

Newburyport Historical Commission
City Council Chambers
December 20, 2012
Minutes

1. Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Newburyport Historical Commission was called to order by Chair Linda Smiley at 7:30 p.m.

2. Roll Call

In attendance were members Linda Smiley, Ned McGrath, Margaret Welch, Bill Todd and Stephen Dodge.

3. Demolition Applications

Toby Hoare

351 High Street

Partial Demolition

The applicant is proposing to add living space to a two-family structure and to make it handicapped accessible. Most of the work would be to the rear of the structure and would be visible only to the abutters. The only modification that would be visible from the street would be the removal of a porch on the north side of the structure to make way for the construction of a one-story addition. Margaret Welch moved that the structure is not historically significant because it is far removed from the original design. Linda Smiley seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Caswell Development Ashland, LLC

39-41 Ashland Street

Full Building Demolition

The applicants said the structure is in a state of disrepair and is not worth saving. They do not know at this time what they would like to construct in its place. Linda Smiley and Ned McGrath both commented that the structure appears square from the photographs. The Commission members agreed that a site visit would be necessary, as not enough information could be obtained from the Assessor's information or the photographs. Linda Smiley informed the applicant that Commission members do not enter the structure to ascertain if any interior features should be saved, but rather to determine its age and condition. Margaret Welch moved that the structure is historically significant and should be considered for preservation. Linda Smiley seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. A site visit will be held on December 29 at 9:00 a.m. A public hearing will be scheduled for the January 17 meeting.

4. Minutes

Linda Smiley moved to approve the minutes of the September 6, 2012 meeting as submitted. Ned McGrath seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

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Linda Smiley moved to approve the minutes of the September 20, 2012 meeting as submitted. Bill Todd seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Linda Smiley moved to approve the minutes of the November 1, 2012 meeting as submitted. Bill Todd seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Linda Smiley moved to approve the minutes of the November 15, 2012 meeting as amended. Bill Todd seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

The approval of the minutes of the December 6 meeting was deferred.

5. Other Business

A public hearing has been scheduled for January 3, 2013 for the Russia Street demolition application from Al Clifford.

Andy Port introduced the new member of the Planning Department, Kate Newhall-Smith.

Andy Port said the second reading of Local Historic District ordinance is to take place at the January 14 City Council meeting. The Building Commissioner would be responsible for the enforcement of the ordinance and the Historical Commission would be dissolved. The Fruit Street District Committee will also be dissolved. A Historical Commission would be reestablished with new members that would oversee the two small historic districts. The new ordinance would not impact the public hearing on 39-41 Ashland Street that is scheduled for January 17. The City Council would consider proposed changes to the Demolition Delay ordinance at a later date. One element of the revised ordinance would be an extension of the delay to 18 months.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.