

Date: _____

Request for a Work Session

Historic District Commission

Owner: THE WENTWORTH GARDNER
TOBIAS LEAR HISTORIC HOUSES
ASSOCIATION

Applicant: STEPHEN FOSTER (HAS P&S)
(If different)

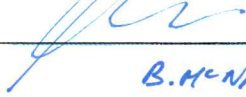
Address: P.O. BOX 563
(Street)
PORTSMOUTH, NH 03802
(City, State, Zip)

Address: 1924 47th STREET, NW,
(Street)
WASHINGTON, DC 20007
(City, State, Zip)

Phone: _____

Phone: 202 392 0202

Signature: _____

Signature: 
B. McNAMARA on behalf of S. FOSTER.

LOCATION OF STRUCTURE

Address: 49 HUNTING ST

Map: 103 Lot: 39 Zoning District: GRB

Brief Description of Work: NEW REAR, SHED ADDITION & GENERAL
PRESERVATION & RESTORATION WORK

Name of Presenter for HDC Work Session: BRENDAN McNAMARA
RESIDENTIAL DESIGNER
207 4393521 brenmcnamara@comcast.net

	Meeting (01)	Meeting (02)	Meeting (03)	Meeting (04)	Meeting (05)
Date					
Fee Paid					
Payment Type					

CONTENTS, HDC WORK SESSION APPLICATION FOR PROPOSED RESTORATION, ADDITION AND CHANGES TO THE TOBIAS LEAR HOUSE, 49 HUNKING ST., PORTSMOUTH, NH.

***2-Narrative**

***3-Photographs, Existing Conditions.**

***4-Tax Map, locating the property.**

***5-Site Plan, Existing Conditions, at 1"=10' scale, portion to fit 11x17.**

***6-Proposed Site Plan, at 1"=10' scale, portion to fit 11x17.**

***7-Over sketch to photograph showing changes to rear shed with notes on exterior restoration.**

NARRATIVE

HDC WORK SESSION

The Tobias Lear House

49 Hunking Street

History. The Tobias Lear House is thought to have been built circa 1740 by ship captain Tobias Lear III, (1706 – 1751), as a modest two-over-two Georgian home with a single central chimney. It was expanded approximately a generation later, presumably by Tobias Lear IV, (1736 – 1781), in a second building campaign which essentially doubled the size of the house to the rear, replaced the central chimney with two interior chimneys, and installed the impressively steep hipped roof and dormers still seen today. In 1788, Tobias Lear V, (1762 – 1816), who was born and raised in this Portsmouth house, became the personal secretary to President-elect George Washington, a position he held throughout Washington’s presidency and beyond. President Washington himself famously visited Tobias Lear’s mother in the front parlor of the house during his 1789 New England tour.

The house remained in the Lear family until 1860, thereafter falling into a period of decline as a tenement. Modest preservation efforts were undertaken after the house was acquired by noted Colonial Revivalist Wallace Nutting in 1917. The house was later sold to William Sumner Appleton of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities before being transferred in 1940 to the newly formed Wentworth-Gardner Tobias Lear Houses Association (the “Association”).

It made sense to put these two houses into a single museum entity in 1940. The high-style Wentworth-Gardener House and the more vernacular Tobias Lear House had been abutting neighbors for nearly two hundred years and had drawn historic preservation interest from the same quarters in the first part of the 20th century. (Wallace Nutting, for a time, also owned the Wentworth-Gardner House.) In 1979, the Tobias Lear House was added to the National Historic Register as part of a newly created Wentworth-Gardner and Tobias Lear Houses Historic District. As the National Register nomination concluded, “Together these two structures represent two traditions of Georgian architecture in America: one a high-style aspiration after British precedents and the other a more simple, vernacular rendering. Their close proximity to one another underscores this contrast and contributes to the spectrum of Portsmouth’s built environment.”

A Historic Building Assessment and Forensic Report, by Bedard Preservation and Restoration LLC, was undertaken in August of 2016.

Context for Current HDC Approval. Despite its history and its legacy of preservation-minded owners from the early 20th century to date, funds have been perennially lacking to provide much support to the Tobias Lear House beyond that needed to keep the property intact, and in late 2017, after extensive deliberation, the Association reluctantly decided to put the house up for sale. Although the Association had originally envisioned an outright sale of the property, after lengthy discussions over the course of nearly a year, the Association and Stephen Foster worked toward a proposal that envisioned a high-level, historically sensitive rehabilitation of the Tobias Lear House that would allow the Association to work with Stephen to continue to make the house accessible to the public. In late January 2019, the Association and Foster signed a purchase and sale agreement for the Tobias Lear House to accomplish those goals. A key condition to completion of the transaction is City approval of

a variance to the Zoning Ordinance to operate the house, once fully preserved and rehabilitated, as a two-bedroom Historic Inn. The purpose of the Inn is twofold: to provide continued public access to this historic property, albeit on a very intimate level to a small, select paying clientele, and to generate sufficient funds to properly maintain the house on an ongoing basis. In addition, the Association and Stephen Foster intend to make the house available, from time to time, for viewing by the general public under the auspices of the Association, particularly in conjunction with companion visits to the Wentworth-Gardner House. The Association will also assist Stephen Foster in the operation of the Inn, and the two have other areas of cooperation in mind as well.

Stephen has pledged to undertake a preservation and rehabilitation of the Tobias Lear House that meets the highest standards for such work, as demonstrated to the Association by a similar project he undertook at Wilton House in Middlesex County, Virginia in 2011. But more importantly, before closing on the transaction, the Association will place detailed historic preservation easements on the entire house, inside and out, to be held and enforced by Historic New England, thus ensuring that the historic and material integrity of the Tobias Lear House will be protected in perpetuity. The "Preservation Restriction Agreement," currently in draft form, can be made available to the HDC and the Planning Department.

The arrangement between Stephen Foster and the Association provides an avenue for the Tobias Lear House to be preserved and rehabilitated in much the way the Association might wish to do, had it the necessary funds. In addition, the Association will be relieved of the financial burden of maintaining the Tobias Lear House and will get a boost of resources from the sale of the Tobias Lear House that it can devote solely to the Wentworth-Gardner property. The agreement also gives the Association the opportunity to enhance its own museum activities and enrich its visitors' experience by showing the high-style Wentworth-Gardner House side by side with its vernacular, but nonetheless impressive Georgian peer. For his part, Stephen gets to do something he loves, bringing old houses back to life, he gets the Association's assistance and collaboration in running the house as an Inn and in showing it to the public; and he gets full ownership of the property to protect his investment.

Topics for the Historic District Commission

Shed Expansion. Condition reports prepared by the Association indicate that the shed is the one area of the house that likely needs to be rebuilt from the foundation up. BOA approval will be requested for a setback variance to accommodate a modest expansion of the shed footprint at the rear, northeast corner of the house. The house and shed (12'3"x7') currently sit six feet from the property line to the east, and the proposed shed expansion would extend that proximity by 3' feet to the north. The abutting property owner is the Association, which has no objection to the proposed shed expansion. The re-building of a shed with an expanded footprint (16'3"x10') will make it possible to house a complete modern kitchen work area (kitchen sink, dishwasher, refrigerator, freezer, microwave, stove-oven, cabinet/storage) and thus relieve the need to use another, more historically sensitive part of the house for this purpose.

Roofing. Approval will be requested to replace the current asphalt shingle roof with period-appropriate Western Red Cedar wood shingles.

Siding, Clapboard, Painting. Approval will be requested for extensive repairs and replacement that are required to clapboard siding.

Exterior windows. Current windows, with the exception of the window over the stair landing at the rear of the house, are 20th century replacements whose profile is not a correct reproduction of the appropriate 18th century originals. Although the current intention is to restore these windows, the applicant would like to review possible replacement to a more original appearance.

Drainage, Stone Wall, to West side. An effort needs to be made to address poor drainage to the North West corner of the house. A drainage swale is suggested, but this necessitates a low stone wall to maintain the existing grade at the property line.

Landscaping and Parking. In order to leave the maximum amount of property available for landscaping and gardening on the grounds of the Tobias Lear House, the Association has agreed to a long-term lease to the Tobias Lear House of three (3) parking spaces it owns around the corner on Mechanic Street to meet the parking requirements for the Inn. An appropriate variance will be requested for the use of these parking spaces for the proposed Inn, rather than spaces created directly on site. It should be noted also that the Association intends to use a portion of the proceeds from the sale of the Tobias Lear House to install gardens surrounding the Wentworth-Gardner House, and Stephen Foster and the Association have agreed to coordinate their respective landscape and garden plans. Stephen anticipates providing a detailed, historically appropriate landscape and garden plan for the Tobias Lear House, but under the circumstances this will necessarily be forthcoming at a later date.



EXISTING CONDITIONS (EAST)

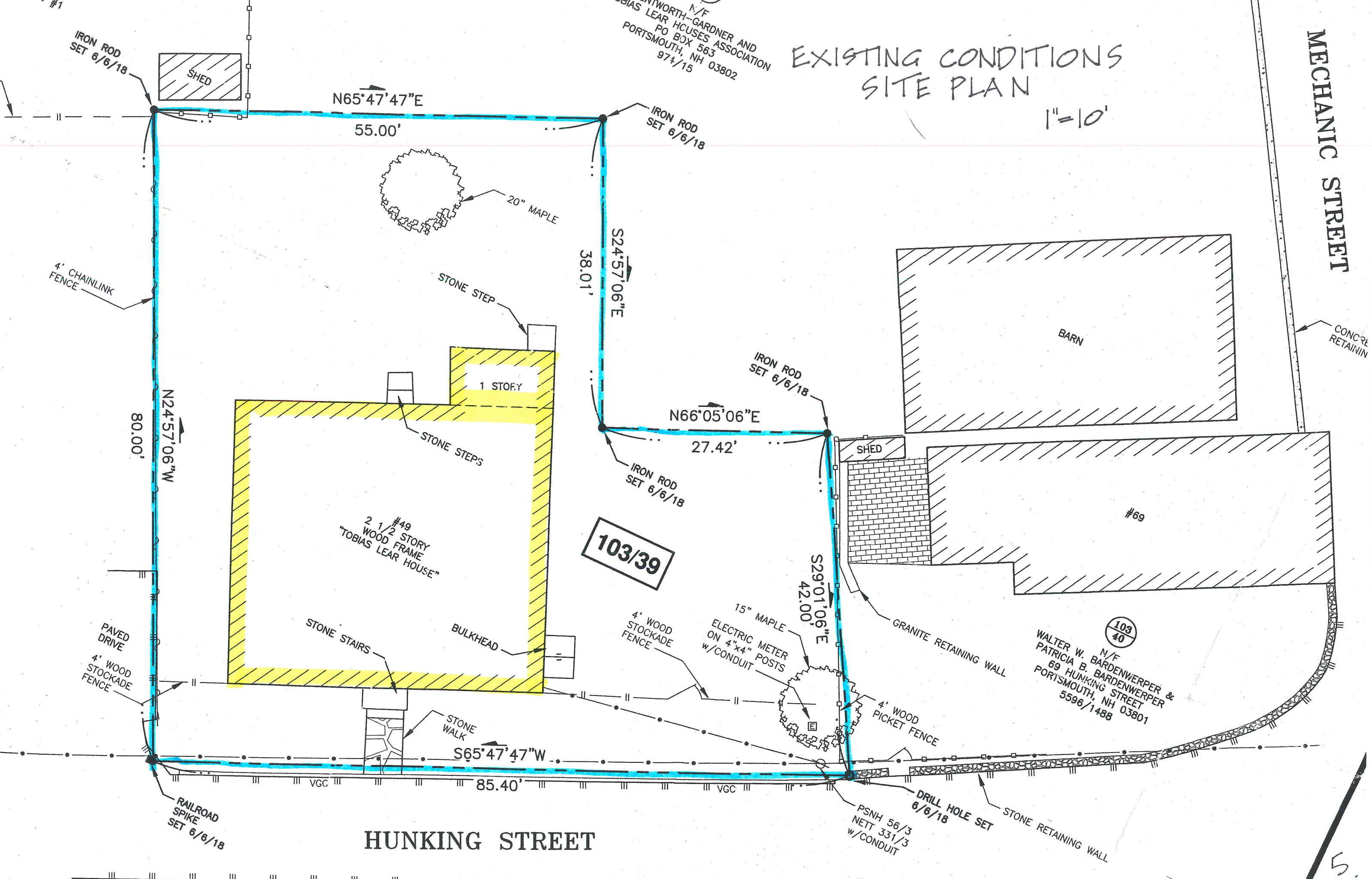
5.

NORTHWORTH-GARDNER AND
TOBIAS LEAR HOUSES ASSOCIATION
PO BOX 563
PORTSMOUTH, NH 03802
974/15

EXISTING CONDITIONS SITE PLAN

1"=10'

MECHANIC STREET



HUNKING STREET

WALTER W. BARDENWERPER &
PATRICIA B. BARDENWERPER
69 HUNKING STREET
PORTSMOUTH, NH 03801
5596/1488

103/39

103/40

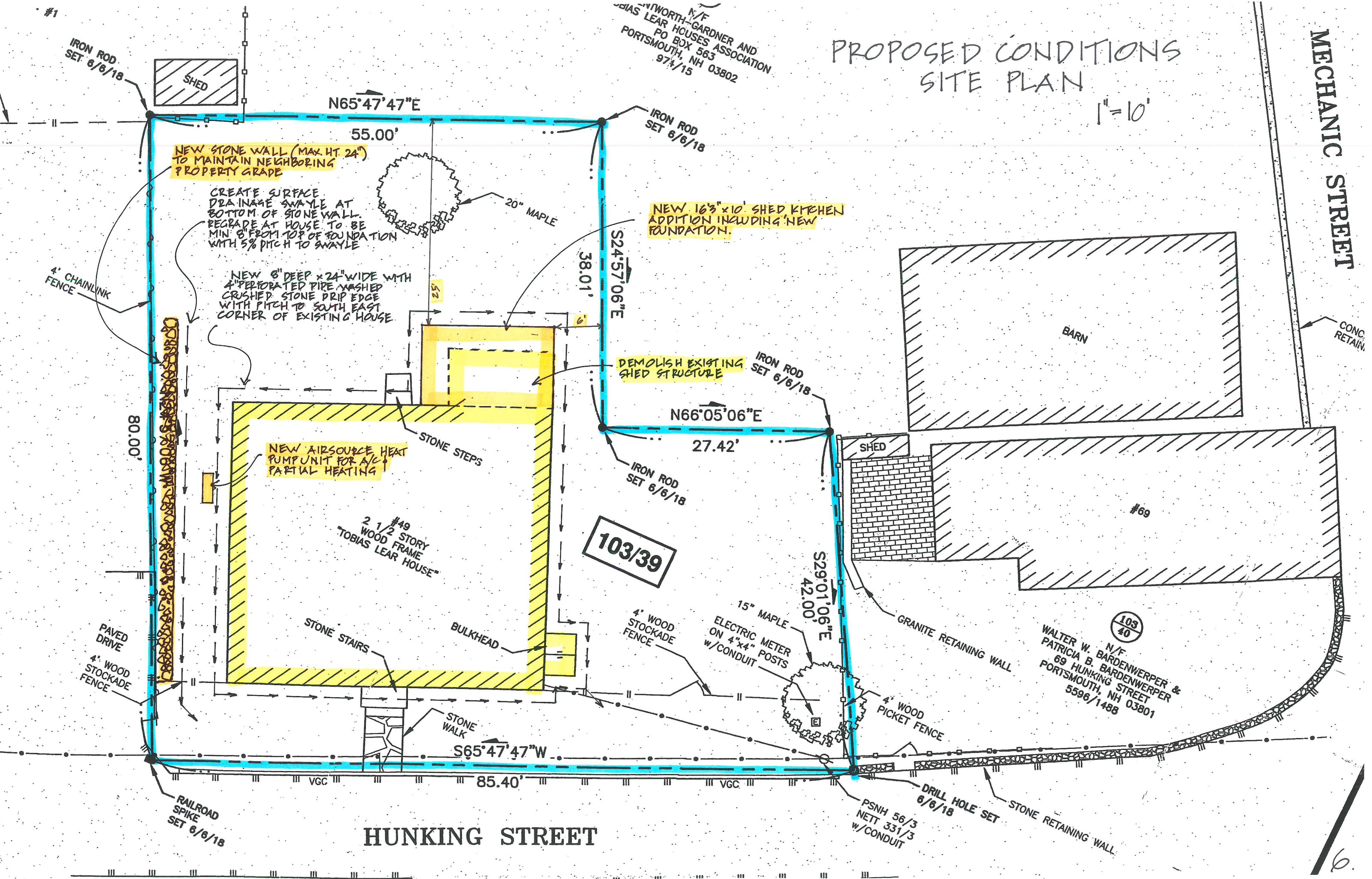
5.

N/F
WORTH-GARDNER AND
BIAS LEAR HOUSES ASSOCIATION
PO BOX 563
PORTSMOUTH, NH 03802
97 1/15

PROPOSED CONDITIONS SITE PLAN

1"=10'

MECHANIC STREET



NEW STONE WALL (MAX HT. 24")
TO MAINTAIN NEIGHBORING
PROPERTY GRADE

CREATE SURFACE
DRAINAGE SWAYLE AT
BOTTOM OF STONE WALL.
REGRADE AT HOUSE TO BE
MIN. 8" FROM TOP OF FOUNDATION
WITH 5% PITCH TO SWAYLE

NEW 8" DEEP x 24" WIDE WITH
4" PERFORATED PIPE WASHED
CRUSHED STONE DRIP EDGE
WITH PITCH TO SOUTH EAST
CORNER OF EXISTING HOUSE

NEW 16'3" x 10' SHED KITCHEN
ADDITION INCLUDING NEW
FOUNDATION.

DEMOLISH EXISTING
SHED STRUCTURE

NEW AIR SOURCE HEAT
PUMP UNIT FOR A/C
PARTIAL HEATING

2 1/2 STORY
WOOD FRAME
TOBIAS LEAR HOUSE

103/39

103/40
N/F
WALTER W. BARDENWERPER &
PATRICIA B. BARDENWERPER
69 HUNKING STREET
PORTSMOUTH, NH 03801
5596/1488

HUNKING STREET

- REPLACE EXISTING ASPHALT ROOF SHINGLES WITH NEW W.R.C. WOOD SHINGLE ROOF SYSTEM.

- NEW STONE WALL 24" MAX. HIT. TO ACCOMMODATE DRAINAGE SWAYLE TO WEST SIDE OF PROPERTY.

- RESTORE/REPLACE IN KIND EXISTING TRIM SIDING

- RESTORE/RENOVATE EXISTING WINDOWS. IF SCREENS OR STORMS ARE DEEMED NECESSARY, INSTALL TO INTERIOR

- REGRADE AROUND HOUSE TO ACCOMMODATE PROPER (5% MIN PITCH) SURFACE DRAINAGE SYSTEM.

- NEW REAR SHED ADDITION (16'3" x 10'0") TO NEW FOUNDATION NEW GREEN MOUNTAIN "MILESTONE" WINDOWS. MATCH TRIM SIDING. NEW W.R.C. WOOD ROOF SHINGLE SYSTEM. 4" THICK STONE VENEER (TO MATCH) TO SHELF IN NEW CONCRETE FOUNDATION, (12" HIGH).

PROPOSED VIEW (EAST)

(OVER SKETCH)

