

**MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 8, 2003 HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MEETING
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE
City Council Chambers**

7:00 p.m.

January 8, 2003

PLEASE NOTE: Due to the length of the Agenda, I. New Business; II. Work Session; III. Old Business; and, IV. Public Hearings will be heard at this evenings Agenda; however, **IV. Work Sessions** will be heard on the following Wednesday, **January 15, 2003 at 7:00 p.m. in City Council Chambers.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman John Rice, Vice-Chairman David Adams, Rick Becksted, Paige Roberts; John Golomb, Ellen Fineberg; Joanne Grasso; and, Alternates Maija Hibbard and Richard Katz

MEMBERS ABSENT:

ALSO PRESENT: Roger Clum, Assistant Building Inspector; and, David Holden, Planning Director

I. NEW BUSINESS

Election of Officers for the year 2003

Mr. Becksted made a motion to nominate John Rice to continue being the Chairman and David Adams to continue as being the Vice-Chairman; Mr. Golomb seconded and all agreed with a 9 – 0 vote. **CONGRATULATIONS!**

Chairman Rice stated that he felt the Commission should continue with the Agenda and at 10:30 p.m. make a decision on whether to split the Agenda. Ms. Fineberg stated she feels a decision should be made sooner so that applicant's do not have to sit and wait for such a long period of time. The Commission members all agreed that at 9:00 p.m., they would make a decision.

II. WORK SESSION

1) Courtesy Work Session requested by U.S. General Services Administration for property located at 62 Daniel Street (McIntyre Building) to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 106 as Lot 008 and lies within the Central Business B and Historic A districts.

The Historic District Commission reviewed the proposal at their Work Session held at the meeting of January 8, 2003 wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure. The following comments are provided in three groups. First is the architectural presentation of the project followed by a summary of the

Commissioners comments and then those provided by the public. Minutes of the meeting as well as video are available to assist in the design process.

Points of the presentation provided by the GSA as follows:

- This project has been worked on for over two years
- There are Federal guidelines that must be followed:
- The proposed renovations do not resemble the surrounding buildings;
- The Penhallow façade is a very congested area;
- Do not want to change the address of the building;
- Removal of the one-story addition on Penhallow Street allows a handicap ramp to be provided along Penhallow Street and gives the building more space to address security issues and will provide for a Plaza to be built;
- No additional square footage is added to the interior;
- Rendering of the Penhallow Street façade shows an expansion of glass and granite along the Daniel and Penhallow Street facades.
- The GSA regrets they did not inform the City earlier of their intentions with this project;
- GSA is following appropriate procedures for this project now.

Comments from the Commission Members:

- Every building in the Historic District area has something to contribute to the character of the district and it's neighborhood;
- This building detracts from the character of the buildings around it and the proposed changes only magnify this situation;
- The Commission felt that on each façade of the building, a different material was being proposed such as stone, granite brick, etc. and would be out of character for the district;
- There is excessive glass in this proposal;
- The Commission has never approved a project that had so much glass;
- Would prefer the design have more brick;
- This is the kind of building that we do not want to bring more attention to by incorporating an expansion of glass;
- The best we can hope for is a minimal change and to mimic what is existing;
- Would prefer a design that is less jarring;
- Hard to respond favorably to the Penhallow Street design;
- Concerned how the sun will affect the area when reflected off the glass;
- The building should be more friendly;
- The focus of the building along Daniel Street should not change;
- Would like a design that does not magnify;
- The Commission would be happy to work with the GSA to come up with a design that would be satisfactory for both the GSA and the City;

III. Comments from Evelyn Sirrell, the Mayor of Portsmouth

- The design is of a fortress;
- The ideal location for Social Security and the Internal Revenue would be at the Pease Tradeport; however, the Post Office should remain at its present location;

Comments from concerned Citizens of Portsmouth:

- Senator Cohen – when showing the City, this building is not the best asset to show off.
- The proposed building is too massive;
- The building should be torn down and start the process over;
- There is a problem with parking;
- The design is totally inappropriate.
- Tourists come to Portsmouth to look at the historical district; this design detracts from the City;
- Not logical to put the entrance on Penhallow Street;
- The use of the word "plaza" is not correct in this design;
- The building is out of scale and a new facility should blend in with what is around it;
- The proposed building creates large security problems;
- Need perspectives showing the context of the proposed building with surrounding properties.

Commission's closing remarks:

- Would be happy if the facility was relocated to the Pease Tradeport;
- Would like to have the GSA come back with an alternate design; and, Commission would appreciate the opportunity to continue work with the U.S. GSA.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A) Amendment to approval received at the December 4, 2002 meeting requested by Mark Moeller for Strawberry Banke, Inc. on property located at 68 State Street wherein the Commission stipulated that the "final color" palette be approved by the Commission. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 105 as Lot 013 and lies within the Central Business B and Historic A districts.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION

Mr. Mark Moeller, the Architect for the project, presented a color copy of an exhibit that showed the color palette of the colors that will be used on the building.

There being no further speakers, the Public Hearing was closed.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Mr. Becksted made a motion to approve the amendment as presented; Ms. Grasso seconded and all approved with a 7 – 0 vote.

B) Amendment to approval received at the February 6, 2002 meeting requested by Lisa DeStefano for 325 State Street, LLC, owner, on property located on Porter Street to provide access doors for the servicing of fire sprinkler and telephone service equipment. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 117 as Lots 046 and 036-2 and lies within the Central Business B and Historic A districts. This application tabled at the December 4, 2002 meeting to the January 8, 2003 meeting.

The motion was made and seconded to take the application off the table and approved unanimously with a 7 – 0 vote.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION

Ms. Lisa DeStefano, the architect for the project, stated the doors on the building will not be accessed from outside, but from the inside only. The doors will be disguised and will have no hardware the outside. She presented a sample of the material that will be used from the Duraspec catalogue #DS98-8286. Ms. DeStefano added it will not have a shiny finish and it is something that is typically used on ships. We have worked on this project for a long time and feel the proposal is the best product possible for this use.

There being no further speakers, the Public Hearing was closed.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Ms. Grasso made a motion to accept the amendment as presented; Mr. Becksted seconded and all approved unanimously with a 7 – 0 vote.

C) Petition requested by GZA Geo Environmental for property owned by The Salvation Army located at 15 Middle Street to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace windows on building) as per plans on file in the Planning Department Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 126 as Lot 012 and lies within the Central Business B and Historic A districts. This application was tabled at the December 4, 2002 meeting to the January 8, 2003 meeting.

Mr. Becksted made a motion to take the application off the table; Ms. Grasso seconded and all approved unanimously with a 7 – 0 vote.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION

Mr. Jeff Rowell, from GZA Geo Environmental, stated there was a history to this project. About fifteen months ago, we inspected all Salvation Army properties and at this particular property, we discovered that the existing windows were not efficient and in need of repair. We are proposing to change the windows identical to what is existing whether it be a 6/6 or a 9/9 or a 12/12. He presented a sample of the window that will be used. The trim will remain as existing and the paladin window will remain as is

Mr. Becksted asked the applicant if he would verify that the glass dimensions will not change

Mr. Becksted stated he would like a window schedule that shows the side of the building and dimensions where the windows will be placed as well as how many lights on the windows. He feels aluminum clad windows maintain a crisp line and added the Commission has approved of this kind of application many times before.

The motion was made and seconded to table the reconvened meeting to the January 15, 2003 meeting to allow for the additional information to be presented. All approved unanimously with a 7 – 0 vote.

V. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1) **Petition for City of Portsmouth, owner, and Dan Hartrey, applicant, for property located at 1 Junkins Avenue (Police Department)** to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (install one (1) sliding window on first level of West façade) and replacement of three (3) sliding windows on fourth level of North façade) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 110 as Lot 001 and lies within the Municipal and Historic A districts.

Since there was no one present to speak to the application, Vice-Chairman Adams made a motion to move the application to the end of the meeting; Mr. Becksted seconded and all approved unanimously with a 7 – 0 vote.

2) **Petition for Black Swan Realty Trust, owner, and Lisa DeStefano, applicant, for property located at 796 Middle Street** to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (demolition of back wing; reconstruction of demolished area; and, construction of an addition to the rear to allow for four (4) residential condominium units to be built). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 153 as Lot 008 and lies within the General Residence A and Historic A districts.

Chairman Rice stated this application has had many work sessions as well as a site walk to the property and this is the first public hearing.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION

Ms. DeStefano, the architect for the property and representing the owner, stated that comments from an abutter have been received and we have addressed the comments. We are now able to move forward with the project. She then reviewed the plans submitted with the Commission members. The one-story addition will be demolished and a two-story addition will be built on the existing footprint. The parking area has been designed for vehicles as well as be located away from the street. We are adding many trees to the property. Clapboards will be restored as well as the trim.

Ms. DeStefano presented photographs of the existing structure as well as a window and door schedule.

There being no further speakers, the Public Hearing was closed.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Vice-Chairman Adams made a motion to approve the application as presented; Ms. Becksted seconded. Mr. Becksted stated he feels the process worked well for the owner and the applicant.

Ms. Fineberg asked if the Commission needs to approve the demolition of the barn? It was reported that this was on the Building Permit and that it will be voted on. Mr. Fineberg stated she will vote in the negative on this application since she feels the design is inappropriate. She is not comfortable with the overall design.

Ms. Grasso asked if there was a written statement from the abutter who wanted to move the barn to her property, because if there was, she could possibly vote in favor of the application and asked if any other Commissioner's had this same concern. The Commission members all agreed that they were not concerned over this fact.

The motion to grant passed with a 6 – 1 vote with Ms. Fineberg voting in the negative.

3) Petition for Paul Delisle, owner and Marc Houde, applicant, for property located at 6-17 The Hill (Hart Rice House) to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (add two dormers to the rear of the structure). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 118 as Lot 026 and lies within the Central Business B and Historic A districts.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION

Mr. Mark Houde, the contractor for the project and representing the owner, stated at the Work Session held prior to this meeting, the Commission members approved of the plan to build two dormers on the rear of the structure. There are three dormers existing on the front of the structure and this is the only house on the Hill that has dormers.

There being no further speakers, the Public Hearing was closed.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Vice-Chairman Adams made a motion to grant as presented; Mr. Fineberg seconded and all approved unanimously with a 7 – 0 vote.

4) Petition for Olde Harbour Condominiums, owner, and Jill Gallant, applicant, for property located at 135 Market Street, Units A,B, and C to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (installation of ten (10) KAS-KELL all season vinyl double hung replacement windows with six over six permanent grids, trim casings and sill covers; and, replacement of door and siding on Unit B)) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 106 as Lot 34-B and lies within the Central Business B and Historic Districts.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION

Ms. Gallant, the owner of the property, stated, the contractor was not available for this evening's meeting to present her application to install 10 vinyl Kas-Kel windows. The windows are not efficient and cannot be opened or closed.

Mr. Becksted asked if the window would be removed and another placed in the opening? Ms. Gallant replied that her contractor, Ron Bet has assured her that the windows will look the same.

Chairman Rice asked if all the windows in the front would be replaced or if all the windows in the building will be replaced? Ms. Gallant replied all the windows on Market Street.

Mr. Becksted stated that the shadow on the glass can make a difference and can reduce the glass size; however, we have approved some vinyl windows. Ms. Gallant stated she was just mimicking what has been done at 123 and 129 Market Street.

Chairman Rice asked if the mullions were on the outside of the glass or are they permanently affixed or on the inside of the windows. If the lights are not permanently affixed, they should be permanently affixed to the outside of the window. He added that the Contractor should bring a sample of the window to the reconvened meeting on January 15th.

Mr. Katz stated the grids will be placed between the glass.
Ms. Gallant then addressed the door replacement in Unit B. It is located on two decks that have been cut into the roof. This door needs to be replaced since here is a terrible water problem and the door and siding has rotted. The door size will not change.

Chairman Rice stated he would like to see a photograph of the door as it exists and a spec sheet on the door because he is concerned whether the grids are between the class.

Ms. Grasso made a motion to table the application to the reconvened meeting on January 15, 2003 to allow for additional information to be provided.

5) Petition for James McSharry, owner, for property located at 244 South Street to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace existing masonite siding on rear of structure with pre-primed F/J red cedar clapboards having a 4" exposure; install solid vinyl (reproduction wood) gutters on front and rear exterior of structure; and, window changes on rear façade) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 111 as Lot 003 and lies in the Single Residence B and Historic A districts.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION

The contractor for the project stated that Mr. McSharry was out of town and he would be representing him. He wanted to put masonite on the rear of the building as well as clapboards and cedar shingles on the front and sides. The windows will have true divided lights on the outside of the glass.

Vice-Chairman Adams feels this window arrangement would be out of character with the neighborhood. He feels that so much glass is inappropriate.

Ms. Roberts stated she agreed and added that even though it is on the rear of the building it is still not in character with the building or the area.

Chairman Rice stated he feels we are angling towards a work session. He made a suggestion on the placement of the windows and asked if the Commission members agreed that this would work? Vice-Chairman Adams stated there are no dimensions on this plan about the size of the openings as well as the windows. Chairman Rice feels this application should be tabled to a work session or an amendment.

Mr. Becksted stated we are only talking about two windows.

Ms. Grasso made a motion to table the application to the reconvened meeting on January 15, 2003 to allow for more specific measurements; Vice-Chairman Adams seconded and all approved unanimously with a 7 – 0 vote.

6) Petition for Beacon Cabin, owner, and, Joseph Kane, applicant, for property located at 117 Bow Street, Unit A-6 to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (enlarge door opening to accommodate a 3' door as well as add frame to match existing; and, window to be removed and replaced with a larger window) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 106 as Lot 57A and lies within the Central Business A and Historic A districts.

There being no one to speak to the application, the motion was made and seconded to table the application to the next schedule meeting on February 5, 2003 and all agreed unanimously with a 7 – 0 vote.

7) Petition for Tyler Rohrer, owner, and Shaun Hickey, applicant, for property located at 420 Pleasant Street to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (removal of existing asphalt siding to allow repair and restoration of siding underneath; and, replacement of existing windows with Pella Architect Series windows) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 102 as Lot 056 and lies within the General Business B and Historic A districts.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION

Mr. Shaun Hickey, the applicant for the project, stated he would like to remove the asphalt siding since it is very unsightly. We do not know what is underneath; however, we did take a section off and there is clapboarding; therefore, we will repair and match the reveal to what is there. We are planning to bring the building back to the integrity of the neighborhood.

Vice-Chairman Adams stated the building will be remarkable after it is completed.

Mr. Hickey stated the building is a 5 unit apartment building

Mr. Becksted stated the Pella salesman has been here a number of times and always has received approval.

Mr. Fineberg made a motion to table the application to the reconvened meeting on January 15, 2003 and was seconded. All agreed with a 7 – 0 vote.

1) Petition for City of Portsmouth, owner, and Dan Hartrey, applicant, for property located at 1 Junkins Avenue (Police Department) to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (install one (1) sliding window on first level of West façade) and replacement of three (3) sliding windows on fourth level of North façade) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 110 as Lot 001 and lies within the Municipal and Historic A districts.

Since there was no one present to speak to the application, Vice-Chairman Adams made a motion to table the application to the next scheduled meeting on February 5, 2003; Mr. Becksted seconded and all approved unanimously with a 7 – 0 vote.

VI. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Becksted made a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting of December 4, 2002 with the following amendment:

The motion to approve with the above amendments passed unanimously with a 6 – 1 vote with Vice-Chairman Adams abstaining.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting and reconvene on January 15, 2003 to complete the Agenda.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan M. Long
Secretary
Planning Department

/jml