

# Newburyport Historical Commission

## Minutes of the 17 November 2011 Meeting

### **1. Call to Order**

The regularly scheduled meeting the Newburyport Historical Commission was called to order at 7:32 in the City Council Chambers, City Hall. Present: Steve Dodge, Tom Kolterjahn, Ned McGrath, Linda Smiley, Bill Todd, and Margaret Welch.

### **2. Demolition Applications**

*132 High Street (Clive Lee, applicant)* – Mr. Lee said that he was both the applicant and owner in response to Chair Smiley's question. He wished to demolish a garage to obtain more parking space. He speculated that it could be ca. 1900. Member Todd said that it was not prominent from the street. The NHC voted that the structure was not historically significant and thus released for demolition (6 yes).

*40 Middle Street (Thomas Keery II/ Russell Grover & Associates)* – Mr. Dave Keery represented the project on behalf of his brother and associates. They wish to remove the connecting roof between the house and garage so that a second story space may be added. NHC members said that they liked the design. Member Kolterjahn was concerned about the existing slate roof. Members noted inconsistency in the plans and drawings about the retention of two chimneys. After some discussion, Mr. Keery said that they would keep the exterior chimneys. Members voted to release the connector roof on the conditions that the presented plans are followed and that the chimneys on the exterior would be retained (6 yes).

*7 Ship Street (William Edwards, owner)* – Member Todd recused himself. The leaking roof triggered the project to lift the wall and put in a new roof structure. The ridgepole of the new addition would be underneath the lower angle of the main gambrel. The addition would be built around the existing chimney. Member Kolterjahn noted that the proposed replacement windows would be an improvement over the current one over one replacements. The NHC voted the structure historically significant and that the demolition as shown on the presented plans be allowed (5 yes, 1 abstention).

*3-5 Pine Street* – Contractor Tim Carey represented the project for SC Green Cities Contracting. Chair Smiley noted the removal of clapboards and sheathing since the last meeting, and member Kolterjahn voiced concern over the loss of sheathing protecting the framing. Mr. Carey talked at length about the deteriorated condition including the rotted corner boards and showed photographs. Member Kolterjahn believed that the amount of building fabric exceeding exploratory demolition but noted that was the Building Inspector's purview. He had seen some sheathing in poor condition but also some in salvageable shape. The NHC voted the structure

historically significant (6 yes). A public hearing will be scheduled for 1 December. The NHC will revisit the site beforehand.

After member Kolterjahn said that developers usually wished to tear down structures, Mr. Carey said that it “was always easier to tear down” rather than rehabilitate. A discussion ensued about saving the older portion of the building; member Kolterjahn mentioned the “sturdy red oak framing.” Mr. Carey said that he would consider using building techniques with which he was not familiar and that he did not wish to be known as a man taking down Newburyport’s buildings. He also said that he was working with a firm that specialized in buying older buildings; “a lot of old houses were a good deal because they need a lot of work.”

### **Review of Minutes**

Minutes of 3 November approved (6 yes).

### **Old Business**

Chair Smiley mentioned that she had not been able to discover whether the GPS antennae on the Unitarian Church steeple would be visible.

### **New Business**

NHC members discussed whether contractors, architects and other professionals may represent a project without the owner present.

*Meeting ended 9:20.*