

Newburyport Historical Commission

July 10, 2019

City Council Chambers

Minutes

1. Call to Order

Chair Glenn Richards called a regular meeting of the Newburyport Historical Commission to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

In attendance were members Ron Ziemba, Christopher Fay, Malcolm Carnwath, Stephen Dodge and Glenn Richards. Ned McGrath participated by telephone.

3. Public Hearings

Amy Badger

21 Olive Street

Partial Demolition

Ned McGrath recused himself from the discussion. Lisa Mead represented the applicant, who is proposing to remove the rear portion of the structure and replace it with a one-story addition on a larger footprint. A middle two-story addition would also be removed and rebuilt on a larger footprint. The two additions would be distinctive from the original structure in both height and width. Their roofs would be of the same pitch as the roof on the historic structure.

The hearing was opened to comments from the public. Patricia Peknik, 4 Dove Street, said she supports the proposal.

Malcolm Carnwath moved to accept the plans as submitted and release the non-historic additions for demolition. Steve Dodge seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Cummings Architects

24 Jefferson Street

Partial Demolition

Mathew Cummings described the proposal to remove a lean-to and sunroom and construct a series of additions in their place. The rooflines of the two two-story additions would step down from the original structure. They would be followed by a one-story addition. Mr. Cummings said the intention is for the sections to appear as if they have been added over time. To this end, details such as the windows would not be consistent across the additions.

Glenn Richards commented the standards of the Secretary of the Interior are not being followed in that the new portions of the structure would not be distinguishable from the original. Ron Ziemba said the design is a sensitive one. Both Ned McGrath and Christopher Fay said they are concerned about the size of the addition in relation to the original structure and the impact it would have on the streetscape.

The hearing was opened to comments from the public. Patricia Peknik said the additions would overwhelm the historic structure. Ben Becker said the proposal would be an improvement over the existing conditions.

Newburyport Historical Commission
July 10, 2019

Ron Ziemba moved to accept the plans as presented. Stephen Dodge seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4 to 2 vote with Ned McGrath and Christopher Fay voting against it.

4. General Business

Grant Lewis

4-6 Bromfield

DCOD Advisory Review Modification

Grant Lewis said the nine-over-six windows that were approved are more expensive than he expected. He instead is proposing to install six-over-six wood windows with a vinyl exterior cladding. The revised plans show that vinyl windows would be installed. Mr. Lewis added a note and signed the plans to indicate they are inaccurate in this regard.

Ned McGrath commented that the plans he received are not the same as those posted on the City's website. He added that the raised roof and expanded footprint would change the shape of structure. He said the role of the Commission is to preserve the City's vernacular architecture. It was noted that the plans were approved at a previous meeting and the only issue to be discussed at this time is the modification of the windows. Stephen Dodge moved to approve to the use of six-over-six wood windows with a vinyl exterior cladding. Malcolm Carnwath seconded the motion. The motion was approved with Ned McGrath abstaining.

Kristen and Micah Donahue

16 Olive Street

Amended Demolition Plan

Ned McGrath recused himself from the discussion. The one-year demolition delay was imposed at the previous meeting. The applicant subsequently revised the plans. The addition is now clearly differentiated from the original structure. The new plans have been reviewed by members of the Newburyport Preservation Trust. Stephen Dodge moved to accept the plans as amended and release the rear addition for demolition. Ron Ziemba seconded the motion. The motion was approved with Ned McGrath abstaining.

Chris Horan

5 63rd Street

Demolition Delay Historical Significance Determination

Lisa Mead represented the applicant and requested the five-family structure be released for demolition. The structure has been greatly modified over the years. Stephen Dodge moved the structure is not historically significant. Ron Ziemba seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Complete Streets – Merrimac Street at Atkinson Common

Glenn Richards moved to authorize the chair to send a letter to MHC stating the project would not have an adverse impact on historic resources. Ned McGrath seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Charles Griffin

Auburn Street/Old Gaol

Preservation Restriction Discussion

Some of the language in the proposed restriction is not appropriate. The document is labeled as a draft and must be final in order for the Commission to approve it. Glenn Richards moved to authorize the chair to address concerns about the preservation restriction with Charles Griffin. Ned McGrath seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Preservation Restrictions for CPA FY2020 Grant Applications

The Community Preservation Committee has recommended to City Council that CPA funds be awarded for work to the Custom House and Cushing House. Preservation restrictions are in place that require the Commission review and approve any major changes to the structures. Stephanie Niketic said a member of the Planning Office should be in attendance to provide guidance on the matter. The Commission members should review the restrictions to determine if they are adequate in scope. The duration of the Cushing House restriction is ten years and should be perpetual, given that the Historical Society has received \$359,000 in CPA funds. The restriction for the Custom House was prepared in 2003 and is not in keeping with restrictions that are currently being written. The document is also out of date; the Maritime Society is the owner of the structure but was a leasee at the time the restriction was written. The Commission members will review the restrictions. They will request guidance from the Planning Office and will ask representatives of the two organizations to attend a meeting to discuss the restrictions.

5. Correspondence

An email was received from Andy Port commenting on the amendments Councilor Eigerman has proposed for the DOD zoning ordinance.

6. Adjournment

Malcolm Carnwath moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m. Ned McGrath seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.