

**Newburyport Historical Commission**  
City Hall Conference Room  
July 13, 2016  
Minutes

**1. Call to Order**

Chair Sarah White called a regular meeting of the Newburyport Historical Commission to order at 7:32 p.m.

**2. Roll Call**

In attendance were members Sarah White, Malcolm Carnwath, Stephen Dodge and Mark Bilodeau. Ned McGrath was absent. Building Inspector James Bone was also in attendance.

**3. Demolition Applications**

None

**4. Advisory Review**

**Aileen Graf, Graf Architects for Doris and Paul Grillo**

11 Center Street □

DOD Advisory Review

The applicant wishes to install dormers on both sides of the structure in order to gain the necessary headroom to add two bedrooms and a bathroom to its second floor. An addition would also be constructed at the rear of the house. Aileen Graf described the changes made to the plans based on comments made at the last NHC meeting. The dormers have been made symmetrical and their size has been reduced. They have been stepped back from the edge of the roof and they are no longer as high as the ridgeline of the house.

Tom Kolterjahn, 64 Federal Street, co-president of the Newburyport Preservation Trust, said the Trust is not in favor of the dormers. They detract from the historic aspect of the building, which a small worker's cottage. Architects associated with the Trust stated to him the only solution they would find acceptable would be for the dormers to be removed from the plans.

Mark Bilodeau said the look of the dormers is not consistent with the neighborhood. He said the job of the Commission is to protect historic structures. The house is a small one representative of a type. Buyers should purchase homes of a size that meets their needs. He said he would prefer there to be a dormer only on one side of the structure. Ms. Graf said the house is too narrow to allow the owners to achieve their program with dormers on just one side of the structure. Stephen Dodge pointed out two-story structures can be found on the street and suggested raising the roof might be an option.

Stephen Dodge moved to recommend the roof be raised to accommodate a second floor. Mark Bilodeau seconded the motion. The motion did not pass.

Mark Bilodeau moved to recommend a long dormer be added to one side of the structure only. Sarah White seconded the motion. The motion did not pass.

Sarah White moved to recommend the plans for the addition and dormers be approved as rendered provided the applicant submits a dimensioned set of plans. Stephen Dodge seconded the motion. The motion passed.

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Sarah White will write an advisory opinion that includes the recommendation all materials shall be of wood and the windows shall be six-over-six and have true divided lights or exterior grids at a minimum.

**Firehouse Center for the Arts**

1 Market Square

DOD Advisory Review

Michael Teller of CBI Consulting described the plans to repoint the mortar joints in the tower at the Firehouse. The building has had a problem with water infiltration. The SDAH only has funds available to repoint the first nine feet of the tower up from the roof. The group is seeking approval of the concept of the work. Brick and mortar sampling would be submitted for approval at a later date. The mortar would be cut with a hand grinder with a diamond blade. Tom Kolterjahn recommended two cuts be made to the mortar rather than one.

Mr. Teller would like to use a clear sealer. He said the technology has improved and the sealer is breathable. Jim Bone agreed sealer has been used successfully on other structures. The product coats the bricks, but does not fill them and dissolves after five years, by which time the bricks would have regained their health. Tom Kolterjahn said the use of the product in Newburyport has failed. He said the Massachusetts Historical Commission does not recommend its use and its use has been discouraged in the *Preservation Briefs*. Sarah White said she is concerned the sealer would trap moisture. She added the Commission must act in accordance with the standards of the Secretary of the Interior.

Sarah White moved to authorize the Chair to write an advisory opinion to the Planning Board that conveys the Commission's concerns about the use of the sealer, approves the use of a diamond blade for the cutting of the mortar joints and recommends that an expert such as Richard Irons be consulted about the brick, that extra care be taken to prevent brick dust and that the work be done by a contractor that has successfully performed work on historic buildings. Mark Bilodeau seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

**5. Minutes**

Stephen Dodge moved to approve the minutes of the June 8, 2016 meeting as submitted. Sarah White seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Sarah White moved to approve the minutes of the June 22, 2016 meeting as submitted. Mark Bilodeau seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

**6. Adjournment**

Mark Bilodeau moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:46 p.m. Malcolm Carnwath seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.