

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

EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

6:30 p.m.

**October 12, 2016
reconvened from October 5, 2016**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Joseph Almeida; Vice Chairman Vincent Lombardi; Members Jon Wyckoff, Dan Rawling, Reagan Ruedig; City Council Representative Nancy Pearson; Alternates Richard Shea

MEMBERS EXCUSED: John Mayer

ALSO PRESENT: Nick Cracknell, Principal Planner

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Chairman Almeida thanked former Vice-Chair William Gladhill for his many years of service on the Historic District Commission and on the Planning Board. He noted that Mr. Gladhill not only served on two boards but also did it very well. Mr. Wyckoff then said a few words, emphasizing that the Portsmouth residents would miss Mr. Gladhill. He presented with a C. S. Gurney historic original photograph. The Commission also presented Mr. Gladhill with a gift certificate. Mr. Gladhill thanked the Commission and said it was a pleasure serving with all of them. He wished them continued success.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

1. 114 Mechanic Street
2. 236 Union Street
3. 39 Dearborn Street
4. 275 Islington Street
5. 232 South Street
6. 116 Middle Street
7. 69-71 Dennett Street
8. 113 Congress Street
9. 540 Marcy Street
10. 224 State Street
11. 77 State Street

Chairman Almeida stated that he would recuse himself from the 540 Marcy Street petition and that Mr. Shea would recuse himself from the 275 Islington Street petition. The two petitions were pulled and later addressed. Mr. Cracknell reviewed the rest of the petitions, with the exception of the 116 Middle Street petition, which was deemed to be exempt from review.

*It was moved, seconded, and **passed** by unanimous vote (6-0) to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the following petitions: 69-71 Dennett Street, 224 State Street, and 77 State Street.*

*It was moved and seconded to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the 114 Mechanic Street petition. The motion **passed**, with 5 in favor and Ms. Ruedig opposed (5-1).*

*It was moved, seconded, and **passed** by unanimous vote (6-0) to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the following petitions, with **stipulations**: 113 Congress Street, 39 Dearborn Street, 232 South Street, and 236 Union Street.*

At this point in the meeting, Mr. Rawling arrived.

Mr. Cracknell then addressed the two petitions that were pulled, 275 Islington Street and 540 Marcy Street.

He reviewed the petition for 275 Islington Street.

*It was moved, seconded, and **passed** by unanimous vote (7-0) to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the application as presented.*

Mr. Cracknell then addressed the 540 Marcy Street petition.

*It was moved, seconded, and **passed** by unanimous vote (7-0) to **grant** the Certificate of Approval for the application as presented.*

II. WORK SESSIONS (CONTINUED)

A. Work Session requested by **Brian J. Bednarek, owner**, for property located at **10 Humphreys Court**, wherein permission was requested to allow demolition of an existing structure (demolish existing garage) and allow new construction to an existing structure (construct new garage and mudroom) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 101 as Lot 43 and lies within the General Residence and Historic Districts. *(This item was postponed at the September 7, 2016 meeting to the October 12, 2016 meeting.)*

The applicant Brian Bednarek and the project representative Jennifer Ramsey were present to speak to the petition. Ms. Ramsey stated that they responded to all of the Commission's previous comments. She reviewed the package and noted that the dormer style was new.

Vice-Chairman Lombardi asked whether the chimney would be removed, and Ms. Ramsey said it would because it took up valuable space.

Mr. Wyckoff asked how old the house was and also noted that there were no railing details on the front door. Mr. Bednarek said the house was built in 1960 and that the entry was an existing one that included a railing. He said he would include it in the drawings at the next presentation

Mr. Shea said he thought a lot of the changes were for the better and asked the applicant if he had considered textures for siding and window types. Ms. Ramsey said they would match the existing siding on the house and that the window styles would also match. Mr. Shea said he was disappointed that the chimney would be removed because the house would someday be historic.

Mr. Rawling said the project had a more refined look than before and asked the reason for the peak dormer over the garage. Ms. Ramsey said if she slid it over, the dormer would be asymmetrical or too small to make the room functional. She suggested making it a longer shed that would peak over the garage door. Mr. Rawling agreed and noted that the dormers were on the existing house were pretty large so it would anchor it more. Chairman Almeida asked where the idea for the gable came from, and Ms. Ramsey said Mr. Mayer had suggested it by trying to relate back to the gables on the main home. Ms. Ruedig suggested making the shed dormer a bit larger, noting that there was precedent. Mr. Rawling said the Commission had several examples of shed dormers that would be successful. He suggested moving the gable piece forward and recessing the side piece. Ms. Ramsey asked whether the applicant should go back to a full shed. Mr. Shea said it would not be inappropriate but suggested making it go straight across. Mr. Wyckoff agreed that a simple shed dormer would be better because he felt the garage addition was overcomplicated. Vice-Chairman Lombardi also agreed and suggested that it be made a bit bigger. Chairman Almeida suggested raising it a bit but still respecting the ridge.

Vice-Chairman Lombardi said the side elevation was a complexity of angles and lines. Mr. Rawling noted that it was a very close neighborhood. Mr. Ramsey said it was a corner lot and said the home next to it had a lot of space between the owner's garage and the side yard.

Ms. Ruedig said she was disappointed about losing the chimney because it was a substantial and tasteful one. She asked whether the doors would be natural finish or stained. Mr. Bednarek said the solid door was painted and that he preferred a new door with windows. The Commission indicated that it would be fine, and they discussed options.

Mr. Rawling asked whether the overhang could be extended to the garage door. Chairman Almeida said he felt there were too many windows on the back dormer and suggesting removing at least one. It was further discussed. Mr. Wyckoff said he thought the four windows were fine.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*The applicant indicated that he would **move forward** with a Public Hearing in the near future.*

B. Work Session requested by **Nicole R. Gregg Revocable Trust, Nicole R. Gregg, trustee and owner**, for property located at **13 Salter Street**, wherein permission is requested to allow demolition of an existing structure (demolish rear and side additions and deck) and allow new construction to an existing structure (construct new rear and side additions and deck) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 102 as Lot 28 and lies within the Waterfront Business and Historic Districts. *(This item was postponed at the September 7, 2016 meeting to the October 12, 2016 meeting.)*

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

It was moved, seconded and passed unanimously (7-0) to postpone the petition to the November 2016 meeting).

C. Work Session requested by **Thirty Maplewood, LLC, owner**, for property located at **46-64 Maplewood Avenue**, wherein permission was requested to allow a new free standing structure (construct new mixed use, 3 to 3 ½ story building) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 125 as Lot 2 and lies within the CD 4, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts. *(This item was postponed at the September 7, 2016 meeting to the October 12, 2016 meeting.)*

The project representative Jennifer Ramsey representing the owner was present to speak to the petition. She reviewed the packet and renderings and noted that the building was a mixture of materials and was a modern concept. She said she wanted to do a rain screen type of look and had photos and materials to show. She discussed how the building would have modern wood clapboard on the base, with masonry on the first floor and anywhere the building stepped back. She said the window sizes had not changed, the building was taller with a taller parapet wall on the front, and there was an appurtenance on the top of the building to hide the mechanicals. She discussed the recesses in the building, the piers, and the landscape design.

Ms. Ruedig noted the frosted glass on the balconies and said the Commission had seen several petitions with frosted glass that were later changed due to maintenance issues. Ms. Ramsey said they still wanted to pursue the glass. She discussed the masonry and showed the Commission samples of it. She also discussed the wood variation.

Chairman Almeida said the materials looked nice and were of good quality. He said he enjoyed the contemporary flair of the building but felt that it would seem very small next to the Portwalk development. He also noted that the windows looked stark and like a single sheet of glass. Ms. Ramsey said she had been asked to make the windows similar to 2/2 windows.

Chairman Almeida said the wooden bays were successful on the back but thought it was a little too much. He also thought the street front was energetic. Mr. Rawling said the building still looked too short and thought it would look out of place, but was comfortable with the feeling on the street level. He said he was reluctant about the wood product because it dominated the building. He discouraged the 2/2 windows for something more contemporary and also the big sheets of glass windows, but said he appreciated the texturing, cornices and brackets.

Ms. Ruedig said the depth in the bays was successful in making the building more interesting. She thought the massing helped but said she preferred to see more height, especially on the corner. She suggested bringing the penthouse forward to make it a bit more permanent. She liked the window and felt that it was traditional material in a contemporary way. She said the glass windows were too stark. She felt that the base material's darker granite with the brick and the wood might be too much because there were many different colors and types of materials. She suggested keeping the lighter colored brick a traditional brick size because the building was important, and she thought it should have blended historic and contemporary elements. She also

suggested more detail for the windows and thought all the wood on the back side was a little too much. Ms. Ruedig felt in general that the project was going in the right direction.

Mr. Shea said he agreed with Ms. Ruedig that the building should incorporate more historic details. He said he wasn't sure that the building was right for its location because that particular type of architecture was seen in a lot of suburban areas around Boston and he felt it didn't relate to Portsmouth. He thought the massing was good but wanted to see more historic elements, textures, and proportions like the ones that made Portsmouth unique.

Mr. Wyckoff said he found the project successful in general and that the massing didn't bother him because there was a stepping down to the Bridge Street area. He said he was enthusiastic about the wood because it was a warm element and he didn't think Portsmouth details needed to be replicated in that particular area. He liked the fact that the wood accented the bays. He thought the back of the building had too much wood but liked the wood accents, the bays, the colonnade effect, and the punched openings. He also felt that the sidewalk was important and said he was happy not to see red brick at that location.

City Council Representative Pearson said she agreed with all the design comments and was partial to the wood. She said the location would change in the future when capital improvement plans took effect by narrowing Maplewood Avenue and calming traffic, resulting in the intersection of Maplewood Avenue and Deer Street being transformed in the next few years.

Vice-Chairman Lombardi said he missed the original plan but liked the new one and was drawn to the varying textures. He suggested as much space as possible for the sidewalks. He said the wood was interesting but felt that the contrast to the stone was a little busy. He agreed that the windows were stark but that it could be solved by uniquely dividing them. He said the streetscape was great, and he confirmed that the stores would be broken up from one another. He suggested that the highest point be brighter than darker.

Mr. Rawling noted that the way the colors recessed the building made it read as a big light-colored building that seemed to have a lot of dark places, and that it was the opposite on the Deer Street side because the colors were more muted. Chairman Almeida said it reminded him of a particular hotel that was in the middle of nowhere because of the similar color scheme. Mr. Wyckoff said he felt the building had quality materials and would provide more public space with wider sidewalks. He said the project had a lot going for it. He also said that, as far as the Conditional User Permit, an added story would be fine.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*It was moved, seconded and **passed** by unanimous (7-0) vote to **continue** the work session to the November 2016 meeting.*

At this point in the meeting, Chairman Almeida read the postponed Work Sessions B and E into the record.

*It was moved, seconded and **passed** unanimously (7-0) to postpone the two work sessions to the November 2016 meeting.*

D. Work Session requested by **Michael De la Cruz, owner**, for property located at **75 Congress Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (rebuild historic parapets, add series of flat roofed dormers, add series of roof walkways and decks, add series of windows) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 117 as Lot 5 and lies within the CD 5, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts. (*This item was postponed at the September 7, 2016 meeting to the October 12, 2016 meeting.*)

The owner Michael De la Cruz was present to speak to the petition, and he reviewed the packet. He noted that the Board of Adjustment granted variances for the heights for the pediments and the dormers and the decks. He reviewed the dormers and said they would allow residents to see the North Church steeple as well as a portion of the City. He discussed the windows, the slight change in the building proportions, the railing, the garage, and the roof lines.

Ms. Ruedig asked why Dormer A was farther out than the others. Mr. De la Cruz said the other dormers were stepped back to allow a view of the North Church steeple. Mr. Wyckoff asked whether the stepped-back dormers had been constructed and was told that they were not.

Mr. De la Cruz then discussed the roof. Mr. Rawling noted that the cooling tower seemed to be prominent. Mr. De la Cruz said he would change the color to make it blend in better with the brick but felt that the office dormer would draw the eye away from it.

Ms. Ruedig said she was concerned with the amount of items that was visible and was also worried about one dormer. Mr. De la Cruz said he had mocked up every dormer and that they weren't as visible as they seemed due to the pediments. He also said that the railing would not be prominent because the eye would be drawn to the pediments.

The wood and various types of brick were discussed as well as the white trim at the top of the building and whether it was historic or not. The parapet color was discussed in length.

Chairman Almeida stressed that the project wasn't a restoration but was a modern interpretation of what was there, and he said it was important to get that profile back, regardless of the color or material. The wood material and longevity issues were discussed.

Mr. Shea suggested that Mr. De la Cruz bring in materials, samples and colors at his next presentation. Mr. Rawling agreed and also suggested that an enlarged detail of one of the pediments be included in the public hearing. Ms. Ruedig said she hoped that the masons would use the correct mortar for the brickwork.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

*The applicant indicated that he would **move forward** with a Public Hearing in the near future.*

E. Work Session requested by **Kimberley A. Lucy Revocable Living Trust, owner, Kimberley A. and James C. Lucy, trustees and James C. Lucy Revocable Living Trust, owner, James C. and Kimberley A. Lucy, trustees**, for property located at **127 & 137 High**

Request To Postpone

Street, wherein permission is requested to allow new construction to existing structures (construct new building at rear of 137 High Street, construct roof deck at rear of 127 High Street, both with associated parking and landscaping) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said properties are shown on Assessor Plan 118 as Lots 20 and 21 and lies within the CD 4, Historic and Downtown Overlay Districts. *(This applicant has asked to postpone to the October 2016 meeting.)*

*It was moved, seconded and **passed** by unanimous vote (7-0) to postpone the petition to the November 2016 meeting.*

III. ADJOURNMENT

*At 9:45 p.m., it was moved, seconded, and **passed** by unanimous vote ((7-0) to adjourn the meeting.*

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Breault
HDC Recording Secretary

These minutes were approved at the Historic District Commission meeting on November 2, 2016.