

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

EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

7:00 p.m.

February 6, 2008

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Sandra Dika; Vice Chairman Richard Katz; Members John Wyckoff, Tracy Kozak, Elena Maltese, City Council Representative Eric Spear, Alternates Joseph Almeida, George Melchior

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Planning Board Representative Jerry Hejtmanek

ALSO PRESENT: David Holden, Planning Director

Prior to the meeting, a work session was held regarding possible modifications to Article X of the zoning ordinance. Also in attendance was Mr. Rick Taintor, City zoning ordinance consultant and Ms. Cindy Hayden, Deputy City Manager.

Chairman Dika explained to the Commission that she was interested in having an informal discussion with City staff regarding possible changes to the zoning ordinance.

Deputy City Manager Hayden referred to the City's Zoning Audit Report and indicated that there were a few changes recommended concerning the Historic District.

Mr. Taintor explained that they would like to look at the boundaries of the historic district where the Northern Tier was concerned. Since there were a limited number of projects that could occur there, the question was how the Historic District Commission would review projects in this area. He also added that they were looking at other parts of the city with perhaps different design standards such as Lafayette Road and Islington Street. He explained that the work on Article X to date has been to basically clean up the wording but nothing substantial has been suggested as of yet.

Deputy City Manager Hayden informed the Commission that the Planning Board would be holding a work session this month at the request of the Atlantic Heights Preservation Committee to discuss the possibility of establishing a Neighborhood Conservation overlay district for Atlantic Heights. She pointed out that it would have a historic element to it and she invited the Commissioners to attend.

Ms. Kozak asked about the history of the Historic District. She said that she recalled a Historic District B. Mr. Holden explained that that was demolition for only. He explained in detail how that district had worked in the past.

Chairman Dika pointed out that the format of the ordinance was not very public friendly. She was wondering if there was a way to show the public the changes that they were proposing to be made to the ordinance. Mr. Taintor replied that in the current draft they are working on a section at the beginning of the ordinance that would be a user's guide. He explained that they were trying to simplify it and were trying to write it for someone who has never used an ordinance before.

Chairman Dika opened the discussion to questions from the Commissioners.

Vice Chairman Katz commented that he has always been a little bit concerned about some of goals as set forth in the ordinance particularly in Section 10-1001 (B). He thought that two of them, conserving property values and strengthening the local economy were just "feel good" phrases that really did not aid the Commissioners in determining the worth of an application. He said that it was sometimes used to attack a particular application. He thought that they should be looked at to see if they were really necessary. Mr. Taintor pointed out that in the overall ordinance, there is a purpose section and he felt it was not necessary to repeat things in the Historic District section that are covered elsewhere. He explained that property values and economic development were not addressed in the overall purpose section of the ordinance. Mr. Holden pointed out that some of the language may have come from State legislation and that would have to be checked into.

Chairman Dika asked Mr. Taintor what kind of consensus he would want from the Commission regarding suggested changes. Mr. Taintor replied that he was not looking for consensus. He said just raising the idea would cause him to look at the suggestion. Deputy City Manager Hayden added that ultimately the City Council would decide on the changes but that they had a lot of faith in the Historic District Commission.

Mr. Holden explained that the present Article X was based on the prior Article X. He said that the present one was a hard fought consensus between the Planning Board and the Historic District Commission and that is reflected in the footnotes at the end of the Article.

Ms. Kozak said that it was reasonable to think that there are different contexts in the City. She thought it might be helpful for designers and planners to have different sets of standards to go by according to different parts of the City. She felt that the City does not have a comprehensive historic survey of the City. She felt that could help to form the character of the neighborhood for an area. Vice Chairman Katz asked who would undertake the survey. Ms. Kozak said she did not know who, but that it would be a monumental task. Mr. Holden suggested making a proposal to be put into the Capital Improvement Plan.

Mr. Wyckoff stated that within the historic district they have used different criteria depending upon the location and the proximity of other properties near a particular project. He said that the Commission has the ability to change depending on what neighborhood they are looking at. He pointed out that they have done that in the Northern Tier and would be able to continue to do that. Mr. Wyckoff stated that he would not like someone looking at the Northern Tier that might not be as qualified as the Commission is.

Councilor Spear said that if the Commission went in the direction of having different districts with different guidelines would it be possible for residential projects that are minimal in scope to follow a set list of guidelines that would exempt them from going before the Commission. He said that he was looking for a way to make it easier for an applicant. Councilor Spear explained the criteria for going before the Planning Board. Deputy City Manager Hayden responded by saying that she thought that might work for smaller projects. Vice Chairman Katz added that maybe a dollar amount for the project could be used as a guide as well.

Chairman Dika indicated that she had a list of minor items that other metropolitan areas used that might fit that category. Her list consisted of chimney caps, gutters, downspouts, trim, corner boards, soffits, awnings and canopies, roofs, and lighting.

Deputy City Manager Hayden explained that the goal was to review what needed to be reviewed and to not review what does not need to be reviewed.

Vice Chairman Katz pointed out there are some areas where there is a wide array of building styles and some areas like Strawberry Banke where the time period is identifiable.

Mr. Melchior stated that in the communities of Salem, MA, Newport, RI, and Mystic, CT, they do not have an overlay districts. He said that they built into their zoning flexibility on a case by case basis. He felt that with an overlay district, you build rigid templates that people have to follow. He said that it locks them in and does not leave a lot of room for flexibility. He added that it left a city like Portsmouth looks now, closed to time, instead of building on the timeline. Mr. Melchior pointed out that history did not stop in 1750. He pointed out that with overlay districts, you stop that timeline.

Vice Chairman Katz suggested that a survey of the predominate styles of the buildings that exists in the City would be a helpful guide. Mr. Taintor pointed out that there were some good models out there such as Oakland, California and Lowell, MA who have guides of the prevalent structures of the city.

Mr. Wyckoff stated that he was not in favor of all buildings in Portsmouth looking the same. He pointed out that the Commission reviews proportion, size, add-ons, and details. Mr. Almeida said that he has heard comments about all of the buildings looking the same but he said that when you really look around the City it is incredibly diverse.

Mr. Almeida said that he was all for simplifying the process. He felt that the process was straight forward and did not want to fix something if it was not broken. He asked Mr. Holden what has been the biggest complaint from applicants concerning the process. Mr. Holden replied that in general, the public was very supportive of the Historic District Commission. He pointed out that the ordinance was designed to be flexible but when you start to get into too much minutia which may be because of one Commissioner or one aspect of the project, it can cause a bump in the road but overall, he said he was not aware of any one thing that was not working.

Deputy City Manager Hayden commented that one of the things that came from the Portsmouth Listens discussions was that people said that they would like the rest of Portsmouth to look like the downtown area. She asked the Commission if there were specific things that needed to be changed that were problematic. She also asked if they were satisfied with the current boundaries.

Vice Chairman Katz said that he wanted to address Mr. Wyckoff's prior suggestions on Historic District boundaries. He indicated that he was comfortable with extending Middle Street to Lafayette Park and extending South Street to Lafayette Park because he felt those sections were very cohesive right now. He was not sure about extending Islington Street and Dennett Street and wondered what the reaction from the residents in that area would be.

Councilor Spear stated that when he lived on McDonough Street ten years ago, there was a suggestion of expanding the Historic District to include that neighborhood and the residents were not in favor of it. He thought a measure of success of the ordinance would be if other neighborhoods wanted to be included in the Historic District. He wondered why they would not want to be since it seems like such a good thing. Ms. Kozak explained that it is expensive to live in the Historic District and a big responsibility to use materials that are appropriate. It removes some of the freedom. She felt this presented a challenge when the City is trying to introduce affordable housing. She thought that may local tax incentives or volunteer groups to help homeowners would be beneficial.

Vice Chairman Katz asked what the percentage of rental properties in Atlantic Heights was. Deputy City Manager Hayden replied that it was 40%. He said that as the City continues to look at work force housing, he thought that area would be a great place for that.

Mr. Wyckoff said that he felt Middle Street and South Street were worth fighting for. He explained that the only reason he suggested Dennett Street was because he was reacting to a couple of projects on that street and was considering the vacant lots up near the Holiday Inn. He also thought that Islington Street was fine the way it was. Chairman Dika disagreed and thought that maybe the Historic District should be considered all the way down Islington Street to Bartlett Street.

Mr. Holden explained that when the ordinance was last looked at, it was acknowledged that Islington Street was the old Rt. 33. He said that if the City is going to make Portsmouth a walking city, Islington Street is a corridor and will probably be seeing a lot more activity in the coming years. He suggested that the Commission might want to consider what the special character of Islington Street is. Vice Chairman Katz responded that it would be lot of work to find identifiable characteristics to be used for criteria. Deputy City Manager Hayden stated that a historic structure survey of Islington Street would probably prove to be very helpful. Ms. Kozak pointed out that the mill buildings in that area are very important and need protection.

Mr. Wyckoff mentioned an area around Hanover Street and Maplewood Avenue that is not within the Historic District. He pointed out that there were three large structures on Hanover Street that could possibly be combined or torn down without any review. He also thought the properties on Bridge Street deserved another look as well. He said that those buildings are in the

Central Business A district and could potentially have a 60 foot high structure on those sites. Mr. Taintor stated that they are looking at that area of Islington Street.

Chairman Dika asked Ms. Kozak to speak about her comments concerning hardship. Ms. Kozak said that the town of Salem, MA had three levels of review – certificate of appropriateness, certificate of hardship, and certificate of inappropriateness. She explained that the certificate of hardship was for an exception that might be made for a special situation. She continued to say that an example of a certificate of inappropriateness would be if an applicant wanted to infill a window and the house currently has vinyl siding. She said that these levels of review would allow the Commission to avoid setting precedence with particular applications.

Vice Chairman Katz said that he would like to see that approved. He cited an example of why these types of review would be helpful. He recalled an older gentleman in his late 80's who wanted to have windows put in and he proposed what he could afford. Vice Chairman Katz said that the Commission denied it because the windows were not appropriate. He said that what ended up happening was that he called Mayor Sirrell and she found money for the gentleman to put in the appropriate windows. He also recalled a leaking chimney situation with the same property. Vice Chairman Katz felt that these two examples would fall under a hardship case.

Mr. Wyckoff mentioned that it might be helpful to have a list of items that would be exempt from review, such as gutters, since the Commission reviews virtually the same type of gutter at its meetings. Vice Chairman Katz mentioned that chimney caps should probably be included in that list.

Chairman Dika stated that she also wanted to discuss demolition. She pointed out that the Commission does not have formal review criteria when it comes to reviewing a demolition.

Mr. Almeida explained that if they are going to lose a building in the Historic District, there cannot be any question about it. They need to know when it was built, how it was built, and who it was built for. He felt that it should be the responsibility of the applicant to provide this information to the Commission. Mr. Holden said that the applicant in this case would be asking for a Certificate of Appropriateness for what they are proposing. Mr. Almeida asked if it was then a separate process. Mr. Holden replied yes.

Ms. Maltese asked for clarification on demolition. She asked that within the district, the Commission is not determining whether it is appropriate to demolish the building but only looking at what the new structure will look like. Mr. Holden said that the certificate of appropriateness is issued for the exterior change that is proposed. Mr. Wyckoff pointed out that the Commission has turned down demolitions after reviewing the building in context with its neighbors. Mr. Holden pointed out that that is grounds for denying the certificate.

Deputy City Manager Hayden pointed out that there is a 30 day waiting period before any demolition can happen.

Mr. Almeida stated that there was a need for a denial process that was completely separate from the process for a new building because that can often cloud the decision as to whether a building should be taken down.

Vice Chairman Katz pointed out that on the first page of Article X of the ordinance, section C, it does a good job of helping with judging a site.

Mr. Taintor pointed out that the last sentence of that section gave the Commission review over demolitions. Deputy City Manager Hayden said it would helpful to take a look at other town ordinances, particularly Salem, MA to see how they handle demolitions.

Mr. Taintor encouraged the Commission to begin discussions on how Article X could be enhanced. He said that the a series of work sessions would be scheduled to review the ordinance changes.

Chairman Dika asked what the Commission should do next. Deputy City Manager Hayden suggested that the Commission get together a few more times in two hour blocks and work through some of the ideas suggested this evening.

The Commission set the date of Wednesday, February 20 to meet to work on possible modifications to Article X. Mr. Taintor recommended looking at the overall frame work of the Article and then work out the details at a later date. He suggested looking at the process and how it works or doesn't work.

Chairman Dika called for a ten minute recess prior to the start of the regular meeting.

Chairman Dika called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

I. OLD BUSINESS

A. Approval of minutes - December 19, 2007

It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to approve the minutes as presented.

Approval of minutes - January 2, 2008

It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to approve the minutes as presented.

B. Petition of **Peter B. Schwab, owner**, for property located at **270-272 South Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace windows, siding, and trim at 270 South Street and remove door, reconfigure window, and add windows at 272 South Street) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is

shown on Assessor Plan 111 as Lot 6 and lies within the Single Residence B and Historic A Districts. *(This item was postponed at the January 2, 2008 meeting.)*

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Mr. Chris Redmond, architect for the project, and David Shipulski, contractor for the project were present to speak to the application.

Mr. Redmond explained that this was his second appearance before the Commission and he expressed his appreciation for all of their comments at the last meeting. He indicated that he had talked with Mr. Holden and Mr. Clum at length about the project and felt comfortable in moving forward with another public hearing. He reminded the Commission that they expressed concern with the windows for the 270 South Street structure and so they brought a mock up of the window for them to review.

Chairman Dika stated that if there was too much discussion on details she would suggest that they move into a work session.

Mr. Redmond explained that with old construction, they typically put the windows against the framing and not against the sheathing. He said that he was proposing to put the sheathing on and put the window casing right against it. There are three pieces of trim that are existing and they are proposing to duplicate that in the same way. Mr. Redmond explained in detail how that would be accomplished.

Vice Chairman Katz asked if the clapboards would be cedar. Mr. Redmond replied yes. Vice Chairman Katz suggested using plywood rather than rigid foam in the reconstruction of the look of the windows but he wondered what the other Commissioners thought. Ms. Kozak said that she would not be concerned with the use of rigid foam. Mr. Wyckoff favored the plywood.

Mr. Wyckoff commented that the look they were going for was good. He felt if they were comfortable with the plywood, it was acceptable to him.

Mr. Almeida stated that he appreciated the look they were trying to achieve. He said that he suspected that the existing conditions were due to the fact that there was probably a wooden storm window there years ago and it would have been the thickness of the piece of trim in question. He wondered if they need to put the second piece of trim on at all. Mr. Redmond said that they would prefer not to.

Mr. Almeida pointed out that because they were using Andersen Woodright windows, the jams of the window unit project way out beyond the face of the trim. He wondered if there was a way to recess it a bit. Mr. Shipulski replied that they could do that.

Vice Chairman Katz asked if they would replicate the thick sill. Mr. Shipulski replied yes.

Chairman Dika asked if there were any questions concerning the 272 South Street project. Mr. Almeida stated that he did not recall any issues with that portion of the application.

Mr. Wyckoff asked why the applicant chose the 2 over 2 window pattern. Mr. Redmond replied that they wanted to match what is there today. Chairman Dika asked if the Commission would prefer to see 6 over 6 windows. Mr. Wyckoff said that he would vote against the application because of the 2 over 2 window pattern choice. He felt they were matching replacement windows that were put in in 1900. Chairman Dika asked if the house was built in 1760. Mr. Redmond replied yes.

Mr. Redmond said that he spoke to the owner about the window configurations and the owner felt that the 2 over 2 window configuration was consist with what was in the neighborhood. He added that the owner said that he prefers the look of it as it is today.

Mr. Almeida felt he could be convinced if the windows would truly look like they do today. He clarified that the windows would be wood with aluminum cladding and with a dark green sash.

Vice Chairman Katz said that if the owner wants to choose the period when these window were replaced which was the turn of the century, he did not have a problem with it. He added that he was not looking for a museum restoration and if it has looked that way for 100 years that was enough reason for it to continue the approach, particularly if the owner has a real inclination to it.

Mr. Almeida said that he agreed with Vice Chairman Katz to the extent that the proposed window was a nice looking window and the applicant was matching the details.

Mr. Wyckoff pointed out that the windows are projecting out and if the window is recessed into the house more they won't be able to trim out the inside of the window because it will project beyond the wall surface.

Chairman Dika asked if there were any more questions for the applicant. Hearing none, she asked if anyone from the public wished to speak to, for, or against the application. Seeing no one rise, she declared the public hearing closed and awaited a motion.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Vice Chairman Katz made a motion to grant a certificate of appropriateness for the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Maltese.

Vice Chairman Katz stated that the applicant seems to be committed to doing a good job in integrating the new windows into the structure. He said that he approved of the methods they plan to employ and hope that the results will be as they have seen this evening.

Mr. Wyckoff stated that these are replacement windows and hopefully they should last 30 or 40 years, however he did not feel that the 2 over 2 window style was appropriate. He said that this is a 1750 house in the Historic District and he believed that a 6 over 6 configuration is called for. He added that he was taken aback by some Commission members feeling the 2 over 2 style was appropriate. He said that he would not support the motion.

Chairman Dika stated that she agreed with Mr. Wyckoff.

Hearing no other discussion, Chairman Dika called for a roll call vote. The motion to grant a certificate of appropriateness for the application as presented failed by a vote of 3 - 4 with Mr. Wyckoff, Ms. Kozak, Mr. Almeida, and Chairman Dika voting in opposition.

II. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Petition of **National Society of Colonial Dames, owner**, for property located at **154 Market Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (construct retaining wall and 8' X 37' lean-to addition onto existing coach house) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 118 as Lot 8 and lies within the Central Business B, Historic A, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

Mr. Almeida stated that he would be recusing himself from the discussion and vote. Chairman Dika informed Mr. Melchior that he would be voting in Mr. Almeida's place.

Chairman Dika explained that the following application came before the Commission as a work session in September 2006. It was noted that three Commissioners were present at that work session.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Mr. Paul Kendrick, architect for the project was present to speak to the application. He explained that the existing coach house has some structural problems that they would like to resolve. He brought a model to help explain the project.

Mr. Kendrick explained that over the years on the south and east elevations, the continual shifting of the grading has put pressure on the wall and it has created rot and structural deterioration of the frame work. Some years ago, the frame work was cut away and a brick wall was built as a base. He said that the brick wall is sitting on a stone rubble foundation. They now have a case where one area is bowing in and as a result, the building is in a slow state of failure. He said that they would like to correct that problem as well as restore the building with wood framing. The proposal was to create a retaining wall eight feet out from the building. That would stabilize the soil, allow them to remove the brick and stone work, lift the building up, and put it on a new structurally secure foundation faced with stone so that it looks historic and then replace the timber frame, the wood sheathing, and the clapboards.

Mr. Kendrick continued by saying that within the eight foot separation between the coach house wall and the retaining wall, they are proposing to drop in a shed roof projection that would cover some storage space and also cover over a trench that will divert water away from the building. He explained that that will allow the structure to look like its original form when one walk into the space. It will provide storage space for tables on the first floor, garden equipment in the rear, and archival storage in the attic space. He added that the materials to be used will match the existing and they will be re-roofing the existing coach house and addition in wood shingles. Mr. Kendrick said that there would be one new door that would match the existing plank doors.

Chairman Dika asked if there were any questions for the applicant.

Ms. Maltese asked if the Moffatt Ladd house was overseen by the same historic preservation office. Ms. Barbara Ward, director and curator of the Moffatt Ladd house said that she had a letter stating that they were complying with all requirements. She gave the letter to Chairman Dika to be placed on file.

Ms. Kozak asked if the distinctive holes in the attic area on the side of the building would be retained. Ms. Ward replied yes. She explained that holes were for pigeons. Alexander Hamilton Ladd, who lived in the house until 1800, left a diary where he mentioned collecting the eggs from the "squabs". Ms. Ward said that later on the roosts were taken out, but a few roosts still exist. The holes have since been covered over with Plexiglas to keep out the weather. Ms. Kozak said that she was glad that they were retaining them.

Mr. Wyckoff wondered why no window was considered on the front of the shed addition. Mr. Kendrick replied that they wanted on initially but as the program changed, they developed a use for the upper area as archival storage and they did not want any penetrations there.

Mr. Wyckoff asked about the two different roof pitches. Mr. Kendrick replied that they were trying to maintain the cornice across the back side.

Mr. Kendrick explained to the Commission why there was such a delay in coming forward with a public hearing. He said that they wanted to get a reading from the Commission at the work session to see if the project was acceptable before they sought funding.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION

Mr. Arron Sturgis, who has been working on the Moffatt Ladd house since 1997 said that each year they do a little bit more to preserve the building. He explained that it has been a combination of efforts and he was looking forward to recreating parts of the building that have been missing for a long time. He added that they would be doing in kind work and addressing age old drainage issues.

Mr. Kendrick pointed out that if the Moffatt Ladd house board wishes at some point to take a bigger approach, all of the work can be easily removed and the building can be returned to its stand alone configuration.

Mr. Joseph Almeida of 33 Blossom Street asked if the roofing material would match the existing shakes. Mr. Kendrick replied yes.

Chairman Dika asked if anyone else wished to speak. Seeing no one rise, she declared the public hearing closed and awaited a motion.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Ms. Maltese made a motion to grant a certificate of appropriateness for the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wyckoff. Chairman Dika asked for discussion.

Ms. Maltese stated that she was very please with the application. She said that she was not on the Commission when it was first presented. She felt that the work would be held to the highest preservation standards in the country.

Chairman Dika said that it has been an exceptional project from the beginning to the end with outstanding people working on it.

Hearing no more discussion, Chairman Dika called for the vote. The motion to grant a certificate of appropriateness for the application as presented passed by a unanimous (7-0) vote.

2. Petition of **Helen S. Brosseau Revocable Trust 2000, owner**, for property located at **191 State Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace fixed glass opening with French doors and sidelights) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 107 as Lot 40 and lies within the Central Business B, Historic A, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Mr. Dana Dowling, contractor for the project, was present to speak to the application. He passed out additional information regarding the fixed grills for the doors. He added that a sample was available at Harvey Industries.

Mr. Dowling explained that they would like to remove the fixed glass that is currently placed into the masonry opening with a smooth fiberglass door, full view with 15 lights. He said that

the sidelights had raised panels. He added that the door would have a smooth finish and would be painted to look like an old wooden door.

Mr. Wyckoff asked if the arched opening was original to the building. Mr. Dowling said yes. He indicated that the arch and the brick connected an alley at one time and was said to be part of the Underground Railroad.

Ms. Kozak asked if he would be wrapping the edges of the masonry opening. Mr. Dowling explained that all of the work would be contained within the masonry opening and that none of the existing brick would be covered. He added that the trim would be glued directly onto the glass both inside and outside. He added that currently the glass is set into the masonry itself and mortar and caulking hold the glass within the bricks.

Vice Chairman Katz asked if all of the wood trim was recessed from the face of the brick. Mr. Dowling replied yes, about an inch or so.

Chairman Dika asked if there were any more questions for the applicant. Hearing none, she asked if anyone from the public wished to speak to, for, or against the application. Seeing no one rise, she declared the public hearing closed and awaited a motion.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Ms. Maltese made a motion to grant a certificate of appropriateness for the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Katz.

Vice Chairman Katz stated that the application was an aesthetic improvement over the existing situation. He said that the project involved interesting problems but he felt they could be resolved and he was looking forward to the finished product.

Hearing no more discussion, Chairman Dika called for the vote. The motion to grant a certificate of appropriateness for the application as presented passed by a unanimous (7-0) vote.

III. WORK SESSIONS

A. Work session requested by **Oleg Y. Kompasov and Hilary G. O’Neil, owners**, for property located at **97 South Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (construct addition to rear of house). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 102 as Lot 45 and lies within the General Residence B and Historic A Districts.

Mr. Oleg Kompasov and Ms. Hilary O’Neil, owners of the property, and Mr. Iain Moodie, contractor for the project were present to speak to the application.

Mr. Moodie stated that the original plans have already been before the Board of Adjustment. During that process, they discovered that the window arrangements needed to be changed. He explained that they would like to keep the original structure intact with no intrusion into the timber framing and expand the two upstairs bedrooms and add an entryway on the first floor.

Ms. Maltese noted that there were three options presented and she asked the owner which one they preferred. The owners indicated that they preferred option B. Ms. Maltese felt that would be a good place to start.

Mr. Almeida pointed out to the Commissioners that the proposed addition would not be seen from the street.

Mr. Almeida stated that the Commission normally does not like to see windows mulled together but he felt that this was a situation where it could be done. He asked if the two casings that were butting up to each other could be replaced with a single width casing. Ms. Maltese was in agreement. Mr. Wyckoff thought that the casings were out of proportion. Chairman Dika said that she did not object to their being mulled together. Ms. Kozak said that since the addition cannot be seen from a public way she felt they could be flexible with it. She added that she agreed with Mr. Almeida.

Mr. Wyckoff stated that he felt the windows were very small. He said that they were not a typical size. Mr. Moodie replied that they would like them to be larger but they are matching the existing windows. Mr. Wyckoff said that he would not have a problem with going with a larger size window. Mr. Almeida pointed out that the house was not a typical size house. It has a very unique scale. Ms. Maltese commented that she would be comfortable with larger windows to show that this is a new section of the house.

Vice Chairman Katz asked if the addition would be at the same plane as the original gable ends on both sides. Mr. Moodie replied yes. Vice Chairman Katz asked if the original rake and corner board will be applied to the addition as well. Mr. Moodie replied yes.

Mr. Wyckoff asked if the roofs would be retained. Mr. Moodie replied yes, the shingles would be removed by the sheathing would remain. Mr. Wyckoff asked what type of foundations the two shed additions have now. Mr. Moodie responded that they had fieldstone foundations that were in very good condition.

Ms. Kozak asked why they chose the angle of the roof pitch for the addition. Mr. Kompasov replied that the angle would provide some storage space. He added that the windows on the north side of the addition would provide some much needed light to that area. Ms. Kozak wondered if the roof pitch of the addition should relate more to the original roof. Mr. Moodie said that they could match the original gable pitch. Mr. Wyckoff agreed with Ms. Kozak.

Mr. Wyckoff asked about the door. Ms. O'Neil explained that there was a center door that has a permanent grill with French windows on the side that open up, eliminating the need for a screen door.

Mr. Wyckoff suggested that there be some relationship with the vertical elements of the addition especially the window located above the door. Mr. Melchior asked why it was critical to have the windows line up. He felt it sounded like aesthetic judgment. Vice Chairman Katz agreed. Mr. Wyckoff stated that it has historic precedence - that the widths of the windows on the second floor match the widths of the windows on the first floor and that their heights may change on a colonial home. Ms. Maltese said that the center line is an issue for her. Chairman Dika agreed that the center line was important. Mr. Moodie said that he understood their concerns and would make it work.

Mr. Moodie wanted to discuss the roof pitch of the new addition one more time. Mr. Wyckoff said that the pitch on the new addition, coming off of the ridge seemed an appropriate angle. Mr. Moodie replied that he could match that.

Vice Chairman Katz asked why they were proposing a dormer in the first place. Mr. Moodie said that he did not want the structure to look like a box. Mr. Almeida stated that he thought that the dormer added to the structure and it directed water away from the door. Ms. O'Neil stated

that inside, the dormer area would serve as a little office at the top of the stairs. Vice Chairman Katz said that that made perfect sense.

Chairman Dika asked if there was any more discussion. Hearing none, she stated that they would see the applicants for a public hearing in March.

Vice Chairman Katz commented on the nice job the applicants did with the presentation materials.

In other business, Mr. Holden asked if the Commission would be willing to hear the 270-272 South Street application at their next meeting, February 20, 2008. He pointed out that the applicant was willing to accommodate the Commission's requests and thought that a work session would be called for to work out any disagreements. Mr. Holden explained that the next public hearing would be scheduled as a work session/public hearing and would be re-advertised and abutters notified. The Commission was agreeable to hearing that application at the February 20, 2008 meeting.

Chairman Dika commented that there was a letter to the editor recently, written by David Ewing, talking about the fake brick walkways. She wondered why the Historic District Commission did not have purview over that. Mr. Holden explained that their purview is what the zoning ordinance gives them which is everything outside of the public right-of-way. Sidewalks are in the public right-of-way so they are the responsibility of the City Council.

Councilor Spear stated that he asked Steve Parkinson, Public Works Director about the bricks that were used and he said that they held up just as well as anything else. Mr. Almeida pointed out that the cross walks are already falling apart and it hasn't even been a year yet. He explained that it is basically a bituminous pavement and it will crack like a street will. Mr. Holden reminded the Commission that they lack the authority to deal with any of it.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:40 p.m., it was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Good
HDC Recording Secretary

These minutes were approved at the Historic District Commission meeting on March 5, 2008.