

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

**EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**7:00 p.m.**

**April 25, 2007**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Sandra Dika, Vice-Chairman John Golumb; David Adams, Ellen Fineberg; Planning Board Representative Jerry Hejtmanek; and Alternates John Wyckoff and Elena Maltese

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** City Council Representative Ned Reynolds, Richard Katz

**ALSO PRESENT:** Roger Clum, Assistant Building Inspector

---

Ms. Dika stated that a site walk was held at 6:00 p.m. at 195 Hanover Street.

**I. WORK SESSION**

A) Work Session requested by **Parade Office, LLC**, for property located **195 Hanover Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow demolition of an existing structure (demolish building) and allow a new free standing structures (mixed use buildings of retail, hotel, office, and residential units). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 125 as Lot 1 and lies within the Central Business B, Historic A, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

Ms. Lisa DeStefano, one of the architects of the project, thanked the Commission for the extra meeting. She said to see the points marked out on the site during the site walk really helped to reinforce the broad walk which was the key element of the site. She added that she would like to spend some extra time on the hotel building during this meeting.

Ms. DeStefano introduced Josh Anderson from Cathartes Private Investments, David Manfredi and Tom Kinslow from Elkus Manfredi Architects and Tim Levine from Olympia Equity.

Mr. Manfredi pointed out that when looking at the entire broad walk elevation, they are using more masonry to tie the frame together. He explained that with the first office building, the masonry tied together both vertically and horizontally without reducing the amount of glazing. He said that the masonry frame feels like a whole. The building comes down to the ground but creates some diversity with the storefronts. Mr. Manfredi pointed out that there was some discussion about the gap between the two buildings so they have made it more modest in scale. He added that with the second office building they were trying to create a more complete frame. He said that it would be ariscraft, a cast stone material that would come down to the ground. Moving further down the street, the material changes to red brick masonry with the corner being

in a metal material. The corners would be of different scales. Mr. Manfredi explained in further detail the materials that would be used on that elevation. He said that they were trying to bring detail around the top of the building to give it a positive cap.

Ms. Fineberg pointed out that the elevation showed panels inserted in the windows but they were not present in the rendering. She asked which version she should be looking at. Mr. Manfredi replied that for that detail she should be looking at the elevation drawings.

Mr. Adams asked that if they wanted the material to have some sense of authenticity, why did they take the material and introduce a spandrel panel underneath the window. Mr. Manfredi said that they liked the proportion of that opening in the frame and the comparison of the sill heights.

Mr. Manfredi pointed out that they have changed the balustrade on top of the one story piece. He said that this was the view corridor between the two buildings and so they wanted the piece to have presence. He said they have put a hand rail along the front edge to try to raise the scale up a bit so that it does not feel too small. Chairman Dika asked if it was their intention to have a deck there. Mr. Manfredi said it was a possibility for an office tenant.

Mr. Wyckoff asked if the windows on this elevation would open. Mr. Manfredi replied no. Mr. Wyckoff suggested they use commercial grade double hung windows to give the building a little more authenticity. He felt it might be more important to open a window rather than go between the heat and air conditioning. Mr. Manfredi said that the reality was that in a multi tenant building, it was extremely difficult to balance a system when you have operable sides because you cannot control what is open and what is closed. Ms. DeStefano pointed out that if they put double hung windows on one building, they would have to put them on all of the buildings because it would change the character that they are looking for with the different facades.

Mr. Wyckoff asked if there would be individual heating units. Mr. Manfredi said they did not have the answer to that yet but he suspected that they would have a split system between the retail and the office with individual zones around the perimeter of the building.

Councilor Raynolds asked the design team to consider using the new LEEDS standards for commercial buildings. Mr. Manfredi replied that that was a good point. He said he did not disagree with operable sash in terms of people's self control and fresh air.

Vice Chairman Golumb asked if the windows would be recessed and if so, would they look like the recessed windows at 100 Market Street. Mr. Manfredi replied that no, they would not be recessed to that extent. Vice Chairman Golumb said that he was still not convinced about the panels on the windows.

Chairman Dika suggested that they look at the Hanover Street elevation.

Ms. DeStefano told the Commissioners that they had the view down Maplewood Avenue in their packet as well. Mr. Manfredi pointed out that the parking element on this elevation creates a bridge effect. He added that the storefronts define the base of the building

Ms. DeStefano said the enlarged elevation on page 4 of the supplemental material showed the shadow lines and the depths. She pointed out that on the Maplewood elevation; you are able to see beyond to the Westin stair tower and the parking garage.

Mr. Manfredi said in regards to the storefronts, the face of the frame was 1' 4" from the face of the brick. He said that it shows that it clearly belongs to the mass of the building.

Mr. Wyckoff asked if the windows above the parking entrance were double hung windows. Mr. Manfredi replied no. Ms. DeStefano explained why they were proposing the windows they were.

Mr. Adams asked about an area where it looked like part of a window would be blocked by a ceiling. He wondered if you would be able to see that when you looked in from outside. He said it looked to be about 14" of drop ceiling set back about 10". He pointed out that with the sunlight there might be odd reflections or at night, there might be odd shadows. Mr. Manfredi replied that he did not think it would be very visible from the sidewalk. He thought it might be more visible at night.

Councilor Reynolds asked if was possible to do something with the corner of the building that faces down Maplewood Avenue. He felt it should be something that creates visual interest. Mr. Manfredi replied that they do not want the buildings to "fall apart" because of too many parts. Ms. DeStefano added that they went back and forth with that corner. Councilor Reynolds suggested something concave, something with lighting, or maybe something artistic.

Mr. Wyckoff said that he has had trouble with the corner as far as the sidewalk goes. He said the he prefers simplicity as opposed to Councilor Reynolds ideas. He added that he would just like to push the building back a little bit more and give the corner some breathing room. Mr. Manfredi said they would take another look at it.

Ms. DeStefano asked for comments about the Maplewood elevation. Mr. Manfredi said that all of the brick detailing was the same. He pointed out the metal cornice at the top of the building.

Mr. Kinslow said that when they met last time, Mr. Adams suggested a string course addition to the building. Mr. Kinslow explained that they looked at the Franklin building which has some interesting detailing on it and they applied some of that design to the Maplewood elevation. He pointed out the granite base storefronts on this elevation. He said that he thought there might be ground floor office space in that area.

Mr. Wyckoff asked about the two doors. Ms. DeStefano said that they have taken one door and made them into two for loading and dumpsters. Chairman Dika felt that was an improvement.

Ms. Fineberg asked what happens on the roof of this structure. Mr. Manfredi replied that that area could become an amenity for office tenants. From an architectural point of view, it was to give it more scale so that it looked like more than a single story building. Ms. Fineberg asked how deep the one story section was. Mr. Manfredi replied that it goes all the way to the back. Ms. Fineberg said that the one story section was a bit off for the Maplewood Avenue elevation.

She felt it would look better on the broadwalk side. She felt that there would not be much pedestrian traffic on the Maplewood Avenue side and would not be appreciated for what it was. Mr. Manfredi said that it was something that they were trying to do on both sides of the building. Mr. Wyckoff said that he disagreed with Ms. Fineberg about the Maplewood Avenue side. He felt it was the main route from his neighborhood. Chairman Dika added that it may change over time with the proposed development at the old Portsmouth Herald site.

Mr. Adams said that this portion seemed to have the charm of a strip mall compared to the rest of the development that they are proposing.

Ms. DeStefano asked how the Commission felt about the one story piece. Chairman Dika said she felt they were right to try to do something about it. Mr. Adams said that the building makes sense the way it wraps around the corners. Ms. DeStefano said they would come back to them with some options.

Councilor Reynolds said that he felt it made a lot of sense that tenants might want to do something with that space on the one story portion. He said that it would be a sun flooded place and so a roof garden might be a nice option. He pointed out that there was not a lot of green space in that part of town.

The discussion then shifted to the Deer Street elevation. Councilor Reynolds left at this point in the meeting.

Mr. Manfredi said that the hotel building on this elevation was the biggest building--it had the biggest horizontal dimension. He pointed out that the building had corner windows and had its own grouping of windows. He explained the materials that would be used on the building.

Ms. DeStefano pointed out that in the supplemental package the rendering showed the detailing of the building.

Mr. Manfredi stated that the top of the building was very high with an 8 foot parapet. He said that the corner windows would allow some really great views and give the building some personality.

Ms. DeStefano said that the corner piece has been projected out from the face of the building. The storefront on the building is different from what is seen on the other buildings.

Mr. Manfredi stated that they wanted to create identity for the hotel. He said that the two stories of glazing would add presence to the street. Ms. DeStefano pointed out that they had a chance on the site walk to see where the hotel building would be anchored.

Mr. Manfredi said that the material that was being proposed for the building was stone, arranged in a regular pattern. They felt that that was a more urban look.

Mr. Wyckoff stated that when it was first presented, the hotel had a colonnade on the front of it and he was really impressed with it. He said that now that design is gone and he was not 100% pleased with it. He felt that they have added too many materials with the brick.

Vice Chairman Golumb said that the Deer Street elevation with its curved element was great. He said that the window openings seem to work with the building. He felt, however, that the hotel needed to be redone.

Mr. Adams asked if it was the balance between the large openings on the first floor in the storefront areas and the groupings of the windows above that made Vice Chairman Golumb uncomfortable. He wondered if they were working too hard to make it not seem so massive. He said if they are trying this hard, why have a fifth floor there.

Mr. Hejtmanak stated that these are massive buildings. He said that if they don't use different materials, set back the buildings, and don't vary the design, it will be massive. He was not suggesting making the buildings smaller, just to finding a way to make them look smaller. Mr. Adams suggested making it four stories.

Vice Chairman Golumb said that when looking at the Deer Street elevation, it was not the massing that concerned him; it was too many elements competing with each other.

Chairman Dika asked the design team how they were thinking of that section because the rest of the building, she thought, worked well.

Mr. Manfredi stated that they cannot pretend that a five story masonry building matches a three story wood framed building, but that does not mean that they cannot coexist. He said that he was not troubled by the transition because he felt it was a contained precinct. Mr. Manfredi pointed out that the hotel building was the most modern looking of all of the other buildings.

Mr. Wyckoff felt that the single, slender windows had an odd quality to them.

Chairman Dika said that she would like to see the building be more respectful of the historic buildings beside it. She wondered if there were other ways to make it more complimentary to those buildings.

Mr. Adams wondered if there was a way of shifting some of the fifth floor program to the small one story plate that was behind it. Mr. Manfredi replied that it was the guest room program. He said that the plate at the base was giving them the bigger kinds of function spaces they needed. He added that hotels are hard to reduce because you are changing the program of the building. Mr. Adams said that everyone sees the tension of the building.

Ms. Maltese stated that she was having trouble with the detailing. She said that she can see the fenestration of the upper sections going together, she can see the entrance as a statement of design, she can see what was being portrayed as a restaurant down below as its own section of design, however, she said that she cannot see them all going together. As with the office buildings, she said she saw their different sections and she sees them compliment each other.

Mr. Adams stated that he was much more on board with the project until tonight. He said that the hotel building was the most residential part of the project and it had the least residential looking windows in it, the least residential feel to it. He added that he felt a responsibility to carry the ball with this project. He told the design team that they lost ground with him tonight.

Mr. Wyckoff pointed out the Nathaniel Hawthorne Hotel in Salem, MA which was a 6 or 7 story brick building with 6 over 6 windows with a nice cornice around it. He suggested to the design team that they try backing up in the other direction. He said that he liked the rest of the project with the rounded corners and introducing nice elements that are early twentieth century.

Mr. Manfredi stated that what he was hearing was that they need to be more regular in a number of the patterns of the building. He felt that they were uncomfortable with the irregularity of the massing. He said that he did not think that it was the size or the height of the building that the Commission was uncomfortable with.

Ms. DeStefano asked for comments on the residential building.

Mr. Kinslow pointed out that they made one minor change to the building. He said that they have emphasized the corner of the building and have made some changes to the cut stone to help proportion the pieces better.

Ms. Maltese asked about the brick masonry and why they had chosen to put it all the way up to the top, over the door, and at the street corner. She felt it took away from it being a front of the building. Mr. Kinslow replied that they trying to inflect to the next building—trying to infer that there was another building. Mr. Wyckoff said that he would like to see the right hand corner be equal to the left hand corner of the building.

Ms. Fineberg asked about the French balconies and wondered if the windows behind them opened. Mr. Kinslow replied yes.

Chairman Dika asked if the Commission was satisfied with that building. Hearing no comments, Chairman Dika asked if there were other questions regarding the project.

Ms. Fineberg asked if it was possible to have a model to get a sense of how the project feels in the space and a sense of scale. Mr. Kinslow replied yes.

Ms. DeStefano said that their plan was to come back in the May meeting for another work session. She asked if they could be scheduled for the May 9<sup>th</sup> meeting. Chairman Dika said that that was a possibility. Ms. DeStefano added that they would like to have a public hearing in June.

Vice Chairman Golumb stated that he would like to expand on Ms. Fineberg's suggestion concerning the model. He felt it was critical to see all of the buildings around the project as well. He hoped that they would be able to see that at the May meeting. Mr. Adams added that he would like to have materials to review a head of time.

Vice Chairman Golumb asked if it was possible for the Chairman and Vice Chairman to retain a copy of the plans to review in the meantime. Ms. DeStefano replied that that would be fine. She asked that they keep one copy and retrieve the copy that Councilor Reynolds received at the beginning of the meeting.

Chairman Dika asked if there were comments from the public.

Ms. Sharon Cuddy Somers with The Hill Condominium Association pointed out that they did not hear any discussion this evening on the side of the hotel and the retail space that would be facing The Hill. She hoped that they would address that at the May meeting. She also said that the proximity of the proposed buildings to The Hill condominiums was of concern to them. She added that the overall height of the building was critical because they do not want to create a wall effect. Chairman Dika explained that they did not get into that discussion because she felt there would be a major redesign of that building.

## **II. ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:55 p.m., it was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Good  
HDC Secretary

These minutes were approved at the Historic District Commission meeting on June 13, 2007.