

Newburyport Historical Commission
City Council Chambers
September 9, 2015
Minutes

1. Call to Order

Chair Sarah White called a regular meeting of the Newburyport Historical Commission to order at 7:30 p.m.

2. Roll Call

In attendance were members Sarah White, Stephen Dodge, Malcolm Carnwath and Mark Bilodeau.

3. Demolition Applications

None

4. Advisory Review

Diamond Sinacori, LLC

Kelley School, 151 High Street

Preservation Restriction and Plan Review

The Kelley School was closed several years ago and was used for a time by the Department of Youth Services. After the City rejected all proposals for reuse submitted in the first round of the RFP process, the building is now under agreement. A preservation restriction was placed on the building, which would require that the Commission approve any change to certain exterior features. The Commission would have no purview over changes to the interior.

Lisa Mead and Steve Tice presented the plans that Diamond Sinacori has proposed for the structure. Ms. Mead said the Commission has no statutory control over the building but she requested the members vote to approve the plans to aid in the purchase and sale process.

The building would be converted to house ten residential units. Parking for 14 cars would be located under the structure. Ms. Mead said the design is in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's standards. Two penthouse units would be located in the attic, where dormers would be added. Balconies with iron railings and translucent glass would be added on both sides of the structure. The exterior trim would be restored and new wood windows would be installed. Any materials not being reused would be offered to the Preservation Trust.

One dormer has been planned for the front of the structure. Sarah White said she would like a second dormer to be added to create symmetry. She said this is one of the few projects the Commission has reviewed that is respectful of the historic structure. Mark Bilodeau commented that the windows as presented are not consistent throughout the structure and recommend the single-pane windows be replaced with those with muntins.

Mark Bilodeau moved to approve the proposed design with the addition of a dormer to the front roofline and the replacement of the proposed single-pane windows with divided lights. Malcolm Carnwath seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

5. Minutes

Malcolm Carnwath moved to approve the minutes of the August 11 meeting as amended. Mark Bilodeau seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

6. Correspondence

Letter from MHC Regarding the Proposed Harbormaster and Visiting Boater Facility at 27R Merrimac Street

The Massachusetts Historical Commission agreed with the Commission's assessment that the placement of a utility corridor for the proposed Harbormaster and Visiting Boater Facility along Custom House Way would cause no adverse effects on historic and archaeological resources.

Letter from MHC Regarding the Proposed Intermodal Transit Center at 90 Pleasant Street

The Massachusetts Historical Commission agreed with the Commission's determination that the Old Port Cinema would not be eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The theater is to be demolished to make way for the construction of an intermodal transit center. Federal Transit Administration funds would be used for the project, which would make it subject to a Section 106 review to determine if there would be any impact to historic properties. A consultant for the FTA had determined the building would be eligible for listing in the National Register and pressured the Commission to support this determination.

7. Designation of CPC Representative

Linda Smiley was the NHC representative on the Community Preservation Committee and her position must be filled now that she has resigned from the Commission. Malcolm Carnwath nominated Sarah White to represent the NHC on the Community Preservation Committee. Stephen Dodge seconded the motion. The motion was approved with Sarah White abstaining.

8. General Business

At the August 26 meeting Peter Binette expressed his opinion that the NHC is not allowed to place conditions on demolition permits. Sarah White said she has reviewed the demolition delay ordinance, which states an applicant would agree to receive a permit according to the conditions of the NHC. She said the community has the right to ask for conditions when an applicant is seeking relief. She asked the members to review the demolition delay ordinance to become more familiar with the Commission's authority and suggested they be more vigorous when exercising their powers with future applicants.

9. Adjournment

Malcolm Carnwath moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m. Stephen Dodge seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.