

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

CONFERENCE ROOM "A"

7:00 p.m.

February 9, 2011

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Sandra Dika; Members John Wyckoff, Tracy Kozak, Elena (Maltese) Whittaker; Planning Board Representative William Gladhill; Alternate Joseph Almeida

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Vice Chairman Richard Katz; City Council Representative Anthony Coviello; Alternate George Melchior

ALSO PRESENT: Lee Jay Feldman, Principal Planner

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I. OLD BUSINESS

A. Approval of minutes – December 8, 2010

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

Approval of minutes – January 5, 2011

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

B. Petition of **Worth Condominium Association, owner, and Friends of the Music Hall, applicant**, for property located at **131 Congress Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (install back lit signage) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. **Withdrawn** 26 as Lot 6-101 and lies within the Central Business B, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts. *(This item was postponed at the January 5, 2011 meeting to the February 2, 2011 meeting.)*

At the applicant's request, the petition was withdrawn from consideration at this time.

C. Petition of **Islington Street Condominium Association, owner**, for property located at **239 Islington Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (construct shed roof structures over six entryways) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 138 as Lot 45 and lies within Central Business B and Historic Districts. *(This item was postponed at the January 5, 2011 meeting to the February 2, 2011 meeting for a work session/public hearing.)*

WORK SESSION

- Mr. Ross Kramer, president of the condominium association and Mr. David Calkins, of Alternative Solutions, Inc. were present to speak to the project.
- Mr. Calkins stated that they were before the Commission last month to seek permission for six shed roofs. He said that a more cohesive design with more details was requested. He showed the Commission a photo of a shed roof currently on a building in Strawberry Banke that they would like to duplicate on their building. Mr. Calkins gave the Commission detailed drawings and explained that the proposed awnings have been scaled back to accommodate the design element. The awning would now be 56 inches wide with a projection of 46 inches. The rise would be two feet. There was detailed discussion regarding this new proposal.
- Ms. Whittaker asked if there was any discussion concerning aesthetics and materials at the last meeting. Mr. Kramer commented that this was not an historic building but he recalled discussion about bringing something back to the Commission that was aesthetically pleasing. He felt the new design was contemporary, functional, and would blend with what was up the street and next door. He thought it worked very well with the building. He added that the association was on board with the proposed design.
- Mr. Calkins asked Ms. Whittaker what other materials would be acceptable without using metal. Ms. Whittaker said she was just trying to understand what they were trying to achieve. Mr. Kramer pointed out that the material on the building besides the commercial grade windows would be wood.
- Ms. Whittaker asked what the projection of the bay windows was. Mr. Kramer said the awnings would project out about another two feet from the bay windows.
- Chairman Dika asked Mr. Calkins if he had a picture showing the entire expanse of the building with the awnings in place. Ms. Kozak thought that would be helpful to see. She also wondered if it would be better to have one long awning structure between the bay windows. Mr. Kramer pointed out that they had that discussion with the owners and that the result was that the individual awnings were preferred.
- Mr. Calkins wondered if they would need an architect to design the awnings. He explained that the lines on the building were clean and simple and they were just trying to match that. He added that he felt the proposed design had a historic as well as a contemporary look. There was discussion concerning the need for a perspective drawing of the front elevation.
- Ms. Whittaker stated that she could see what the applicant was trying to do and she was willing to move forward with the application. Mr. Gladhill added that a perspective drawing would be nice but he was beginning to see it as well. Mr. Almeida said that he did not need any more drawing but what he was struggling with was the material that was selected. He said that to see wood bolted to the side of the building would look very awkward. He added however, that he could be convinced to go with the design if color was a factor. Mr. Kramer said that he would like to paint the trim color either white or brown.
- Ms. Kozak said that the trick was to get the lumber pieces small enough so that it was in keeping with the sinewy metal pieces of the bay windows and the metal railings. She suggested reducing the height of the fascia board to a 1"x 4" or a 1"x 6".
- Mr. Wyckoff stated that he found the 4"x 4" members very awkward. He felt the brackets were too heavy. He pointed out that they were making a major change on a

major building on Islington Street and so he did not think additional drawings were unreasonable. He did not think the design worked.

- Mr. Kramer commented that they have reduced the width and the length of the roof by 20%. Mr. Wyckoff pointed out that they were still using the 4"x 4" brackets and that was his objection. Mr. Kramer said that the association actually liked the larger brackets.
- Mr. Calkins said that they were stuck between what the homeowner wanted and what the HDC wanted. Chairman Dika explained that the Commission had to decide what was appropriate for the district.
- Ms. Kozak asked if they would be proposing a rain diverter. Mr. Calkins said that there would be no diverter and they would not be replacing the lighting.
- Mr. Almeida mentioned that he shared Mr. Wyckoff's concerns about the oversized members. He felt they would appear massive over the doors. He was concerned with the size of the 4"x 6" beam that supported the rafters. Ms. Kozak asked the applicant if they would consider reducing some of the member sizes. Mr. Wyckoff added that he had a problem with the vertical 4"x 4".
- Ms. Whittaker commented that she thought the focus would not be on the doors but on the bay windows. She felt the windows were the dominate design feature. She added that the awnings would give the doors a more formal front. Ms. Whittaker agreed that the 1"x8" fascia board was not in proportion. She concluded by saying that she would be comfortable with the application if the wood were clad in aluminum or had the appearance of aluminum clad.
- Mr. Almeida asked what the underside of the awning would be. Mr. Calkins said it would be bead board.
- Mr. Kramer emphasized that the goal was to paint all of the existing wood a uniform color that would match the rest of the building. Mr. Almeida said that would make the application successful.
- Mr. Almeida asked if a drip edge would be used. Mr. Calkins said that they would use a bronze color drip edge.

At this point in the meeting, the work session ended and the public hearing commenced.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Mr. Calkins stated that they were seeking approval for six awnings with a projection of 46" and a width of 56" and with the following additional changes:

- 1) That the 4"x 4" vertical members will be reduced in size to 2"x 4".
The 4"x 6" member will be reduced to 4"x 4". The fascia board will be reduced to a 1"x 6".
- 2) That 3/4" painted bead board will be used for the ceiling.
- 3) That a bronze color drip edge will be installed.
- 4) That all wood and Azek trim will be painted to match the color of the existing window trim.

Chairman Dika asked if there were any more questions of 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. Kozak made a motion to grant a Certificate of Approval for the application with the following stipulations:

- 1) That the 4"x 4" vertical members will be reduced in size to 2"x 4".
The 4"x 6" member will be reduced to 4"x 4". The fascia board will be reduced to a 1"x 6".
- 2) That 3/4" painted bead board will be used for the ceiling.
- 3) That a bronze color drip edge will be installed.
- 4) That all wood and Azek trim will be painted to match the color of the existing window trim.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Whittaker. Chairman Dika asked for discussion.

Mr. Wyckoff stated that it was unfortunate that this awkward carpentry based roof was going onto this building. He felt the building had an important position on the street and that a little more thought into its design would be best.

Ms. Kozak said that the awnings would add to the overall effect of the building and help to define the entries. She felt the attention to detail and the adjustments that were talked about could work.

Hearing no other discussion, Chairman Dika called for the vote. The motion to grant a Certificate of Approval for the application with the following stipulations passed by a 4-2 vote with Chairman Dika and Mr. Wyckoff voting in opposition:

- 1) That the 4"x 4" vertical members will be reduced in size to 2"x 4".
The 4"x 6" member will be reduced to 4"x 4". The fascia board will be reduced to a 1"x 6".
- 2) That 3/4" painted bead board will be used for the ceiling.
- 3) That a bronze color drip edge will be installed.
- 4) That all wood and Azek trim will be painted to match the color of the existing window trim.

II. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Petition of **Forum Group, LLC and Blue Star Properties, LLC, owners**, for property located at **67 Bow Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (construct exterior bar enclosure) as per plans on file in the Planning

Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 106 as Lot 53 and lies within Central Business A, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Ms. Anne Whitney, architect for the project and Mr. Bill McGrath, owner of the business at 67 Bow Street were present to speak to the application.

Ms. Whitney explained that new ordinances in the health department require that outdoor bars have enclosures and roofs. She said that this project was an existing bar situation that has been taken apart and has not been rebuilt yet. Once rebuilt, it would basically be the same but with the enclosure and roof added.

Ms. Whitney submitted an aerial view of the property that showed the existing awning.

Ms. Whitney walked the Commission through the submitted plans. She explained that the last five feet of the bar area would be allowed to remain open. She added that the structure would be built within the existing post structure and would have an awning over it. Panels of MDO material and Azek trim would infill the area between the posts. The panels would be hinged from the inside and would be in the up position when the restaurant was open.

Mr. Almeida commented that it was a neat little structure, very interesting. Ms. Whitney replied that it was a challenge.

Chairman Dika asked if there were any more questions of 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. Almeida made a motion to grant a Certificate of Approval for the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Whittaker. Chairman Dika asked for discussion.

Mr. Almeida stated that the application was very clear and was an appropriate structure for its location.

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

2. Petition of **Susan E. Lassen Revocable Living Trust, owner, and Arthur and Mary Anker, applicants**, for property located at **34 Salter Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (construct rear vestibule) and allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (reconfigure misc. windows, replace existing windows, add

French doors) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 102 as Lot 34A and lies within the General Residence B and Historic Districts.

Chairman Dika asked if the property had changed ownership recently. Ms. Anker stated that she was the new owner but that the ownership change had not caught up yet in the City's records.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Mr. Michael Graf, architect for the project and Ms. Mary Anker, owner of the property was present to speak to the application.

Mr. Graf stated that the project was two fold. The first request was to replace all of the windows with a Marvin, aluminum clad window in ebony. The second request was to construct a 5'x 8' rear entry. He said that the reason for the rear entry was to provide protection from rain and snow when entering the house.

Mr. Graf walked the Commission through the submitted plans and highlighted where the change in window configurations and the new French doors were proposed. The windows would be single divided lights with a 5/8" muntin.

Ms. Anker stated that she had photos of the neighbor's homes that were taken from the back of 34 Salter Street showing how all of the houses are adjoined. She also submitted letters of support from various neighbors.

Mr. Wyckoff asked if the proposed windows were replacement or new construction windows. Mr. Graf said that they were new construction windows and explained that they would be taking the trim and sills off but would put them back or replace them in kind.

Ms. Whittaker pointed out that the submission stated that the house was built in 1980. Mr. Graf said the original house was a cape and was built in the 1980's but in 2004 it was converted to a saltbox. Chairman Dika pointed out that the architect who designed it, Mr. McHenry, was present this evening.

Ms. Whittaker asked why two exits were being proposed off the back of the house. Mr. Graf explained that the single door was a mud room entry. The French doors provided a way to open up the kitchen to the exterior.

Mr. Almeida asked for clarification on the sill. Mr. Graf explained in detail how the sill would be constructed.

Chairman Dika asked if there were any more questions of 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. Almeida made a motion to grant a Certificate of Approval for the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Kozak. Chairman Dika asked for discussion.

Mr. Almeida stated that the windows were appropriate and have been approved many times by the Commission. He pointed out that this was not an antique building. He felt the amount of glass was appropriate to enjoy the yard and it did not have a prominent view.

Ms. Whittaker added that if this were an historic structure, she would have a lot more heartburn with the French doors but because it was a reproduction, she thought it was very well done.

Chairman Dika commented that she remembered the house when it was a 1950's cape and she felt the reconstruction to a saltbox was extremely effective and was a nice improvement to the neighborhood.

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

3. Petition of **Unitarian Universalist Church, owner**, for property located at **206 Court Street**, 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 116 as Lot 34 and lies within the Mixed Residential Office and Historic Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Mr. Bill Greenier, contractor for the project was present to speak to the application. He clarified that his plans stated that the project was at 221 Court Street when in fact it was actually 206 Court Street. He also pointed out that he would be proposing a spacer bar with the windows. He explained that they were looking to improve the drafty windows. A similar window was used a number of years ago to replace the church's basement windows.

Ms. Kozak asked if these were the original windows. Mr. Greenier said yes.

Mr. Wyckoff asked if the proposed windows were replacement windows. Mr. Greenier said yes except for the third floor windows in the rear which were casement windows. He said that they would have to take the trim off to install the windows and then put it back on.

Ms. Kozak asked if he had considered re-glazing and weather stripping the windows on the front of the building. She understood that the current windows do not function like they should but a lot could be done by rebuilding the windows. She felt this was a very substantial building in the Historic District and that it would be nice to at least keep some of that history on the front façade. Mr. Greenier said that they were really going for a high efficient window. He appreciated Ms. Kozak's approach but in this case, he thought this was the best solution. He pointed out that the building itself was in really bad shape.

Mr. Wyckoff stated that he went through one of these renovations for retaining the windows on a front façade and it was a nightmare. He said that the homeowners still had to put shrink wrap plastic over them.

Mr. Almeida commented that he appreciated Ms. Kozak's question. He said he has also been involved in restoring windows that was highly successful. He did not think this was the application to make an example of but he thought that at some point the Commission needed to deal with this issue. He felt they needed to pay attention to certain windows in certain buildings.

Chairman Dika suggested that maybe work sessions should be held when a large number of windows are being proposed to be replaced.

Chairman Dika stated that she looked carefully at the windows on the front of the building and noted that they were in very poor condition. She did not think this was the application to draw the line in the sand.

Mr. Gladhill said he was hesitant to vote for the windows and thought the proposal should be looked into a bit more. Ms. Kozak clarified that not everything lasts forever but some things can be replicated.

Mr. Almeida asked if the shutters would remain. Mr. Greenier replied yes. Mr. Almeida thought the operable shutters would make a huge impact on how good the windows will look. Mr. Almeida asked what color the window trim would be. Mr. Greenier thought that a bronze color would be better.

Ms. Whittaker encouraged applicants to research their projects thoroughly because sometimes replicating historic work can be just as cost effective as replacing with different materials. In addition, it would increase the value of the building.

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.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION

Mr. Steve McHenry of McHenry Architecture stated that window replacement was an ongoing issue and so it would be great to have a workshop on window technologies that would give people options.

Ms. Eileen Dugan, who owns a building at 93 Middle Street, stated that she replaced all of the windows in her building and they were draftier than the original windows. How tightly the window fits into a building is a big issue as well.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Mr. Almeida made a motion to grant a Certificate of Approval for the application as presented with the following stipulation:

- 1) That the window trim color will be bronze.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Whittaker. There was no additional discussion.

The motion to grant a Certificate of Approval for the application as presented with the following stipulation passed by a 4-2 vote with Ms. Kozak and Mr. Gladhill voting in opposition:

- 1) That the window trim color will be bronze.

III. WORK SESSIONS

A. Work Session requested by **City of Portsmouth, owner**, for property located on **Marcy Street (Prescott Park)**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (renovate and enlarge existing pavilion structure, consolidate three seasonal structures into one structure). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 104 as Lot 1 and lies within the Municipal and Historic Districts.

- Mr. Steve McHenry of McHenry Architecture, Ms. Lea Aeschliman, chair of the Trustees of the Trust Fund Committee, Eileen Dugan, chair of the Buildings and Grounds Committee for Prescott Park Arts Festival, and Mr. Ben Anderson, Director of Prescott Park Arts Festival were all present to speak to the application.
- Mr. McHenry stated they were here to present changes to the Prescott Park pavilion structure and the support buildings that go along with it. He explained that they wanted to expand the pavilion to increase the size of the kitchen area, the bathroom area and add storage. The footprint would be larger and would require the removal of one tree. The three smaller support buildings would be removed and one new building would take their place.
- Mr. McHenry explained that the overall character of the new pavilion structure was similar to the existing structure. He also said that the existing wharf building was the inspiration for the support building.
- A power point presentation was viewed showing the perspective drawings of the two proposed structures.
- Chairman Dika asked when the original pavilion was built. Mr. McHenry thought it was built around 1978.
- Mr. Almeida asked about the wire mesh structure on the pavilion. Mr. McHenry said it was to deter vandalism. He explained that it would be put into place after hours.
- Mr. McHenry explained the design for the support building. Mr. Almeida commented that there was not an overhang on the building. Mr. McHenry said that it was designed without one. He added that the exact placement of the support structure had not been determined yet. Mr. Almeida asked if any trees would be impacted with this structure. Mr. McHenry replied no and explained that they were trying to keep the structure as compact as possible.
- Ms. Kozak commented that it would be helpful to see a site plan. She also stated that this was a fun and exciting project and she was happy to see that something new was

happening in Prescott Park. This was the heart and soul of Portsmouth. She encouraged the citizens to get involved in this project and have a say in it. She commented that the expansion of the existing pavilion was lovely but her first impression of it was that it looked like Virginia, Monticello in particular. She said that the expanse of verandahs and colonnades was a more mid Atlantic look instead of Portsmouth. She also said that this was an opportunity to do something bolder and more formal. She pointed out that the houses and buildings as well as the gardens around it were more formal.

- Mr. McHenry agreed that colonnade was a little out of character for Portsmouth but they were expanding and enlarging the building greatly and wanted to keep it low and not too imposing on the site. He also pointed out that they will be limited to only putting in a partial foundation because it is a seasonal building. Ms. Dugan added that she did not think the City supported anything other than a seasonal building on the site.
- Mr. Wyckoff said that the colonnade feature already exists on the existing building. He felt the extension was successful. He added that he did not think the support building should stand out. Ms. Duggan commented that during the theatre season, the building will be very lively and lit up. During the off season, it would blend in with its surroundings. Ms. Aeschliman pointed out that they had both the Sheafe and the Shaw warehouses on one side of the lot. She added that the trustees have not reviewed the design of the support building yet.
- Ms. Whittaker asked what the current height was of the tallest outbuilding. Mr. McHenry replied eight feet. Ms. Whittaker asked how tall the proposed support building would be. Mr. McHenry thought it would be 11 ½ feet. Ms. Whittaker added that it would be useful to see a site plan. She hoped that the building would be as minimal as possible.
- Mr. Almeida said that he thought the design was dead on and had no concerns with it. He felt it was accurate to look to the existing warehouse for precedence for the support building. He added that if they came back before the Commission, he would like to see renderings of the buildings in action.
- Mr. Wyckoff commented that he was pleased with the design but he felt they should pay more attention to where people will be standing at the support building. He felt it needed an awning or a covering of some sort.
- Ms. Kozak implored Mr. McHenry to think beyond the seasonal shed. She felt it could be so much more. It was the entrance to a theatre. She felt that the warehouses were the backdrops to the stage. The support building was the front door of the stage. Chairman Dika agreed and said she would like to see something lovelier. Mr. Almeida stated that he thought the focus was the stage and what you walk by fades into the shadows.
- Ms. Duggan stated that the feedback was good to hear now.
- Mr. McHenry told the Commission that the floor plan was complete. They were working out the food service functions. He reiterated that the support building had not been fully vetted by the trustees yet.
- Ms. Duggan stated that they would like to come back one more time to the Commission.
- Ms. Aeschliman added that once all of the various stakeholders felt comfortable then they would like to go to the City Council with a concept for the pavilion structure.
- Ms. Kozak suggested they explore a more marketplace/festival type of language in the designs.
- Mr. Gladhill agreed that the concession building did look like something in Virginia but he still felt it was unique and it fit in its location.

- Mr. McHenry stated that they would be back for another work session.

B. Work Session requested by **30 Maplewood, LLC, owner**, for property located at **30 Maplewood Avenue** wherein permission is requested to allow a new free standing structure (construct a 4 and 5 story building) on Assessor Plan 125 as Lot 2 and lies within Central Business B, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

At the applicant's request, the Commission voted to postpone the work session to the March 2, 2011 meeting.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

At 9:15 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 2, 2011.