

## **Newburyport Historical Commission**

April 22, 2021

Online Meeting

Minutes

### **1. Call to Order**

Chair Glenn Richards called an online meeting of the Newburyport Historical Commission to order at 7:00 p.m.

### **2. Roll Call**

In attendance were members Glenn Richards, Peter McNamee, Joe Morgan and Marc Cendron. Patricia Peknik, Christopher Fay and Malcolm Carnwath were absent. Also in attendance were Planning Director Andy Port, Planner Katelyn Sullivan and note taker Gretchen Joy.

### **3. Demolition Delay**

#### **14 Highland Avenue**

Lisa Mead and Aileen Graf represented the applicant. At the April 8 meeting, the Commission determined the structure is historically significant and considered for preservation. The Commission members and abutters were concerned about the scale of the proposed structure and the impact it would have on the historic neighborhood. Attorney Mead said the applicant has significantly revised the plan. The new proposal would be more compatible with the style of the other structures on the street. The proposed structure would be within the same footprint as the existing structure and would be no higher than it.

Aileen Graf said the living space was removed from the top level of the proposed structure. There would now be two levels of living space, which would reduce the scale of the structure. The second story would be located above the footprint of the existing deck. The proposed structure would have a broad gable with its ridge running parallel to the street. Its details would acknowledge the bungalow style. Shingles are proposed for the dormers and clapboards would be used for the remainder of the structure. The windows would be three-over-one double hung.

The hearing was opened to comments from the public. Rob MacMillan, 16 Highland Avenue, said the new plans are a marked improvement. However, he thinks the design for the rear of the structure would perpetuate the mistakes that have been made in the past. He said he disagrees with the statement that the extension would remain within the footprint of the existing structure. He is also concerned the deck would be enclosed in the future. While the plans for the front of the structure have been improved, the rear addition would not be in keeping with the bungalow style.

Stephanie Niketic, 93 High Street, thanked the Commission members and abutters for the attention that was given to the character of the neighborhood and the streetscape. The public comment period was closed.

Attorney Mead said the rear addition was designed to not be visible from the street. It would provide the additional living space that was lost when the height of the proposed structure was lowered. Aileen Graf said her focus was on the reduction of the scale and massing rather than the bungalow style and more bungalow details could be added.

Attorney Mead said any future changes to the plans would require ZBA approval. Glenn Richards added that if approval for the proposal is granted, the applicant would be held to the plans that were submitted and changes would require further review. A change to the roofline would trigger NHC review, but the Commission would not have purview over the enclosing of the deck.

Glenn Richards asked for comments from the Commission members. Marc Cendron said there has been an obvious attempt to improve the design but the rear addition would stand out in an awkward manner.

Joe Morgan asked about the determination that the structure is preferably preserved. He said he understands that separate votes are to be taken after public comment and deliberations. He added that the reworking of the building would not preserve much of the original structure. He does not think there is much worth preserving but the house is important in its relationship to its historical context. He would consider it to be preferably preserved only as it applies to this criteria. He said he is comfortable with the proposal, even though it does not have much to do with the original structure. He said he found precedent for the roofline in the neighborhood.

The Commission members reviewed the procedural flow chart. When it is determined that a building is historically significant and considered for preservation, the plans are reviewed at a public hearing. A second vote is then required on whether the building should be preferably preferred. An affirmative vote results in a 12-month delay, which can be lifted at any time based on the review of the plans.

Joe Morgan moved the structure is historically significant and preferably preserved. Marc Cendron seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote (Glenn Richards, yes; Peter McNamee, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Marc Cendron, yes).

Peter McNamee moved to approve the plans as submitted. Joe Morgan seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote (Glenn Richards, yes; Peter McNamee, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Marc Cendron, yes).

### **35 Tyng Street**

David Keery represented the applicant, who is proposing to alter the roofline of a bungalow-style house that was constructed in 1920.

Joe Morgan moved the structure is historically significant and considered for preservation. Marc Cendron seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote (Glenn Richards, yes; Peter McNamee, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Marc Cendron, yes).

David Keery said a dormer would be added to the rear of the bungalow-style house. Dormers currently exist on the other three sides of the structure. Windows and a second-story balcony would be added to the rear façade to open up the house to the yard. The later-added chimneys would be removed.

No one from the public spoke in favor of or in opposition to the plans. Marc Cendron asked if a balcony extending from a dormer would be typical of the bungalow style. Mr. Keery replied that the balcony would break up the roof in an aesthetically pleasing way. Joe Morgan said he likes the design.

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Peter McNamee moved the structure is preferably preserved. Glenn Richards seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote (Glenn Richards, yes; Peter McNamee, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Marc Cendron, yes).

Marc Cendron moved to approve the plans as presented. Joe Morgan seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote (Glenn Richards, yes; Peter McNamee, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Marc Cendron, yes).

### **7-9 Hancock Street**

Eric Primack is proposing to change the roofline of a rear addition to a two-family structure built between 1850 and 1860.

Mark Cendron moved the structure is historically significant and considered for preservation. Joe Morgan seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote (Glenn Richards, yes; Peter McNamee, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Marc Cendron, yes).

The structure currently consists of a three-story section in the front, a single-story rear section with a pitched roof and an enclosed porch. The roof of the rear section would be removed and a second story with a flat roof would be added. The 360 square-foot addition would allow for a second-story bathroom in each unit. Mr. Primack said currently each unit has one bathroom on the first floor. Six-over six windows would be installed with trim that matches the existing. The bay windows on the first floor of the rear section would be retained. Mr. Primack said he plans to side the addition with vinyl but would be agreeable to using cedar shingles to match the first floor. He said the vinyl siding on the main part of the structure would be retained, as it is in good condition. No structural changes would be made to the main structure or the enclosed porch.

Joe Morgan asked if the applicant considered further renovation of the historic structure, such as the removal of the vinyl siding. He said if the applicant is allowed to change the roofline, he should be required to restore the portion of the house that is visible from the street. He added that it would be a good opportunity to repair any rotted wood. Mr. Primack said the project is a budget one and the vinyl is in good condition, as is the trim.

Peter McNamee said he would not be in favor of a flat roof for the addition, but it would not be visible from the street. He said it is the role of the Commission to safeguard the historical integrity of the city and the vinyl siding should be removed. He said the building should not be sided with a variety of materials and he would not want the addition to be sided in vinyl. He asked about the Commission's jurisdiction over the siding. Andy Port responded that the Commission would have control over other aspects of the project as a condition of releasing the delay.

Glenn Richards said the windows to be used in the addition have not been specified in the plans. He asked if there is a schedule of materials and if any windows would be replaced in the main section of the structure. Mr. Primack responded that if any windows are in poor condition, they would be replaced in kind. The existing windows six-over-six with simulated divided lights.

Marc Cendron encouraged the applicant to replace the vinyl siding with clapboards. He also said he would also prefer a hip roof over a flat one for the addition.

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Mr. Primack said only 180 square feet would be added to each unit. He said there are other flat roofs in the city and the addition would not be visible from the street. The cost of construction materials has risen due to Covid and the expense would be considerable if the clapboards under the vinyl are found to be in poor condition. He said the project would not be undertaken if it proves to be too expensive.

The hearing was opened to comments from the public. Tom Kolterjahn, 64 Federal Street, said a flat roof would be unusual for a historic house. He said it might be possible to construct a low-pitched hip roof and still be able to retain the third floor windows. He would like the vinyl siding to be removed.

Stephanie Niketic, 93 High Street, said that while a Form B was not created for the structure, it is still contributory to the historic district. The Commission could require that the vinyl siding be removed as a condition of allowing the roofline change. The public comment period was closed.

Peter McNamee moved the structure is preferably preserved and to impose the demolition delay. Joe Morgan seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote (Glenn Richards, yes; Peter McNamee, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Marc Cendron, yes).

The public hearing will be continuing to the May 13 meeting. The applicant will look at the condition of the clapboards under the vinyl siding and will provide additional information on the materials.

**c) 10 Auburn Street**

The property owner requested that the discussion on the preservation restriction be postponed to the May 13 meeting.

**3. Other Business**

Andy Port said the Planning Office is close to issuing an RPF for the updating of the historical housing survey. The Commission members could assist in the process by identifying properties not yet covered by the forms. He also said the members should be familiar with the Commission's regulations and procedures. Information of the Board's powers and duties can be found on the City website.

**4. Approval of Minutes**

Joe Morgan moved to approve the minutes of the April 8, 2021, meeting. Glenn Richards seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote (Glenn Richards, yes; Peter McNamee, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Marc Cendron, yes).

**5. Adjournment**

Marc Cendron moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:19 p.m. Peter McNamee seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote (Glenn Richards, yes; Peter McNamee, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Marc Cendron, yes).