

Newburyport Historical Commission
Mayor's Conference Room
May 10, 2017
Minutes

1. Call to Order

Chair Sarah White called a regular meeting of the Newburyport Historical Commission to order at 7:38 p.m.

2. Roll Call

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

3. Advisory Review

Michael Cyros

6 Purchase Street

DOCD Advisory Review

Michael Cyros said he resides at 8 Purchase Street and acquired the neighboring property. He intends to restore the house at 6 Purchase Street and tie it stylistically to his house at 8 Purchase Street. Two additions were made to the 6 Purchase Street house. One of these dates to 1920 and the other was constructed sometime after 1937. Both additions were built on the ground without a foundation. Both would be removed and replaced with a two-story addition on a foundation on the same footprint. Mr. Cyros intends to use Hardie Plank and Marvin Windows. The Commission members dissuaded him from the use of both of these materials. He was advised to restore the windows despite their poor condition. While the windows are probably not original to the house, they are old. Mr. Cyros was advised to keep the style of the structure simple and not attempt to match the details of the house at 8 Purchase Street. It was recommended he determine the age of the structure before deciding on the style of the door and trim. It would be appropriate to add a small, flat, rectangular pediment over the main entrance. Mr. Cyros does not intend to retain the existing skylight and it was not shown on the plans. Stephen Dodge moved to approve the plans for 6 Purchase Street subject to the recommendations of the Commission. Malcolm Carnwath seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

4. General Business

5 South Pond Street

Modification of Approved Plans

Lisa Mead represented the applicant, Brad Kutcher. In 2016 the Commission voted to approve the demolition of the structure with the condition that any changes made to the plans be presented to the members for their review and approval. The plans have been modified with regards to the shape and placement of the windows above the garage. Mark Bilodeau moved to approve the modified plans as presented. Malcolm Carnwath seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

158 State Street

Preservation Restriction

The placement of a preservation restriction on the main house is a condition of a ZBA permit

that would allow three townhouses to be constructed at the rear of the property. One element of the restriction would be the requirement that the structure only be used as a one or two family home. The Commission would review the restriction after it has been drafted and would work with the property owner to define its details. The elements the property owner should consider for inclusion in the preservation restriction are the details, the roof height and form, the doors and the windows. Sarah White moved to work with the applicant to place a preservation restriction for 158 State Street with the condition that the details of the restriction shall be determined at a later date and the document shall be completed within six months. Mark Bilodeau seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

1690 House Preservation Restriction

Lisa Mead, Lawrence Chen and Erik Ekman represented the applicant. Attorney Mead said the plans approved in 2007 are different from the building permit plans issued in 2008. Modifications were made to the plans during the permitting process and the construction process. Mr. Chen viewed the timeline of the project. In 2007 the Planning Board issued a special permit for the condominium development. As a part of the special permit, a preservation restriction was drafted for the 1690 House, but the document was not recorded. A building permit was issued in 2008. Work on the project was subsequently stopped. In 2015 the project was resurrected and members of the Planning Board and Historical Commission visited the 1690 House with the applicant. Three windows and their Indian shutters were identified at that time as being significant. A discussion took place about the preservation of certain interior features. The Planning Board issued a special permit in 2015. The preservation of the interior elements that was discussed at the site visit did not become a part of the approved plans. The special permit included a procedure by which any materials not being used would be made available to the Preservation Trust. Some of these materials were instead discarded.

Mr. Chen said the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation include four levels of care. The 1690 House is not individually listed on the National Register but is instead a contributing structure. The rehabilitation standard, a lower level of care than the preservation standard, would therefore apply to the structure. The Planning Board, and not the Historical Commission, would be the authority that would determine if these standards have been met.

Mr. Chen said the applicant is willing to make some of the changes the Historical Commission has requested. Three windows on the south façade would be raised to match the height of the adjacent sills. Wood shutters would be added to one façade. The entrance sidelights would be painted white and the doors would be painted black. An additional sconce would be added at the front door. The vents would be painted black. The Indian shutters would not be put into sliding pockets but instead would be mounted as fixed panels on the sides of the windows.

Mark Bilodeau said he believes the applicant misled City officials and implied the interior features would be preserved in order to obtain the necessary permits for the condominium development. Sarah White responded the applicant indicated an attempt would be made to retain the interior features, but no promises were made and the City lacked the mechanism to require their preservation. She opened the meeting to comments from the public. Tom Kolterjahn, 64 Federal Street, said as a Historical Commission member he attended a site visit at which it was stated the interior features would be preserved and the intention to do so is part of the minutes of meetings held at that time.

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The Planning Board is the permit-granting authority. The roll of the Historical Commission is to determine if a preservation restriction should be placed on the structure given the extent to which the original features have been lost. If not, it would be necessary for the Planning Board to modify the special permit. The form of the structure, the beams, the roofline, the arches in basement and the chimneys are still present. The Commission members affirmed the applicant should continue to refine the preservation restriction and make the changes they requested, in addition to proceeding with plans for interpretive signage. The applicant has also offered to donate funds to assist with preservation efforts in the city. It is not yet known if the Massachusetts Historical Commission would agree to hold the preservation restriction on the structure.

Sarah White moved to continue the discussion at the joint hearing with Planning Board scheduled for May 17. Mark Bilodeau seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. A site visit will take place on Friday, May 12 at 4:00 p.m.

5. Minutes

Malcolm Carnwath moved to approve the minutes of the April 12, 2017 meeting as submitted. Stephen Dodge seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Stephen Dodge moved to approve the minutes of the April 26, 2017 meeting as submitted. Mark Bilodeau seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

6. Adjournment

Malcolm Carnwath moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m. Mark Bilodeau seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.