to take care of the floor slabs and extra brick that projected out.

*Councilor Blalock moved to **approve** the administrative item, seconded by Vice-Chair Doering, with the following **stipulation**: The bronze aluminum exterior chases shall be coped to the building.*

*The motion **passed** unanimously.*

6. **179 Pleasant Street**

Mr. Gilbo said the applicant had been before the Commission previously for the extensive renovation project. He reviewed the rear yard landscape plan and the proposed features that included a pool, stairs, a few walls, and other hardscape features. [Timestamp 51:30]

7. **385 Islington Street, Unit #3**

The proposal was to install a Tesla EV charging setup. Dr. Brown asked if the charging station was just for a Tesla. The applicant was present and said there would be an adapter for other cars.

8. **72 Islington Street, Unit #1**

The proposal was for two material changes on the property: 1) changing the failing current tin roofing material to a rubber roofing material on the flat piece of the roof, and 2) replacing the details of the damaged trim, soffit, and so on with an Azek or composite material instead of wood. It was further discussed. [Timestamp 58:23]

Stipulation: All the details on the trim, soffit, fascia, and so on will match existing.

9. 28 New Castle Avenue

Mr. Gilbo said there were two changes proposed to the original petition: 1) install matching windows to replace the two windows over the left garage door that are six inches higher than the ones on the right, and 2) keep the door leading to the basement area instead of filling it in. He said the applicant also did the vegetative planting screen for the HVAC systems.

*Councilor Blalock moved to **approve** Items 6 through 9, including the stipulation on Item 8. Ms. Ruedig seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously.*

III. REQUEST FOR REHEARING

1. Request for Rehearing of **Michael B. Myers and Stephanie G. Taylor, owners**, for property located at **700 Middle Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow the installation of rooftop mechanical equipment (solar panels) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 148 and Lot 29 and lies within the General Residence A (GRA) and Historic Districts.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

The applicant Michael Myers was present and said he was requested the rehearing because he wanted to present better plans. He noted that he was out of town the previous time. Mr. Ryan said it was a good idea to rehear the petition and asked Mr. Myers to bring more architectural drawings. Mr. Myers agreed and said he would present the petition at the March 6 meeting.

*Ms. Ruedig moved to **grant** the request for rehearing, seconded by Councilor Blalock. The motion **passed** unanimously.*

IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS (OLD BUSINESS)

A. REQUEST TO POSTPONE- Petition of **Joseph Cunningham, owner, and Jane Myers Vanni, perspective buyer**, for property located at **195 Washington Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow renovations to an existing structure (repair rot on the front entryway, siding and trim, remove and replace stairs, replace roofing, and install gutters) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 103 as Lot 78 and lies within the General Residence B (GRB) and Historic Districts.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Dr. Brown moved to **postpone** the petition, seconded by Vice-Chair Doering. The motion **passed** unanimously.*

B. Petition of **Anne F. Moody Living Trust, Anne F. Moody Trustee, owner**, for property located at **180 New Castle Avenue**, wherein permission is requested to allow the installation mechanical equipment (solar panels) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 101 as Lot 23 and lies within the Single Residence B (SRB) and Historic Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

The applicant Anne Moody was present and asked that the petition be postponed because her solar panel contractor wasn't present.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Vice-Chair Doering moved to **postpone** the petition to the February 7 meeting, seconded by Ms. Ruedig. The motion **passed** unanimously.*

V. PUBLIC HEARINGS (NEW BUSINESS)

1. (Work Session/Public Hearing) requested by **Zachary Dombrowski & Meghan Black, owners**, for property located at **111 Gates Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (remove rear porch, add new rear 2-story addition with walkout basement, and reconfigure existing side addition) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 103 as Lot and lies within the General Residence B (GRB) and Historic Districts.

WORK SESSION

[Timestamp 11:42] Architect Amy Dutton was present on behalf of the owners, with the applicant Zachary Dombrowski. Ms. Dutton said they would keep the addition on the right, with the same footprint and roofline, and that they wanted to raise the roof on the left side where the mud room entrance was. She said it made more sense to leave the addition in the existing footprint instead of centering it, so they proposed a shed dormer off the back married into a gable dormer on the rear elevation.

Councilor Blalock said he was fine with it, and Vice-Chair Doering said she liked what was done with the dormer and thought it was subtle. Mr. Ryan said the proportions were more appropriate for the house but thought the pediment should match the ridgeline to be more in keeping with the rest of the house. He also suggested spreading the space out more between the door to the balcony and the two side windows. Chair Wyckoff asked how the rain water coming off the second-story deck would be controlled. Ms. Dutton said it would be a sloped rubber roof system

with no gutters. Mr. Ryan suggested a cornice that could contain a gutter, and it was further discussed. Chair Wyckoff noted that the City's tax map showed that the building appeared to be wider on the street and narrower toward the back, and it was further discussed. Mr. Ryan asked if new front windows would be put only on one side. Ms. Dutton said the new windows were for the living room and main bedroom, and the other windows were already new.

There was no public comment.

*Ms. Ruedig moved to **close** the work session and **open** the public hearing, seconded by Mr. Ryan. The motion **passed** unanimously.*

PUBLIC HEARING

Chair Wyckoff reread the petition into the record.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Ms. Dutton summarized the changes to the petition and said she would return for an administrative approval for the water runoff and gutter redesign. [Timestamp 1:33:20]

Chair Wyckoff opened the public hearing.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION

No one was present, and Chair Wyckoff closed the public hearing.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Councilor Blalock moved to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the petition, with the following stipulations:*

- 1. The applicant shall use ½ screens.*
- 2. The applicant shall return for Administrative Approval for the final gutter design.*

Mr. Adams seconded.

Councilor Blalock said the project would conserve and enhance property values and would be compatible with the design of surrounding properties.

*The motion **passed** unanimously.*

Mr. Adams recused himself from the following petition.

2. Petition of **Novocure, Inc., owner**, for property located at **64 Vaughan Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow the installation of animated direct illumination signage as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 126 and Lot 1 and lies within the Downtown Overlay, Character District 5 (CD5), and Historic Districts.

Mr. Gilbo stated that the petition's description was incorrect and that the request was for a rooftop penthouse. Dean Smith, Associate Director of Facilities for Novocure, was present and confirmed that they were there just to discuss the pavilion and did not plan to do the illumination signage. Mr. Gilbo said the petition would have to be postponed and readvertised with the correct project description.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Ms. Ruedig moved that the Commission **would not vote** on the incorrectly advertised description, seconded by Vice-Chair Doering. The motion **passed** unanimously.*

The applicant said he would present the petition at the February 7 meeting.

3. Petition of 95 Daniel Street, LLC, owner, for properties located at **95 & 99 Daniel Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow exterior renovations and construction to both structures (replace or repair exterior features and construct new rear addition at 95 Daniel Street) and (replace or repair exterior features and construct new rear deck and stairs at 99 Daniel Street) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said properties are shown on Assessor Map 107 as Lots 6 & 7 and lie within the Character District 4 (CD4) and Historic Districts.

Mr. Adams resumed his voting seat.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Project architect Mark Gianniny was present on behalf of the applicant, along with the applicant Sean Peters. Relating to the 95 Daniel Street building, Mr. Gianniny said the changes were that the 1st floor windows were taller and narrower to be more in proportion with the Gothic window, the shutter sizes were in equal proportions in width to their windows, the window hardware was simplified, and a door was added on the rear elevation for basement access. He said the siding material was wood all the way around. He said the siding exposure and trim on the 99 Daniel Street building was simplified and wall exhaust vents were added. [Timestamp 1:45:23]

Dr. Brown asked why there was a fiberglass door on the 95 Daniel Street building. Mr. Gianniny said they were re-using the existing wood door and the door on 99 Daniel Street would be a fiberglass door. He said the front doors on both buildings would be wood. Mr. Adams suggested that the applicant replicate the scarf-jointed clapboards with modern tools. He asked if the cove casings on the original windows would be reproduced. Mr. Gianniny said they would be on the front of the building. Mr. Adams asked what the foundation material would be. Mr. Gianniny said the foundation was in good condition except for the porch and stair on the left side of the property that he didn't think had a foundation. He said they would examine what was there, however. He said there was no cross basement from the inside and that he would match the existing brick. Vice-Chair asked if Mr. Gianniny would return with a color for the roof shingles, and Mr. Gianniny said he could. Vice-Chair Doering confirmed that the decking would be dark hickory and the shutters would be black. She said she hoped there would be no structural degradation or demolition to the building. Mr. Gianniny said a contractor would ensure that the building would be supported when the foundations were looked at, Mr. Ryan said he hoped Mr.

Gianniny would still be part of the process, Mr. Adams said he wanted to stipulate that scarf joints would be used because it was an important detail for the story of the structure.

Chair Wyckoff opened the public hearing.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION

No one spoke, and Chair Wyckoff closed the public hearing.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Mr. Adams moved to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the application, with the following stipulations:*

- 1. The clapboards shall be scarf-jointed, and*
- 2. The pre-existing large sill window frame shall be utilized with a cove back band for the front of the 95 Daniel Street building.*

Ms. Ruedig seconded.

Mr. Adams said the project would maintain architectural values and the historic architecture of the community.

Mr. Gianniny was asked to submit interior photos of the barbershop to the Athenaeum.

*The motion **passed** unanimously.*

VI. WORK SESSIONS (NEW BUSINESS)

A. Work Session requested by, **Debra Patsky & Cynthia Woods, owners**, for property located at **37 South School Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (construct single-story addition to the right of the property and a new rear porch as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 101 as Lot 72 and lies within the General Residence B (GRB) and Historic Districts.

WORK SESSION

[Timestamp 2:09:55] Project architect Scott Brown was present on behalf of the applicants, along with the applicants Debra Patsky and Cynthia Woods. Mr. Brown said they proposed a single-story addition with the entire living space on the first floor and a covered porch on the back side. He said the property was a large parcel and could accommodate the addition. He reviewed the existing and proposed conditions.

Mr. Brown said the existing gable would be partially taken away by the addition and would be a shuttered window. Mr. Adams said it looked awkward and suggested making a full exterior casing and just having glass in the upper part and structural panel fill for the rest of it. Mr. Adams said the 10" columns on the one-story porch seemed robust. It was further discussed and

Mr. Brown said the columns could be narrowed. Vice-Chair Doering said she was concerned about the effect of an addition of that size in that space relating to the streetscape and the other buildings around it. Mr. Brown said the addition was located where it would have the least impact on the house and the backyard. He said the property had a lot of frontage and thought it could handle a lateral addition without compromising the neighborhood's integrity. Ms. Ruedig said she thought it was a logical place for the addition but wondered about its overall width. She asked if the sidewall could be brought in to match up with the bathroom to help with the rhythm of the windows and all the proportions. Mr. Brown said the two windows on the front elevation were a bed wall and it was a struggle to get them as close together as they could. He said the addition of the shutters helped with the spacing. He said it was essential to have a jog on the right side of the addition to help break down the massing and to have a few rooflines. He said the garage's placement would help take the eye away from the back half and wouldn't be as visible from the street. He said they could probably shrink it a bit by a few inches but wasn't sure it would be a big improvement. Mr. Adams asked if the stone wall at the edge of the driveway would be retained. Mr. Brown said the wall would be pushed toward the house because the driveway would be widened. Mr. Adams said he was less bothered by the addition's massing than the driveway's widening. Mr. Ryan said he liked the massing and the fact that the small garage was being added into the composition of the rest of the property. He said he'd like to see it in the proposed front elevation to confirm it. He said the jog did break up the mass a bit and thought the hefty columns were a nice shape. He said his only concern was the little porch roof and suggested that a vinyl roof might look better.

Public Comment

Sheryl and Jonathan Booth of 19 South School Street said they were the next-door neighbors. Ms. Booth said she didn't know why the addition couldn't be on the back of the house. She said she was concerned about the double driveway that went toward their house and the retaining wall that reached her foundation. She asked what would be done to the flood table and to her foundation if the ledge was dug up. She said three trees would be killed by the excavation.

Chair Wyckoff said the Commission didn't have purview over the size of the driveway, the groundwater, and the trees. He suggested that the Booths work it out with the applicant. Mr. Gilbo said the applicant would have to go before other land boards and the Department of Public Works for the driveway enlargement and permit, setback reliefs, and so on. Chair Wyckoff said there was a way to get rid of the ledge with chemicals instead of digging it up.

Mr. Brown said the intent was to extend the driveway to the left side and away from the Booths' property. He said the home's aesthetics would be ruined if the addition was built off the back, and there would be a drop-off at the edge of the property due to the ledge. Chair Wyckoff said he thought the side addition was appropriate. Vice-Chair Doering asked if the applicant considered tearing down the garage and incorporating it into the addition instead. Mr. Brown said they considered other garage options but decided to keep it due to zoning issues. Ms. Ruedig said the small chimney on the right wasn't on the floor plan and asked if it would be removed. Mr. Brown said it would not be removed and that he would address the discrepancy on the floor plan.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Ms. Ruedig moved to **close** the work session, seconded by Mr. Ryan, and to **go into a public hearing** at a future meeting. The motion **passed** unanimously, 7-0.*

VII. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

1. Chair

*Chair Wyckoff said he was stepping down as Chair and moved to **nominate** Ms. Ruedig as the new Chair. Vice-Chair Ruedig seconded the motion.*

Several Commissioners said Ms. Ruedig's experience and leadership would work very well. Mr. Ryan said Mr. Wyckoff had done a great job in managing the chairmanship for several years but thought it was good to have term limits and new people in fresh positions.

*The motion **passed** unanimously.*

Ms. Ruedig thanked Mr. Wyckoff for his service as Chair and said she looked forward to hearing his voice more regularly in the Commission's future discussions because she relied on his expertise and knowledge of building.

2. Vice-Chair

*Ms. Ruedig moved to **nominate** Ms. Doering as returning Vice-Chair, seconded by Councilor Blalock. The motion **passed** unanimously.*

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Breault
HDC Recording Secretary