

Newburyport Historical Commission

Minutes of the 20 October 2011 Meeting

1. Call to Order

The regularly scheduled meeting the Newburyport Historical Commission was called to order at 7:37 in the City Council Chambers, City Hall. Present: Tom Kolterjahn, Ned McGrath, Linda Smiley, and Margaret Welch. Absent: Bill Todd and Steve Dodge.

2. Old Business

251 Merrimac Street (Brad Kutcher, applicant) – Mr. Kutcher submitted a revised preservation restriction. The NHC voted to authorize the Chair to sign it (4 yes, 2 absent).

3. Advisory Review

Drew Flanagan of the Mayor's Office presented plans for a handicapped ramp for the Emma Andrews Library with project architect Chip Nutter of Woodman Associates. A ramp winding from the back door and around the side will be built (the back door will be widened). Planting strips will mask the ramp. Mr. Nutter said that a lift at the front door would be inappropriate and expensive. Chair Smiley said that the ramp would not be an intrusion on the front of the building. Member Kolterjahn asked that the old back door be retained for possible future reuse. The NHC approved the plans (4 yes, 2 absent).

Mr. Flanagan presented photographs of the damage to the Firehouse from Hurricane Irene. Gutters and bricks were torn off on the right side of the building (facing Market Square). Members after studying the photos said that the wooden gutters were probably installed incorrectly, resulting in the damage. Mr. Flanagan said that the city's insurance agency demanded that metal gutters be installed as replacements. NHC members requested that Mr. Flanagan request wooden gutters properly installed and suitable mortar for the brickwork repair. Chair Smiley and Member Kolterjahn will make a site visit.

Jo Ann Clemons, 26 Jefferson Street, discussed placing a preservation restriction on her house as part of a Section 6C special permit. In order to gain revenue to renovate her home, she would place a free-standing condo in the back. The NHC pointed out that preservation restrictions used in similar circumstances would be available online at the NHC site. Ms. Clemons had questions about weatherizing her house and installing solar panels. She would probably be permitted to remove non-historic additions with new additions being subject to approval.

4. Demolition Applications

257-259 Water Street (Ian Lucy, applicant) – Neither Mr. Lucy or William Salley, project architect, appeared. The application asked for a full-building demolition of the two-family residence built in 1898. NHC members noted that Mr. Lucy in a letter attached to the application said that a living trust for his mother currently owned the house and that he would buy the house from his siblings after his mother's death. He intended to build a single-family house for himself. No owner's signature was present in the application. NHC members were not sure whether Mr. Lucy was empowered by the living trust to act for his mother re: this application. The NHC voted the structure historically significant (4 yes, 2 absent). Chair Smiley would ask for clarification from city attorneys. A public hearing had been already set.

Review of Minutes

Minutes of 6 October approved (4 yes, 2 absent).

Meeting ended 8:40.