

Newburyport Historical Commission
City Council Chambers
July 18, 2013
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, Margaret Welch, Ned McGrath, Stephen Dodge, Sarah White and Bill Todd.

3. Applications

Kevin and Debra Raftery

245 Northern Boulevard

Full Building Demolition

The applicant is requesting to amend a permit received in 2008 for the partial demolition of the Oliver House. Mr. Raftery said the structure has deteriorated since 2008 and he is no longer able to financially justify its remodeling. He now wishes to demolish the structure and rebuild it according the plans from the original application. Sarah White asked if it would be feasible to save the structure if the plans were changed to be less ambitious. Margaret Welch commented that the condition of the Oliver House is poor and the Plum Island houses do not have the lasting power of other structures. Linda Smiley said the owners have made a good faith effort to save the structure. She encouraged them to save the timbers so they might be reused in either the replacement structure or in some other location. Some elements have an educational value. The parts of the structure worthy of being saved might be labeled and stored at the DPS.

Linda Smiley moved to release 245 Northern Boulevard for demolition. Ned McGrath seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Nancy Reap

21-23 Collins Street

Partial Demolition and Roofline Change

Linda Smiley moved that the structure is historically significant. Sarah White seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

David Keery appeared with the applicant, who is proposing to expand the living space in the two deeded half houses that were constructed around 1900. The rear portion of one of the structures is to be partially demolished. An addition would be made to the rear of the original house and the roofline extended. A porch and corbels are to be added.

Linda Smiley said the structure is a vernacular one that contributes to the streetscape and the applicant has followed the guidelines for adding to a historic building. Ned McGrath said the proposal tastefully increases the living space while not detracting from original core structure.

Linda Smiley moved to release the structures for partial demolition. Ned McGrath seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

4. General Business

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Initial review of Preservation Restriction for Congregation Ahavas Achim

53½ Washington Street

Irene Harnch-Grady said the Preservation Restriction was reviewed by the Planning Department. The Commission members did not receive the document before the meeting and need time to review it. The document will be discussed at the August 1 meeting.

Belleville Church Preservation Restriction

Hans Erwich distributed photographs of the work to restore the façade of the chapel that is subject to a preservation restriction. He said the congregation does not currently have the funds to complete the full scope of work.

5. Minutes

Linda Smiley moved to approve the minutes of the June 20, 2013 meeting as amended. Ned McGrath seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

6. Other Business

Linda Smiley said a letter was sent from Brona Simon of MHC to Alex Strysky of DEP regarding the proposed plans for the Merrimac Ale House. Ms. Simon stated the proposed large, incompatible addition would adversely effect the Newburyport Historic District.

Sarah White introduced Peter Binette, the new Assistant Building Inspector, who will attend the meetings of the Commission.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.