

Newburyport Historical Commission

January 9, 2019

City Council Chambers

Minutes

1. Call to Order

Acting Chair Stephen Dodge called a regular meeting of the Newburyport Historical Commission to order at 7:30 p.m.

2. Roll Call

In attendance were members Stephen Dodge, Glenn Richards, Christopher Fay, Ron Ziembra and Malcolm Carnwath. Ned McGrath participated by telephone. Sarah White was absent.

3. General Business

Byrnes, Trustee, c/o Mark Griffin, Esq.

5 70th Street

Demolition Delay Historical Significance Determination

Mark Griffin represented the applicant, who is proposing to change the roofline of a cottage that was built around 1900. He said significant changes have been made to the cottage over the years.

Malcolm Carnwath moved the structure is not historically significant. Stephen Dodge seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Central Congregational Church

14 Titcomb Street

DOD Advisory Review

Jim Robinson described the plans to replace the windows on the first and second floor of the church. The new windows would be true divided lights with an exterior aluminum cladding. The existing storm windows would be removed. The Window Woman of New England was consulted about the work. Mr. Robinson said her quote was higher than the amount of funds available for the work and storm windows would still be needed.

Members of the public were asked for their comments. Stephanie Niketic, 93 High Street, said she would prefer the windows to be preserved rather than replaced, as windows of that age were made from wood of a quality of that is no longer available. She believes it would be possible to restore the existing windows and install custom-made storm windows at a lesser cost than the proposed replacement windows. She said the Preservation Trust would be willing to work as quickly as possible with the applicant to find an alternative to the Window Woman for the restoration of the windows. She added hardship is not a part of the ordinance and the Commission members are not required to consider cost in making their decision.

Ned McGrath moved to advise the Planning Board that the Newburyport Historical Commission prefers the restoration of the existing windows and recommends that the applicant shall collaborate with the Newburyport Preservation Trust over a four-week period to explore alternatives that would allow for the existing windows to be restored rather than replaced with modern windows. Glenn Richards seconded the motion. The motion failed with Ned McGrath

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and Glenn Richards voting in favor of it and Stephen Dodge, Christopher Fay, Ron Ziemba and Malcolm Carnwath voting against it.

Malcolm Carnwath moved to recommend to the Planning Board that the applicant shall work with the Newburyport Preservation Trust to determine if the existing windows could be restored in a reasonable way and to accept the proposal for replacement windows if restoration does not prove to be feasible. Christopher Fay seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Joseph Dussi

42-44 State Street

DOD Advisory Review

The applicant is seeking approval for the replacement of a steel door facing State Street. Joseph Dussi said the appearance of the new door would be similar to that of the existing one, but the transom muntins would not be externally mounted. They would instead be inside the panes or a clear transom without muntins could be installed. The Commission members expressed their opposition to the removal of a historic element. They also were not in favor of the use of a door constructed of composite materials. They encouraged the applicant to take advantage of an opportunity to make a change for the better and protect the architectural resources of Newburyport. Mr. Dussi said it would be possible to construct the new door of custom-made wood slabs and leave the fanlight intact.

Ned McGrath moved to recommend that the new door shall be constructed of a wood such as mahogany and the fanlight shall not be replaced. Glenn Richards seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Charles Griffin

145 High Street (Superior Courthouse)

Informal Discussion

Charles Griffin made a presentation on the plans to remove the brick infill and restore the arcade on the Superior Courthouse. Lisë Reid and Mark Griffin spoke in favor of the plans.

4. Correspondence

A letter from MassDOT regarding the proposed improvements for High Street related to the Safe Routes to School Program was received and filed.

5. Minutes

Malcolm Carnwath moved to approve the minutes of the December 12, 2018, meeting. Glenn Richards seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

6. Adjournment

Stephen Dodge moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:17 p.m. Glenn Richards seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.