

Newburyport Historical Commission
Minutes of the July 19, 2010 Meeting

1. Call to Order

A meeting of the Newburyport Historical Commission was called to order by Chair Linda Smiley at 7:30 p.m.

2. Roll Call

In attendance were members Linda Smiley, Tom Kolterjahn, Stephen Feige, Leah McGavern and Margaret Welch.

3. Public Hearing

8 Harrison Street

Bruce Taylor, AIA, for Phillip Guinta

Mark Griffin appeared for the applicant. He said the applicant's architect, Bruce Taylor, was of the impression that a gambrel roof would be the only design acceptable to NHC. Mr. Griffin said the applicant does not wish to have a 12-month delay imposed. Linda Smiley said that NHC would not dictate a single style, especially when there is so little of the original fabric left. While the gambrel roof would be the best solution, it would not be the only choice. NHC members were concerned about the proportions of the third floor as presented. They wished to have a dialogue with the applicant about possible alternatives to the proposed design and would like to see the existing first and second floor timbers saved. Leah McGavern said the issue is not about style, but rather about saving the integrity of the structure. The foundation is good, as is the framing to the second floor, and a compromise might be to keep these. Tom Kolterjahn said if the new structure is to be of the Federal style, then the Federal proportions of the third floor should be retained. The applicant wishes to have the same sized windows on the third floor because that is to be the living space. Linda Smiley said the gambrel roof would be in keeping with the desire for a higher third floor. If the applicant does not wish to keep the Federal proportions then an interpretation of another style could be used for the structure. Tom Kolterjahn moved to impose the 12-month demolition delay and to encourage the applicant to provide an alternative design. Leah McGavern seconded the motion. The motion passed with four members voting in favor and Stephen Feige voting in opposition. He stated he is opposed to the design as presented.

4. Demolition Applications

23 Rear Marlboro Street

Matthew McDermott, Charmaine McDermott, Robert Miller and Dana Hooper

Leah McGavern recused herself from the discussion. Tom Kolterjahn said that while the building does not look old from the outside, inside there was a lot of early material. The structure was probably built in the 1940s or 1950s with old materials. Tom Kolterjahn moved that the structure is not historically significant. Linda Smiley seconded the motion. The motion passed with four members voting in favor and Leah McGavern abstaining.

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5. Other Business

NHC members will be added to the email chain for Planning Board and Zoning Board meeting agendas.

Margaret Welch said NHC should have been involved with the parking garage proposal at an earlier date. The Massachusetts Historical Commission has said that the FTA funding for the project triggers a Section 106 review. Historic buildings that are listed on the state historic register as contributing structures have been inaccurately identified and would be adversely impacted.

Members would like NHC to be represented at meetings on the design of the Whittier Bridge. Andy Port promised to keep them connected to the process.

Andy Port asked members about their opinion about alternatives for the waterfront. Linda Smiley said there is no need to replicate what was there as times have changed. Tom Kolterjahn said a better job could be done of telling the history of the wharfs. Andy Port asked their opinion about an expanded museum on the waterfront. Tom Kolterjahn said the Custom House should be preserved before the museum is expanded.

6. Minutes

The approval of the minutes of the July 1, 2010 meeting was deferred.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.