

Newburyport Historical Commission 21 January 2010

Meeting Minutes

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Newburyport Historical Commission (NHC) was called to order at 7:32 in the Council Chambers, City Hall. Present: Linda Smiley, Tom Kolterjahn, Leah McGavern, Ned McGrath, and Margaret Welch. Absent: Stephen Feige.

Call to Order

Guests

Dorothy and Herb Williamson with project architect Bob Gould discussed the Belleville Church's proposed rehabilitation projects including in-kind replacement of deteriorating elements of the Parish Hall and painting parts of the exterior of the church building. The Rev. Ross Varney also was in attendance. The congregation intends to apply for CPA funding. Mr. Gould spoke about the architect, Thomas Silaway, a native of Newburyport who did major public commissions including the Vermont State Capital. The commission spoke about the significance of the church as a landmark. The Williamsons distributed a list of outside organizations that used the church and parish hall. The NHC voted to write a letter of recommendation to the CPC (5 yes, 1 absent).

Advisory Review

182 High Street – Attorney Mark Griffin, project contractor James Bourque, and owner Jean Petrillo were in attendance. Mr. Griffin and the commission spoke about preservation restriction that would enable the Planning Board to grant a VI-C permit to Ms. Petrillo. NHC member Kolterjahn, who toured the interior during a previous site visit, said that the residence was “one of the finest Federalists in Newburyport.” He and other members spoke about interior features being included in the preservation restriction. Mr. Griffin said that the Planning Board had concerns over the public benefit of interior restrictions in a private residence. When members discussed the proposed fenestration of the carriage house (to be converted into a guesthouse and garage), NHC members McGavern and Welch urged that the proportions and door of the upper center opening in which hay was moved be retained; the commission approved the plan to convert the opening into a French door with the hook above remaining. The NHC voted to write a letter of support for the permit to the Planning Board with the request of a perpetual restriction. Chair Smiley told Mr. Griffin that she would write the letter by the Board meeting of 4 February.

Old Business

NHC member Kolterjahn gave an update on the Powder House restoration. He said that the group would apply for a CPA grant for funding to finish the masonry work and put down white

oak beams for a new floor. The NHC voted to recommend the project (4 yes, 1 abstention, 1 absent).

New Business

Chair Smiley asked for volunteers to go to a meeting with Planning Board members to discuss the pending VI-C permits.

Review of Minutes

Minutes of 7 January approved with emendation (4 yes, 1 abstention, 1 absent).

Correspondence Received

Chair Smiley discussed a letter from the Mayor requesting the Chair and notetaker attend a 25 February meeting with the City's attorney.

Copy of letter to former Mayor Moak from Boston Affiliates saying that the firm remains interested in helping the city pursue National Landmark status.

Correspondence from the Mayor's office allowing the city's attorneys to review the documents in the recent lawsuit re: 84-86 State Street.

Meeting ended 9:20