

**RECONVENED MEETING OF THE
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE
1 JUNKINS AVENUE
City Council Chambers**

7:00 p.m.

**November 8, 2006
reconvened from November 1, 2006**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Vice-Chairman David Adams, Richard Katz, John Golumb, Ellen Fineberg, Planning Board Representative Jerry Hetjmanek, and Alternates Sandra Dika and John Wyckoff

MEMBERS ABSENT: Chairman John Rice, City Council Representative Ned Raynolds

ALSO PRESENT: Roger Clum, Assistant Building Inspector

I. OLD BUSINESS

A) Approval of minutes – October 11, 2006

It was moved, seconded, and passed to approve the minutes as presented. Ms. Fineberg abstained from voting as she was not present at the October 11th meeting.

II. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Petition of **Deirdre P. and Thomas M. Hammer, owners**, for property located at **115 Court Street** wherein permission was requested to allow renovations to an existing structure (remove asbestos shingles and replace with architectural asphalt shingles, remove wood gutters, replace with copper) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 116 as Lot 23 and lies within the Mixed Residential Office and Historic A Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Mr. Tom Hammer spoke to the petition. He stated that he would like to replace the shingles on his roof since he is experiencing roof leakage.

Vice Chairman Adams asked if he would be removing the gutters and extending the roof. Mr. Hammer replied that he will remove the gutters, put a fascia board on to extend the gutters out a bit and put up a half round copper gutter. It would not encompass the existing cornice board. He said that he would not be putting gutters on the front and back dormers. He thought the copper gutters would look nice considering that the house

already has copper flashing. Mr. Hammer said that they also intended to put a copper drip cap over the edge of the roof.

Vice Chairman Adams said that currently, the gutter is an architectural element at the cornice line. He pointed out that in at least one location, the crown that is created at the top of the cornice, is carried up the rake of the express gable. He asked Mr. Hammer what would happen when that was removed. Mr. Hammer replied they would cut it and turn it back into the building.

Mr. Katz asked for more specifics about the process. Mr. Hammer explained in further detail as to how he would handle the gabled areas. He said that the gutters would come out to about the same point as to where the existing ones are now.

DECISION OF THE BOARD

Mr. Katz made a motion to approve the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hetjmanek. Vice Chairman Adams asked if there was any discussion.

Mr. Katz commented that a wood gutter was an architectural feature of the building but he felt the applicant had a handle on how to reconcile the transitions. Vice Chairman Adams said that although he was concerned with the loss of the wood, he agreed with Mr. Katz.

Vice Chairman Adams called for the vote. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

- 2. Petition of **March Twenty-Two, LLC, owner**, for property located at **58 State Street** wherein permission was requested to allow a new second floor, one story addition and extension of a firewall to a previously approved structure, as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown as Assessor Plan 105 as Lot 12 and lies within the Central Business B and Historic A Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Ms. Jennifer Ramsey of March Twenty-Two, LLC spoke to the petition. She mentioned that project was previously approved this summer. They would now like to make a couple changes to the approved design. She said they would like to add a one story addition on the second floor deck on the right hand portion of the building. The French doors and window that was previously approved will be moved forward six feet, six inches. They will also be building a deck on top of that and will be adding another set of French doors. Ms. Ramsey stated that they would like to extend the firewall by an additional foot as well. She stated that they would be using the same doors and windows that were previously approved. The deck on top of the addition will have a solid and open rail system. She pointed out that the dimensions of the addition will be 6'6" X 22' 11".

Vice Chairman Adams asked if there were questions for the applicant.

Ms. Fineberg asked if they were extending the building. Ms. Ramsey replied that they are adding a bay to the unit on the second floor. They are not extending the building on the lot.

Mr. Golumb asked about the use of clapboards with the brick façade. Ms. Ramsey pointed out that it would look similar to the left hand side of the building.

Mr. Wyckoff asked about the rail system for the third floor with clapboards and open balusters. Mr. Ramsey replied that the reason for it was to provide privacy from 46 State Street.

Vice Chairman Adams asked if anyone from the public wished to speak to, for, or against the application. Seeing no rise, he declared the public hearing closed.

DECISION OF THE BOARD

Ms. Fineberg made a motion, for the purposes of discussion, to approve the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Katz.

Ms. Fineberg said that she had concerns with the part clapboard and part rail design. She felt it was not attractive. Since it was designed to add privacy, she wondered if an alternative, like putting up a piece of canvassing, would be a better look. She stated that she was comfortable with the French doors, windows, and the balcony. Mr. Wyckoff and Mr. Katz agreed with Ms. Fineberg.

Ms. Ramsey stated that she would be willing to amend the design to the standard dovetail design. She said it could be a rail that matches the height of the rails that are existing already.

Vice Chairman Adams said that he too, was uncomfortable with the introduction of the clapboards. He felt the amendment to the design was a good solution for everyone.

Ms. Dika asked if they would have to come back to the commission for approval of a canvas privacy screen. Vice Chairman Adams replied no, it would not be considered an awning.

Mr. Golumb pointed out that the previously approved design on the Court Street side was brick. Now they are introducing clapboard on the second story. He said he would like to see it all brick. He asked if anyone else was troubled by that.

Ms. Dika replied that she was troubled by it. She said she was having trouble conceptualizing the whole project. Vice Chairman Adams commented that many of the

buildings on State Street have clapboard additions on the back. He said that it was not a problem for him.

Mr. Katz pointed out that one of the applications that they had last week involved a brick building with a wood framed addition that is within close proximity to this building. He said that he did not see a problem with it.

Mr. Golumb said that he did not feel the design was appropriate. It was a one story brick addition and he felt it should remain brick. Mr. Katz replied that there is historical justification for this design all over town.

Ms. Finberg made a motion to amend the application to change the railing on the third floor to match the railings on the rest of the structure. Mr. Katz seconded the amendment.

Vice Chairman Adams called for the vote. The motion passed by a 6 – 1 vote with Mr. Golumb voting in opposition.

3. Petition of **7 Islington Street, LLC, owner**, for property located at **7 Islington Street** wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace windows, fire escape, back entry, canopy and stair, and add seven condensing units) and demolition of an existing structure (demolition of one story garage) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 126 as Lot 51 and lies within the Central Business B, Historic A, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Ms. Jennifer Ramsey spoke to the petition. She said that this is the historic Buckminster House. On the first floor, they are planning to rebuild the back stair and the back entry stair to code. They will also be changing the canopy over the back entry. On the back right hand corner of the building, they plan to locate seven condensing units. Ms. Ramsey said that the first three units would be sitting on a raised area of grade with a retaining wall. She added that they would be moving a fence forward on the site; however, the visual aspect would remain the same.

Ms. Fineberg asked why they needed seven condensing units. Ms. Ramsey replied that the variety of uses on the first floor is still undetermined. She said there could be as many as five offices on the first floor. She explained how the condensers would sit on the property. The fence will cover them from view. Mr. Adams asked how tall the fence was. Ms. Ramsey replied that it was probably 6 feet tall. Ms. Fienberg asked if it was possible to combine several units to one condenser. Ms. Ramsey said this was the best way to maximize the use of the space.

Ms. Ramsey stated the windows that will be replaced would be Eagle clad windows throughout. She said that on the side elevation, they will be removing the existing door and replacing it with a window opening. She also explained that the rail system for the stairs would be the typical rail and balusters.

Mr. Wyckoff asked if the stairs would project out beyond the building. Ms. Ramsey replied no, there is a 1 ½ feet of wall before the stairs start.

Mr. Wyckoff asked about the square balusters that were proposed in the plan. He said that that system does not work very well because they twist and turn. He gave Ms. Ramsey some information on how to address that issue.

Vice Chairman Adams asked about the window replacement plans. Ms. Ramsey replied that the Eagle windows are sashes that they are replacing the old windows with. They will be using the existing millwork. She said it was a simple application; the sashes come in separate units. She said they would also match mullions to the existing windows that they will be replacing. They will be six over six.

Vice Chairman Adams asked if anyone from the public wished to speak to, for, or against the application. Seeing no one rise, he declared the public hearing closed.

DECISION OF THE BOARD

Ms. Fineberg made a motion, for the purposes of discussion, to approve the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Katz. Vice Chairman Adams asked if there was discussion.

Ms. Fineberg said that the plan was one that they have seen before, as part of a larger plan. She said the only thing she had an issue with was the number of condensers. She wondered if the commission could approve four condensers and then the applicant could come back to revise it if necessary. She added that they have seen buildings bigger than this one with smaller numbers of condensers.

Mr. Wyckoff asked Ms. Fineberg where she would place the four condensers. Ms. Fineberg replied that she did not know what the best option was.

Mr. Katz asked if there were any code issues involved with a large number of units. Mr. Clum replied that each condenser could be considered to be a zone in a cooling system. He said they are probably asking for seven condensers because there will be seven individual units. The placement of condensers in regards to the zoning ordinance and the building code only revolve around sound – how much sound they produce and how close to the property line they can be located.

Ms. Fineberg commented that putting the condensers in the back versus the side would be a better option where sound is concerned.

Vice Chairman Adams asked Ms. Fineberg where her discomfort lies with the condensers. He pointed out that the condensers that bothered her the most were in an area that was blocked by the fence. Ms. Dika interjected that if they are allowed seven units, then they should be allowed seven condensers. Vice Chairman Adams added that he would rather see seven units sitting on the ground than fifteen window air conditioners sticking out of the new windows.

Mr. Katz asked about the dimensions of the condensers. Ms. Ramsey replied that one was 25" long and the others were 20" long and all were 3 to 4 feet high.

Mr. Wyckoff asked if the windows would have full screens. Ms. Ramsey said the first floor windows are big and would probably never be opened since it will be retail space. She did anticipate that the other floor windows would have half screens.

Vice Chairman Adams asked if there were any more questions. Hearing none, he called for the vote. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

III. WORK SESSIONS

A) Petition of **Jarvis Revocable Trust, owner**, for property located at **20 High Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow a new free standing structure (install entrance gate to parking lot) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 117 as Lot 15 and lies within the Central Business B, Historic A, and Downtown Overlay Districts. *This item was tabled to a work session at the November 1, 2006 meeting.*

Ms. Fineberg made a motion to remove the petition from the tabled status. The motion was seconded by Mr. Golumb. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Mr. Sam Jarvis was present to speak to the petition. He presented some photos of various areas of the property. He pointed out that the proposed gate mechanism would be placed behind the granite post. The granite post was 33" in height; it was 7" from the pavement to the curb. He stated that the installer said that they would have to dig in order to put a 12" X 12" concrete slab for the mechanism to rest on. Once the mechanism is place, it will measure 42" in height, a 9" height difference in the height of the granite post. He said the planter measures 16.5" by 7". Mr. Jarvis said that there would be electrical wiring continued from the inside of the planter, under the brickwork, and through to the building. The length of the gate measured 14-16 feet. The length of the opening is 23 feet. He added that he looked at other gates in the area – Bow Street, the Post Office building, St. John’s Church, Harbour Place, Porter Street, and the Sheraton parking lot. He said he was trying to keep the gate a reasonable size for maintenance. Mr. Jarvis stated that he maintains the exterior of his property and so would like to control what happens in his lot. He is concerned about vandalism.

Mr. Katz asked if the gate was going to be operational during the business hours. Mr. Jarvis replied it would be in operation 24 hours. He said that he has individuals who rent parking spaces so they would have monitors to raise and lower the gate. As for the customers, Mr. Jarvis said that there would be an attendant inside the restaurant to operate the gate when needed.

Mr. Jarvis stated that he was agreeable to installing the white gate mechanism.

Ms. Dika commented that the maintenance of the gate is important. She said that given how meticulously Mr. Jarvis maintains his property, she had no doubt that he would maintain the gate as well.

Mr. Katz said that any attempt to have a more aesthetic gate would entail massive outlays of effort, time, and money. He did not think the impact would be that great.

Vice Chairman Adams asked if anyone was concerned with the gate only partially covering the opening. He wondered if the gate arm should be longer than the 14-16 feet.

Vice Chairman Adams reopened the public hearing.

Vice Chairman Adams asked if anyone had any further questions. Hearing none, he asked if anyone from the public wished to speak to, for, or against the petition. Seeing no one rise, he declared the public hearing closed.

DECISION OF THE BOARD

Mr. Golumb made a motion to approve the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Dika. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

B) Petition of **Chad and Laura Morin, owners**, for property located at **36 Market Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure and new construction to an existing structure (new third floor addition at rear of building, stair enclosure, three story elevator, and lobby structure at rear of building, replace existing windows and add new windows) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 117 as Lot 29 and lies within the Central Business B, Historic A, and Downtown Overlay Districts. *This item was tabled to a work session at the November 1, 2006 meeting.*

Mr. Golumb made a motion to remove the petition from the tabled status. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hetjmanek. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Ms. Julie MacDonald from DeStefano Architects and Butch Ricci, contractor for the project spoke to the petition. She pointed out that the areas of concern from last week's

meeting were of the general massing and materials. She also said that they would like to discuss skylights with the commission as well.

Ms. MacDonald said that the difficulty with reducing the massing was that they are adding an elevator. An elevator has a certain amount of overrun that is required so the height of the elevator is an element that they cannot change. She said they have worked on keeping that the same height but tried to pull down some of the other areas where they could. The original plan had the elevator and the elevator lobby both the same height. They have pulled down the elevator lobby and introduced a roof that runs next to the elevator tower. Ms. MacDonald added that also on that same elevation, they changed the window pattern on the Ladd Street building. She said they have added windows on the elevator tower. They will be sealed from behind but from the alley side they will look like windows. Pulling down the massing also allowed them to open up the deck area.

Ms. MacDonald said they are proposing cementitious clapboards throughout. She brought a sample color of it with her.

Mr. Ricci said to keep in mind that it is almost impossible to see the addition anywhere in the City. You can see it at the top of the parking garage and maybe for 20 feet on Hanover Street.

Ms. Fineberg asked about the material for the door. Ms. MacDonald said that it is painted wood with glass in the upper panel. There is no side light as was originally proposed.

Ms. MacDonald mentioned that they would like to put in a couple skylights. She said there would be no other changes with the roof. Vice Chairman Adams said that he remembered roofing problems on the building in the past. Mr. Ricci replied that the whole building has two roofs. They are planning to remove a portion of one of the roofs that will give them some extra ceiling heights.

Mr. Golumb said that he was having discomfort with the use of cementitious clapboards instead of brick. He asked if they thought to clapboard the sides and brick the front. Mr. Ricci replied that the existing building that they are going on top of cannot hold the weight. Vice Chairman Adams interjected that when you stand at the back of the building, all you see is clapboard and it is not out of character with the area.

Ms. Fineberg and Mr. Golumb said that they had no problem with the skylights.

Vice Chairman Adams asked if the cementitious clapboards come already pre stained in colors. Ms. MacDonald replied yes. She said they would be painting the trim areas.

Mr. Golumb asked when installing the cementitious clapboard, would they be putting the smooth side out. Mr. Ricci replied yes.

Mr. Ricci showed the commission a sample of the railing system. Ms. MacDonald mentioned that the window trim would be green. Mr. Ricci was not sure if the railing

system was available in other colors but he would check to see if it was available in green. Ms. Fineberg suggested that if they can not get it in green, she would like them to come back for approval of another color.

Ms. Fineberg made a motion to close the work session and reopen the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Mr. Katz. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Vice Chairman Adams asked if anyone in the public wished to speak to, for, or against the petition. Seeing no one rise, he declared the public hearing closed.

DECISION OF THE BOARD

Mr. Katz made a motion to approve the application as amended. The motion was seconded by Mr. Golumb.

Mr. Golumb stated that he felt the changes made to the elevator tower and the windows were far superior to last week's plans. Mr. Wyckoff was in agreement.

Vice Chairman Adams called for the vote. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

B) Work session requested by **160 Middle Street Trust, and Wilfred L. Sanders, Jr., applicant**, for property located at **160 Middle Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow a new free standing structure (two-car detached garage). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 127 as Lot 9 and lies within Mixed Residential Office and Historic A Districts. *This item was tabled to a work session at the October 4, 2006 meeting.*

Ms. Fineberg made a motion to remove the petition from the tabled status. The motion was seconded by Mr. Golumb. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Ms. Gayle Sanders, representative for the applicant, spoke to the petition. She gave the commission a packet for their review. On the first page of the packet, she pointed out the photo of the house at 160 Middle Street, which is located on a narrow lot. There is a ten foot driveway to the left of the house. She mentioned that it would be difficult to see any of the proposed garage from the street. The next page showed samples of garages in the neighborhood that are visible from the street. The following page showed the back yard of 160 Middle Street. She also shared a photocopy of the house that she obtained from the Planning Department archives that showed the back of the house and its many roof lines on the rear of the house. Page four of the plans showed the various roof lines. Ms. Sanders said when faced with the challenge of putting a garage in the back yard, it seemed inappropriate to do a very elaborate garage, because it is a simple house. She felt it was appropriate to do a simple garage. She thought a simple flush panel garage door, painted black would look appropriate. She said that the door on the rear of the house is painted black. Page five was a slightly revised floor plan. The revision enlarges

the garage by a few feet. The lighting fixtures would be similar to the light fixture that is by the back door of the house.

Vice Chairman Adams asked about the siding. Ms. Sanders replied that it would be clapboard. It would match the existing clapboard on the house as well as the shingling.

Mr. Golumb commented that the garage doors seemed oversized. Ms. Sanders replied that they were 8'X 8'. Mr. Wyckoff said he would not use 8 foot garage doors. Vice Chairman Adams mentioned that sometimes in situations like this, they have reverted to a single wide door because it does not require the center post. It allows for the cars to go in and out easier. Mr. Wyckoff said that he would find the single wide door inappropriate in that neighborhood. Ms. Dika pointed out that there is a house that she has listed that has a 14' door and it very attractive. She said that the door is very plain.

Mr. Wyckoff said that what is missing from the drawings is ventilation at the peak. He wondered if traditional wooden gable vents would help.

Vice Chairman Adams asked if the garage is in line with the driveway. Ms. Sanders replied yes, it follows the existing driveway.

Ms. Sanders stated that the roof pitch was 6.5 over 12. There are five or six roof pitches on the existing home.

Ms. Fineberg pointed out the pork chop gable end of the rear of the house. She felt that look might be appropriate on the garage. Ms. Sanders replied that she originally did that on previous plans but the commission did not like it so she took away. Mr. Wyckoff said that she may be referring to one of his comments about how the drawing did not make sense at that point. Ms. Sanders said that there may have been deficiencies in the drawings. She said that what she was thinking of doing in that area was a little reveal on a profile with the frieze board, have it run the whole way and have it be same all around the gable and the eaves. Mr. Katz asked if she would cap the eave trim. Ms. Sanders replied that the overhang from the main layer of the building is about 4". Ms. Sanders said she would be willing to match whatever roof line they prefer. Mr. Wyckoff stated that he thought the north gable rear would be reasonable.

Mr. Katz thought that a flat panel garage door would be more appropriate. Vice Chairman Adams felt a solid flush door would work best. Ms. Sanders was agreeable to those suggestions.

Mr. Golumb said that he was grappling with the size of the garage doors. He felt they were overpowering the structure. Mr. Katz replied that that is the case, but that is a common situation. Mr. Golumb said that it may just be the way he is looking at it.

Mr. Katz wanted to clarify the trim at the intersection of the eave and rake. Mr. Wyckoff interjected that if the commission is comfortable with the north end gable they could ask that the garage match that.

Vice Chairman Adams declared the work session closed and reopened the public hearing.

Mr. Clum pointed out that the garage size has changed since the last meeting so the applicant will need to modify the building permit to accommodate that change.

Vice Chairman Adams asked if anyone from the public wished to speak to, for, or against the application. Seeing no one rise, he declared the public hearing closed.

Mr. Wyckoff made a motion to approve the application with the following amendments – that the trim details match the north gable rear of the house, including the gable vent. The motion was seconded by Ms. Dika. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

C) Work Session requested by **J.W. Sobel Revocable Trust, owner**, for property located at **49 Sheafe Street** wherein permission was requested to allow demolition of an existing structure (two garages) and new free standing structures (two new garages). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 107 as Lot 21 and lies in the Central Business B and Historic A Districts. *This item was tabled at the October 11, 2006 meeting.*

Mr. Jonathan Sobel and Mrs. Valerie Sobel of 49 Sheafe Street spoke to the project. Mr. Sobel stated that this is a project in development. He presented to the commission a recorded site plan. It was a lot line revision plan that turned out to be longstanding debate concerning one of the garages. That has been resolved. He explained that the property was built by Jay Smith many years ago. There are two existing garages on the property – one that has access to Sheafe Street and the other one has access to Custom House Court. He said there are also rights of ways for pedestrian traffic for the Custom House Court garage to Daniel Street. Mr. Sobel said that the existing garages are very decrepit. The smaller garage that is on the driveway of the Sheafe Street property is a 13' X 20' structure which dates to the 1920's. They would like to replace it with a conforming structure that mirrors the saltbox style. He pointed out that they are speaking in very broad terms since they are not set on any one idea. They are looking for input from the commission. They are wanting to enlarge the garage to a size of 18' X 28'. He added that the new structure would be a half or three quarter story taller than the existing structure.

Vice Chairman Adams asked if they would be building this garage on the same footprint. Mr. Sobel replied that they would be moving the building back 4 feet toward the back of the lot. Vice Chairman Adams asked if they would have any trouble with setbacks. Mr. Sobel replied that it is in a zero lot line zone. He added that with the expansions of both garages increases the lot coverage to 58%. It is currently at 52%. The requirement for the zone is 95%.

Mr. Sobel told the commission about the second garage. He said it was originally a glazing shop. He said that over the years, it has served as commercial property, but since

1985, it has served as a garage. One end wall of the building is brick. The front of the building is cement block and the rest of the building is relatively crudely constructed. Mr. Sobel pointed out this building and the neighbors building are collapsing onto each other. He said that when reconstruction takes place, they will have to use a material that is a true firewall since the buildings sit very close together.

Mr. Sobel said that for years, he has looked down Custom House Court and thought what a blight the garage was. He said he would like to construct a terminus of a carriage house that has a presence on the street. He stated that he liked the overhangs and the brackets on the new Jardinière building on Deer Street. He would like to construct something like that. He showed the commission some rough drawings of what he envisions for the site.

Mr. Sobel estimated that the proposed building would be 38'-39' in height. He said that that height is in keeping with the adjacent buildings down the street.

Vice Chairman Adams said there are a number of design features that need further study and review.

Ms. Fineberg stated that it was difficult to understand it and discuss it without seeing the site. She recommended a site walk. Mr. Golumb and Ms. Dika agreed.

Mr. Katz commented that this is an ambitious project. He asked if they would be taking on the project themselves or would they be hiring someone. Mr. Sobel replied that they would like to first get some general feedback and then seek professional assistance. Mr. Katz said that a key element that they will be able to address with a site walk is mass.

Vice Chairman Adams said that he felt a three story building is a bit of a stretch for the area. He did not look at the street without a termination as much as it was a collection of people's back yards. He said that he felt that the garage for the 49 Sheafe Street property has some balance issues. The proposed prominent roof and the third floor are problems for him. He said he is not looking for something pleasant to look at there because he enjoys the cacophony of all of the utilitarian spaces. He said he feels that something needs to be done there but he feels it is a little too enthusiastic.

Mr. Katz asked if the site walk would be on a Saturday morning. Vice Chairman Adams replied that he would suggest a Saturday morning but it would be sometime during the day. He felt the site walk needed to be about an hour in length.

Mr. Wyckoff stated that he agreed that a two story structure would be more appropriate. Mr. Sobel felt that the site walk would be important because when they see the three story buildings around it, it will not look out of place.

Ms. Dika thought it was helpful that the applicant presented his concept before the site walk.

An abutter, whose building attaches to the garage spoke about the project. She said she is concerned about how it will affect her building when the garage comes down since they share a common wall. She said she is supportive of a new structure. Mr. Sobel pointed out the original plan was to remove that wall and completely rebuild it but he said that the most recent opinion was that the common footing is strong enough to keep the existing wall and to repair the holes that are in it. The abutter's wall will be reinforced as a result.

Ms. Dika asked if he had an opinion from a structural engineer. Mr. Sobel replied that he had a couple people take a look at it. They said that the other corners are collapsing away from the structure.

Mr. Todd Spencer, an abutter who lives at 37 Sheafe Street spoke next. He said that his concern is the size of the structure. He would like to see something done to the building but he felt a three story building was a bit too large. He pointed out that when you look at the area from the Sheafe Street side, they are all two to two and half story structures there. He added that he is looking forward to seeing where the plans go.

Vice Chairman Adams said they are looking forward to the site walk before the next meeting.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

At 10:10 p.m., it was moved, seconded, and passed to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Good
HDC Secretary

These minutes were approved at the Historic District Commission Meeting on December 13, 2006.