

Newburyport Historical Commission
City Council Chambers
August 21, 2014
Minutes

1. Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Newburyport Historical Commission was called to order by Chair Linda Smiley at 7:31 p.m.

2. Roll Call

In attendance were members Linda Smiley, Mark Bilodeau, Ned McGrath, and Margaret Welch.

3. Demolition Applications

143A State St. (Wojcicki Holdings, LLC applicant)

Mark Wojcicki, the project developer, and Paul Gagliardi, the project attorney, presented the plans to tear down the existing bungalow house and replace it with another residence. They referenced a report from Daniel Gelinas, structural engineer, which discussed cracks and buckling in the concrete foundation. They thought that the building was not in good enough condition to move. The report suggests that the soil was not appropriate to support a structure. The structure is not post and beam construction and had dimensional lumber.

The NHC voted the house historically significant. Two site visits for NHC members were arranged.

4. Advisory Review

2 Orange Street

Chair Smiley discussed the site visit to the building. The hallway of the front unit was accessible, but the attached rear building could not be seen. The NHC needed to make a recommendation to the ZBA.

Diana Kerry, 33 Temple Street, explained that she was an abutter and was speaking also for neighbors on Fair Street. She was concerned that the main structure on Orange Street, a contributing structure in the NRD, would be dramatically changed. She had lived in Newburyport for about ten years and had seen great changes in facades and in infill. NHC members urged her to attend the ZBA hearing. Ned McGrath repeated his concerns about the major changes in the façade.

Elizabeth Hallett, 30 Olive Street, said that the Newburyport Preservation Trust Board was against the project.

Chair Smiley said that she thought the addition on Fair Street was a building older than the federal-era house on Orange Street. In her opinion, certain additions in back of the Orange Street house were not historic and could be removed. She believed that the changes in windows and doors constituted over 25% demolition of the front façade. The elevated roofline on three sides would create an overwhelming presence. The following points should be incorporated into

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correspondence with the ZBA: 1) the addition on Fair Street was probably a historic shop or other building 2) the proposed fenestration and doors dramatically changed the historic façade on Orange Street 3) the smaller structure on Fair Street could be renovated and serve as one unit.

5. General Business

Maudslay State Park Potting Shed

MHC requested of the Department of Conservation and Recreation that the NHC be informed of the proposed demolition of the potting shed. NHC members expressed concern about the continued demolition of buildings in the park and will contact the DCR.

6. Advisory Review (106 Review)

Resurface Pavement, I-95

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation, in preparing its environmental review, requested that the NHC review the project (MassDOT Highway Division Project Number 606549). NHC members declined to comment.

7. Minutes

The minutes of 7 August were approved as amended (4 yes, 3 absent).

8. Public Comment

Lyndi Lanphear, 347 High Street, asked about the extensive restoration at 386 High Street house next to Atkinson Common. Chair Smiley said that the owners had contacted her about the project. The renovation does not constitute a demolition.

9. Adjournment

Linda Smiley moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 p.m. Ned McGrath seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.