

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

EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

6:30 p.m.

**August 07, 2019
To be reconvened on
August 14, 2019**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Vice-Chairman Jon Wyckoff; City Council Representative Doug Roberts; Members Dan Rawling, Martin Ryan; Alternates Heinz Sauk-Schubert and Margot Doering

MEMBERS ABSENT: Chairman Vincent Lombardi, Reagan Ruedig, Cyrus Beer

ALSO PRESENT: Nick Cracknell, Principal Planner, Planning Department

.....
Vice-Chair Wyckoff assumed Chairman Lombardi's seat as Chair in his absence.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. July 10, 2019
2. July 17, 2019

*It was moved, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote (6-0) to **approve** both sets of minutes as submitted.*

II. CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL- EXTENSION

1. Petition of **Janet Zerr & David Simpson, owners**, for property located at **65 Rogers Street**, wherein a 1-year extension of a Certificate of Approval granted by the Historic District Commission on September 05, 2018, was requested to allow the demolition of an existing garage, the construction of a new attached garage, the conversion of a 3-season porch with open deck above to a two-story structure, new third floor dormer and the expansion of an existing one story entry as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 115 as Lot 2 and lies within the Mixed Residential Office (MRO) and Historic Districts.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*City Council Representative Roberts moved to **grant** the request for a one-year extension, and Mr. Ryan seconded. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote, 6-0.*

III. MARKET STREET GATEWAY IMPROVEMENTS

A. David Desfosses, Project Manager, Department of Public Works

Mr. Desfosses said he was present for the Commission's input regarding the Market Street Gateway on Nobles Island, which required Federal government approval for park projects related to wetlands. He reviewed the Phase 2 site plan and asked the Commission if they had concerns regarding possible historic resource impacts of the project. Acting-Chair Wyckoff asked if the brush-cutting on the extension was part of the project. Mr. Desfosses said it was fill and not part of Nobles Island, and that the City planned to build a recreational park as a gateway amenity. The Commission concluded that they had no concerns about the project.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

1. 449 Court Street

The request was to replace louver shutters with a panel shutter and replace the front door with a panel door. Mr. Rawling and Acting-Chair Wyckoff agreed that the solid shutters had more of a mid-Atlantic look. The project contractor Ben Ojai was present and said the shutters could be louvers. The Commission stipulated that louver shutters be used instead of solid panel ones.

2. 33 Holmes Court

The request was to replace two metal garage doors with a single metal door of a different design.

3. 135 Congress Street, Unit 145

The request was to add a rooftop stairwell to the building. The applicant's architect Andrew Sidford was present and said the stairwell would blend in with the side of the building.

4. 56 Middle Street

The request was to replace the rear porch with mahogany and install a cedar open lattice panel fence between the two properties.

5. 39 Mt. Vernon Street

The request was to replace a wood picket fence with a 6" cedar stripboard and lattice fence of a different design and height but code compliant.

6. 222 Pleasant Street

The applicant Ron Bourgeault was present and said he wanted to replace some gutters and downspouts. It was briefly discussed.

7. 174 Fleet Street

The request was to run an additional gas line over the roof using one of two options: run it up the left (Option A), or run it up the right side (Option B). The Commission stipulated Option A.

8. 142 State Street

The request was to install an 8" copper gutter.

9. 410-430 Islington Street

The request was to change previously-approved mechanical equipment and screening by placing them down the sides of the building.

*City Council Representative Roberts moved to **approve** Administrative Approval Items 1 through 9, with the following stipulations:*

- *Louvered shutters shall be used. (Item 1); and*
- *Option "1" for the gas line location shall be used. (Item 7).*

*Mr. Ryan seconded. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote, 6-0.*

Acting-Chair Wyckoff stated that four petitions had requests to postpone: 137 NW Street; 15 Mt. Vernon Street; 3 Pleasant Street; and 202 Court Street.

*It was moved, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote (6-0) to **postpone** the petitions to the September, 2019 meeting.*

V. PUBLIC HEARINGS (OLD BUSINESS)

A. Petition of **Gregory J. & Amanda B. Morneault, owners**, for property located at **137 Northwest Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (demolition of existing side porch to be replaced with deck) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 122 as Lot 2 and lies within the General Residence A (GRA) and Historic Districts. *(This item was continued at the July 10, 2019 meeting to the August, 2019 meeting.)*

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*It was moved, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote (6-0) to **postpone** the petition to the September, 2019 meeting.*

VI. PUBLIC HEARINGS (NEW BUSINESS)

1. Petition of **Drew & Brittany Schulthess, owner**, for property located at **15 Mt. Vernon Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (extend roofline of the existing house over the attached garage) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 111 as Lot 33 and lies within the

General Residence B (GRB) and Historic Districts. *(This item was postponed at the July 17, 2019 meeting to the August, 2019 meeting.)*

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*It was moved, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote (6-0) to **postpone** the petition to the September, 2019 meeting.*

2. Petition of **Deborah Chag Revocable Trust of 1993, Deborah Chag Trustee, owner**, for property located at **404 Middle Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace 5 existing windows and install an A/C condenser) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 136 as Lot 21 and lies within the Mixed Research Office (MRO) and Historic Districts.

Mr. Rawling recused himself from the petition.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

The applicant Deborah Chag was present and reviewed the petition, stating that the replacement windows would be wood and painted to match the other windows; the louver vents would be located at the back and side yards; and the two condensers would be by the backyard.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR, AGAINST THE PETITION

No one rose to speak, and Acting-Chair Wyckoff closed the public hearing.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*City Council Representative Roberts moved to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the application as presented, and Mr. Ryan seconded.*

Mr. Roberts said the project would: preserve the integrity of the District, conserve and enhance property values, and be consistent with surrounding properties.

*The motion **passed** by unanimous vote, 5-0.*

3. Petition of **Victorian Townhouse Condominium Association, owner**, and **Caitlin C. Sweeney, applicant**, for property located at **169 Lafayette Road**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (new windows, roofing, and installation of A/C condensers) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 151 as Lot 22 and lies within the General Residence A (GRA) and Historic Districts.

Mr. Rawling resumed his voting seat.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

The applicant Caitlin Sweeney was present and stated that she owned Unit 2. She reviewed the petition, beginning with the request for exterior changes related to the condensers and air conditioners (Part A). She said there would be no changes to the front of the house and that the equipment would be painted to match. She said she wanted to replace the front porch roof with asphalt shingles and replace the fascia (Part B). Mr. Ryan said that putting asphalt shingles over the curved roof wasn't a good strategy and suggested a rubberized product instead. Ms. Sweeney said she wanted to replace the two turret windows in her unit with new-construction windows (Part C). She said the new windows would not look different from the other windows.

The Commissioners agreed that additional information on the new windows was required and asked the applicant to return with photos of existing conditions and material specification sheets to ensure that the windows matched the other ones. They also asked that the applicant provide a professional assessment as to whether the existing windows could be restored.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR, AGAINST THE PETITION

No one rose to speak, and Acting-Chair Wyckoff closed the public hearing.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Mr. Rawling moved to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for Parts A and B of the petition (the condensers and the roofing), with the following stipulations:*

- The barreled and porch roof shall be resubmitted to show a metal or decorative rubber roof.*
- The curved window component of the application shall be removed and resubmitted at the September, 2019 meeting for Administrative Approval.*

Ms. Doering seconded.

Mr. Rawling said the project would preserve and enhance property values, be consistent with the special and defining characteristics of surrounding properties, and complement and enhance the architectural and historic character.

*The motion **passed** by unanimous vote, 6-0.*

It was noted that the barreled roof and porch roof (Part B) should match. An amended motion was made to stipulate that the entire porch roof would be replaced with rubber, but Mr. Rawling said a rubberized roof would be very visual and unattractive. The Commission decided that they should see the roof material, and they removed the roof request from the application so the applicant could return with samples at the September, 2019 meeting.

*Mr. Ryan moved to **amend** the motion and **grant** the Certificate of Approval for only the condensers and air conditioners (Part A). City Council Representative Roberts seconded.*

*The motion **passed** by unanimous vote, 6-0.*

4. Petition of **Gruen Revocable Trust of 2019, Thomas W. & Carol R. Gruen Trustees, owners**, for property located at **673 Middle Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (construct new rear addition and rear entry porch) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 148 as Lot 33 and lies within the General Residence A (GRA) and Historic Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Project architect Anne Whitney was present on behalf of the applicant and reviewed the petition. The Commission said more details were necessary.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR, AGAINST THE PETITION

No one rose to speak, and Acting-Chair Wyckoff closed the public hearing.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Mr. Ryan moved to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the application as presented, with the following stipulation:*

- *The dimensions of the proposed addition shall be submitted for Administrative Approval.*
-

City Council Representative Roberts seconded.

Mr. Ryan said the project would preserve the integrity of the District and would be consistent with the special and defining characteristics of surrounding properties.

*The motion **passed** by unanimous vote, 6-0.*

5. (Work Session/Public Hearing) requested by **Danny Taggart, LLC, owner**, and **Mark A. McNabb, applicant**, for property located at **3 Pleasant Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow renovations and new construction to an existing structure (3-story, 2000 ± s.f. addition to the rear and modify the roof of the building with office space) structure as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 287 as Lot 1 and lies within the Character District 5 (CD 5), Downtown Overlay, and Historic Districts.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*It was moved, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote (6-0) to **postpone** the petitions to the September, 2019 meeting.*

VII. WORK SESSIONS (OLD BUSINESS)

A. Work Session requested by **202 Court Street Property Group, LLC, owner**, for property located at **202 Court Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (new dormer addition to the north elevation) and exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace: siding, roofing, windows and doors) as per plans on file in the

Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 116 as Lot 35 and lies within the Character District 4-L1 (CD4-L1) and Historic Districts. *(This item was postponed at the July 10, 2019 meeting to the August, 2019 meeting.)*

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*It was moved, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote (6-0) to **postpone** the petitions to the September, 2019 meeting.*

B. Work Session requested by **Brendan Robert Cooney & Megan Tehan, owners**, for property located at **57 Mt. Vernon Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (construct front deck and 2-story addition to the rear of the house) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 111 as Lot 31-1 and lies within the General Residence B (GRB) and Historic Districts. *(This item was continued at the July 10, 2019 meeting to the August, 2019 meeting.)*

The applicant Brendan Cooney was present and introduced the design architects Brian Murphy and Liz Nguyen. Mr. Murphy reviewed the design and showed photos of several homes as examples of homes with eclectic additions.

Mr. Rawling said the architect was trying too hard to make the design work, noting that the materials for the siding were too heavy, the windows were unrelated to the main house, and that eliminating the fascia would create water problems. He suggested that the design follow the small Cape's shingles and window proportions. City Council Representative Roberts said he was more comfortable with the revised design but thought the old shape and the new were differentiated so much that the addition looked tacked on. Ms. Doering said the addition overwhelmed the rest of the structure and noted that Mr. Murphy's examples of precedents tended to have additions added to the side and not the top. Mr. Ryan said the design was a statement of modern architecture but preferred the earlier version because it showed details of corners, rakes, eaves, and windows. Mr. Sauk-Schubert said the design was awkward. Acting-Chair Wyckoff agreed, saying that the design was too simplistic to be seen as an artistic expression. He pointed out that the examples shown of other homes had interesting architecture, and he suggested that the applicant begin again and incorporate windows with fenestration that matched the existing windows, corner boards, shingle siding, overhangs, trims, and so on.

Most Commissioners felt that traditional materials that matched the main house would look better. Some felt that a contemporary addition could work.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*It was moved, seconded, and unanimously passed (6-0) to **continue** the application to the September, 2019 meeting.*

VIII. WORK SESSIONS (NEW BUSINESS)

1. Work Session requested by **Wayne & Kristin Barrows, owners**, for property located at **55 Lafayette Road**, wherein permission is requested to allow the construction of a new freestanding structure (home with attached garage) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 151 as Lot 10 and lies within the General Residence A (GRA) and Historic Districts.

The applicant Joe Caldarola was present to speak to the petition and said he was the new owner. He reviewed the area's context of homes and said he wanted to replicate an authentic 18th Century home in Newington, which he presented photos of. He reviewed the petition, noting that his neighbors were not concerned about the retaining wall.

Mr. Rawling said the applicant could be more creative with the design, noting that most of the houses on the street were more playful. Ms. Doering said the neighborhood was a mix of old Victorians, shingle styles, and contemporary, and she suggested a ranch-style home. City Council Representative Roberts said the design was acceptable but thought the Newington example didn't fit in the location. Mr. Ryan said the design was a builder's house that looked like it could be built in a Greenland suburb. He said the design, materials and details weren't appropriate for a historic district, noting that the garage door was a prominent feature and there was a lot of asphalt-shingle roof. He recommended genuine materials and traditional details. Mr. Sauk-Schubert said the materials, proportions, and fenestration were issues. Acting-Chair Wyckoff said the design was too generic. He said he understood the applicant's intentions as a builder but not the justification for a four-bedroom Colonial on such a small lot, which drove the second story over the garage. He said the Commission didn't like to see street-facing garages and houses without a chimney. Various styles of houses were discussed, including designs from the 1900s or 1920s and Colonial styles with more interest and variation.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to **continue** the work session to the September, 2019 meeting.*

IX. ADJOURNMENT

*It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to **adjourn** the meeting at 9:30 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Breault
HDC Recording Secretary