

Newburyport Historical Commission
City Council Chambers
April 17, 2014
Minutes

1. Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Newburyport Historical Commission was called to order by Chair Linda Smiley at 7:37. Planning Director Andy Port was also in attendance.

2. Roll Call

In attendance were members Linda Smiley, Stephen Dodge, Malcolm Carnwath, Ned McGrath, Sarah White, and Margaret Welch.

3. Preservation Restrictions

Kelley School Restriction

Chair Smiley had reviewed the list of protected features in the 27 March draft, and the NHC will have purview over masonry repair. She understands that interior features are not included in the restriction. The NHC will ask MHC to make an expedited review.

4. Demolition Advisory Review

43 Fair Street

Scott Brown, project architect, was uncertain to continue the process of demolishing an addition under the new demolition control ordinances. Mr. Port of the Planning Department advised Mr. Brown to proceed. Tom Kolterjahn of 64 Federal Street said that he thought that the ZBA would approve the plans.

Mr. Brown proceeded to discuss changes to his original proposal – he will leave the original roofline. He continued to want to demolish the ell and to replace it with an addition with a staircase from basement to attic. NHC members liked that the proposed addition would keep to the extant footprint. Mr. Brown agreed that keeping the scale “down” was “super important.” The NHC voted to approve the plans of 17 April (4 yes, 2 abstentions, 1 absent) and will pass a positive recommendation to ZBA.

5. Demolition Delay

11 Pond Street

Project architect Andy Sidford presented plans for taking down a back addition and building a new addition. He will not be altering the front, and the roofline of the new addition will not be visible from the street. The NHC voted to approve the plans as proposed (6 yes).

6. Demolition Advisory Review (cont.)

193 High Street (Barn)

Mr. Anthony Conte bought the funeral home about five years ago and considered renovating the barn. Contractors told him that renovation would be cost-prohibitive. After a structural engineer

said that the building was unsafe, Mr. Conte asked the Building Inspector to condemn the building. The Building Inspector did not condemn the building but wrote a memorandum detailing how to repair the structure. The owners did not follow this instructions. A portion of the roof subsequently collapsed.

NHC members scheduled site visits. Tom Kolterjahn of 64 Federal Street, after he was acknowledged by the chair, said that the barn was clearly historic, and he recommended two contractors specializing in rehabilitating historic barns. Chair Smiley noted that there was great differences in structural engineers evaluating the field of historic structures. Mr. Conte said that rehabilitation might cost three times the value of the property.

Review of Minutes

Review of 3 April minutes was deferred due to lack of quorum.

New Business

NHC members and the Planning Director discussed the new Demolition Control ordinances. The Planning Office will forward the recommendations of the NHC to the ZBA and Planning Board. The NHC could coordinate with the Planning Office to send NHC members when the Planning Office cannot attend a relevant meeting.

Tom Kolterjahn shared the exciting news that the cobblestone survey for the Powder House was completed. He showed a diagram of the cobblestone pattern and drip brick coursing.

Meeting ended 8:45.