

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

EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

6:30 p.m.

**May 14, 2014
reconvened from May 7, 2014
to be reconvened again on May 21, 2014**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Joseph Almeida; Vice Chairman Tracy Kozak; Members Richard Katz, John Wyckoff, Planning Board Representative William Gladhill; Alternates Dan Rawling, Reagan Ruedig

MEMBERS EXCUSED: City Council Representative Esther Kennedy; George Melchior;

ALSO PRESENT: Nick Cracknell, Principal Planner

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. March 5, 2014
2. March 12, 2014

*Vice-Chair Kozak moved to **approve** the minutes as presented. Mr. Katz seconded. The motion passed unanimously with all in favor, 7-0.*

II. DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

- A. Design Review Toolkit
- B. Character-Based Zoning

Due to the length of the agenda, these reports were moved to the May 21, 2014 agenda.

III. PUBLIC HEARING (OLD BUSINESS)

*The Board's action in these matters has been deemed to be quasi-judicial in nature.
If any person believes any member of the Board has a conflict of interest,
that issue should be raised at this point or it will be deemed waived.*

1. Petition of **PF Jax Real Estate, LLC, owner**, and **Bryan Pappas, applicant**, for property located at **159 Middle Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow a free standing structure (install free standing sign) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 127 as Lot 4 and lies within the Mixed Residential

Office and Historic Districts. *(This item was postponed at the May 7, 2014 meeting to the May 14, 2014 meeting.)*

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Mr. Brian Pappas, one of the owners, and the designer Ms. Carrie Eisner of Portsmouth Sign Company were present to speak to the application. Mr. Pappas stated that they had addressed the Commission's previous points and incorporated elements to make the signage more traditional and historical, and they also changed colors and ornamentation. He distributed copies of the new proposal and also had an example of the paint color and the shape of the proposed panels.

Ms. Eisner stated that the top portion of the sign would be a double-sided, hand-painted carved element, and the sign itself would be edged in gold. Mr. Pappas added that the corners were removed to add a design element to the panel so that it didn't look stark or modern. The carved shape to the top header along with some finials and the addition of the black pattern with the gold gave the sign a more traditional look. The color scheme matched the building, and any PVC material would be covered up by the panel. He preferred the white and the gray combination because he thought it went better with the building's color scheme.

Mr. Rawling asked if the posts were square and noted that there could be some shading on them. Mr. Pappas said they were proposing the square posts due to cost and installation. Mr. Eisner added that round posts were not generally used with that type of sign because of the panel. Mr. Wyckoff asked if the location would be the same as previously-proposed, and Mr. Pappas said that it would. Chairman Almeida verified that the post material was wood.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION

There was no one to speak to the petition, so Chairman Almeida closed the public hearing.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Vice-Chair Kozak moved to **grant** a Certificate of Approval for the application as presented, with the revised plan submitted at the meeting. Mr. Gladhill seconded.*

Vice-Chair Kozak thought that it was a great improvement, the subtle details made a big difference, and it matched the intent of how things were traditionally built. Mr. Gladhill specified for the record that it was the rendering on the left-hand side, Option 1.

*The motion **passed** unanimously with all in favor, 7-0.*

IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS (CONTINUED)

The Board's action in these matters has been deemed to be quasi-judicial in nature. If any person believes any member of the Board has a conflict of interest, that issue should be raised at this point or it will be deemed waived.

23. Petition of **Strawbery Banke, Inc., owner**, for property located **off Washington Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow a new free standing structure (construct skating rink with chiller enclosure, pavilion, fencing, and light posts) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 104 as Lot 7 and lies within the Mixed Residential Office and Historic Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Vice-Chair Kozak and Chairman Almeida recused themselves, and Mr. Katz took their place.

Mr. Larry Yerdon, President and CEO of Strawbery Banke, and the project architect Mr. Brian Murphy were present to speak to the application. Mr. Murphy stated that Puddle Dock Pond would be an outdoor seasonal skating rink. The vision was to create an active and healthy engagement of the community in the winter. It would open from the first day of December to the last day of February every year. The intent was to design a thoughtful temporary addition to the museum that complemented its surroundings.

The following items were for consideration and approval:

- Item 1 - the fence that would enclose the ice, with specifications.
- Item 2 - a series of 15 light poles going around the rink, four of which had speakers.
- Item 3 - the enclosure for the chiller that would be constructed of wood and have a gate, along with baseboards and cap boards.
- Item 4 - the pavilion stand housing the ticketing operations and rental skates. The roofing material was changed from fiberglass and aluminum to polycarbonate for reasons of economy, ecology, and ease of construction and availability.

Mr. Wyckoff asked why polycarbonate was chosen and how it was better for the ecology than fiberglass. Mr. Murphy said that he may have misspoken because he couldn't say it was more ecological, but the product was more durable and had fewer maintenance issues. Mr. Wyckoff's concern was the height of the chiller fence. He also asked for information on the decibels because he wanted to know how loud the chiller was with nothing around it compared to with the fence around it. Mr. Murphy stated that they had a team statistician who had done extensive research and determined that the fence needed to be a certain height to yield the allowable decibel level at the property line, which was what the Zoning Ordinance required.

Mr. Rawling noted that the chiller's prominence on the site would be significant and asked if a study was done about turning it the other way. The broad side was to the green, and turning it with the short side to the green would reduce its visual impact. Mr. Murphy told him that it involved spatial constraints and he didn't know if a study had been done. Mr. Yerdon pointed out a drawing that had a large tree on it and said that if the and said that if the chiller were slid further down the lawn and turned, it would face into the tenant's buildings. Mr. Gladhill felt uncomfortable with the enclosure because it was the size of a small house with no ornamentation and no detail and resembled a huge wooden box. Mr. Yerdon replied that it wasn't permanent and would only be there for three months. Mr. Wyckoff asked if the chiller and the pavilion

would be removed at the end of the three months. Mr. Yerdon said the chiller would be removed and the pavilion would be dismantled and stored.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION

There was no one to speak to the petition, so Chairman Almeida closed the public hearing.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*Ms. Ruedig moved to **grant** a Certificate of Approval for the application as presented. Mr. Wyckoff seconded.*

Ms. Ruedig found it appropriate because it would only be up three months each year. The materials were appropriate and complimentary to the surrounding structures. The design was appropriate because it was contextual but also represented a 21st century building.

*The motion **passed** unanimously with all in favor, 5-0.*

V. WORK SESSIONS

A. Work Session requested by **Melvin D. Reisz Revocable Trust and Elizabeth C. Reisz Revocable Trust, trustees and owners**, for property located at **49 Market 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 106 as Lot 27 and lies within Central Business B, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

The owner Mr. Melvin Reisz and Mr. Lee Cooper of New England Design Elements were present to speak to the application. Mr. Reisz told the Commission that he had photos of the building's exterior front and rear and photos of the condition of the windows, which was terrible. They had been installed circa 1975 and had deteriorated, and parts of the windows were plastic and others aluminum. He wanted to replace them with windows with exterior mullions and a 2/1 pattern typical of Market Street. He said the windows were not original and probably not the first set of replacement windows, based on the building's age. Two options were the Integrity fiberglass window by Marvin or the Andersen series. The Marvin window looked like wood and had the most amount of daylight opening.

Chairman Almeida asked Mr. Cooper what he meant by saying the window had the most amount of daylight. Mr. Cooper told him that the glass area could be bigger for the same size window and would dramatically reduce the environmental impact to the building as well as related costs and maintenance. Chairman Almeida asked if it was paintable, and Mr. Cooper said it was but that it did not need to be painted, which was an advantage. The Andersen windows were not paintable because they were a vinyl wood-clad product. Mr. Wyckoff stated that the Andersen window was made of Fibrex, which was similar to a fiberglass wood product. He asked about the 2/1 pattern, which he considered a cottage-style window, and felt that the existing 6/6

mullion pattern was more appropriate on an 1820 Federal building. Mr. Cooper said he had an early photo of the building that showed a 2/1 pattern.

Vice-Chair Kozak asked Mr. Cooper if he had details or images of the window, and Mr. Cooper replied that he didn't. Vice-Chair Kozak said the Commission would need section details for the application to be complete because the building was a significant period building on a significant entryway into the City. Mr. Reisz stated that the other buildings of the same period along the street had the same windows, 2/1 and 2/2 patterns, and he was confused as to why his building would be treated differently. Chairman Almeida said that one of the photos Mr. Reisz provided showed a building to the left that had multiple pane windows and another building on the right that had true divided windows. He said there had been several window replacements done on Market Street without permission because the Commission had never approved 1/1 windows on Market Street. Mr. Reisz insisted that there were a lot of 2/2 windows on Market Street, including 6/1 and 1/1 patterns. Chairman Almeida said they were case-by-case considerations and asked Mr. Reisz why he would not consider multi-pane windows. Mr. Reisz said it was partially due to cost, but the main reason was to let in as much light as possible. Chairman Almeida said that the 3rd story windows drove the window patterns because they were a distinct feature. He preferred 3/3 because he thought they were more appropriate.

Ms. Ruedig believed that all the buildings would have originally had 6/6 patterns but over time, larger glass sizes were available and replaced the original windows with mostly 2/2 windows. However, she felt that 6/6 was more appropriate because it went back to the original design of the building. Mr. Reisz produced an 1847 photo that showed the building next to his with 2/1 windows and said that his building may have had some 6/6 windows but in an ideal world, all the windows on Market Street might have been 6/6. It seemed discriminatory because he was trying to improve a building, and the window style seemed minor when all the other windows on the street were so varied. Ms. Ruedig replied that no one was telling him that he couldn't have replacement windows, but it was a question of the ideal situation. Chairman Almeida told Mr. Reisz that he had one of the finest storefronts on the street with original cast iron features and a wood storefront, yet other buildings had aluminum storefronts, but Mr. Reisz wasn't asking to put in an aluminum storefront. The Commission was just trying to keep his building as fine as it was, and it was an opportunity to make it finer. Mr. Gladhill thought the 3/3 and 6/6 windows were appropriate to the building's age and didn't know why the other windows on the street were 1/1 or 2/2 patterns unless they were done before the HDC. Chairman Almeida told Mr. Reisz that they weren't singling him out and had had the same discussion with 25 Market Street. Mr. Wyckoff remarked that 6/6 windows were approved by the early HDC many years before on State Street were mysteriously removed and replaced with vinyl windows. Eventually the HDC would have the ability to have some recourse, but the reasoning that other people had gotten away with it didn't fly. He said that the Alie's Jewelers block used to be a 4-story building and was reconfigured with small-pane windows in the 1860s and then turned into a 3-story building with wider openings because it was popular at the time. He thought it would be inappropriate to take a 6' window and turn it into a 6/6 when it was a Victorian window in a Victorian building.

Vice-Chair Kozak asked Mr. Reisz to submit details of how the window would set in the wall with the same plane and brick mold, the angle and thickness of the sill, and the screen. The Commission's decision was made on how those details integrated into the existing fabric.

Chairman Almeida added that the Planning Department had guidelines for typical questions and that Mr. Rawling had put a series of sketches together that would help him. The specification that Mr. Reisz selected was not wood and was paintable, which the Commission liked, but they preferred a multi-pane window. Mr. Wyckoff added that the Commission insisted on half screens, and the specifications of the window brand showed a full charcoal fiberglass screen, which was the worst option. Mr. Cooper said they hadn't reached a decision on screens. Chairman Almeida mentioned interior screens, which were rolling screens integrated into the jambs that were ideal. The second option would be a half screen. Mr. Cooper asked if they could be casements or screens on the inside or if a half screen in a double hung window would work. Mr. Wyckoff said it would go in the same channel as a full screen. The applicant verified that they could do a half screen.

Chairman Almeida asked if they would completely remove the existing windows and put new ones down to the masonry openings. Mr. Cooper said they would not touch the trim, with the exception of the 3rd floor where the windows were so small.

*The applicant indicated he would **move forward with a public hearing** at the June meeting.*

B. Work Session requested by **30 Maplewood, LLC, owner**, for property located at **30 Maplewood Avenue**, wherein permission was requested to allow a new free standing structure (construct mixed use, 3 ½ to 5 story structure) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 125 as Lot 2 and lies within the Central Business B, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

Ms. Jennifer Ramsey of SOMMA Studios was present on behalf of the applicant. She had an alternate handout that responded to current allowable heights and the upcoming design guidelines, and she reminded the Commission that they had previously discussed the approach of one building versus the look of multiple buildings on the lot. She emphasized that Phase 2 would have a large singular building on the lot, and she showed a collection of six buildings of varying sizes. The strong corner building stepped down to the look of multiple buildings that related to Phase 1 of 30 Maplewood Avenue and the VFW building as well as several buildings across the street on Deer Street. The roof plan view took into account their request for a height exception for the center building because it was a taller building that pared down to smaller structures on the sides. With so many recent zoning changes, Ms. Ramsey asked the Commission if they would consider the massing and scale for that particular location or if they preferred that she continue to go in the direction that she was going.

Mr. Gladhill thought the varied roofline was a very positive aspect on a big building. He asked Ms. Ramsey if she had received Version 2 of the Conditional Use Permit (CUP), and Ms. Ramsey replied that she received a letter from the Planning Department saying they had completed the design review process. There was further discussion on the two versions. Mr. Cracknell stated that the criteria used for 175 Market Street was the same criteria adopted two months later, making the criteria for the proposed project the same. Vice-Chair Kozak asked him to go over the CUP requirements. Mr. Cracknell stated that public benefits had to be associated with the improvements and the design had to be consistent with the surrounding context and have high-quality materials. What might be confusing was what was adopted versus

what was proposed and rejected six weeks before by the City Council. The HDC had attempted to clarify some of the language adopted back in September and applied it to the 175 Market Street project, but the community felt that the language was too vague. The criticism concerned the proportionality versus the benefit given to the public, and they thought it needed to be more descriptive. The HDC went back six months later to tighten it up and clarify the public benefits, but the City Council did not adopt it, so they were stuck with the language of having a proportional public benefit for the added height as well as reference to the surrounding context.

Mr. Wyckoff thought that the varied roofline that accentuated the buildings were different from one another and would be liked by the community, but the language of the CUP and the turndown of it and Phase 2 unfortunately put the building into the horizontal 3-1/2 story, flat roof type of building that people didn't want to see. He thought it was a very good plan but felt that maybe the applicant should wait a year and a half for another election if that was what they really wanted to build. Mr. Cracknell said that it did not require action by the City Council because it was vested under the CUP that was adopted in September and no longer existed for any current project that was not vested. The HDC had the ability to authorize a permit for the proposed building's form, context and height without City Council action. Mr. Wyckoff thought that the criteria would be difficult to prove in that particular building. Mr. Cracknell disagreed and suggested that they wait until the applicant and the HDC were familiar with the criteria and the full proposal of what the benefits would be.

Mr. Rawling supported Sketch #2 and was happy to see hip roofs on the end structures and the varied massing. He felt that a taller building on the corner was quite significant as a scaling element with Portwalk itself, and having the height on that corner gave presence and prominence to the corner and intersections. He felt that, relative to the projecting bays and brackets, the brackets were good but the bays still had no side windows and looked like boxes. Ms. Ramsey told him that she read the design review guidelines and thought the projections had to be a minimum of 4', which meant they could get side windows in the bays. Ms. Ruedig supported the varied rooflines and the heights of the different areas of the building, but wanted to see it without details because the Commission still had to look at context. If Ms. Ramsey continued to bring in design ideas and styles, they would have to see what she was drawing from and also see the buildings that would be seen from the site.

Chairman Almeida asked Mr. Cracknell to give Ms. Ramsey the four-step process. He was very excited about the scheme and thought it was a wonderful building with the varied rooflines, and he agreed with Mr. Rawling that the projecting bays and side windows would make it more convincing. He thought that the window and sill heights changing from the form next to it in Portion D was critically important and convincing and hoped that they would not lose it. He agreed with Ms. Ruedig that it was premature to discuss details but wanted to make sure that they considered the massing. Mr. Gladhill asked what the height would be on Building C if the penthouse were removed, and Ms. Ramsey said 47' and said that Building F was the back one-story structure that allowed windows and had a lot of context because it faced Bridge Street.

Mr. Gladhill cautioned that there would be tough questions and justifications due to the CUP. Chairman Almeida added that the building coverage was related to the mass and CUP, and he felt that it was disappointing that the building coverage hadn't been discussed at the CUP

discussion because people were more concerned about height than coverage. The argument for the CUP was that if it was said the height was 'x' height, the building just got wider. Mr. Cracknell disagreed. He referenced the 111 Maplewood Avenue project and said the lot coverage was irrelevant because the proposed building was relatively small and, like 111 Maplewood Avenue, there was no deed restriction on the parking lot. The parking lot was not encumbered by the next building that would be added. It was assumed that the footprint was about 95% coverage. Chairman Almeida asked if the remaining lot was buildable, and Mr. Cracknell said it was, so Chairman Almeida thought that if the project failed to achieve the CUP, they could simply build on more of a lot under 45'. Mr. Cracknell again said that it was irrelevant because a CUP should not be seeking to put deed restrictions on other portions of the lot that rode with the deed forever. The parking lot would never be associated with a CUP that said it would stay a surface lot forever. The CUP that was adopted in September did not speak at all to lot coverage but spoke to open spaces, wider sidewalks, and high-quality building materials.

Chairman Almeida asked Mr. Cracknell to read the guidelines, which stated that the HDC could approve a building in the District up to 60' only if the building and site design positively contributed to the context, quality and overall historic quality of neighboring properties and the District as a whole. It included the following examples:

- Publicly-accessible open space areas such as widened sidewalks, plazas, pocket parks, playgrounds, etc.
- Underground parking in lieu of surface parking
- High-quality building materials such as slate, copper roofing/gutters/downspouts, restored brick, etc.
- Significant scaling elements of the building design such as setbacks, reduced footprint and volume, and pitch roofs
- Massing techniques to maintain the pedestrian scale along the facade
- Significant restoration or reconstruction of a contributing building
- Permanent protection of significant view corridors.

Ms. Ramsey thought that the application was more exciting by pursuing the direction they were and had a lot more potential for interesting public spaces, especially since the tenants were moving into the Phase 1 building. The application allowed for individual structures to have more frontage. She showed another example of the center building, which was all contemporary brick yet referenced historical elements, and a mixture of materials, clapboards and brick on the individual buildings. Mr. Gladhill told her to pursue what she had handed out that evening. Vice-Chair Kozak thought that the penthouse form was not an historic form, and trying to replicate the historic form below it didn't work. Ms. Ramsey replied that she thought of penthouses in the City as whimsical features. The center piece was a mansard in form and the materials made it more contemporary, while the penthouse could be more playful and interesting on top of it. Mr. Wyckoff liked the wider sidewalks because they allowed more public use of the block, but he thought a problem would be pushing back on the Norway Maple trees that were not good city trees. He thought it would help achieve the CUP if they pulled back the structure and have better trees. He liked the previous scheme with the corner of the building pulled way back and a corner courtyard. Ms. Ramsey told him they previously had landscaping that wasn't well received, but they had a good amount of space in the front and would probably hire Terra Firm Landscape and plan a different landscaping, which she felt was critical to the site.

Mr. Rawling mentioned the alternate proposal and said he preferred the taller 1st floor levels on the earlier schemes. Ms. Ramsey told him that they took the lower 1st floor level at 10' but could push it to allow the building to be kept at a maximum of 54'. Chairman Almeida thought the new sketch was much more successful and that the window pattern and fenestration as well as the lesser dormers were much better and more elegant.

Chairman Almeida opened the public comment session.

Mr. Joe Caldarola of 170 Dennett Street stated that he supported it. He had met with Mr. Steve Kelm to discuss trying to follow Form-Based Zoning, and he thanked him for following through. He liked the varied appearances of the building but agreed that the details were confusing. The bump-outs were what bothered people the most because they made the building feel like it was on top of their heads, and he was concerned that they would accentuate the building's mass. The height was exempted by the CUP because it was grandfathered in. He was bothered by the repetitive style around the corner that made it look less like a traditional street scale, but he liked the end that met the 2-story houses on Bridge Street. He stated that simpler was better.

No one else rose to speak, so Chairman Almeida closed the public comment session.

*Vice-Chair Kozak moved to **continue** the work session to June 4, 2014. Mr. Gladhill seconded. The motion **passed** with all in favor, 7-0.*

C. Work Session requested by **82-86 Congress, LLC, owner**, for property located at **25 Chestnut Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (remove windows and wood paneling on west elevation, replace with new windows, brick, and artistic mosaic cladding) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 117 as Lot 45 and lies within the Central Business B, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

The owner Mr. McNabb, and Mr. Steve McHenry and Ms. Kathy Jackson of McHenry Architecture were present to speak to the application. Mr. McHenry stated that they had done a lot of changes to the building over the years. He showed an image of the five existing windows as well as a wood panel doorway opening that was in front of the main opening of the building. They wanted to create and install a public art ceramic mosaic to the side of the building. He showed the existing elevations and windows and the door panel they would remove. He also had images of works in progress and other public ceramic mosaic art installations. He said they were not seeking approval for the exact design but wanted to show the scale and constraints that made up the project due to the location of the window openings. The mosaic would continue from the storefront on the left of the elevation up to the main entrance of the building and continue along most of the first floor, and he showed an insert of a broken tile style mosaic that could be used on that scale. Another option included new mirrors or glazed window shapes within the ceramic shape of the overall mosaic design. Their overall goal was to add a rich addition to a very bland elevation that led to one of the most important art venues in the City. He showed another option that was more linear and had a different form of windows that might be replaced as part of the piece. He introduced Ms. Jackson as the interior designer who had done previous public art

installations. Ms. Jackson showed a Powerpoint presentation about mosaics and public art mosaics and gave the background and history of public art installations.

Mr. McNabb said the mosaic was for fun and was not driven by tenants or rent but was part of the funding for the Chestnut Street renovation to add granite benches, planters, new lighting, and so on. He owned the entire building block and felt that the wall on one side was bland. The Portsmouth Herald used to be there, and the building had an industrial feel to it and had been 'calling to him for something'. The storefront would be finished in three months and had evolved over the years. He talked about his laborious restoration of the building and said that, although it wasn't visible on the outside, they were restoring the stained glass and stripping and repainting the walls. He mentioned a holding area at Martingale Wharf that was a successful piece of art work and said his project was a similar one of going out of his way to incorporate art and a few windows.

Mr. Gladhill said he liked mosaics, and if it were on a modern building or in the Northern Tier, it would be much easier for him to approve it. However, it was a 100-year-old building in the center of the District. As to the choice between the glass and mirror, he preferred the mirror because if it were glass, they'd get into the fenestration. He considered the mirror more as part of the art work. Mr. Rawling thought it was an exciting proposal and always felt that the area needed something to announce and celebrate the Music Hall. He liked Option 1 because it had a bolder scale and was a more encompassing piece of art itself. Mr. Katz also thought it was an exciting proposal and liked Option 1 because it could be viewed as a sign for Bull Moose Records and was appropriate for that store as well as the Music Hall. Mr. Wyckoff thought it was exciting and not something that would be seen in Newburyport, and he liked all the options.

Ms. Ruedig said that she was all for public art but was hesitant about putting it on historic brick. She found Option 3 more cohesive to the building's design because it echoed other details on the building like the curved windows at the top. Ms. Jackson told her that the mosaics could be made on boards that were attached to the building instead of attaching directly to the brick. Ms. Ruedig said that would be preferable. Vice-Chair Kozak agreed with Ms. Ruedig's concern. Otherwise, she thought it was the best location in Portsmouth for the mosaic piece and could become another landmark. The small corner of Chestnut Street was Portsmouth's theater district and the mosaic would be perfect. She hoped that it could be reversible so that it would be easy if they wished to do something different later on. Her other concern was that it could start to look like a graffiti kind of art, so the quality of the art was critical to its success. The other aspect that would make it successful would be incorporating it into the building's design and working with the lines and scale of the building. Ms. Jackson said that the beauty of mosaics was that they were durable and would not peel. Mr. Rawling preferred Option 1 because a graffiti artist could fill in the leftover space on the other option and Option 1 was more encompassing.

Chairman Almeida agreed that Option 1 was the preferred option. He asked Mr. Cracknell why the application had come to the HDC if it were mostly about art. Mr. Cracknell said it was a change in material, and applying it to the outside of the building was a change in appearance. Chairman Almeida thought Option 1 was reminiscent of the Yellow Submarine graphics and liked it a lot. It was appropriate at that location for a number of reasons, including Bull Moose Records. The access corridor going through Vaughan Mall to Portwalk Place was getting more

defined and would be a high-quality pedestrian path. He wouldn't mind if the mosaic was a permanent piece of the building because he didn't feel they were losing any architectural features on that side, and he would support it whether it was applied on panels or routed into the brick.

Mr. McHenry said their goal was to get the Commission to think about it as a concept, not to choose one option or another. He had tried to give Mr. McNabb very different options, from conservative to wild, to see what the limits were before talking to the Commission, and he was gratified that they were on board. He needed to know if they could infill the windows and door openings and use that area. They would match the existing brick so that the pattern was even, like a canvas for the mosaic. He mentioned the distinction between graffiti art and ceramic art and recommended that the Commission watch the film *Exit Through the Gift Shop* that was about a graffiti artist that went from graffiti to tremendous art. He would also consult with an expert so that they would not have something that would look dated in a few years but rather would be permanent part of the community. Mr. McNabb said that he felt a much stronger tie to the corridor to the Music Hall and that Bull Moose was not even aware of the mosaic, but it was not a hidden agenda and was more for the community and the Music Hall. He thought that the brick on one side of the building was fine and unusual, but the other side's brick was quite different because it was more of a commercial nature and the window openings and abandoned door had nothing redeeming, so the art would cover some of that brick and would address the openings as well. Vice-Chair Kozak said that if he decided to infill the windows, he should not disguise it too much because people noticed bricked-over windows and how the buildings evolved, and there could be soldier course in the building that would show the layers. She liked Scheme 1 because it was evocative of the Music Hall's new lobby and thought it would be even stronger if there were some way to tie it into the surrounding architecture and have relevance.

*The applicant indicated they would **move forward with a work session/public hearing** in the near future.*

D. Work Session of **Noble Island Condominium Association, owner**, for property located at **500 Market Street, Units 16A & 16B**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace siding, roof, and windows) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 120 as Lot 2 and lies within Central Business A and Historic District.

Mr. Doug Bates, President of the Noble Island Condominium Association/President of the Chamber of Commerce and the property manager Mr. Chuck Thibodeau were present to speak to the application. Mr. Bates stated that Noble's Island buildings were built in 1985 and most had brick veneer and nice fenestration, but the Chamber was built by UNH college students and it was time to fix a few things, like the windows and the insufficient overhang. He wanted something more durable, and with the new Gateway project, he felt that there would be more integration and the Chamber would still be an anchor for visitors. There were no substantial changes, but the shingles were 30 years old and the overhangs needed work. The old windows were culled together with glass, and he didn't want to change the dimensions but wanted a long-term solution. He showed a photo of a large window with a large pane of glass and said he could change it into two mullioned units. All the single light windows were multiples of double lights, so a mullion in the center would match two awning windows. He would get rid of the non-standard

sliding glass doors or make them look like the windows above them and would use Azek for the trim. He further discussed window improvements.

Mr. Rawling asked if it would be a glass transom. Mr. Bates said he wanted to put a regular shingle transom to build it up. The top three windows and skylights would remain, and the two fixed skylights would be replaced. Nothing would change in the back of the building except that the skylights would be replaced and the overhangs increased. He had considered changing over to an architectural shingle. On the weathered side of the building, all shingles would stay the same, and on the other side of the building, the skylight would be removed. He would remove a window with a rotted frame because it was in the lobby and there was plenty of light from above. Relating to the texture of the siding, he could use clapboard or shingle and mentioned a nearby building that had a classic shingle with a modern flair and good vinyl. They could do shingles and clapboards, or all shingles and maybe Hardiplank, as long as it was durable and low maintenance.

Ms. Ruedig asked why the windows between E and F were different windows. Mr. Thibodeau said that one was a working window and the other was solid. It was an existing commercial storefront. Mr. Bates said they wouldn't touch the windows on the front of the fenestration of the doors. They had considered an Andersen product so they would all have the same look. There were lots of shingles and he thought something artistic could be done. Vice-Chair Kozak said the building was quirky and there was nothing like it in Portsmouth. It was a pure example of a post-modern single style, so she thought the shingles were appropriate and it would be a mistake to use clapboards. She also thought a fiber cement product may be more convincing. Mr. Bates said their intent was to choose something that worked for everyone, kept the maintenance costs down, and made the building look better. Mr. Wyckoff said it was one of those buildings that got an after-the-fact approval. He wanted to make it clear that, eight years before, the developer had put vinyl siding and windows in the building and then had gone to the HDC, and the HDC had let it go. He agreed with Vice-Chair Kozak about the post-modern shingle style and said the technology of the modern shingles was better and was sold in strips that were quicker to put up than individual shingles. He thought the Azek would be a great help.

Mr. Gladhill asked why they would want to put up a mixture of clapboard and shingles. Mr. Bates said they thought it would make it look better instead of miles of shingles. Mr. Gladhill suggested alternate styles of shingles. Mr. Rawling said the building reflected an architectural style in the period that it was built, so it was important to respect the original design and intent of the building and put a minimal amount of changes on it. Ms. Ruedig thought the shingle look should be preserved and they could make the material improvements because even though the building was unattractive, in 50 years someone could say what a great 1980s building it was. Chairman Almeida agreed with a lot of the comments and had minimal issues with the application. Making drastic changes to the siding might be a mistake, but the Azek was appropriate. He thought the authentic shingle should be kept because the building's function was to welcome people to Portsmouth to see authentic things. On the other hand, it was not the John Paul Jones House. Mr. Bates said that he wore two hats and his obligation was life cost and maintenance. Chairman Almeida said a composite material could be used but it would have to be a very good one and convincing. In general, he thought it was a very positive application. Mr. Wyckoff thought the back of the building could be Hardiplank but said it wasn't a concern.

Chairman Almeida opened the public comment session.

Mr. Steve McHenry of McHenry Architects stated that he wanted to stick up for the little building because it was from the 1980s and he lived through the 1980s. What made it interesting was its use of vernacular forms, natural materials, and symmetry that gave it a monumental look. He referred to the Haystack School of Craft in Maine and the famous buildings from the 1980s that used those same shapes. Maintaining pre-finished and well-installed wood shingles as well as the strong horizontal trim pieces and keeping the original building shape and materials was preferable. It was not a beautiful building but was of its type.

No one else rose to speak, so Chairman Almeida closed the public comment session.

*The applicant indicated they would **move forward with a work session/public hearing at the July meeting.***

E. Work Session requested by **Robert and Carlotta Holster, owners**, for property located **46 Livermore Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (construct two story addition with masonry chimney and elevator shaft, construct screen porch) and allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace French doors and misc. windows) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 109 as Lot 21 and lies within General Residence B and Historic Districts.

Mr. Steve McHenry and Ms. Sarah Howard of McHenry Architects and the owner Mr. Bob Holster were present to speak to the application. Mr. McHenry said he would review the proposed changes to the 1810 Nathan Parker House. It was in a very prominent location and he was aware of its importance to the fabric of the City and the South End. They were proposing to infill a back ell with an addition as well as other changes. He introduced Ms. Howard, the designer on the project. Ms. Howard reviewed the packet with the Commission. She showed photos of context and various views as well as the existing elevations. The south elevation showed the historic brick home, the carriage house portion, and the small barn area. The east and west elevations were the front and back of the house. The north elevation was close to the neighboring condominium. The images showed that the proposed building was a 20' x 22' addition designed to accentuate the brick in a conservatory style. It would have a Rumford exterior working wood fireplace and a new chimney in the middle section that would be an elevator shaft. It would also have a screened-in patio, and the arch symmetry of the colonnade would mimic the existing façade. Chairman Almeida told Mr. Holster that he owned the finest building in the City and that all his decisions would be based on that fact. The process would be very detailed because it was an incredibly special building, and it was a big responsibility for the owner, architect, and the Commission to make decisions on it.

Ms. Howard stated that their first intent for consideration was massing, scale, and rhythm, and they would have intricate details and responses to concerns at the following work session. She showed the proposed floor plan, saying that the existing perimeter was retained and there would be a stone granite curved entryway in the addition. The elevator shaft nestled nicely in that ell of the existing house and would be a free-standing structure that would not permeate into the brick.

The screened porch will have operable French doors. The barn would have a new window next to the existing door. The conservatory was a two-floor addition and would have the same elevator shaft nestled in the corner with existing perimeters retained. The second floor of the barn section would have a new window above the other new window below it on the first floor and an existing window in the middle would be replaced. The conservatory's roof plan showed the elevator shaft clad in brick and how it would continue up, along with the Rumford chimney, and also showed how the roof would tie into the existing roof above the lower ell section with the chimneys popping up. Because the owner requested low maintenance, the south elevation would have aluminum clad windows, Marvin or Colby. The paneling would be Hardiplank or Azek with paintable material. There would be a stone base to mimic the existing stone foundation with a continued granite water table. The curved entry would have metal railings. The screened-in porch would have retractable screens hidden inside the archways so they could be pulled down or put up. There would be new windows on the barn on the 1st and 2nd floors and the window above the door would be replaced.

Mr. Wyckoff asked if the elevator would be hydraulic and if the tower would be ventilated. Ms. Howard said the elevator would be gear-driven and that the tower didn't to be ventilated. Mr. McHenry said the purpose of the elevator was to help preserve the house because it was difficult to reach the top floors and it was critical to the design that they get limited use with the elevator so that the 3rd floor could be accessible. They tried to nestle the addition in without extruding into the public view. He encouraged a site walk so that the Commission could see the viewpoints from around the site, like the backyard, the cemetery beyond and the Wentworth Home, to see how visible or not visible the addition will be.

Ms. Ruedig thought it was very appropriate because the addition respected the original house and was easily documented. Mr. Gladhill had a harder time with it because the house could be seen from Mill Pond and wasn't the typical back of the house. Mr. Rawling asked how much space was needed for the pulleys on the top of the elevator, and Ms. Howard replied 24". Mr. McHenry said there wasn't much clearance above the elevator, so they had latitude in the height of the chimney structure. Mr. Rawling asked if it was just to create a chimney look, and Ms. Howard agreed. He then asked if there was a way to break up the mass of the chimney because it was a huge block compared to the other ones. If it were scaled down and made shorter, it could be less visible. Mr. McHenry said it was located in an inside corner and didn't work functionally anywhere else, but he could show it both ways at the next work session. Mr. Rawling thought that the porch looked appealing on the small scale drawing, but on the large drawing it looked more like a standard glassed-in porch with flat panels that could be seen on any house. Attention to the detailing was important so that it would respond to the house and he felt that it needed more distinction and uniqueness. Mr. McHenry agreed.

Vice-Chair Kozak stated that the building was a monument and one of the City's finest, and a particular facade was an important part of the view of the City that could be seen from City Hall. It was important to preserve the historic integrity of that particular side of the building. Her first reaction to the conservatory addition was that it was too big and obscured the entire back ell, which was an important part of its history. To her, the word conservatory evoked a greenhouse with iron metal and plants and not a two-story glassed house. She also struggled with the exterior chimneys and the porch on the barn. Mr. Gladhill thought that it could be attached to the

house instead. Vice-Chair Kozak replied that there were precedents of attached conservatories that didn't look like that at all. An addition to a historic building could either be really different or blend in. She had conflict about the exterior chimneys stuck against the building because a defining characteristic was an internal chimney. The porch on the barn could work if the building behind it was not obscured. It had historic precedence because people used to put porches on the sides of their buildings, but the porch looked like a box on the back. Ms. Ruedig noted that the house had been so well preserved for so long. She appreciated that it was a different material that wasn't trying to create more of a brick wall, but it was a little too big. She thought it could be set in more so that it didn't completely double the depth of the house but made it look more like a secondary building rather than enlarging the house's total volume. She preferred not to see a huge elevator shaft but instead have it tucked away. She also agreed that the chimney on the exterior of the conservatory looked out of place but thought the porch and the granite steps would work. The detailing for the materials would be important.

Chairman Almeida asked Mr. McHenry to talk about the building's history. Mr. McHenry said it was built for the minister of the North Church in 1810, and he would supply more information about its history. Chairman Almeida told him that it would be important. He hadn't gotten beyond the point of making any changes to the building, but could not consider artificial materials. It had to be high-quality wood with no vinyl or aluminum clad. He remembered a comment from a former Commissioner who had said that people couldn't live in museums and someone had shouted out that it could easily be a museum because the quality was so high. So, wherever they ended up, he wanted the materials to respect that. Mr. Rawling knew of a house that had an elevator that went up through a sunroom and connected with a gable dormer, and he thought it might be a good suggestion. He asked if there was a second floor on the conservatory or if it was open. Ms. Howard told him there was a second floor. Mr. Wyckoff thought the Rumford chimney really stood out and was inappropriate for the whole structure because it looked very contemporary.

*Mr. Gladhill made the motion to **continue** the work session at the June 4, 2014 meeting. Mr. Wyckoff seconded.*

*The motion **passed** unanimously with all in favor, 7-0.*

VI. OTHER ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Mr. Wyckoff asked if their meetings could have a time limit because midnight was a struggle. Vice-Chair Kozak noted that the work sessions and public hearings should be available to the public, and few people would show up or stay until eleven. Mr. Cracknell said the solution was easy. They could have four meetings a month, which was what they would have to do if they had long agendas and stopped at eleven o'clock. They were routinely over 20 items for each meeting. Part of the solution of not having 3-4 meetings a month was to review their exemptions. They had too many mechanicals, and if they considered anything above a single or two-family structure, they could remove some of those items that took up to 20 minutes apiece. He thought that the exemptions could be written a little better. Chairman Almeida said they could also be more efficient in how they used their time by placing a physical time limit on work

sessions and public comment. Mr. Cracknell said they had tried that before but never followed through, and he gave the example of the Findings of Fact, which happened 50% of the time but needed to be done all the time. Mr. Gladhill said the worse-case scenario on time limits would be that the application would get bumped out another month. It might be more efficient if they stated that the applicant had a half-hour and stuck to it.

Chairman Almeida told the Commission that Mr. Katz wanted to say a few words. Mr. Katz stated that it was his last meeting as a Commissioner. He had asked Mayor Lister for a one-year extension, which would fulfill the ten-year limit. Mayor Sirrell had appointed him to the HDC as an advocate for homeowners because he was a member of the Steering Committee as well as a member of the citywide neighborhood groups. When he spoke with Mayor Lister, he suggested that during his extension, he work with the city neighborhood group to encourage members to apply for HDC appointments. Mayor Lister had agreed, but earlier that day, the Mayor had called him to say that he would not honor the agreement because many people had complained that he was rude and no one had spoken in his favor. Mr. Katz apologized to the two character references that he had listed because they seemed to have been unimportant. He thanked the Commissioners for the years they spent together. He spent seven years as an Alternate and then was appointed a full Commissioner. For another nine years, he did his best to attend the meetings, and he had thought it would be great to have an extra year to round it out as a job well done. It was not a good feeling to leave in this manner, especially after all that time. He thanked everyone again and wished them the best.

The Commissioners thanked him. Chairman Almeida told Mr. Katz that if it weren't a final decision, he would plead with the decision-makers to reconsider. Mr. Wyckoff remarked that it was very discouraging. Chairman Almeida wanted Mr. Katz to know that he had not been consulted regarding the decision and had not been asked his opinion, nor did he think any of the other Commissioners were. If he had been consulted, he would have been a very strong advocate for Mr. Katz.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

At 9:45 p.m., it was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Breault
Acting HDC Recording Secretary

These minutes were approved at the Historic District Commission meeting on June 11, 2014.