

Newburyport Historical Commission

Minutes of the 2 December 2010 Meeting

1. Call to Order

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Newburyport Historical Commission (NHC) was called to order at 7:35 in the Council Chambers, City Hall. Present: Linda Smiley, Ned McGrath, Tom Kolterjahn, and Margaret Welch. Absent: Stephen Feige.

2. Old Business – Coombs Wharf

Bill Harris, Citizens for Chapter 91, reported that the archaeological portion had significant success under the adverse circumstances of oil in the ground on 30 November. Archaeologist Tim Barker saw cribbing related to the early timber of the wharf before oily water quickly covered it. Mr. Barker will return when the new trenches are dug. Pieter Hartford, manager of the sewage wastewater project, said that he would alert the Univ. of Massachusetts archaeologists when the project digs near Water Street where the earliest portions of the wharf may lie.

NHC member Kolterjahn displayed the photographs which he had taken of the cribbing. He recommended four items: 1) Remove only one stone so that the rest of the wharf remain undisturbed 2) Make careful measurements available publicly 3) Mark wharf with granite posts 4) overlay measurements on the City's GIS map. Mr. Hartford agreed to the conditions, saying that the granite posts would need approval by the Sewer Commission and that their location could not interfere with the public way. The NHC voted to adopt the recommendations (4 yes, 1 absent).

3. Advisory Review

Bulkhead of American Yacht Club -- MHC had asked the NHC to review the project. Bill Decie of the club said that the bulkhead will remain with sheet pile driven outside. The granite wall will not be disturbed. The NHC approved the project (4 yes, 1 absent) with Chair Smiley writing a letter to the MHC.

4. Community Preservation Act

Congregation Ahavas Achim – Jayne Underwood, representing the congregation, has begun to modify the preservation restriction (the congregation also had legal counsel). NHC member McGrath will make a site visit to suggest features of interest to be named in the preservation restriction.

5. Advisory Review

Emma Andrews Library (Windows) – Andrew Flanagan, Director of Planning & Policy, gave the background for the plan to replace the windows on the upper floor of the building. An estimate of \$600-800 per window for deleading and restoration led Mr. Flanagan to seek window replacements. He chose vinyl Harvey windows which he said resembled the original windows. NHC members voiced the concerns that vinyl windows would not hold up well and that the price Mr. Flanagan quoted seemed high. Chair Smiley advised the group to seek out wooden replacement windows.

251 Merrimac Street (Brad Kutcher, applicant) – Mr. Kutcher wished to discuss the terms under which the NHC would recommend his project to the Planning Board when considering his 6-C special permit. Because of concerns from the NHC on the proposed building's height, Mr. Kutcher said that he would drop the overall height of the new building by 18 inches. He would also change the proposed roofline from 10 pitch to 8 pitch. NHC members who saw the interior on a site visit praised interior features such as the staircase, mantels, and floors. NHC member Kolterjahn thought that the main doorway's columns were original. NHC member McGrath thought that the renovations would improve the property. The NHC voted to write a letter to the PB approving the project with the conditions of height and roof pitch noted (4 yes, 1 absent).

6. Review of Minutes

21 October and 18 November minutes approved.

7. Correspondence Received

The applicants for 33 Tyng Street had submitted their updated plans to the Chair who approved them.

Letter from MHC re: 36 N. Atkinson Street stating that the MHC does think that the property holds historic significance and that a perpetual preservation restriction will be approved.

Letter from MHC stating that the replacement trefoil window had no adverse effect on St. Anna's Chapel.

8. Demolition Applications

Project architect Leah McGavern said that the front chimney of 243 High Street is probably original and that the first floor fireplace has been exposed.

Meeting ended 8:55.