

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

**EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**6:30 p.m.**

**August 3, 2016  
to be reconvened from August 10, 2016**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Joseph Almeida; Vice Chairman/Planning Board Representative William Gladhill; Members Jon Wyckoff, Dan Rawling; Reagan Ruedig, Vincent Lombardi; City Council Representative Nancy Pearson; Alternates Richard Shea and John Mayer

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:**

**ALSO PRESENT:** Nick Cracknell, Principal Planner

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Chairman Almeida stated that Work Session D, 10 Humphreys Court, had a request to postpone by the applicant.

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

**I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

1. July 6, 2016
2. July 13, 2016

Mr. Lombardi recused himself from the vote.

*It was moved, seconded, and **passed** by unanimous vote (7-0) to approve both sets of minutes, with a minor edit on the July 13 minutes.*

**II. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS**

- A. 31 Cabot Street (*This item was postponed at the July 13, 2016 meeting.*)
- B. 536 Marcy Street
- C. 540 Marcy Street
- D. 500 Market Street
- E. 173-175 Market Street

- F. 28 Dennett Street
- G. 272 New Castle Avenue
- H. 29 Vaughan Street (*This item is postponed to the August 10, 2016 meeting.*)
- I. 147 Middle Street
- J. 2 Bow Street (*This item is postponed to the August 10, 2016 meeting.*)
- K. 303 Islington Street
- L. 640 Middle Street

Mr. Cracknell recommended that Petition A, 31 Cabot Street, be pulled for discussion.

He then reviewed Petitions B and C. Chairman Almeida said he would have to recuse himself from Petition C, 540 Marcy Street.

Mr. Cracknell reviewed Petitions D and E.

Mr. Rawling asked that Petition F, 28 Dennett Street, be pulled for discussion.

Mr. Cracknell reviewed the rest of the petitions. On Petition J, 2 Bow Street, Ms. Ruedig asked whether the removed brick would be reused. Mr. Cracknell said he would find out.

On Petition K, 303 Islington Street, Vice-Chair Gladhill stated that he was uncomfortable with a window, but Mr. Cracknell said it was necessary due to the stairwell.

*It was moved, seconded, and **passed** by unanimous vote (7-0) to grant a Certificate of Approval for Administrative Approval Petitions B, D, E, G, I and K.*

Chairman Almeida recused himself on Petitions C, 540 Marcy Street and Petition L, 640 Middle Street.

*Ms. Ruedig made a motion to **grant** a Certificate of Approval for Petitions C and L. Mr. Wyckoff seconded. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote (7-0).*

The Commission then discussed Petition F, 28 Dennett Street. Chairman Almeida resumed his voting seat.

Mr. Rawling discussed the mulling patterns for the upper and lower windows and stated that 8/8 would be more consistent for the glass size than 6/6. Chairman Almeida agreed. Mr. Wyckoff said it was difficult to make a smaller window four panes wide and noted that the windows would not be visible except from the pond. Chairman Almeida said the Commission had already approved the upper windows, and the applicant was matching those. Ms. Ruedig said the windows wouldn't be seen. Mr. Rawling said he would accept the windows as shown.

*Vice-Chair Gladhill made a motion to **grant** a Certificate of Approval for the application as presented, and Ms. Ruedig seconded. The motion **passed** by unanimous vote (7-0).*

The Commission then discussed Petition A, 31 Cabot Street. Mr. Rawling recused himself from the petition.

Mr. Cracknell stated that the windows were replaced, some of which occurred in advance of the approval, and then the porch was completed. He said there were several modifications made to the porch design behind the house as well as slight modifications to the railings. He said it was different from what was approved. He also stated that the applicant installed full screens, even though there was a stipulation for half screens, and that the applicant had submitted additional information as to why the full screen option was appropriate for the neighborhood context.

The applicant Kristen Campbell approached the podium and said she had nothing further to add.

Vice-Chair Gladhill asked why the full screens were installed. Ms. Campbell said they were put in with the original windows before she went to the Commission. Vice-Chair Gladhill asked Ms. Campbell if she would be amenable to half screens on the front façade. She said it would be very costly. Mr. Wyckoff noted that the house was on the edge of the District and felt it didn't have to be held to historic window replacement standards. He also observed that the rear porch was improved by eliminating the posts.

*Ms. Ruedig made a motion to **grant** a Certificate of Approval for the application as presented, and Mr. Wyckoff seconded.*

Ms. Ruedig referred to Mr. Wyckoff's comments as a reason for approving the petition, and said it was a property that was a little out of the way and the applicant had already done a lot of effort.

*The motion **passed** by unanimous vote (7-0).*

### **III. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

1. Petition of **Mahanna Properties, LLC, owner**, for property located at **43 Whidden Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (relocate rear door, remove existing deck, construct new deck with granite steps, install lighting, infill misc. basement windows) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 109 as Lot 2 and lies within the General Residence B and Historic Districts.

#### **SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

The owner Greg Mahanna was present to speak to the petition. He explained the reasons for the exterior renovations, emphasizing that the addition was narrower than the rest of the house and would not be visible from the street.

Vice-Chair Gladhill noted a condenser protruding from the house. Mr. Mahanna said it was an error and said it would not protrude.

Mr. Lombardi said the changes were beneficial to the house but noted that he didn't like composite decking because it deteriorated.

Mr. Rawling said he would support the changes, with the exception of the composite, because he thought authentic materials were more appropriate for the house and the neighborhood. It was further discussed. Mr. Rawling stated that the deck and trim should be wood. Mr. Mahanna also said he would repair the area above the step in wood.

### **SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION**

No one rose to speak, and Chairman Almeida closed the public hearing.

### **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

*Mr. Lombardi made a motion to **grant** a Certificate of Approval for the application, with the following stipulations:*

- 1) Except for the single basement window that will be removed and replaced with clapboards, the basement windows will remain as is and be repaired.*
- 2) The condenser will be located behind the house and the plane of the sidewall.*
- 3) The trim and deck shall be wood.*

*Ms. Ruedig seconded the motion.*

Mr. Lombardi said the changes would preserve the integrity of the District and were compatible with the design as well as an improvement.

*The motion **passed** by unanimous vote (7-0).*

2. Petition of **Harbour Place Condominium Association, owner**, for property located at **135 Bow Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace wood roof shingles with asphalt roof shingles) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 105 as Lot 2-1 and lies within the CD 4, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

### **SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

Jennifer Ramsey of SOMMA Studios was present on behalf of the applicant. She stated that they wanted to re-roof the building with asphalt roof shingles. She passed out a shingle sample to the Commission, and the Commission further discussed the shingle.

Mr. Shea asked whether the shingles were already elsewhere on the existing building. Ms. Ramsey said the ell-shaped building had shingles on the sloped portion, and that they would match existing. Vice-Chair Gladhill asked how much of the roof would be replaced with the shingles, and Ms. Ramsey said they would replace the roof just on the front building and that the entire building would be the same material.

Chairman Almeida noted that every time an application for the building appeared before the Commission, it resulted in erosion in quality. He referred to the request to remove all the copper roofs from the entries. He said it was not a historic building but its location and quality were high, and he feared that it was being eroded systematically and would turn into a nondescript building. Mr. Ramsey said they chose materials that they could afford to maintain.

Vice-Chair Gladhill said the wood shingles were 32 years old and that asphalt didn't last that long. He said he had a difficult time going to a material that he felt was going backwards. Mr. Lombardi agreed, saying that the prominent roof would be seen from the street. He felt that the building was eroding, not from the weather but from the new materials being put on it. It was further discussed, and he thought it would be wiser to use the wood to match existing.

Ms. Ruedig asked whether the windows near the copper valleys would remain. Ms. Ramsey said they would if they could install the shingle that they were requesting. Ms. Ruedig said she did not have a problem with modern materials on a modern building and noted that the Commission had seen instances where wood roofs were put back on the buildings that had asphalt roofs on them for a long time, like the John Paul Jones House. She said roofs had to be replaced due to their limited life cycle, and there was always the option of going back to the original design.

Mr. Shea said he could go either way because the building wasn't a historic structure.

### **SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION**

No one rose to speak, and Chairman Almeida closed the public hearing.

### **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

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

- 1- The copper valleys shall remain.*

*Ms. Ruedig seconded the motion.*

Mr. Wyckoff stated that the rest of the condominium had already been roofed with wooden shingles that he had not realized were wood. He said it was a contemporary building built in a time when a lot of materials were failing, so he understood why the applicant had to replace it. He said the heavy-weight shingles with a 50-year warranty were better than a wood shingle replacement on the waterfront because modern wood shingles were not of the quality of those from 40-50 years ago. He said the project would preserve the integrity of the District and would complement and enhance its architectural character.

Vice-Chair Gladhill said he would not support the application because he didn't think it maintained the special character of the District by getting rid of historically-appropriate wood material and installing a 20<sup>th</sup> Century roofing material.

Councilor Pearson said she appreciated the effort that the condominium association was putting in to beautify the building and agreed with the Commission's comments, but she felt that it wasn't an old building, so she would support the application.

*The motion **passed** by a vote of 4-3, with Chairman Almeida, Vice-Chair Gladhill, and Mr. Lombardi voting in opposition.*

3. Petition of **355 Pleasant Street, LLC, owner**, for property located at **355 Pleasant Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow a new free standing structure (construct 2 ½ story duplex home) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 103 as Lot 64 and lies within the General Residence B and Historic Districts.

### **SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

Mr. Shea recused himself from the petition so that he could represent the applicant.

The owner Katherine Williams Kane and the project architectural designer Richard Shea were present to speak to the petition. Ms. Williams Kane requested a short work session to review the final changes.

### **WORK SESSION**

Mr. Shea reviewed the changes, noting that the windows over the front door were eliminated, some details were changed on the bottom of the porch posts, and the window lintels were enlarged. He said they would still use the PVC shutters and the Green Mountain windows. They would eliminate the metal drip edge on all roof locations and replace them with cedar wood shingles and install asphalt shingles over them. Mr. Shea discussed the vents and the clapboards, and he requested a stipulation that they could either use wood clapboard or Boral.

Mr. Rawling noted a higher relief on the bevel. Mr. Shea said they were doing a 5/4 trim on all the corner boards with a single band on the windows.

Mr. Shea then discussed the side elevation, noting that they only changed the square windows. He said the overhead door in the back elevation would be field painted, and the rear door was changed so that it had a flat panel at the base. He then discussed the window details and said the triangular head piece was enlarged by three inches and the top of the column capital was broken down into two inches.

Mr. Rawling asked about the bevel on the edges, and Mr. Shea said they tried the bevel but liked the simplicity of the squareness of the edges.

Mr. Wyckoff asked Mr. Shea to review the construction of the windows, which he did.

There was no public comment. They entered the public hearing.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

The owner Katherine Williams Kane and the project architectural designer Richard Shea briefly reviewed their petition.

Mr. Rawling said there were no shutter holdbacks and thought hardware approval for those may be needed. Mr. Shea said they had not chosen the hardware and asked whether it could be an administrative approval item. The Commission agreed.

Vice-Chair Gladhill asked what was in front of the proposed building. Mr. Shea said it was a combination stone wall and fence. Vice-Chair Gladhill asked whether it would have an augmentation to make it look like one could walk up to the house. Mr. Shea said the stone wall would have to be modified for stairs. Chairman Almeida agreed that it was an important point.

## **SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION**

No one rose to speak, and Chairman Almeida closed the public hearing.

## **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

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

- 1) The exterior siding shall be wood or Borel composite material.*

*Mr. Wyckoff seconded the motion.*

Vice-Chair Gladhill said the structure had a well-crafted design and thought the feedback produced a wonderful product. He said the structure took in historic elements yet made it its own, and he noted that the historic design was not prevalent but had historic characteristics that were new. He said the project would preserve and maintain the character of the District by incorporating elements from around the District, and it would complement and enhance the architectural and historic character of the area. He also said that it would improve the conservation of property values because the very large structure would replace an empty lot.

*The motion **passed** by unanimous vote (7-0).*

4. Petition of **Ann L. and Mark M. Wilbur, owners**, for property located at **199 Middle Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow demolition of an existing structure (demolish rear two story addition) and allow new construction to an existing structure (construct new two story addition and decks, rework and relocate existing fence) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 127 as Lot 6 and lies within the Mixed Residential Office and Historic Districts.

## **SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

Chairman Almeida recused himself from the petition, and Vice-Chair Gladhill assumed his seat.

Juli MacDonald of DeStefano Architects on behalf of the owners was present to speak to the petition. She passed out an image of the new construction to the Commissioners and reviewed the petition.

Ms. Ruedig asked whether the windows were all wood, and Ms. MacDonald agreed.

Mr. Mayer asked whether the shutter was the actual one that would be used, and Ms. MacDonald said the shutter would have the existing rail seen on the house and would match existing.

Mr. Shea asked whether the lintels and muntins would match existing. Ms. MacDonald said it would be narrower, at 5/8 inches. He asked whether the window sill profile would match, and Ms. MacDonald agreed.

### **SPEAKING TO, FOR, OR AGAINST THE PETITION**

No one rose to speak, and Acting Chair Gladhill closed the public hearing.

### **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

*Mr. Wyckoff made a motion to **grant** a Certificate of Approval to the application as presented, with the following stipulations:*

- 1) The muntin width shall be 5/8”.*
- 2) The window sills and casings shall match the existing structure.*

*Mr. Lombardi seconded the motion.*

Mr. Wyckoff said the project seemed to be appropriate because it replaced a 1980s project that didn't seem to fit on the back of the building. He said it was consistent with the special and defining character of surrounding properties, it related to the historic existing structure, and it had some compatible and innovative technology.

*The motion **passed** by unanimous vote (7-0).*

## **IV. WORK SESSIONS (NEW BUSINESS)**

A. Work Session requested by the **City of Portsmouth, owner, and Friends of the Music Hall, applicant, for City right-of-way located on Chestnut Street between Congress and Porter Streets**, wherein permission was requested to allow street improvements within the right-of-way (safety and aesthetic improvements including the installation of a wayfinding arch) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 126 as Lot 7 and lies within the CD 4, Historic, and Downtown Overlay Districts.



Chairman Almeida resumed his seat. He read the petition into the record. Councilor Pearson recused herself from the petition.

Music Hall trustee Ben Auger, Music Hall Executive Director Patricia Lynch, and landscape architect Terrence Parker were present to speak to the petition. Mr. Auger reviewed the Commission's previous feedback. He said the arch design had been simplified by reducing the filigree and lowering it by three feet. He said they reduced the column size to 24 inches. He said they would work with the Department of Public Works on the speed table, as well as work with Art-Speak to do a musical element. He said the Music Hall would fund the designated maintenance program and communicate the construction schedule to the abutters. He noted that a pedestrian-friendly street would be created by installing shrubs and trees, lighting on the arch, and skateboard-detering benches. Mr. Auger showed before and after photos of the arch.

Mr. Wyckoff asked what the material of the arch was. Mr. Auger said it was steel, coated with a copper patina. Mr. Wyckoff asked whether there were bolts or rivets on the arch, and Mr. Auger said they were nuts and bolts that were just a design element.

Mr. Mayer asked what the original goal of the arch was. Ms. Lynch explained in detail how the arch would be helpful to people trying to find the Music Hall as well as the African Burial Ground. Mr. Mayer said the arch was a bold statement and would draw attention to Chestnut Street, but he felt that it was esthetically in conflict with the historic landscape. He said he struggled with the quality of the design and would prefer something less massive. He noted that some of the features seemed out of context and too ornamental. Mr. Parker said the context was focused on and inspired by architectural elements of Portsmouth.

Mr. Rawling said he felt that the design of the arch didn't connect to the Music Hall and that the scale was very heavy and cumbersome on the street and that it needed lighter forms and more of a theatrical nature.

Mr. Lombardi noted that the Commission's goals and guidelines needed to be referred to, as far as the consistency with the special character of the District and its surrounding properties. He felt that the arch was not really consistent and compatible with the historic buildings around it and didn't complement the area. He said that the streetscape alone, with a significant change of lighting, could accomplish more than the arch.

Vice-Chair Gladhill agreed with Mr. Lombardi that the arch seemed out of place, especially in that location, and did not complement the area. He also thought it was too prominent.

Ms. Ruedig said she agreed with Mr. Rawling and didn't think the design was quite right. She said she appreciated that different things from Portsmouth were being pulled but noted that it didn't always work because there still had to be a theme. She said the motifs didn't work for the site and also felt that the materials could be much lighter. She suggested that it would be more contemporary by being thinner and lighter and would fit in more with the Music Hall's interior.

Mr. Shea said he liked the concept but noted that Congress Street was a one-way street and that the arch would be a side view to people driving by Chestnut Street. He said the arch seemed to

disappear from Congress Street, and he suggested making the arch come out over the street a bit. Mr. Wyckoff agreed, saying that the view of the arch was nice from across the street but was a microsecond to someone driving by. He liked the base and the beam going up to the arch and said he would be satisfied seeing just those things, similar to some obelisks in other cities. He said it was an art piece and wouldn't do what the applicant wanted it to do.

Chairman Almeida said the arch was an artistic expression, which was the reason he originally gave it license, and that he currently saw it as a framework for a stage for Chestnut Street. He said the arch suggested recycled iron from Portsmouth's bridges, and he felt that it preserved the integrity of the District. He noted that things were allowed in that area because of the Music Hall. He also noted that the painting in the lobby showed an arch crossing Congress Street.

Mr. Rawling discussed the exterior construction details and whether they complemented or enhanced the existing structure and were compatible with surrounding properties. Mr. Parker said the arch was in context with the pedestrian scale and the history of Portsmouth and would add a dramatic north-south alignment. Mr. Rawling said his issue was not with the placement of the arch but with its style. They further discussed whether the arch should protrude over Congress Street, the importance of its connection to the African Burial Ground, and the promotion of joy and art.

Mr. Wyckoff said he felt comfortable with the arch and thankful that the bridge construction elements were added, which he felt made a big difference.

Ms. Ruedig said the arch was a piece of art and would incite tension from people who wanted to see more or less. She said one of the obstacles was that it was designed by a committee with too many opinions. She said she loved the idea of the arch and felt it would contribute to the community, but wanted to see the best possible design that wasn't diluted by too many opinions.

Vice-Chair Gladhill said he felt the arch was inconsistent with surrounding properties and that it would fit better on Hanover Street or Portwalk Place, where there was a transition from old to new. He said the problem was the arch itself, not the design.

Chairman Almeida said the concept of the arch promoted the education, pleasure, and welfare for Portsmouth's residents and visitors.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Councilor Pearson said it would be dark most of the time when patrons were going to the Music Hall and that the arch would be lit up. She felt that even though the arch had a thin side view, people would be able to see it. She also felt that the arch would provide an opportunity for a public art element and that Art-Speak was excited that a private organization had stepped forward to provide access to everyone to experience a piece of public art. She thought it would set an incredible precedent.

The Commission discussed whether they should send a report to the City Manager. Vice-Chair Gladhill said the Commission would not make a formal recommendation. Chairman Almeida

concluded that the Commission was in favor of the concept, specifically everything at grade level, but had different opinions on the design, location, appropriateness, and style of the arch. Mr. Cracknell noted that the Commissioners were in favor of the horizontal streetscape and improvements on the ground, and that most of the Commissioners agreed about having an arch and its location as well as the revised base, but were concerned about the style.

## **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

The Commission provided informal comments on both the streetscape improvements proposed for Chestnut Street as well as the proposed Archway at the Chestnut Street and Congress Street intersection.

B. Work Session requested by **Jason Lander and Justus C. Bergweger, Jr., owners**, for property located at **34-36 Highland Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (remove and replace windows) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 135 as Lot 10 and lies within the General Residence A and Historic Districts.

Ms. Ruedig recused herself from the petition because she was a neighbor. She left the meeting.

The owner Jason Lander and the project designer Richard O'Donnell were present to speak to the petition. Mr. Lander reviewed the exterior renovations and noted that the storm windows on the front of the building were deteriorating. He showed the Commission a mockup of the Andersen SDL window that he wanted to use.

Mr. Wyckoff discussed the casing. Mr. Shea said the Commission liked to preserve historic windows if possible, and if not, they preferred a replacement sash kit. He said their last choice would be to put a frame within a frame, which was what the applicant wanted. They further discussed window options.

## **DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

The Commission postponed the application to the August 10, 2016 meeting with a site walk to be held prior to the meeting.

## **V. ADJOURNMENT**

*At 9:50 p.m., it was moved, seconded, and **passed** unanimously (7-0) to adjourn the meeting.*

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Breault  
HDC Recording Secretary

These minutes were approved at the Historic District Commission meeting on September 7, 2016.