

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

CONFERENCE ROOM "B"

7:00 p.m.

January 7, 2009

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Sandra Dika; Vice Chairman Richard Katz; Members John Wyckoff, Tracy Kozak, Alternates Joseph Almeida, George Melchior

MEMBERS EXCUSED: City Council Representative Eric Spear; Planning Board Representative Paige Roberts; Elena Maltese

ALSO PRESENT: Roger Clum, Assistant Building Inspector

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I. OLD BUSINESS

A. Approval of minutes – December 3, 2008

It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously (6-0) to approve the minutes as presented.

B. Petition of **Christine A. Davidson Trust, owner, Christine A. Davidson, Trustee, and David White, applicant**, for property located at **127 New Castle Avenue**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (construct second story dormers on left and right side elevations, construct deck on right side elevation) and allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace three windows on right side elevation with French doors, replace window with door on left side elevation, reconfigure and add windows on rear elevation) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 101 as Lot 54 and lies within the General Residence B and Historic A Districts. *(This item was tabled at the December 10, 2008 meeting to a Work Session/Public Hearing at the January 7, 2009 meeting.)*

Chairman Dika invited the applicants to come forward for a work session.

- Mr. David White and Mrs. Kristin White were present to speak to the application. Mr. White said that he understood The Commission's confusion at last month's meeting concerning their project. He said that he put together a package to help guide the discussion and pointed out that everything in the packet was in the application. He also informed the Commission that they were not using the same builder anymore.
- Mr. White stated there would be five replacement windows on the front elevation, four on the bay side elevation, and four on the driveway side elevation. He said they would be double sash wood windows with aluminum cladding, simulated divided light and permanent affixed exterior grills. He said their size would match the existing windows.
- Mr. Wyckoff asked if they were planning to replace the attic windows. Mr. White explained that the original proposal did not show the replacement of the attic windows

but he thought it was an oversight on the builder's part. He said he would like to replace them but he did not know how much flexibility the Commission had concerning that.

- Mr. White explained that using a window kit was their first option. Their second choice would be a sash and jamb replacement. Mr. Wyckoff stated that the Commission would favor the first choice.
- Ms. Kozak asked what the width of the grills would be. Mr. White answered that they would be 7/8" in width. Mr. Almeida asked if there would be a spacer bar. Mr. White said that they were not proposing the spacer bar but if the Commission felt it was an important feature, he was willing to add it. The Commission felt it was.
- On the driveway side of the house, they were proposing to remove the existing entry structure and replace it with a new door with sidelights. The sidelights would match the sidelights on the front of the house. Mr. Almeida asked for clarification as to the number of lights on the sidelights. Ms. White said that the front sidelights had four lights.
- On the bay side elevation, they were proposing to replace the triple double hung windows with French doors and sidelights. They would also like to construct a new mahogany deck with mahogany railings. A new roof would be installed, as would new fascia board, shadow trim, and frieze board. Ms. Kozak pointed out that the roof work has been done already and noted that the completed work has raised the height by a couple of feet.
- Mr. White informed the Commission that they could not afford to do the dormers now as the budget did not allow it. Ms. White gave the Commission drawings of the project without the dormers for the record.
- Mr. Almeida asked if the intent was to match the existing casings around the new windows and doors. Mr. White replied yes.
- Mr. White explained that the chimney would now remain and would be repaired.
- Mr. White said that the renovations to the rear of the house were to remove an existing kitchen window and add two double hung windows side by side in its place.

At this point in the work session, Vice Chairman Katz made a motion to move into the public hearing segment of the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wyckoff. The motion passed by a unanimous (6-0) vote.

Chairman Dika 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

Mr. Wyckoff made a motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness with the following amendments:

- 1) That the dormers are removed from the application.
- 2) That the proposed windows will have spacer bars.
- 3) That the window and door trim will match the existing trim.
- 4) That this approval applies to the replacement of the attic windows as well.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Almeida. Chairman Dika asked for discussion.

Mr. Wyckoff felt that the proposal was appropriate and that the new windows, the clapboarding, trim, and decking would be a fine addition to the neighborhood.

Hearing no other discussion, Chairman Dika called for the vote. The motion passed by a unanimous (6-0) vote.

II. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Petition of **Paul and Mille Nakrosis, owners**, and **Mike Brandzel, applicant**, for property located at **39 Dearborn Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow relocation of an existing structure. **Administratively Withdrawn** the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 140 as Lot 3 and lies within the General Residence A and Historic A Districts.

2. Petition of **BNG Properties, Inc., owner**, for property located at **14 Market Square**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace windows) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 107 as Lot 29 and lies within Central Business B, Historic A, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Mr. Matt Govoni, owner of the property was present to speak to the application. He said that he would like to replace his existing windows with Marvin two over two aluminum clad windows. Concerning the bays in the Daniel Street side of the building, the larger middle window would be a two over two and the two smaller windows flanking the larger one would be one over one.

Mr. Wyckoff asked Mr. Govoni why he was proposing the two over two window pattern. Mr. Govoni said that the most obvious reason was cost. He pointed out that there are a lot of windows in the building and he thought the six over six pattern would appear too busy.

Mr. Wyckoff said that he has seen pictures of Market Square, taken sometime around 1860 and the building had six over six windows just as most of the buildings in the Square did. He would like to see it brought back. Chairman Dika stated that she would like to see six over six also but she was not sure they could enforce their view. Mr. Almeida said that it was a matter of appropriateness and the two over two pattern was appropriate. He added that the storm windows would be removed and that would make a big difference in the appearance of the windows.

Hearing no other discussion, Chairman Dika 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

Mr. Almeida made a motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Melchior. Chairman Dika asked of discussion.

Mr. Almeida stated that the choice of two over two was appropriate for the building. They exist now and once the storm windows are removed, it will be a huge improvement to the look of the building.

Hearing no other discussion, Chairman Dika called for the vote. The motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the application as presented passed by a unanimous (6-0) vote.

3. Petition of **Rebecca L. Burak, owner**, for property located at **33 Northwest Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (renovate barn structure) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 141 as Lot 27 and lies within the General Residence A and Historic A Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Mr. Rob Harbeson of DeStefano Architects was present to speak to the application on behalf of the homeowner. He stated that the project was approved by the HDC in 1999. It was not pursued at the time and the architect for the project has since passed away. He said that they have tried as much as possible to use the previous architect’s drawings but there have been some minor adjustments.

Mr. Harbeson walked the Commissioners through the submitted packet page by page and explained the proposed changes to each elevation. He highlighted the garage doors stating that they would simulate carriage house doors but would not be operable. Mr. Harbeson also pointed out that the vertical line drawn between the two garage doors on the plan was an erroneous line. It would just be a single piece of trim. Also, at the eaves, the horizontal line that is shown returning to the corner boards was also erroneous and would not be there.

Mr. Harbeson explained that the windows would be wood divided light windows with most likely a storm panel attached. He said he would be willing to discuss alternatives if the storm panel was a concern.

Mr. Almeida commented that it was a great application. He thought that the building held the distinction of sitting on the highest spot in town. He asked Mr. Harbeson if the storm panel was an energy panel that was affixed to the sash. Mr. Harbeson said that it was placed in front of the sash. Mr. Almeida asked if they had considered using a low E panel. Mr. Harbeson said that he was not very familiar with them. He added that part of the reason for wanting the storm panel was to add protection to the wood windows. Mr. Almeida pointed out that the main house had storm windows on it.

Mr. Wyckoff stated that he did not think the storm panels were appropriate and pointed out that when you put the storm panel over the exterior muntins, you lose the muntins.

Mr. Harbeson said that part of the reason for proposing the storm panel was cost. Another reason was that this was what was proposed in the previous application. He added that he was willing to propose a vinyl Andersen window with simulated divided lights as an alternative.

Ms. Kozak pointed out that what the applicant was proposing was a true divided light window. Mr. Almeida added that it was the closest replication to what is there now.

Vice Chairman Katz asked if the energy panel was a seasonal thing and if so, would they be removed. Mr. Wyckoff said that they were removable but would probably not be removed.

Mr. Almeida stated that there was not a piece of vinyl on the property and to add vinyl clad windows would be a shame. Ms. Kozak thought that any of the options would be appropriate. Mr. Melchior and Vice Chairman Katz said they supported the energy panel. Mr. Harbeson stated that that was the applicant's preference.

Mr. Wyckoff suggested that the board running across the top of the garage be a wider and thicker board with a roof cap on it. Mr. Harbeson said he would be happy to make it wider. Mr. Wyckoff suggested a 5/4" x 8" board. Mr. Harbeson said he would like to amend the application to include those specifications.

Mr. Harbeson stated that he would like to propose that the corner boards be 5/4" x 6" and the casings around the garage doors be "one by" in depth.

Hearing no other questions, Chairman Dika 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. Kozak made a motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the application with the following amendments:

- 1) That the top board running across the front of the garage is 5/4" x 8" in size and includes a cap.
- 2) That the corner boards are 5/4" x 6" in size.
- 3) That the casings around the garage door will be a "one by".

The motion was seconded by Mr. Almeida. Chairman Dika asked for discussion.

Ms. Kozak felt it was a great project. It was an old building that they would not want to lose. She felt it met the spirit of the original structure and the surroundings.

Hearing no other discussion, Chairman Dika called for the vote. The motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the application with the following amendment passed by a unanimous (6-0) vote:

- 1) That the top board running across the front of the garage is 5/4" x 8" in size and includes a cap.
- 2) That the corner boards are 5/4" x 6" in size.
- 3) That the casings around the garage door will be a "one by".

4. Petition of **LBJ Properties, LLC, owner**, for property located at **22 Market Square**, wherein permission was requested to allow a new free standing structure (add roof top HVAC unit and guardrails) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 107 as Lot 30 and lies within the Central Business B, Historic A, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

Chairman Dika stated that she would be recusing herself from the discussion and vote. Vice Chairman Katz conducted the public hearing.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Ms. Arilda Densch of McHenry Architecture was present to speak to the application on behalf of the owner. She explained she was seeking approval for another roof top HVAC unit with guardrails. She said that the guardrails were a code requirement. She reminded the Commission that she was before them last month for another HVAC unit. At the time, the mechanical drawings were underway but they were not complete and they had been working under the assumption that an existing unit would be able to be replaced with a unit of the same size. As it turned out, they needed a larger unit.

Ms. Densch walked the Commission through the submitted plans. She pointed out that the guardrails would be painted black as to be as obscure as possible.

Mr. Almeida asked about some windows on an abutting property. He asked if the HVAC unit would be going up within a couple feet of those windows. Ms. Densch replied yes and explained that those windows looked into an air shaft. It was a light well and also housed mechanical duct work.

Mr. Clum informed the Commission that the mechanical code requires a guardrail for HVAC units that are located 15 feet or less from the roof edge for the safety of the mechanical contractors servicing it.

Mr. Almeida asked for the maximum height of the unit. Ms. Densch said that the unit was 69" high with a curb of about 8". Ms. Densch said that the maximum height would not exceed 77". Mr. Almeida asked if they had considered pulling it away from the abutting window. Ms. Densch replied yes, they did consider other locations but they were not suitable.

Hearing no other questions, Vice Chairman Katz 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. Kozak made a motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Melchior. The motion passed by a 4-1 vote with Mr. Almeida voting in opposition.

5. Petition of **Touati and Barnes, LLC, owner,** and **Ron Zolla, applicant,** for property located at **198 Islington Street,** wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace windows, reconfigure windows, add dormers, replace siding and trim, replace roof, and remove stairs) and allow new construction to an existing structure (add three story residential addition with parking at grade level) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 137 as Lot 20 and lies within the Central Business B and Historic A Districts.

Chairman Dika informed the public that the Commission has had several work sessions with the applicant.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Ms. Carla Goodknight of CJ Architects and Mr. Robert Dockham of Dockham Builders were present to speak to the application. Ms. Goodknight explained that the proposal was to renovate the existing building on the site as well as to construct a multi level structure with grade level parking and three floors of living space with a roof top deck.

Ms. Goodknight gave the Commission additional 3D views. She pointed out that some of the views would never be seen but the views helped to showcase the volume of the structure.

In the previous work session, Ms. Goodknight explained that they had removed the chimney to make room for mechanical equipment. She said that the equipment would be located in the basement of the old house so the chimney will remain.

Ms. Goodknight stated that the connector piece was a real challenge. She said that they reworked the exit corridor and reconfigured some windows so that a dormer could be added. She also pointed out that they illustrated the roof top access in the 3D images to show where the back stairs punched through. Ms. Kozak asked if there was a roof plan. Ms. Goodknight passed a copy of the roof plan around.

Mr. Wyckoff commented that he found the new connector design more pleasing than the old design.

Mr. Almeida asked Ms. Goodknight if she had considered a solid fill in the gable areas of the dormers. Mr. Wyckoff pointed out that it would look less busy. Ms. Goodknight stated that she would be willing to make that change.

Ms. Goodknight showed the Commission some sample materials. She showed them the brick sample and explained that it was called Old Port. She said that the siding would be masonite board. Mr. Dockham showed the Commission a sample of the railing assembly. Mr. Clum pointed out that the railing height needed to be 42” high.

Mr. Almeida asked about the grout color. Chairman Dika suggested that someone from the Commission be assigned to review the grout on site. Mr. Almeida was assigned the task.

Ms. Goodknight told the Commission that she was proposing to use aluminum clad Lepage windows.

Mr. Almeida asked if the hardiplank siding would have a flat surface. Ms. Goodknight replied yes.

Mr. Almeida asked what the cap material would be on the brick planters. Ms. Goodknight said that it would be a limestone cap. Ms. Kozak noticed the trim did not wrap the corner at the garages on the Islington Street elevation. Ms. Goodknight said they would be using flush brick and would not need a cap. Ms. Kozak stated that she had trouble with that. Mr. Wyckoff agreed with Ms. Kozak. He said the addition of an imitation water table at that location would be appropriate. Ms. Goodknight said that she would be able to accommodate that request.

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

Mr. Wyckoff made a motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the application with the following amendments:

- 1) That than additional dormer and an additional second story window is added to the connector section on the entrance elevation.
- 2) That a solid surface is used in all of the gable areas of the dormers.
- 3) That the brick that wraps the corners at the garage doors has a water table on top of it.
- 4) That a brick and mortar sample is viewed on site for final approval.

The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Katz. Chairman Dika asked for discussion.

Mr. Wyckoff stated that they have reviewed this project for quite a while. He said that he was glad that the colonial structure was being saved. He felt the addition fit in with the other structures in the vicinity. He added that it was a good project.

Vice Chairman Katz added that he hoped this particular project would inspire others to make changes to Islington Street in a like fashion.

Hearing no other discussion, Chairman Dika called for the vote. The motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the application as presented with the following amendments passed by a unanimous (6-0) vote:

- 1) That than additional dormer and an additional second story window is added to

- the connector section on the entrance elevation.
- 2) That a solid surface is used in all of the gable areas of the dormers.
 - 3) That the brick that wraps the corners at the garage doors has a water table on top of it.
 - 4) That a brick and mortar sample is viewed on site for final approval.

III. WORK SESSIONS

A. Work Session requested by **Blue Star Properties, LLC, owner, and Bungalow Development Group, applicant**, for property located at **233 Vaughan Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow demolition of an existing structure (demolish existing building) and allow a new free standing structure (construct multi-story, mixed use building). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 124 as Lot 14 and lies within the Central Business A, Historic A, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

- Ms. Carla Goodknight was present to speak to the application. She reminded the Commission that they had seen this project a few months back. She had additional 3D images and several views for them to review.
- Page 2 showed the existing site plan. Page 3 showed the proposed structure with on grade parking on the Vaughan Street elevation. It also showed a location for outdoor dining on the Green Street elevation. The underground parking entrance was located on the far right side of the Green Street elevation.
- Page 4 was a rendering which showed the raised landscaping wall that would elevate the dining terrace. Ms. Goodknight said that they were proposing a lighter masonry material on the lower level with brick work above. The windows would be punched openings. The additional material on the upper level would be a metal siding material. Ms. Goodknight added that they were also proposing a roof top garden and the tower provided access to it.
- Chairman Dika asked the Commission what their reaction was to the project. Mr. Wyckoff thought the massing was fine and added that it was an ambitious project.
- Vice Chairman Katz commented that the area was undeveloped and so they cannot look to the surroundings as to how this building fits in. He said they would have to take a subjective approach to the project.
- Ms. Goodknight explained that the tower was the main entrance to the building. The vertical circulation to the roof was contained in it. She said that since it was the primary point of entry she was looking for a way to elevate its importance.
- Vice Chairman Katz stated that he was impressed by the importance of the mechanical aspects but he felt the tower made too much of a statement. He added that the rest of the building was just right.
- Chairman Dika commented that it was an interesting building. It had an industrial feel to it and was close to the waterfront. She said that she understood what Vice Chairman Katz was saying but said she did not share that concern. She did however; feel the tower was a bit awkward.
- Mr. Melchior stated that he did not think the tower was bold enough. He thought it was an opportunity to give it more of a contemporary identity. Chairman Dika agreed.

- Ms. Kozak said that the massing was fun as there was a great play of shadow, mass, and setbacks. She found the forms very intriguing and added that the detailing could pull it all together. She discussed in detail how the detailing could be more tailored to the two building methods. Vice Chairman Katz stated that Ms. Kozak had addressed his concerns with the tower. He added that nothing was a deal breaker for him and that he was 95% in favor of the proposal.
- Mr. Almeida said that he was just as excited about the project as he was when it was first presented. He felt the massing was right on and was perfect for the site. He pointed out that the pedestrian experience in the area has to be in the forefront.
- Mr. Almeida asked if the tower would be a storefront system. Ms. Goodknight said she would like to build it with more conventional construction methods with an unconventional result. Mr. Almeida commented that he hoped they would think early on how the mechanical systems will affect the elevations. Ms. Goodknight said that they were envisioning most of the mechanical systems coming up through the central core.
- Ms. Goodknight told the Commission that the first floor would be restaurant and retail space, the second and third floors would contain office space, and the top floor would have condominiums with a roof top deck.
- Mr. Almeida stated that it was not too early to be thinking about signage and lighting on the building.
- Mr. Melchior commented that he would like to see more glazing on the first level to differentiate that level from the other levels.
- Ms. Goodknight told the Commissioners that they would be looking into windows that open up and fold back for an open air restaurant experience.
- Mr. Wyckoff stated that he did not think the tower went far enough. He thought it should stand proud. He suggested making it taller. Chairman Dika agreed. Ms. Goodknight explained that they were already at the maximum height.
- Vice Chairman Katz ended the work session by stating that in concept, he did not see anything that would keep him from voting for the project. He felt the applicant was definitely heading in the right direction and was enthusiastic about it.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

At 9:00 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 February 4, 2009.