

**MINUTES OF THE  
THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION  
PORTSMOUTH, NH**

**Remote Meeting Via Zoom Conference Call**

To register in advance for this meeting, click on the link below or copy and paste this into your web browser:

[https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_v5pHj-RfQJiOhP3OKEug\\_w](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_v5pHj-RfQJiOhP3OKEug_w)

*You are required to register in advance to join the meeting over Zoom, a unique meeting ID and password will be provided once you register. Public comments can be emailed in advance to [planning@cityofportsmouth.com](mailto:planning@cityofportsmouth.com). For technical assistance, please contact the Planning Department by email ([planning@cityofportsmouth.com](mailto:planning@cityofportsmouth.com)) or phone (603) 610-7216.*

Per NH RSA 91-A:2, III (b) the Chair has declared COVID-19 outbreak an emergency and has waived the requirement that a quorum be physically present at the meeting pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order 2020-04, Section 8, as extended by Executive Order 2020-18, and Emergency Order #12, Section 3. Members will be participating remotely and will identify their location and any person present with them at that location. All votes will be by roll call.

**7:00 p.m.**

**October 14, 2020**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Vincent Lombardi; Vice-Chairman Jon Wyckoff; Members Reagan Ruedig and Margot Doering; City Council Representative Paige Trace; Alternate Heinz Sauk-Schubert

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Martin Ryan (recused)

**ALSO PRESENT:** Nick Cracknell, Principal Planner, Planning Department

.....

Chairman Lombardi stated that Commissioner Martin Ryan was recused from the meeting because he would present a petition that evening.

**I. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS**

*It was moved, seconded, and **passed** unanimously (6-0) to pull Item 1 out for a separate review.*

The Commission then addressed Items 2 through 7.

**1. 60 Penhallow Street**

Project architect Tracy Kozak was present and reviewed the changes by category.

Stipulations:

- The size of the tiles was increased;
- The railings behind the third floor were shifted back a foot to align with the cornice;
- The two courtyard entry doors were recessed at the courtyard in back;
- The front entry glass door filled the opening;
- Vertical timbers of the rounded corners were made higher;
- Pella windows were used;
- The sheet wall siding was made horizontal instead of vertical.

#### Engineering:

- A new louver was added on the top floor facing the courtyard;
- The rooftop mechanicals increased in size, including three vents for the kitchens;
- Solar panels were added;
- Some height was added to get the required clearance for the two elevators;
- The northwest roof corner was lifted to get an exit door under the steel;
- Less metal fasteners were required; and
- A roof ladder was added to the mechanicals in the back.

#### Tenant Updates:

- Some 1<sup>st</sup> floor doors and windows were swapped and take-out windows were ordered;
- Minor sill height adjustments on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor windows were made;
- Snow cleats were added to the roof over the sidewalks;
- Exterior lighting was concealed and exterior door types were chosen;
- Awnings were added to the main entrances;
- The flashing detail was changed to painted aluminum;
- Rails were added to the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor roof deck;
- Copper metal awnings on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors would be perforated;
- A vertical grain would be used on the frieze band over the storefronts; and
- Two freestanding stainless steel trash chutes would be located in the west alley.

She reviewed the details. She noted that the parking entry was widened a foot due to the short turning radius. She described the solar panels. Vice-Chair Wyckoff asked what percentage of the buildings would have solar panels. Ms. Kozak said it was a good portion of the building. She reviewed the NanoWall system, trim, louvers, lights, garage door, and mechanical equipment.

Vice-Chair Wyckoff said it was a fantastic building and that he didn't have any problems with it because everything was replacing something else. He asked if the trash chutes would be locked. Ms. Kozak said they were fire-rated and would be secured. Vice-Chair Wyckoff said the Daniel Street façade showed how the entire building would blend in. City Council Representative Trace said she didn't have an issue with any of the changes, and she asked how visible the three new exhaust systems would be from the street. Ms. Kozak said that none of them were visible from the pedestrian view. In response to Ms. Doering's questions, Ms. Kozak said the main entrance consisted of two doors that were made four inches wider to fill the gap; that the garage door was quiet; and that only a corner of the mechanical box would be seen from a distance. Chairman Lombardi said he agreed with all the comments and thought Ms. Kozak had done an amazing job. He noted that the takeout counters were important, especially with the COVID-19 virus.

*Vice-Chair Wyckoff moved to **approve** the administrative item, and Ms. Trace seconded. The vote **passed** unanimously, 5-0. (Mr. Salk-Schubert was not available at the time).*

## **2. 25 Maplewood Avenue**

Mr. Cracknell said the request was for permission to have two rails around the generator on the Provident Bank building. He explained that the previously-approved wing walls on the generator fell short of covering it because it was turned. He said the rails were in lieu of a longer wall and were added on per code. City Council Representative Trace asked how visible the generator was from the street. Mr. Cracknell said the mechanical equipment on top of the building could be seen a fair distance away from Congress and Islington Streets. She asked if the blind wall would be continued. The contractor Steve Wilson was present and said they had the option of lengthening the wall, which would have increased the elevator shaft mass. He said it wasn't really visible to the naked eye and he explained why they still would have had to put in railings.

## **3. 410-430 Islington Street**

Mr. Cracknell said there were four changes. In Building 428-430, siding at the basement levels would be added instead of concrete. He said entry stairs were modified; mechanical units and venting were added; and a fence was added at the retaining wall at the back. Architect Sarah Howard was present and reviewed the changes in detail.

Vice-Chair Wyckoff noted that there were five rises on the stairs going onto Islington Street that would require a railing, and he asked if it would wrap around onto the trim. Ms. Howard said they didn't have a concept for the railing yet and that the sidewalk was not at the finished sidewalk height. She said they would have a temporary railing and would return to the Commission for approval on the final model. Vice-Chair Wyckoff said having a handicapped rail come down a foot beyond the post would be awkward and hoped it would look appropriate. Ms. Howard said they didn't have to provide handicap extensions because it was a residential building, so the rail could end on the first tread.

City Council Representative Trace asked if the wall-mounted HVAC unit was visible to the pedestrians. Ms. Howard said they would do ground mounting instead of the wall-mounted unit and that it would only be seen from a neighbor's parking spot. She said the two units wouldn't have the same screening as Buildings 410-412. Ms. Trace said the units were in the District and should have appropriate screening around them, even with a perimeter fence. Ms. Howard said the abutter requested that they not be screened because he didn't want to maintain them when it snowed. It was further discussed. Mr. Cracknell said the same light screening that was used on the front units could be used to protect from snow, and he suggested stipulating that the two proposed ground-mounted units include a screen that matched the unit at 410 Islington Street.

*It was **stipulated** that:*

- 1. The (2) proposed ground mounted A/C condensers shall include a matching louvered screen as previously approved for the units located on 410 Islington Street.*

**4. 388 State Street**

The request was for approval to add some gutters on the exterior stairs at the rear of the building. Mr. Cracknell said there were already aluminum gutters and downspouts on the building and suggested that the gutter and downspouts be painted to match the trim on the porch.

*It was stipulated that:*

1. *The gutters and downspouts shall be field-painted to match the stairwell.*

**5. 206 Court Street**

Project architect Jeremiah Johnson representing the owner was present and said there were some minor changes relating to gutters and downspouts, window types, and the entryway in response to a recent land use review. He said the leaders would be relocated to meet up with existing drain lines. He said they decided to refinish the exterior, so they wanted to replace an existing Marvin window with a Green Mountain one. He said the window manufacturer mistakenly replicated the existing windows on the two west wall elevations on the upper floors, so they didn't meet the previous 3/3 stipulation made by the Commission but did match the windows that were there before and the front windows. He said an additional Marvin window was added at the side elevation. He said the grade at the entry level changed dramatically so the two-step composite deck didn't have the same stair configuration that it previously did and would meet grade instead of having two steps up to the entry door.

Ms. Ruedig said she had no problem with the windows and that her only concern was the big leader coming down the façade of the building. She asked if it could be painted the same color as the brick so that it didn't stick out. Mr. Johnson said he thought the owner would comply. Mr. Ruedig asked if there was any trim visible at the top of the gutter. Mr. Johnson said the gutter system replicated the original wood gutter that was integral without the trim, so the profile would be the same and that the gutter might stay black. Ms. Ruedig said it was fine and that she was pretty sure that the panel couldn't be painted but that the conduit could. Vice-Chair Wyckoff agreed. He said the electric meter was almost an exact match but the conduit could be painted, as well as the leaders, downspouts, and elbows. He said he agreed with all the changes.

*It was stipulated that:*

1. *The conduit, leaders, elbows, and downspouts shall be field-painted to match the brick color.*

**6. 46-64 Maplewood Avenue**

Mr. Cracknell said there were two administrative approvals. He said one was to modify the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) that was issued for the project relating to the hatched area under the arcade that was the 30 percent of the land area dedicated for community space. He said the request was to reconfigure the space and replace the six parking spaces with an office space so

that the entire building would be commercial. He said there would be an equal or larger space for the public to go from Point A to Point B. He said the brick sidewalk was privately owned and that the owners of 30 Maplewood Avenue had agreed to give an easement. He said it was necessary to amend the CUP to relocate the 700 square feet and that it would have to go back to the City Council. He said the applicant would return at the November 4 meeting with a design change that would have windows instead of an opening for cars.

Vice-Chair Wyckoff said it could be a problem due to the way the fence ran along the sidewalk that divided it from the private land. He thought it should adjoin the sidewalk with the same material, level, and so on. Mr. Cracknell said it was proposed to be all brick sidewalk. Vice-Chair Wyckoff said it shouldn't be divided from the City sidewalk if it was public access. Mr. Cracknell said Public Works would weigh in but was sure that people could walk right through.

City Council Representative Trace asked why the office space was still proud of 46 Maplewood Avenue and what the width was. Mr. Cracknell said the width was around eight feet and that the space was already constructed as a parking garage as part of the original approval. He explained how it would be a better connection for the City and a better outcome for the building and residents. In response to further questions, Mr. Cracknell said the office space would be one level and a mezzanine and that the different condominium associations were in agreement on the change in switching sidewalks. It was further discussed. Mr. Cracknell said it was really up to the City Council. Ms. Ruedig said it was a much better trade that would have better public use than going through the middle of a parking garage and that she fully supported it. Ms. Doering said she was concerned about what it did going the other way and thought there would be safety and wayfinding issues. She said the 'cutting through' was given up for the other deal. Mr. Cracknell said the applicant had to provide 30 percent community space to get the half-story and that there was a better public benefit of getting through the middle of the block. Ms. Ruedig said no one would want to walk down the up-and-down passageway anyway and that coming through the block would be more useful. Vice-Chair Wyckoff said the owner of Statey had the right to add three floors onto his building and thought the owner planned to add some upper units, which would result in two buildings up against each other. He agreed that the plan had a much better walkway going from Bridge Street to Maplewood Avenue than the Deer Street walkway. Chairman Lombardi said it was a bit serpentine but at least didn't go through a tunnel.

## **7. 33 Northwest Street**

Mr. Cracknell explained that the driveway went up to the accessory building and that the applicant wanted to move a concrete retaining wall to the wooden fence and reconstruct it inside the fence. In response to Chairman Lombardi's questions, Mr. Cracknell said the wall would be moved to the City right-of-way and that the fence and wall would be repaired in kind. The applicant Rebecca (no last name given) was present and said she received all the necessary approvals from the City Council to build on the City right-of-way.

*Vice-Chair Wyckoff moved to **approve** Items 2 through 7, with the **stipulations** on Items 3, 4, and 5 as noted previously. Ms. Ruedig seconded. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote, 6-0.*

At this time, Chairman Lombardi requested a motion to postpone Work Session A.

*It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously (6-0) to postpone Work Session A to the November 4 meeting.*

(The Commission then addressed Administrative Approval Item 1).

## II. WORK SESSIONS (OLD BUSINESS)

A. Work Session requested by **132 Middle Street LLC and 134 Middle Street, LLC, owners**, for property located at **132-134 Middle Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (re-pointing brick, roof replacement, add ADA accessible entry, and front entrance renovation) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 127 as Lots 11 and 12 and lies within the Character District 4- L1 (CD 4-L1) and Historic Districts. *(This item was continued at the September 09, 2020 meeting to the October, 2020 meeting.)*

*It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously (6-0) to postpone the work session to the November 4, 2020 meeting.*

B. Work Session requested by **Margot L. Thompson, owner**, for property located at **57 Salter Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (add new side entry porch and recessed porches on the rear elevation) and renovations to an existing structure (re-size and replace windows, remove existing skylights) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 102 as Lot 32 and lies within the Waterfront Business (WB) and Historic Districts. *(This item was continued at the September 09, 2020 meeting to the October, 2020 meeting.)*

## WORK SESSION

The designer Brendan McNamara was present. He reviewed the previous concerns that the Commission had. He said he wasn't able to find an original photo of the entire house but did find a side view that wasn't very instructive. He said a tremendous amount of deterioration was found in the 1990s, so the owners did a lot of work. He said the proposed project would not change the core of the house other than add a small entry porch. He said the recessed deck was an amenity but would make the original structure read more clearly. He said they wanted a 5-window pattern on the south side to replace the 3-window one, and they wanted to keep the shingles on the north and west elevations but do clapboards on the rest of the house. He said the west elevation windows would be bigger and more rhythmic.

Vice-Chair Wyckoff said the look of an 18<sup>th</sup> Century house was retained but essentially it was like a new house. He said he was amazed that Mr. McNamara was able to put the amount of windows he did and that he had no problem with the project for a house in that location. Ms. Ruedig said if the house had more historic material, the changes would be hard to take, but the house was essentially a new house in its historic framework massing, so she found the changes acceptable. She said it was being made symmetric and regular, which corresponded to the style of the house, and that it would blend in fine with its surroundings and context. She noted that the recessed porch and the amount of glass in the doors may stand out, but since it was an addition,



she didn't have a problem with it. Chairman Lombardi said he remembered when the house was first demolished and how deteriorated it had been and thought the owners should have done more restoration back then. Mr. McNamara noted that the recessed porch would have a low-impact cable rail system with stainless steel handrail and support and that the deck would have the same and would be rebuilt. He said the fencing would be a classic heavy rope.

There was no public comment. Mr. McNamara said he would return for a public hearing.

*It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously (6-0) to close the work session.*

## **DECISION**

*The applicant will return for a public hearing.*

## **III. WORK SESSIONS (NEW BUSINESS)**

1. Work Session requested by **Michael George Petrin and Katie Marie Laverriere, owners**, for property located at **239 Northwest Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (construct new rear dormer, side porch, and add basement access) and renovations to an existing structure (replace windows, roofing, and repair trim as needed) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 122 as Lot 3 and lies within the General Residence A (GRA) and Historic Districts.

### **WORK SESSION**

Project architect Martin Ryan representing the applicant was present. He gave a brief history of the home, noting that it was purchased a few years ago and was in very poor condition on the interior but the frame was solid. He reviewed the elevation drawings and discussed what they proposed to do, including:

- Clean up the siding and trim and repaint;
- Put a vinyl removable slider window system in the porch to make it more of a sun porch;
- Rebuild the north elevation pilasters with wood;
- Keep all the windows but do replacement sashes with a metal clad system;
- Replace the basement windows;
- Eliminate an old addition on the south elevation and do some new additions;
- Create a porch and remove the sloped shed roof addition;
- Add a steel bulkhead door leading to a new basement area for mechanicals; and
- Remove the tall chimneys and replace them with a faux chimney system.

Vice-Chair Wyckoff asked what the two structures on the back were and how they were constructed. Mr. Ryan said they had a conventional frame and were probably built in the last 50 years. He said they would remove one that had an unfinished interior and would keep the other one. He said they probably used to be utility rooms. Vice-Chair Wyckoff said he had no problem with any massing details but wasn't sure if he agreed with replacing the windows with vinyl. He recommended that the faux chimneys have some color in the mortar and look real. Mr. Ryan said there was a way to make them look like real chimneys and that he would use real brick and

bluestone caps at the tops. Ms. Doering asked about the south elevation's rambling addition's profile and whether it was functional. Mr. Ryan said the forms followed the logic of the interior. He said that after they removed the most prominent shed roof, the new shed would be about 15 feet back and portions of it would be seen. He said the little bit of porch would appear at the end of the west side of the gable end, so it would be seen as more of a human element feature instead of a shed addition and that the rest of the dormers would have better symmetry. Ms. Doering recommended a company that did porch screens that zipped in and out of framing.

City Council Representative said Mr. Ryan had done a great job by adding to the house intelligently and making all the different parts of the house's history come together. She said she preferred the screen option that Ms. Doering recommended for the front porch instead of windows. Ms. Ruedig said she agreed with the comments and thought the proposed changes were very appropriate for the neglected house. She thanked Mr. Ryan for bringing back some of its worthy details, and she was interested to see what Mr. Ryan came up with for windows, the porch, and the chimneys. She said the house would be much improved.

There was no public comment. Mr. Ryan said he would return for a public hearing.

*It was moved, seconded, and **passed** unanimously (6-0) to **close** the work session*

## DECISION

*The applicant will return for a public hearing.*

City Council Representative Trace recused herself from the following work session and left the meeting.

2. Work Session requested by **100 Market Street, LLC, owner**, for property located at **100 Market Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (remove and replace existing front corner entrance) and renovations to an existing structure (remove sunshades) as per plans on file on the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 118 as Lot 6 and lies within the Character District 5 (CD5) and Historic Districts.

## WORK SESSION

Lily Mullin representing Springer's Jewelers and architect Timothy Hart were present to speak to the petition. Mr. Hart said that Springer's Jewelers was a tenant in the building and that the project was to update their brand identity. He said they wanted to increase the visibility and transparency at the entrance by bringing the storefront entrance out closer to the street and lightening the materials to make the storefront more inviting. He said they would also take up the lower restaurant space and would occupy both sides of that corridor. He said the proposed material for the entrance was an all-glass, stainless steel-type entrance. He said the exterior façade at the ground floor would be simplified by removing the existing awnings at the corner and along Market and Hanover Streets and adding new column covers at the corner entrance. He said new signage would also be added at the corner.



Vice-Chair Wyckoff asked how all the windows would be painted. Mr. Hart said all the windows in the building would be painted. He said the current windows were aluminum and would be treated with an appropriate formula. Vice-Chair Wyckoff said the improvements were major ones and that he was in support of the project. Ms. Ruedig said it wasn't an historic building, so the architect had a lot of freedom to update it, but she was concerned about the awning's removal in that historic area of downtown. She said the Commission generally encouraged the use of awnings because an awning was a pedestrian humanizing element. She said the entrance would get a good amount of sun and that the tenant might want some protection from it, and that bringing the doorway out to the surface of the building would give it very little protection from the elements. Ms. Doering agreed. She asked what the difference in the recess would be by bringing the door forward. Mr. Hart said the overhang was probably set back four feet, which he felt would offer a comfortable amount of protection. Ms. Doering said there might be room for a different shape and size of awning. Mr. Hart said they would consider it.

Mr. Sauk-Schubert said he wasn't in favor of the proposed entry plan because it didn't provide enough visibility of the merchandise. He said the way the foyer was proposed to move out to the sidewalk with no regard for the two columns would pose an encumbrance and wasn't a well laid-out space. He said the canopy was part of the existing structure and that removing it and replacing it with something else wouldn't be as pleasant. In response to Chairman Lombardi's question, Mr. Hart said the lobby space would not be a doorway going directly into Springer's but would be completely renovated and much more transparent than it currently was by being a glass-type of environment where one could see into both spaces. In response to Mr. Sauk-Schubert's concern about not being able to see the merchandise from the new entrance, he said it would be seen through the glass corridor walls. He said it would be a modern retail entrance that embraced the street rather than one that was pushed back and looked like a hotel entrance.

Chairman Lombardi said it looked strange to have the columns without the space behind them, and that removing the awnings made the building very plain. He thought the awnings were quirky and contributed to other quirky buildings in the city.

There was no public comment.

## DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Ms. Ruedig moved to **continue** the work session to the November 4, 2020 meeting, and Vice-Chair Wyckoff seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously, 5-0.*

## IV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Breault  
HDC Recording Secretary