

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

6:30 p.m.

January 7, 2026

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Reagan Ruedig; Vice-Chair Margot Doering; Members Martin Ryan, Dave Adams, Joy Curth, and Alternates Larry Booz and Susan Strauss

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Dr. Dan Brown

ALSO PRESENT: Izak Gilbo, Planner 1, Planning Department

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Chair Ruedig called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Alternates Mr. Booz and Ms. Strauss took voting seats for the evening.

Vice-Chair Doering moved to address the Election of Officers at the beginning of the meeting instead of the end, seconded by Mr. Adams. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

*Mr. Adams **nominated** Ms. Ruedig as Chair and Ms. Doering as Vice-Chair. Mr. Booz seconded. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.*

Chair Ruedig read the Requests for Postponements into the record. [Timestamp 7:50]

*Mr. Adams moved to **postpone** the petitions to the February 4 meeting, seconded by Vice-Chair Doering. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.*

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. December 3, 2025

Vice-Chair Doering noted that the addresses for 42 and 53 Austin Street in the Planning Board Referral Memo discussion were switched and that Mr. Gilbo would correct it.

*Mr. Ryan moved to **approve** the minutes as amended, seconded by Mr. Adams. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.*

II. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS [Timestamp 10:19]

1. 232 Court St, Unit 2

Mr. Gilbo said the applicant wanted to have a black charger and posts instead of the white ones that were stipulated by the Commission the previous month. He explained that the applicant

bought a black charger ahead of time and wanted the black posts to match. The Commission discussed it and decided to allow the black charger if the posts were black.

2. 6 Dearborn St

The request was to replace the existing rear side entry by keeping the roof but replacing the posts, railings, decking boards, and stairs. Mr. Gilbo said the dimensions would be the same and that the only additional items would be skirting and more trim work on the new posts.

3. 139 South St, Unit A

The request was to relocate one window from the side elevation to the rear. Mr. Gilbo noted that the window would be a Marvin window like the one that was previously approved.

4. 39 Holmes Ct

The request was to change the Hardie siding material to a similar ACRE material and to change the paneling and trim. Mr. Gilbo said the applicant also wanted to omit the previously approved trim and molding details and that there was a slight change in a window due to egress concerns from the Inspection Department.

5. 163 Islington St

The request was to install a window in Café Killim where it was believed that a window historically existed. Mr. Gilbo said the window would match the other windows and trim.

DECISION OF THE BOARD

*Mr. Ryan moved to **approve** the five administrative approval items as presented, seconded by Vice-Chair Doering. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.*

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS (OLD BUSINESS)

A. REQUEST TO POSTPONE - Public Hearing requested by **Capital Security Financial Services, owner**, for property located at **40 Market Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replacement of the store-front entry doors) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 117 as Lot 30 and lies within the Character District 5 (CD5), Downtown Overlay and Historic Districts

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Mr. Adams moved to **postpone** the petitions to the February 4 meeting, seconded by Vice-Chair Doering. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.*

B. REQUEST TO POSTPONE - Public Hearing requested by **Peter and Morgan Caraviello, owners**, for property located at **366 Islington Street**, wherein permission is

requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replacement of the existing front door) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 145 as Lot 17 and lies within the Character District 4-L2 (CD4-L2) and Historic Districts.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Mr. Adams moved to **postpone** the petitions to the February 4 meeting, seconded by Vice-Chair Doering. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.*

C. Public Hearing requested by **Ralph 1912, LLC, owner**, for property located at **175 Fleet Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (construct 1-story rear addition and install new fencing with landscaping and hardscaping) and the new construction of (2) food kiosks on-site as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 117 as Lot 8 and lies within the Character District 5 (CD5), Downtown Overlay and Historic Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

[Timestamp 19:35] Project architect Tracy Kozak and owner Mark McNabb were present. Ms. Kozak said Kiosk 1 was moved to the south part of the property to open up the view of Gilley's. She said the material on the two kiosks was changed from metal to composite. She said the same crimson and white paint colors as Gilley's would be used and the roof would be a copper-colored metal. She said six square windows would face the street: the two windows to the left and the two windows to the right would be spandrel glass because of the cooking stoves, and the two middle windows would be clear glass. She said the back would be fenced off with a 6-ft cedar fence and the area would be a shared trash collection. She said the transaction window and service door in Kiosk 1 were flipped because the kiosk was moved.

[Timestamp 24:38] Mr. Adams asked what happened to the gas entrance. Ms. Kozak said the meters would be relocated to the back of the bathroom addition and that the venting for the kitchen would be on the roof. Vice-Chair Doering asked if the Kiosk 1 venting would be on the street side. Ms. Kozak said the vents could potentially flip. Mr. Ryan said the two kiosk structures seemed like the offspring of the 1912 building and thought it was a simple solution that would maintain the character. Mr. Booz said the architect did a good job of pulling back Kiosk 1 to allow for a larger dining court area, and he also thought keeping the same color scheme would be more harmonious. Ms. Strauss said the landscaping had changed. Ms. Kozak reviewed the plantings. Ms. Curth said it was a significant improvement but thought the roof was dramatic compared to the other roof and that the pattern on the ground was a bit artistic for the historic nature of the area. She said she liked the matching colors and thought the overall design fit better but suggested moving everything back so that it did not crowd the corner.

Chair Ruedig opened the public hearing.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION [Timestamp 34:32]

Elizabeth Bratter of 15 McDonough Street said she liked the revised plan and thought the sidewalk pattern would match the one coming down Hanover Street and tie in the whole block.

No one else spoke, and Chair Ruedig closed the public hearing.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION [Timestamp 35:49]

*Mr. Adams moved to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the petition as presented, seconded by Mr. Ryan.*

Mr. Adams said the project would preserve the integrity of the District and improve and enhance the historic significance of the building on the site for the pleasure of the community. Mr. Ryan concurred and said it was a well-done and creative solution and that he looked forward to seeing the icon being preserved and the whole area being reinvigorated. Chair Ruedig said the project was toned down just enough to fit in well but was still creative and clearly new buildings that were a take on the historic ones. She said it would help clean up the square and bring the whole block together cohesively. Vice-Chair Doering asked if the generator boxes were part of the application. Ms. Kozak said they were but might change slightly because the generator size was not yet known. Mr. McNabb said the transformers were a combination of the City, Eversource, and the project's work happening on Fleet Street. It was further discussed.

The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS (NEW BUSINESS)

- 1. (Work Session/Public Hearing)** requested by **Double MC, LLC, owner**, for property located at **134 Pleasant Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (construct additions and other exterior modifications) and the new construction of a multi-use building on the site as per plans on file in the planning department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 105 as Lot 18-202 and lies within the Character District 5 (CD5) and Historic Districts.

WORK SESSION [Timestamp 44:49]

Project architect Tracy Kozak and owner Mark McNabb were present. Ms. Kozak reviewed the packet. She said a shallow hip roof was added to the penthouse building and that the existing building would be re clad using a white granite and a metal composite. She said she sunshades on the front entrance were removed so that it was now just glass and siding. She said the pitch was lowered on one roof to step it down more and that the entrances on the other building were redesigned. She said they changed one of the arches and got rid of the shed roof and added a straight parapet wall. She said the siding on the new building's side wings was changed to a horizontal board siding. She explained how the residential entrance to the new building was more detailed and how the arches had a metal lattice work. The apricot-colored glazed brick was discussed. She said they proposed a flat thermal finish to the white granite.

[Timestamp 54:44] Vice-Chair Doering asked where the gun metal gray went. Ms. Kozak said it was the second-floor cladding on the existing building. Vice-Chair Doering said it looked like it

was white marble all the way up in one of the renderings. Chair Ruedig asked if the thermal treatment would fade. Ms. Kozak said the color would go all the way up and would not get a silvery patina. Chair Ruedig said she was concerned that the wood material would end up looking different in the future. It was further discussed. Vice-Chair Doering asked how the gym would be handled and how it would look like through the storefront windows. Mr. McNabb said he was not sure if the gym would stay but if it did, there would also be physical therapists, so the workout equipment would not be seen in the storefront. The 3D model was reviewed. The landscaping and drive-thru were discussed, and the glazed brick was further discussed.

[Timestamp 1:18:37] Mr. Adams said there were many 18th, 19th, and even 20th century buildings near the project that had brick and that he thought it was a comfortable repeated material with a fair amount of variations allowed, but that very few buildings had a perfect brick façade. He said he was not prepared to accept a departure from traditional brick but thought the rest of the project fit in. He asked what the point of the headers on the windows was. Ms. Kozak it was to tie them into some of the exposed steel metals on the other buildings. Mr. McNabb said the material could be revisited after seeing samples of it on site. Mr. Ryan said he would like to see a mockup and did not mind the steel lentils because it was a new building. It was further discussed. Vice-Chair Doering said a lot of the forms, like the hip roof and windows, were reminiscent of the high school but were far apart. She said she saw an advantage to having a lighter brick on the building but supported having mockups. Chair Ruedig said she did not have a problem with a glazed brick, but since the building was new and had traditional forms, she thought it was appropriate to have modern materials to showcase that it was a new building. Mr. Ryan said he thought the materials, form, and massing were fine. Chair Ruedig said the change to the bank's main arches reminded her of the original market that had that arcade, so she thought it had a historic context even though it was a modern interpretation.

Chair Ruedig opened the public comment session.

Public Comment [Timestamp 1:31:07]

Elizabeth Bratter of 159 McDonough Street said the top square windows on the white part of the building on Pleasant Street looked like they were too small and out of character. She said the white granite shown in the renderings looked like cinderblocks. She said the penthouse looked like it would be more of a third story and did not seem to fit the setback criteria. She said she would like to see what the brick looked like next to red brick and thought the white parts of the building were stark, especially compared with the gray building next door, and did not blend in.

Mr. McNabb said the penthouse met the ordinance's criteria and would be reviewed by other boards. He said he would place mockups of the brick on site. Regarding the small square windows, he said when there was a lot going on architecturally and the focus was on an item like the square windows, it was much different than the whole picture. He said the windows fit in well in the entire building scape and noted that they were large windows and could not be larger because they were in a two-story space.

Mr. Adams moved to close the work session, seconded by Mr. Ryan. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

The public hearing started.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION [Timestamp 1:44:40]

Ms. Kozak reviewed the changes discussed in the work session. She said they would present mockup samples before approval for a brick color and would return with options for clay and brick as well as different colors for the Commission to review. She said they would also have a mockup of the white granite. She summarized that the existing Citizens Bank building would be reclad and have added fenestration and a rooftop penthouse. She said the building would be used for a gym and physical therapy on the bottom and would have a total of 16 apartments. She said the drive-thru would remain. She said the new building on Pleasant Street would consist of a combination of hipped roof forms and some flat roof connector sections. She said they updated the entrance architecture on the building, revised some roof pitches and provided additional details. She reviewed the context views, elevations, and renderings.

Vice-Chair Doering asked if the drive-thru's canopy would be similarly reclad. Ms. Kozak agreed and said it would have the same gray metal composite panels going horizontally across as the second floor. She said the supporting posts were presently brick but were shown clad in metal and that she would return with more details. She said there were a lot of double hung windows in the new building and the upper windows were awnings. In the existing renovation, she said the second-floor windows were all awnings and that most of the first-floor windows were fixed ones for the commercial space. She said the operable windows were Pella and the storefronts were Kawneer aluminum ones.

Chair Ruedig opened the public hearing.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION [Timestamp 1:51:45]

Elizabeth Bratter of 159 McDonough Street said the white section on Pleasant Street next to the gray building would "shout white" and the square windows would be very noticeable. She suggested that the Commission not approve it until they saw the mockups and any other things having to do with the drive-thru area.

No one else spoke, and Chair Ruedig closed the public hearing.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION [Timestamp 1:52:57]

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

- 1) The masonry exterior cladding materials shall require further conversation, and*
- 2) In-place on site samples shall show jointing and technique along with some alterations in the choice of materials.*

Mr. Ryan seconded the motion.

Mr. Adams said the Commission had long seen the white pieces of the Pleasant Street side of the building as being dependent and having unique forms and that they were not a distraction from the building itself. He said it was a unique situation of filling a site on a historic street with a historic streetscape and at the same time remodeling a not-quite historic but a previously constructed building that has significance. He said it was a step in showing the vitality of that. He said the project would maintain the integrity of the Historic District and the special character seen in the Historic District, most significantly in the modulation of the sizes and scales of the buildings. He said it was not designed to be a replicate or point to a particular thing but that it fit into the rhythm of the streetscape that ended right there. He said it would promote the welfare of the City and would be consistent with the special and defining nature of the community. He said he had no difficulty supporting the project. Mr. Ryan concurred and said the scale, mass, forms, and language were very appropriate for the Historic District. He said the project had come a long way through several months of work sessions and reached the point where it is successful.

Mr. Booz said the existing building was softened and was made to blend in with the new building that had more of a historic look. He said the roof modulation and addition of a hip roof to the existing building softened the flow along the street. Chair Ruedig said the Commission recognized that it was a unique site and had a different and unusual problem than normally seen in the Historic District. She said the redesign of the existing building and the design of the new building were pleasant and aesthetic and would work very well in the location. She thanked the applicant for their hard work and said she looked forward to seeing the mockups and finetuned materials but thought overall that the design was very appropriate.

The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

V. WORK SESSIONS (OLD BUSINESS)

A. REQUEST TO POSTPONE - Work Session requested by **Zucchini Crayon Trust, owner**, for property located at **77 State Street, Unit 202**, wherein permission is requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (enclose second story outdoor patio space) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 105 as Lot 18-202 and lies within the Character District 5 (CD5) and Historic Districts.

DECISION OF THE BOARD

*Mr. Adams moved to **postpone** the petitions to the February 4 meeting, seconded by Vice-Chair Doering. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.*

B. REQUEST TO POSTPONE - Work Session requested by **Christopher W. Avery Revocable Trust, owner**, for property located at **30 Walden Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (expand existing connector hallway to extend living space) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 101 as Lot 18 and lies within the Waterfront Business (WB) and Historic Districts.

DECISION OF THE BOARD

*Mr. Adams moved to **postpone** the petitions to the February 4 meeting, seconded by Vice-Chair Doering. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.*

VI. SELECTION OF OFFICERS [Timestamp 6:15]

Mr. Adams nominated Ms. Ruedig as Chair and Ms. Doering as Vice-Chair. Mr. Booz seconded. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

[Timestamp 1:58:10] At this point in the meeting, other topics were discussed.

Chair Ruedig brought up the boundary redefinition of Middle Street. She said, after further conversations with the Planning Board and the public, that she thought the decision should be postponed so that it could be included into a larger discussion of the Master Plan. She said there would be more time to ensure that the Commission was redefining the boundary purposefully and also ensure that there was plenty of public comment so that the property owners had plenty of time to be part of the discussion. She said a site walk could be included.

Vice-Chair Doering said the City Newsletter was putting out the opportunity for citizens to sign up to receive notices about certain councils that were meeting and that the HDC was one of them. Mr. Gilbo agreed and said the City would let folks know every time meeting materials were posted. Vice-Chair Doering said it would be a good way to ensure that a citizen or abutter did not lose track of a project. Mr. Gilbo said people could sign up for notices from all the boards or just individual ones.

Mr. Ryan asked if there was an update on the grant. Mr. Gilbo said the grant application was accepted but that the City was still waiting for a response. Chair Ruedig said she would keep the Commission updated.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Submitted,

Joann Breault
HDC Meeting Minutes Taker