

**Newburyport Historical Commission**  
Mayor's Conference Room  
July 11, 2018  
Minutes

**1. Call to Order**

Chair Sarah White called a regular meeting of the Newburyport Historical Commission to order at 7:34 p.m.

**2. Roll Call**

In attendance were members Sarah White, Stephen Dodge, Ron Ziemba, Glenn Richards and Malcolm Carnwath. Ned McGrath and Christopher Fay were absent.

**3. General Business**

**Nathan Norton**

8 Cushing Street

Historical Significance Determination

The applicant is proposing to add a second story to a ranch-style house dating from 1940. Stephen Dodge moved the structure is not historically significant. Glenn Richards seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Judy and Dan Lynch**

342 Merrimac Street

Preservation Restriction

Lisa Mead represented the applicants, who are seeking a Section 6(c) special permit from the Planning Board. They requested an informal discussion take place in order that they might receive Commission input before beginning the process. The 1785 Federal house is located in the city's ship building district and is a contributing structure to the National Register District. The applicants are proposing to return it to a single-family house and add a second structure to the rear of the property. Eric Dray has been hired to conduct historical research and has revised the Form B for the structure. The existing windows would be replaced with ones with true divided lights. The bay window would be removed and the front entry would be restored.

Sarah White moved to inform the Planning Board that the Historical Commission would accept the placement of a preservation restriction on 342 Merrimac Street. Stephen Dodge seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Patrick Reddy, Redco Construction c/o Lisa L. Mead, Esq.**

132 High Street

Advisory Review

Lisa Mead and Eileen Graf represented the applicant, who is proposing to alter the exterior of a six-unit residential structure built between 1850 and 1880. The three "prongs" on the first and second floors on the rear façade would be infilled and the roofline would be carried across continuously across the rear of the structure. The dormer on the front façade would not be removed but its windows would be made symmetrical in order to improve its appearance. One large garage door would replace the two existing ones.

The Commission members agreed the changes would improve the appearance of the structure. Sarah White moved to advised the Planning Board that two-over-two windows should be used throughout the structure and the additions proposed for the rear of the structure would be acceptable to the Commission. Glenn Richards seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

#### **4. Public Hearings**

None

#### **5. Other Business**

##### **19 Merrill Street**

Merrill Street

Building Commissioner Peter Binette said the structure at 19 Merrill Street was racked when it was raised. He inspected the building after the interior was gutted and determined it was unsafe for the workers. The structure had been damaged by fire and beetle bugs. Mr. Binette said the safety of the workers was his primary concern. An independent engineer also determined the structure was unsafe. It was demolished under the building code, which supersedes the local ordinance. The building code allows Building Commissioner to act outside of the Zoning Board process and order the demolition of a structure he believes cannot be stabilized. The provisions of the ordinance were followed and the chair of the Historical Commission was notified. It is not required that the members of the Commission be informed.

#### **Section 106 Review of Proposed High Street Improvements for Safe Routes to School**

MassDOT and the City are proposing a series of roadway and sidewalk improvements as a part of the Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Program. The Historical Commission is being asked under Section 106 to comment on the impacts these proposed improvements would have on the city's historic resources. Andy Port and Juliet Walker reviewed the features of the proposal. These include the addition of bump outs to shorten the distance needed to cross the street and the installation of flashing beacons at three intersections near the high school. A balance must be struck between increasing pedestrian safety and preserving the historic character of the street.

The brick sidewalks would be replaced in kind and the existing brick would be reused whenever possible. Concrete would be used to replace asphalt except at driveways. Granite curbing would be installed around the rest bit islands. Seasonal planters might be added to these islands. Mr. Port is concerned with visual clutter and said he would ask that the minimum amount of signage be used.

The details of the light fixtures have not yet been decided. The Commission members are concerned about the proposed installation of a Hawk fixture, which would extend over the street. A light on a single black pole at the edge of the street would be preferable. It should be required that the appearance and function of the fixtures be reviewed and approved by a City official in consultation with members of the Commission. The amount of light or sound emitted could be adjusted according to the

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time of day. The members would like to see examples of the ways these elements have been handled in other historic communities.

A frustration was expressed that the drawings are confusing because they are not consistent and certain elements, such as the existing bollards or tree belts, have not been shown.

The Commission members would like the existing granite and brick to be reused wherever possible. It was suggested that a fluorescence be added to the paint used in the cross walks. Green paint or striping could be used to better delineate the bike lane.

More information must be received before the Commission issues its comments. Members of the community who are concerned about the impact of the project on historic resources were asked to forward their comments directly to the Planning Office.

#### **6. Minutes**

Malcolm Carnwath moved to approve of the minutes of the June 27, 2018 meeting as submitted. Glenn Richards seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

#### **7. Adjournment**

Stephen Dodge moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 p.m. Malcolm Carnwath seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.