

**MINUTES  
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MEETING  
PORTSMOUTH, NH**

**Remote Meeting Via Zoom Conference Call**

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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 2020-21, 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.

**6:30 p.m.**

**December 02, 2020**

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

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Martin Ryan

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

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Chairman Lombardi welcomed new Commission member Karen Bouffard.

**I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

1. November 04, 2020
2. November 10, 2020

*It was moved, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote (7-0) to **approve** both sets of minutes as presented.*

**II. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS**

Mr. Cracknell requested that Items 1 and 3 be removed for a separate discussion and vote after Items 2 and 4 were addressed. (Note: the items are kept in the original numerical order).

### 1. 292 State Street

Alyssa Murphy was present on behalf of South Church and said they wanted to replace the existing slate roof with a new slate roof. She said they could probably retain 10 percent of the old slate and use it on the portico. She said they also wanted to replace in kind the bell tower roof, the copper details on the ridge, and the chimney flashing as well as repoint the granite along the top of the roof. She said the snow guards would be the only visible change.

City Council Representative Trace asked if the snow guards would be left untreated so that they would oxidize naturally. Ms. Murphy said she assumed they would but would confirm it.

*Vice-Chair Wyckoff moved to **approve** Administrative Item 1, and City Council Representative Trace seconded. The motion **passed** unanimously by a vote of 7-0.*

### 2. 111/145 Maplewood Avenue

Mr. Cracknell said the applicant wanted to add two roof decks and railings, access doors, and lighting fixtures. He noted that the Commission previously approved the existing deck and that the new decks would be in kind and have limited visibility. In response to City Council Representative Trace's questions, Mr. Cracknell said the new decks would have light fixtures consistent with the other deck's lights but wasn't sure if it would be the exact same fixture.

### 3. 209 Marcy Street

Mr. Cracknell said the request was for three air conditioning units and one compressor that needed a conduit run up the side of the house that would be painted to match. The applicant Harold Lorencic was present and said he wanted to plant a shrub to shield the compressor.

Vice-Chair Wyckoff suggested that the compressor be screened with the picket fence design instead of a shrub. In response to other questions from the Commission, Mr. Lorencic said the compressor would be closer to the Marcy Street side of the house and that he didn't want to put it on the other sides of the house because of the outdoor furniture and the soffit. Mr. Adams said that no conduit should be put on Marcy Street. Mr. Lorencic said there were similar installations along Marcy Street and that his was less obtrusive. Ms. Trace agreed with Mr. Adams and said there were other options, and it was further discussed. Ms. Ruedig said it would be preferable to keep everything off Marcy Street and suggested tucking the conduit around the side, noting that it was a reversible application and could be yanked out when the technology improved. She also suggested placing a box-type unit around the compressor instead of a shrub. Vice-Chair Wyckoff recommended that the compressor be screened and placed on the Gates Street side because the dormer in the back didn't line up with the first-floor wall and the piping wouldn't work.

Mr. Cracknell said there were two options: 1) that the screen have three sides to it and could be mounted on the building, and 2) that the compressor have a removable box.

Vice-Chair Wyckoff made a motion to approve, but Ms. Trace asked that it be amended to qualify which side of the house the conduit would be on, and Mr. Cracknell also suggested that the conduit be painted to match the siding. Vice-Chair Wyckoff agreed to amend his motion.

*Vice-Chair Wyckoff moved to **approve** the administrative item, with the following **stipulations**:*

- 1. The condenser shall be screened with a 3-sided lattice work screen.*
- 2. The conduit line to the front of the building shall be moved to the Gates Street side of the building (Labelled as Alternative Dining Room on the plan set).*
- 3. All conduit lines shall be field painted to match the color of the siding.*

*Ms. Ruedig seconded. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote, 7-0.*

#### **4. 37 South Street**

The request was to add deck skirting on the rear of the building using a vertical composite board lattice instead of a previously-approved design. Ms. Ruedig confirmed that the board would just replace the spot where the lattice was.

*Ms. Ruedig moved to **approve** Administrative Approval Items 2 and 4, and Vice-Chair Wyckoff seconded. The motion **passed** by a vote of 6-1, with City Council Representative Trace voting in opposition.*

### **III. PUBLIC HEARINGS (OLD BUSINESS)**

Chairman Lombardi recused himself, and Vice-Chair Wyckoff was Acting Chair.

A. Petition of **Andrea L. Ardito and Brad R. Lebo, owners**, for property located at **121 Northwest Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (construct covered porch off main bedroom) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 122 as Lot 1 and lies within the General Residence A (GRA) and Historic Districts. *(This item was continued at the November 10, 2020 meeting to the December, 2020 meeting.)*

#### **SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

Project architect Alyssa Murphy representing the applicant was present. She said that the porch would be the same size and shape as previously presented, but the columns and pilasters would match the dimensions of the front porch and the balustrades would have the same height spacing and size as those on the front porch. She said everything would be painted white to match the front porch but the screen panels would be left natural and would not be visible.

Ms. Doering said the changes were much more in fitting with the New England look. The other Commissioners said it was a much better project and an improvement from the previous stark design. The applicant Andrea Ardito was also present and thanked the Commission for their help with the design and thanked Ms. Murphy for doing a wonderful job.

Acting-Chair Wyckoff opened the public hearing.

### **SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION**

No one was present to speak, and Acting Chair Wyckoff closed the public hearing.

### **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

*Ms. Ruedig moved to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the petition as presented, and Mr. Adams seconded.*

Ms. Ruedig said the project was in keeping with the architectural style of the house and with the District.

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

### **IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS (NEW BUSINESS)**

Chairman Lombardi resumed his role as Chairman and Acting-Chair Wyckoff resumed his role as Vice-Chair. Mr. Adams and Alternate Ms. Bouffard recused themselves from the petition.

1. Petition of **Deer Street Associates, owner**, for property located at **163 Deer Street (Lot 4)**, wherein a third 1-year extension of a Certificate of Approval originally granted on February 14, 2018 is requested to allow demolition of an existing structure (demolish existing building) and allow a new freestanding structure (construct new mixed-use building) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 125 as Lot 17-2 and lies within the Character District 5 (CD 5), Downtown Overlay, and Historic Districts.

### **SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

Attorney Kevin Baum was present on behalf of the applicant, and the applicant Kim Rogers was also present. Attorney Baum stated that they were requesting a third extension for several reasons, including that a one-year delay was due to construction of the public garage, the other buildings on Lots 3 and 6 had to be constructed prior to the building on Lot 4, and cost increases also slowed the project down. He said the criteria were still met, however. Mr. Rogers said they were working with the City Attorney and Staff to finalize the parking agreement and had site plans approvals that depended on that agreement. He said Lot 4 was an integral part of the Lot 3 project, which had a foundation permit issued by the City, and that the project would move forward when the parking agreement was resolved.

City Council Representative Trace asked if the foundation permit was granted for Lots 3 and 6 and whether the Commission had ever given a third extension to a project. Mr. Cracknell said he had not seen a third extension request granted during his tenure. Attorney Baum said Lot 3 had foundation approval and that Lot 6 would allow service to Lot 3. Ms. Trace asked for verification of the foundation permit for Lot 3, noting that the issue was the process and not the design itself. Ms. Ruedig said the process wasn't the Commission's purview and that the building's design had

received unanimous approval before. She thought the building still worked very well and was willing to grant the extension so that the building could be constructed. Ms. Doering said all the approvals were starting to come due and were based on the assumption of what the area would look like, but that the neighborhood's context had changed a lot due to several new buildings. She thought the Commission should look at the petition anew.

Mr. Cracknell said the foundation permit for 165 Deer Street was issued in April for Lot 3 but would expire in February. He said Lot 5 would expire in July. He said if the extension was granted, it would carry to February 2022 but that the applicant would have to file with the Planning Board to get through site plan over the next six months for Lots 4 and 5. Mr. Rogers said they had to resolve Phase 1 first, but that there was no limit on the number of extensions that the Commission could issue if they felt it was appropriate.

Vice-Chair Wyckoff asked why a contractor was not digging a foundation for Lot 3. Mr. Rogers said the site plan approval for that lot and for Lot 6 depended on a parking agreement, which was up in the air because the City had concerns about how the garage was constructed and how the parking agreement would work. He said the revised parking agreement was turned down by the City Council. Vice-Chair Wyckoff said the garage was still 75 percent vacant. He asked why Lot 6 wasn't started. Mr. Rogers said it took a while to go through the process. Vice-Chair Wyckoff noted that three or four new buildings by another contractor had gone up in the area within a year since the original project approval from the Commission. Mr. Rogers said they were in a quagmire with site plan approvals and permits that pended on parking meeting the zoning. Chairman Lombardi said the Commission thought the Lot 4 building had the best design of all the Deer Street project buildings and wanted to see it come to fruition, and that it was important that the Lot 4 building fit in with the neighborhood's new structures. He said he was disappointed that there had been no progress in the building's development. Attorney Baum said the project was being done in phases and that the building was contingent on the two adjacent ones. He said it was an award-winning building and still appropriate to meet the criteria for granting the extension. Ms. Doering reiterated that the building would be a good design a year from now but should be looked at again in light of the other new buildings around it.

Chairman Lombardi opened the public hearing.

### **SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION**

Commissioner Dave Adams said that buildings in different contexts and times looked different. He said that one design couldn't persist forever and thought the Commission should revisit the application.

No one else was present to speak, and Chairman Lombardi closed the public hearing.

### **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

*Ms. Ruedig moved to **grant** the one-year extension.*

She said the design was just a few years old. She said it was true that the context was evolving and that she didn't see the building being constructed in the next year, but that she'd rather kick the can down the road one more year than revisit the building, seeing that the Commission didn't know when the surrounding buildings would be built. She said the building's design was a very good one and that the Commission would look at again before the building got constructed.

*Vice-Chair Wyckoff seconded the motion.*

*The motion **failed** by a vote of 4-2, with City Council Representative Trace, Mr. Sauk-Schubert, Ms. Doering, and Chairman Lombardi voting in opposition.*

Mr. Adams and Ms. Bouffard resumed their voting seats.

2. Petition of **Nobles Island Condominium Association, owner, and Dean Mello, applicant**, for property located at **500 Market Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow renovations to existing structure (construct ADA compliant front entrance) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 120 as Lot 2 and lies within the Character District 4-L1 (CD4-L1) and Historic Districts.

#### **SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

Architect Sarah Howard was present on behalf of the applicant, as well as the owner Dean Mello. Ms. Howard said they wanted to add a brick ramp, pilaster, a brick wall to match existing, and a decorative metal railing. She said the two condensers would be replaced and screened in kind.

Mr. Cracknell said the Commission needed to see what the screening would look like, and Ms. Howard said they would do a louver screen. Ms. Ruedig asked if the existing screen was on some of the other buildings. Mr. Mello agreed but said it was a funky design and that not all the condenser units were screened. He said the condo association would have to approve the updated louver screen. Mr. Adams said all the decks would be redone on the other buildings and that they would use the deck railing as part of the screening, so they might come up with a site-specific compressor screen. He said the railing looked like it had brackets bolted to the side wall of the building and asked whether balusters would be placed up against the building. Ms. Howard said they would just put a hand rail and that the brackets would be painted to match. Ms. Doering asked why the extra baluster would be added and why the whole process was to the right side of the building. Ms. Howard said the ramp only fit that side of the building and it was a nice way to tie it into the building and screen it from the parking lot.

Chairman Lombardi opened the public hearing.

#### **SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION**

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

#### **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**



*Vice-Chair Wyckoff moved to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the petition as presented, and Ms. Ruedig seconded.*

Vice-Chair Wyckoff said the project would maintain the special character of the District in that area and would also preserve the integrity of the District.

Chairman Lombardi suggested that the screening for the condenser be stipulated.

The motion was **amended** as follows:

*Vice-Chair Wyckoff moved to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the petition as presented, with the following **stipulation**:*

- 1. The applicant shall submit the louver screening design as an Administrative Approval.*

*Ms. Ruedig seconded. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote, 7-0.*

3. Petition of **Michael George Petrin** and **Katie Marie Laverriere, owners**, for property located at **239 Northwest Street**, wherein permission was 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.

### **SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

Architect Martin Ryan was present on behalf of the applicant. He said the building's two additions were built in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and that the new design would be within the existing style and language. He reviewed the petition, noting that most of the work would be in the back of the house, the chimneys would be replaced by faux chimneys, and HardiePlank clapboard would be used on the new extension.

Ms. Ruedig asked why the new back addition would have HardiePlank instead of wooden clapboards like the rest of the house. Mr. Ryan said the back of the house was off the highway and got a lot of dust and grit, so the Hardiboard would need less maintenance. He said it would have the same profile and exposure. Ms. Ruedig noted that the house looked like it originally had Greek detailing around the door. Mr. Ryan said they would keep the door and that the clapboards on the inside would be repainted and kept in character.

Vice-Chair Wyckoff said he was satisfied with the proposal, noting that the additions had details from the original Greek revival cottage and that the location up against the highway was terrible. He said he had no problem with the faux chimneys, especially with real brick at the top with capstones. He said he didn't care for the front porch but that it wasn't a deal breaker. Mr. Ryan said the porch would be a passive solar gain. City Council Representative Trace said she was sympathetic to the original house and all the iterations and could support the petition. Ms. Doering said she didn't like the bathroom bump-out because it stuck out, but she assumed that it

wouldn't look like that from the street. Chairman Lombardi said the loss of the chimneys bothered him because they were defining characteristics of the house. Mr. Ryan said the chimneys weren't functioning ones, and it was further discussed.

Chairman Lombardi opened the public hearing.

### **SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION**

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

### **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

*Vice-Chair Wyckoff moved to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the petition as presented, and City Council Representative Trace seconded.*

Vice-Chair Wyckoff said the project would preserve the integrity of the District and the significant architectural value of the existing structure, and that the new construction's scale, mass, and general size would work well.

*The motion **passed** by unanimous vote, 7-0.*

4. Petition of **Lassen Family Revocable Trust, Charles L. & Susan E. Trustees, owners**, for property located at **34 Blossom Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace (10) windows on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, (8) windows on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, and replace (1) door and (1) window with new doors) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 111 as Lot 41 and lies within the General Residence B (GRB) and Historic Districts.

### **SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

Project architect Anne Whitney was present on behalf of the applicant. She said the existing windows had been replaced at various stages and were not in good condition. She reviewed the petition, noting that the window would be replaced with Marvin Elevate 6/6 windows, a French door would replace one window, and a wood door would be added.

Vice-Chair Wyckoff said the kitchen door looked like it was recessed back and asked if there was a porch there. Ms. Whitney said it was a one-story addition that projected out and the existing door swung in and would be replaced. Ms. Doering asked about the condenser on the ground by the back addition. Ms. Whitney said it was existing. City Council Representative Trace suggested that it be screened with a 3-sided lattice or vertical board.

Chairman Lombardi opened the public hearing.

### **SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION**

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



**DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

*Ms. Ruedig moved to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the petition as presented, with the following **stipulation**:*

- 1. That all windows shall have half-screens*

*City Council Representative Trace seconded.*

Ms. Ruedig said the project would preserve the integrity of the District and the special and defining features and characteristics of the surrounding properties. She noted that the replacement choice for the wooden windows was acceptable because the wooden windows were not historic and were in very poor shape.

*The motion **passed** unanimously, 7-0.*

5. Petition of **Dika Family Trust Fund, John A. & Sandra S. Trustees, owners**, for property located at **333 Marcy Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace (6) windows) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 102 as Lot 13 and lies within the General Residence B (GRB) and Historic Districts.

**SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

The applicant John Dika reviewed the petition and said he wanted to replace the six windows with LePage H100 Series windows, which was a combination of wood and aluminum clad. He said he also wanted to replace the shingles on the back of the building and wanted the option of putting a corner board on one side to match the front of the building.

Chairman Lombardi asked when the structure was built. Mr. Dika said he wasn't sure but thought it was originally a one-story shed. Chairman Lombardi asked if a corner board would be consistent with the rest of the building. Mr. Dika said the building was a mishmash and the back of it wasn't seen much. Mr. Adams said it would be easier to put a corner board if only one wall was redone and that he preferred the formality of the corner board with the single wall because it made the building look less cottage-like.

Chairman Lombardi opened the public hearing.

**SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION**

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

**DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

*Vice-Chair Wyckoff moved to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the petition as presented and with the option of using a corner board, and City Council Representative Trace seconded.*

Vice-Chair Wyckoff said the project would preserve the integrity of the District and also preserve the special and defining character of the surrounding properties.

*The motion **passed** unanimously, 7-0.*

**V. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Breault  
HDC Recording Secretary