

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

EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

6:30 p.m.

**July 5, 2017
to be reconvened on July 12, 2017**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Vincent Lombardi; Vice-Chairman Jon Wyckoff; Dan Rawling, Reagan Ruedig, Richard Shea, John Mayer; City Council Representative Nancy Pearson; Alternate and Molly Bolster

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Alternate Martin Ryan

ALSO PRESENT: Nick Cracknell, Principal Planner

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Chairman Lombardi read the Requests for Postponement petitions.

*It was moved, seconded, and **passed** unanimously (7-0) to **postpone** the 82 Court Street petition to the July 12, 2017 meeting.*

*It was moved, seconded, and **passed** unanimously (7-0) to **postpone** the 113 Congress Street and 46 Maplewood Avenue petitions to the August meeting.*

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. June 7, 2017
- B. June 14, 2017

*It was moved, seconded, and **passed** unanimously (7-0) to approve the June 7, 2017 minutes as presented.*

*It was moved, seconded, and **passed** unanimously (7-0) to approve the June 14, 2017 minutes as amended.*

II. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

1. Puddle Lane (Strawbery Banke) – The Commission had no issues with this request.
2. 20 Mast Lane (Strawbery Banke)

The Commission felt that there was a lot of material for an administrative approval. Mr. Cracknell said the applicant could answer any questions at the next meeting.

*Vice-Chair Wyckoff made a motion to **postpone** the Administrative Approval to the July 12, 2017 meeting so that the applicant could speak to it. Ms. Ruedig seconded the motion. The motion **passed** by unanimous (7-0 vote).*

3. 67-77 State Street – The Commission had no issues with this request.
4. 16 Sheafe Street – The Commission had no issues with this request.
5. 174 Fleet Street

Vice-Chair Wyckoff noted that the glass was removed from the project, which he said was one of the selling points. Ms. Ruedig agreed. The project architect Brandon Holben stated that the change was budget-driven.

6. 290-296 Pleasant Street

The Condominium Association President Steve Burack was present to speak to the petition's railing cross pattern design. In answer to the Commission's questions, he said he would consider reproducing the cross pattern as illustrated as well as the spiral staircase concept.

Mr. Shea asked whether the Fire Chief was okay with the pulldown ladders. Mr. Burack said there were safe and that he was going to speak to the Fire Chief upon approval of the petition. Mr. Shea said it could be built as shown if the applicant got the building permit. He asked him to still check with the Fire Department. Mr. Cracknell said that if the cross pattern was included on the railing system and if the pulldown ladders did not meet the fire protection code, then a black metal spiral staircase could be used.

*Ms. Ruedig made a motion to **remove** the Administrative Approval request to vote on it separately, and Vice-Chair Wyckoff seconded. The motion **passed** by unanimous (7-0) vote.*

*Vice-Chair Wyckoff made a motion to **grant** the Administrative Approval for the application, with the following stipulations:*

- *That the cross pattern be included as drawn; and*
- *That a black iron circular staircase is substituted if the Building Inspector does not approve of the pulldown ladders.*

*Mr. Shea seconded the motion. The motion **passed** by unanimous (7-0) vote.*

7. 105 Daniel Street- The Commission had no issues with this request.
8. 33 Deer Street – The Commission had no issues with this request.
9. 275 Islington Street

Mr. Shea recused himself. Ms. Ruedig noted that the petition was originally presented with no screens and now the applicant wanted half screens, but she said it wasn't a problem.

10. 56 Dennett Street

Vice-Chair Wyckoff said that the decking projected beyond the corner board, and the post and rail system was on the outside of the decking and would need a return. Chairman Lombardi said it didn't look structurally secure but that the Building Inspector would take care of it.

*Ms. Ruedig made a motion to **grant** the Administrative Approval for Petitions #1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, and 10. Vice-Chair Wyckoff seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously (7-0).*

*Ms. Ruedig made a motion to **grant** the Administrative Approval for Petition #9, 275 Islington Street, and Councilor Pearson seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously (7-0), with Mr. Shea recused from the vote and Alternate Molly Bolster voting.*

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS (OLD BUSINESS)

A. Petition of **Worth Development Condominium Association, owner, and The Friendly Toast, applicant**, for property located at **113 Congress Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (replace front windows with retractable windows with screens) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 126 as Lot 6-114 and lies within the CD 5, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts. *(At the applicant's request, this item was postponed at the June 7, 2017 meeting to the July 5, 2017 meeting.)*

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*It was moved, seconded, and **passed** unanimously (7-0) to **postpone** the petition to the August 2017 meeting.*

B. Petition of **Kristina Logan, owner**, for property located at **220 South Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (remove and replace windows, remove asbestos siding, replace with cedar shingle siding) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 111 as Lot 1 and lies within the Single Residence B and Historic Districts. *(At the applicant's request, this item was postponed at the June 7, 2017 meeting to the July 5, 2017 meeting.)*

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

The owner Kristina Logan was present to speak to the petition, noting that she also wanted to replace the windows because they were in bad shape. Ms. Ruedig asked if Ms. Logan would remove the clapboards under the siding or just shingle on top of them. Ms. Logan said a lot of them were damaged and that she had to remove them in order to insulate the house. Ms. Ruedig said she preferred that the clapboards remain and said that older wood lasted longer than modern

shingles or clapboards. She said the areas that needed fixing could be scraped down and wouldn't need any more maintenance than new shingles. Ms. Logan said the house was tall and that she didn't have the funds to pay someone to repair or paint the clapboards. Ms. Ruedig said that shingles would give the house a very different look. It was further discussed. Vice-Chair Wyckoff said that it was inappropriate to put wood shingles on the 1890 house and that stripping off the clapboards would create more problems than restoring them. He recommended using a primer to bond to the clapboards.

In response to Mr. Mayer's questions, Ms. Logan said she would restore the old window trim, retain the stained glass windows only, and insulate the building before the shingles went on.

Mr. Shea said there were a lot of unknowns about the house and suggested that the asbestos removal could be pulled from the petition and approved, giving the Commission time to look at the quality underneath. He said if it was discovered that the windows had to be replaced, they could do the sash replacement only, with the trim and sills restored, which would keep the building's authentic look. Ms. Logan said she was nervous about removing the asbestos in that case. Chairman Lombardi recommended that the petition be continued as a work session so that Ms. Logan could get advice about what she could do. Ms. Ruedig said that the Commission also had a list of window preservation specialists, and Chairman Lombardi said the State Historic Preservation Society had a website listing preservation carpenters and other good resources.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE COMMISSION

No one rose to speak, and Chairman Lombardi closed the public hearing.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Vice-Chair Wyckoff made a motion to **continue** the petition to the August meeting so that the Commission could look at the conditions under the asbestos and trim. Ms. Ruedig seconded. The motion **passed** by unanimous (7-0) vote.*

C. Petition of **82 Court Street, LLC, owner**, for property located at **82 Court Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (remove and replace seven windows) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 111 as Lot 48 and lies within the CD4-L1 and Historic District. *(At the applicant's request, this item was postponed at the June 14, 2017 meeting to the July 5, 2017 meeting.)*

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*It was moved, seconded, and **passed** unanimously (7-0) to **postpone** the petition to the July 12, 2017 meeting.*

D. (Work Session/Public Hearing) **Petition of 46 Maplewood Avenue, LLC, owner**, for property located at **46-64 Maplewood Avenue**, wherein a Conditional Use Permit and a Certificate of Approval is requested to allow a new freestanding structure (construct 3 ½ story mixed use building) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 125 as Lot 2 and lies within the CD4, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts. *(The item was postponed at the June 7, 2017 meeting to the July 5, 2017 meeting.)*

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously (7-0) to postpone the petition to the August meeting.

IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS (NEW BUSINESS)

1. Petition of **610 Islington Street LTP Partnership, owner**, for property located at **610 Islington Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (remove and replace siding on west, north, and south facades, replace misc. trim with composite, replace shutters) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 155 as Lot 1 and lies within the CD 4-L2 and Historic Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

The contractor Matt Morrow was present to speak to the petition on behalf of the applicant. He briefly reviewed the petition. Mr. Shea noted that the applicant was replacing in kind and suggested that the front façade would look better with flat casing on the windows. Vice-Chair Wyckoff said it was a replacement in kind and that whatever the applicant did would improve it.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE COMMISSION

No one rose to speak, and Chairman Lombardi closed the public hearing.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Mr. Shea made a motion to grant the Certificate of Approval for the application as presented, and Vice-Chair Wyckoff seconded.

Mr. Shea said it was a replacement in kind and a minor change to the appearance of the building.

The motion passed by unanimous (7-0) vote.

2. Petition of **Stephen J. Craige, owner**, for property located at **10 Humphrey's Court**, wherein permission was requested to allow an amendment to a previously approved design (demolition of existing garage, construct two car attached garage, revisions to dormers, replace and reconfigure various windows and doors) as per plans on file in the Planning Department.

Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 101 as Lot 43 and lies within the General Residence B and Historic Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

The architect Jennifer Ramsey was present on behalf of the applicant to speak to the petition. She reviewed the site plan and the petition in detail.

Mr. Shea asked what the siding would be. Ms. Ramsey said it would be clapboard and that the roof singles would match existing. Mr. Rawling asked whether the windows would be vinyl clad. Ms. Ramsey said it was an Andersen product and wasn't vinyl. In response to further questions, Ms. Ramsey said the jambs would match the trim color and that half screens would be used.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE COMMISSION

No one rose to speak, and Chairman Lombardi closed the public hearing.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Mr. Rawling made a motion to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the application as presented, with the following stipulations:*

- 1) Half screens shall be used.*
- 2) The jamb color should match the sash color.*

Councilor Pearson seconded the motion.

Mr. Rawling said the petition was for extensive modifications to an existing house that he believed had been altered quite a bit and would have a much better balancing composition. He said it would improve the neighborhood and keep the cottage effect of the original house.

*The motion **passed** by unanimous (7-0) vote.*

3. Petition of **Swirly Girl II, LLC, owner**, for property located at **244 South Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (construct one and two story addition on rear façade for garage and apartment, renovations to existing structure including new windows, door, siding, and trim, construct new chimney and deck) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 111 as Lot 3 and lies within the Single Residence B and Historic Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

The architect Anne Whitney was present on behalf of the applicant to speak to the petition. She introduced the builder Steve Bedard. Ms. Whitney reviewed the petition, beginning with the removal of the painted cedar shingles and window replacement. She said they would do a black

sash with wineberry frame to match the trim and clapboards. She noted that the grading on the front of the building was very tight, so they were proposing a mud sill just on the front elevation.

Ms. Ruedig asked whether Ms. Whitney was able to save much from the interior. Ms. Whitney said the old paneling and stairways would be kept.

Ms. Whitney continued her presentation. Ms. Bolster asked why there were cedar shingles on the side with the cedar siding on the same wall. Ms. Whitney said the old building would be clapboards and the addition would be shingles with red trim to differentiate the old and the new and to break up the mass of color. She said the trim would be the same shade of red.

Ms. Whitney reviewed the right side elevation and said she wanted to put the egress window on the back. She said they would end up with some wall-mounted HVAC condensers, so she wanted a solid fence to shield them. She reviewed the window schedule.

Vice-Chair Wyckoff said that the entry door looked awkward because of the thin pilasters on the sides of it. Ms. Whitney said they might find evidence of the original surround. Vice-Chair Wyckoff asked what the material for the step was. Ms. Whitney said it was a piece of granite. Vice-Chair Wyckoff said he thought the width of the pilasters was based on an existing stone step that had been there for 200 years. He said the front door surround could be pulled from the application until after the demolition so that there was a better idea of what could have been there before. Ms. Whitney said it could be a stipulation.

Mr. Mayer asked whether the mud sill was added and if it would carry around. Ms. Whitney said the grade was close in that spot and that the sill wouldn't carry around because it dropped away on both sides. Vice-Chair Wyckoff said the mud sill depended on the grade and wasn't a design feature except on a big, important house. Mr. Shea said they could stipulate that the chimney would match the one on State Street.

Mr. Shea asked whether light fixtures would be added to the front of the house. Ms. Whitney said they might put something on either side of the door. He asked whether the front door was solid wood. Ms. Whitney said it was, with reproductive-style hardware.

Mr. Rawling said the front entry seemed compressed at the top and needed adjusting. He encouraged the second chimney rather than the cupola, with a condition that the architectural shingles be a weathered wood tone.

Chairman Lombardi noted that the porch came out to the side and looked like there was a step off to the ground from the rear and then it went down a steep grade. Ms. Whitney said there would probably be a railing.

Vice-Chair Wyckoff asked about the three gas meters. Ms. Whitney said there might not be any, or only one. Mr. Shea asked about gutters. Ms. Whitney said they were required to place gutters on the back and said Mr. Bedard preferred that they not be on the front.

At that point, Mr. Bedard stated that they believed they would find some interesting details when they took the house apart. He asked the Commission for a ‘leap of faith’ that he and Ms. Whitney would put back what belonged there. He noted that he wanted to bring the chimney back like it was before and wanted to make the windows look like the original ones.

Ms. Ruedig said she was glad Mr. Bedard wanted to find the details but wasn’t sure whether Mr. Bedard was asking for a blanket approval. Mr. Bedard said he was asking not to come back because a lot of the details wouldn’t be known until they were uncovered. Mr. Cracknell said it would depend on the magnitude of those changes and that any changes would be brought to his attention to determine whether they were major ones.

Mr. Shea said it looked like two presentations because Mr. Bedard mentioned museum-quality restoration and was showing Marvin windows. Mr. Bedard said the window issues could be resolved. Mr. Shea asked whether they would make them look like period windows, and Ms. Whitney said they would if it was in the budget.

Mr. Cracknell recommended that the Commission approve the base model and that Mr. Bedard come back with any changes. Vice-Chair Wyckoff said he was still concerned about the front door surround because it was out of proportion. He said it was too flat as drawn and almost looked like a prefinished door surround. Ms. Whitney said they could return for an administrative approval for that item.

Ms. Bolster asked whether the gutters were on the front or back. Mr. Bedard said they were on the back and wouldn’t recommend them on the front because it was a maintenance issue.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE COMMISSION

No one rose to speak, and Chairman Lombardi closed the public hearing.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Vice-Chair Wyckoff made a motion to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the application, with the following stipulations:*

- 1) Bullet glass may be used above the entry door.*
- 2) The faux chimney will have the same flashing and brick detail as was used on the faux chimney that was approved at 102 State Street.*
- 3) A second faux chimney shall be located where the historic chimney was originally located.*
- 4) The exterior lighting shall be submitted for an administrative approval.*
- 5) The architectural shingles shall be weathered wood.*
- 6) The door surround shall be removed from this application and submitted for an administrative approval.*

Ms. Ruedig said she would be more comfortable saying that the cupola substitution would be the Commission’s preference. Ms. Whitney said she wanted a second chimney. The Commission discussed it further and said if the chimney was on the front of the house it would be fine.

Ms. Ruedig seconded the motion.

Vice-Chair Wyckoff said that the petition was consistent with the special and defining character of surrounding properties and consistent with Colonial restoration, making it compatible with the design of surrounding properties. He said the building had been used and abused and would be made into a duplex type of structure, which he thought was a great improvement for it.

Ms. Ruedig said the project was a very complex one and that the building had a complex history. She thanked the applicant for heeding the Commission's recommendations. She said the addition was well sized for the building and appreciated all the attention to detail and for making it look like something that was more loved than it ever had been.

*The motion **passed** by unanimous (7-0) vote.*

4. Petition of **Cristina Jane Ljungberg, owner**, for property located at **47 South Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (remove and replace windows on front and left elevations, remove five windows on rear and left side elevations) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 102 as Lot 51 and lies within the General Residence B and Historic Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

The architect Anne Whitney was present on behalf of the applicant to speak to the petition. She reviewed the petition, noting that the windows were replaced 25 years before with Brosco ones and were in poor condition but thought some of the sills might be salvageable.

Mr. Shea asked how much of the window was replaced. Ms. Whitney said it was just the sash replacement but there was interior trim that they wanted to preserve. She said the sash needed to be removed and that the frame was rotten so the whole system had to come out. Mr. Shea concluded that the original frames the house were gone. Ms. Whitney said they were, except for the sills, which they would keep but would put new construction in the opening. She said they would probably re-clapboard it and try to match the exposure. Vice-Chair Wyckoff asked if the sills would be saved, and Ms. Whitney said they would.

Vice-Chair Wyckoff asked if the awkward horizontal window on the left elevation would be replaced. Ms. Whitney said it would not. He asked how visible the little bay window would be. Ms. Whitney said it could really only be seen from the bridge.

Mr. Rawling asked about the jambs and sash. Ms. Whitney said she would use an ebony sash and off-white jambs and trim. Mr. Rawling said it would seem odd to have the bay structure with just wall panels below it. Ms. Whitney said it wasn't awkward when one walked into the space, and she didn't think it would really be seen. Vice-Chair Wyckoff asked whether the attic window would be replaced, and Ms. Whitney said she wanted to.

In response to Mr. Mayer's questions, Ms. Whitney said the nine front windows would be replaced as well as three on the left side and three on the right, that the third-floor window would look better as a 4/4, and that the trim would be painted Azek.

Ms. Ruedig said she wouldn't feel comfortable changing the attic window unless there was evidence that it was originally smaller. Ms. Whitney said she didn't think that any of the window openings were changed. Ms. Ruedig said she could leave it the way it was. Mr. Rawling asked whether the new window change on the left elevation could be four lights. Ms. Whitney said she could downsize it a bit more and make it more proportionate.

Vice-Chair Wyckoff asked about half screens. Ms. Whitney said she would have either half screens or interior screens.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE COMMISSION

No one rose to speak, and Chairman Lombardi closed the public hearing.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Mr. Shea made a motion to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the application as presented, with the following stipulation:*

- 1) Half screens or interior screens shall be used.*

Ms. Ruedig seconded the motion.

Mr. Shea said the petition was compatible with the design of surrounding properties and consistent with the special and defining character of surrounding properties. He said he wouldn't approve the window replacements if they hadn't already been replaced, noting that the damage to the old house had already been done from a historic standpoint and that he felt comfortable approving it with replacement windows.

*The motion **passed** by unanimous (7-0) vote.*

5. Petition of **Flintatta, LLC, owner**, and the **Unitarian Universalist Church of Portsmouth, applicant**, for property located at **73 Court**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (construct addition to accommodate enclosed egress stair and lift) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 116 as Lot 18 and lies within the CD 4-L1 and Historic Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

The architect Alyssa Murphy on behalf of the applicant was present to speak to the petition. She reviewed the petition, noting that not much had changed from the prior work session. She said they might return for two items, replacing the storm windows and exterior lighting at the door.

Mr. Rawling said that removing the exterior door on the outside would clean up the building's exterior a lot. He said the addition forms were clean and thought the distinction between the new and the old were there, and he liked the contemporary glazing treatment.

Mr. Shea noted that the front doors on the old elevation appeared to be out to the front façade but the metal ones were recessed in. He asked whether that recess would be used again. Ms. Murphy said there were two closets in the way and didn't know which would make more sense. Mr. Shea said either location was okay.

Mr. Mayer asked why the rear door would be removed if it was part of the building's original design. Ms. Murphy said there was no documentation indicating such but didn't feel that it was a loss because there was no path around the building. Chairman Lombardi asked whether a fence along the parking lot was considered. Ms. Murphy said she didn't consider a fence because it might block some of the windows.

Mr. Mayer asked about placing a solar thermal panel on the blank wall. Ms. Murphy said it was possible but wasn't planned. Vice-Chair Wyckoff said he supported the petition and thought that the solar panel idea was a good design.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE COMMISSION

No one rose to speak, and Chairman Lombardi closed the public hearing.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Ms. Ruedig made a motion to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the application as presented, and Mr. Shea seconded.*

Ms. Ruedig said she thought it was a thoughtful design for an addition that was distinct and related to the building. She said it fit in, even though it was a modern design, and that it would preserve the integrity of the District and was compatible with innovative technologies.

*The motion **passed** by unanimous (7-0) vote.*

6. Petition of **The Hill Condominium Association, owner, and Logan Properties, LLC, applicant**, for property located at **403 Deer Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (upgrades and location changes to the existing kitchen venting system) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 118 as Lot 26-3 and lies within the CD 4-L1, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

The builder Kip Brooks was present to speak to the petition on behalf of the applicant. He reviewed the application, noting that there were code issues, especially with the existing kitchen

venting system, which had to have its hood replaced to bring it up to code. He explained the exhaust fan system and said one option was to go through the roof with the utility fan. He said the owners would do additional work on the outside of the building, including repairing the air conditioning system, putting cedar shakes on both shed roofs, and lowering the lattice fencing, which would enhance the back courtyard. He said the condominium association sent a letter of support. He said the two upper windows on the gable side would have louvers.

In response to Vice-Chair Wyckoff's questions, Mr. Brooks said he would cedar shingle the two small roofs and not the entire back of the building, and that the louvers could be painted and were not motorized. Ms. Ruedig asked what new window would replace the one being removed. Mr. Brooks said he would put an existing frame back and make the window match the old one. Ms. Ruedig said the Commission would have to approve whatever new window was put in and that the sash had to match existing. Mr. Mayer asked whether the louvers could look like closed shutters. Mr. Brooks said it was possible. Vice-Chair Wyckoff recommended a louvered shutter that swung out and looked like two.

In response to Mr. Mayer's questions, Mr. Brooks said the existing chimney could not serve as a place for the fan being moved to the roof and that the window fan could not be moved to the roof as well. Chairman Lombardi asked about the conduit for the fan in the last window, and Mr. Brooks said they could get rid of it.

Mr. Shea said he thought Option 1 was the best solution and for more detail on the brick veneer. Mr. Brooks said it would be a thin brick and that the cheaper alternative was just flashing, a metal box that could be painted. Mr. Shea said that putting the brick on it might draw too much attention to it and it wouldn't match the original chimneys. He suggested powder coating the box to match the roof color as closely as possible. Mr. Brooks said he could do that. The rest of the Commission agreed that it was a good solution.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE COMMISSION

No one rose to speak, and Chairman Lombardi closed the public hearing.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Vice-Chair Wyckoff made a motion to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the application, with the following stipulations:*

- 1) The louvers shall be painted to match the existing trim.*
- 2) The replacement window shall match the existing historic window.*
- 3) The shutters shall be awning, Bermuda style.*
- 4) The conduit shall be removed from the rear of the building.*
- 4) The chimney and fan shall be a powder coated metal and be a gray color.*

Mr. Mayer seconded the motion.

Vice-Chair Wyckoff said the petition would maintain the special character of the District. He said it was an improvement to remove the fans and straighten them out. He said the petition

would complement and enhance the architectural character as well as make use of compatibility of design and innovative technologies.

*The motion **passed** by unanimous (7-0) vote.*

7. Petition of **Bluestone Properties of Rye, LLC, owner**, for property located at **135 Congress Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations and new construction to an existing structure (complete renovation of the front and rear elevations, construct glass addition on rear elevation, reconstruct original skylight) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 126 as Lot 5 and lies within the CD 5, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

The architect Andrew Sidford on behalf of the applicant was present to speak to the petition. He stated that they followed up with NHDHR and engaged an historian. He reviewed the history of the building and reviewed the petition in detail. He showed window and roofing samples.

Ms. Ruedig said she thought the façade restoration was fantastic but the design of the rear addition still concerned her. She noted that Mr. Sidford considered the Secretary of Interior Standards to make the addition distinct but compatible. She said she was in support of glass additions but struggled to find how the design of the addition was referential to the historic building. Mr. Sidford said there was a fine line between being referential and mimicking. He said that the pattern of the glazing, the way it was broken up, and the very calculated frequencies and proportions were referential to the windows and fenestration on the back, and that they had considered various fenestration patterns but settled on the one that they felt was the most appropriate. He said the design had layers and that the fenestration and geometric patterns were meant to entice people and then break down and open up to the original windows.

Ms. Ruedig said it wasn't necessarily the window patterns, which she felt were totally acceptable. She said she didn't think there was that fine of a line between mimicking and being referential. She understood the concept of all the distracting angles and towers but felt that the design, with different rooflines and angles, was too distinct and not at mid-point. She said it looked like a completely different design and concept, with no reference to the building.

Mr. Rawling said he saw it more as a compatible differentiation and felt that the addition was compatible to the building but different, and that the materials and coloration set off the existing building. He said the tower element was a unique form that needed to be unique to draw attention, and he felt that the angularity enhanced the site a lot. He said Mr. Sidford had walked a nice tightrope and created a pleasing, compatible design.

Mr. Mayer said he was more aligned with Ms. Ruedig's concerns about the form's angularity but also appreciated that it was a new form in Portsmouth. He asked whether the applicant considered any signage on the facades. The owner Mike Labrie said they hadn't spent a lot of time on signage and tended to like the minimalist look. Mr. Mayer said it would be important on

the front façade. He said that the design of the roof façade might serve as an integrating factor with the angularity of the design and the historic building.

Mr. Shea said he had liked the project from the beginning and thanked the applicant for restoring the building. He said he thought the only great thing about the rear elevation was the arched windows, which the Commission was trying to save. He said he had to look at the building and how it fit into the parking lot, which was an uninteresting space. He said the tower gave it some interest and turned the back of a bunch of buildings into an interesting, artistic entry point. He said if the building wasn't at that location, he may not be as in love with the tower, but it added some interesting forms and he liked the rear design. Vice-Chair Wyckoff said he agreed with Mr. Shea. He said he remembered trying to straighten the tower out and was glad that Mr. Sidford plowed ahead. He said it was an artistic expression and thought it might be something that Mr. Sidford would be extremely proud of in the future. He said he also appreciated what was being done to the front façade.

Councilor Pearson said she was a big fan of the angularity and hoped that the project broke the logjam of flat roofs in Portsmouth. She noted that the whole area would be redeveloped over the next several years and that they had the potential of being a new anchor point that didn't exist before. She thought the timing was perfect and was excited about the project.

Ms. Ruedig asked what the longevity of the boral material was. The contractor Ben Auger said it would outlast all of them and said they chose it because it was the most stable synthetic product for exterior trim. Ms. Ruedig asked whether they would be able to mill it into all those different details and moldings. Mr. Auger said it was millable and paintable. Ms. Ruedig said the Commission would need to see more detailed drawings of some of the moldings as the project moved forward. Mr. Auger said they were using the architectural drawings and old photographs as a guide. Mr. Sidford said they would be happy to return with details.

Vice-Chair Wyckoff said that the transom windows over the storefront were vague but that he knew what the applicant was trying to do. He said the fact that the applicant was really trying to recreate something was very important and that the applicant could return for lighting and anything else that needed to return for approval.

Chairman Lombardi said he assumed the applicant would be back with many details, and he thanked the Labries for the work they did to bring the building back. He said he liked the addition and also liked that it was a little heavier than originally. He said it allowed the back structure to stand on its own and felt less like it was attached to the building. He said he knew the back façade would face a space that would evolve in the City. He said it was a parking lot now but thought that the use of cars would change dramatically in the next 10 or 20 years, making the space something different in the future. He said all the buildings would take advantage of that and that the project was a good start and would encourage either reconfiguration of the existing buildings or whatever happened along the Worth Lot.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE COMMISSION

No one rose to speak, and Chairman Lombardi closed the public hearing.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Mr. Rawling made a motion to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the application, and Councilor Pearson seconded.*

Mr. Rawling said the project made a great effort to restore an old building to its former grandeur, to fill in the missing pieces and to create a stronger presence on the streetscape. He said it would do a lot to generate a lot of activity at that end of the street. He said the rear addition did a lot to create character in the back lot by using modern materials in creative ways. He said it would be an exciting new addition to the whole area and that it would enhance and preserve the integrity of the District, both the preservation of the historic features and the recreation of lost historic features. He said it would enhance the historic significance of the building by bringing it back to life and recreating lost elements of it, and it would enhance surrounding property values by its revitalization and drawing people and activity in. He said he strongly supported it.

Ms. Ruedig said she was thrilled with the revitalization of the building but could not support the project because she felt that the design of the addition did not meet the Commission's guidelines.

*The motion **passed** by a vote of 6-1, with Ms. Ruedig voting in opposition.*

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

Chairman Lombardi stated that representatives of the State Street Saloon wanted to meet with the Commission as soon as possible. Vice-Chair Wyckoff asked whether it was appropriate, noting that the Commission was either for removing the building or not. He asked what was going to replace the building, noting that the Commission had nothing in front of them and thought the applicant expected something that he wasn't willing to give at that point.

Mr. Mayer said it was a mistake to sign off and say that the building would be lost. He suggested that steps be taken to stabilize the building so that the Commission could argue for preservation without seeing it fall further into disrepair. Mr. Shea agreed, saying that it appeared no effort was made to save the building. He asked whether anyone had measured the building. Mr. Cracknell said he didn't know whether that was being evaluated or not but would ask the Inspection Department. Chairman Lombardi said the City must have inspected it because people were allowed to walk next to it. Mr. Shea recommended that, if it was decided that the building was to be demolished, that the HDC request that it be put back in kind.

*Vice-Chair Wyckoff made a motion to **request** that the building be **stabilized** and made weatherproof, and Mr. Shea seconded. The motion **passed** by unanimous (7-0) vote.*

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Breault
Recording Secretary

These minutes were approved at the Historic District Commission meeting on August 2, 2017.