

Newburyport Historical Commission

June 11, 2020
Online Meeting
Minutes

1. Call to Order

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

2. Roll Call

In attendance were members Christopher Fay, Glenn Richards, Patricia Peknik, Peter McNamee, Joe Morgan and Ron Ziemba. Malcolm Carnwath was absent. Also in attendance were Planning Director Andy Port, Planner Katelyn Sullivan, Zoning Enforcement Officer Jennifer Blanchet and note taker Gretchen Joy.

3. Demolition Delay Applications

Redco Construction, Inc. c/o Lisa Mead, Mead, Talerman & Costa, LLC

3-5 School Street

Partial Demolition/Roofline Change

Lisa Mead represented the applicant and requested a continuance. Glenn Richards moved to continue the application to the July 28 meeting without prejudice. Christopher Fay seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 6-0 vote (Glenn Richards, yes; Patricia Peknik, yes; Christopher Fay, yes; Peter McNamee, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Ron Ziemba, yes).

Daniel and Judith Lynch c/o Lisa Mead, Mead, Talerman & Costa, LLC

342 Merrimac Street

Partial Demolition/Roofline Change/Preservation Restriction Discussion

Lisa Mead represented the applicant, who is seeking approval for the partial demolition of a 1785 Federal-style house. A two-story ell at the rear of the structure was constructed prior to 1880. A portico was added sometime in the early 1900s. A demolition permit is being sought for the removal of this second-story bay on the front of the structure.

The structure has been converted to two-family use. The applicant is proposing to revert the structure to single-family use and build a second single-family house at the rear of the property, facing Merrimac Court. A Section VI-C Special Permit is needed for the work. The preservation restriction on the structure is being sought to fulfill the public benefit requirement.

The applicant previously proposed to replace all of the existing windows with fiberglass-clad six-over-six windows with simulated divided lights. The front door and its sidelights would also be replaced, along with the door on the east elevation. The Commission members visited the site on May 30. The applicant revised the plans based on comments made at the May 28 meeting. The existing door on the east elevation would now be retained, as would the sidelights and moldings on the front door. The applicant is proposing to install a single window with sidelights above the front door. The wood windows on the first floor of the original structure would be restored, with the

exception of one on the east elevation. This would be replaced with a shorter window would be in the kitchen because of its location in the kitchen. The applicant is proposing to replace the windows on the second and third floors with fiberglass-clad simulated divided lights.

Patricia Peknik said the construction of small rooms like the one in the bay began just after the Civil War. She said it would be important to document it for the record. She asked about the new door on the west elevation, where a window is currently located. Ron Ziemba said he likes the sidelights on the window above the front door. Glenn Richards asked if the window that is to be removed from the kitchen could be used elsewhere in the structure. He said a single window above the front door would be most historically accurate. Joe Morgan said he is not in favor of adding new fiberglass windows with simulated divided lights in the historic structure. He would like the wood windows with true divided lights to be used throughout it.

The Commission members discussed the use of simulated divided lights on the second floor. The applicant contacted Attorney Mead during the meeting and agreed to installing a single window without sidelights on the front façade and wood windows with true divided lights on the front and sides of the original structure. The applicant would like to have the option of installing wood or Marvin Integrity windows in the rear of the structure and the addition. The Commission members expressed a strong preference for the use of true divided lights for the entire original structure. While the use of simulated divided lights might be adequate for the rear or second floor in other circumstances, it would not be acceptable for a structure on which a preservation restriction is being placed.

Glenn Richards moved to lift the demolition delay with the condition a preservation restriction shall be drafted that includes, but is not limited to: 1) the exterior features of the historic structure shall be preserved, including the window and door trim, the molding and sidelights on the front door, and the door with its transom and trim on the east elevation, 2) the existing wood windows shall be restored and all replacement windows in the original structure shall be of wood with true divided lights, 3) the existing chimneys shall be retained, 4) a single window without sidelights shall be installed on the second story above the front door, 5) the window to the right of the door on the east façade shall be restored and its sill height shall not be changed, 6) the windows in the new addition may be of the Marvin Integrity series and 7) the addition of a door on the west façade shall be allowed. Peter McNamee seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-1 vote (Glenn Richards, yes; Patricia Peknik, yes; Christopher Fay, yes; Peter McNamee, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Ron Ziemba, no).

Joseph & Kristine Collins c/o Lisa Mead, Mead, Talerma & Costa, LLC
39 Harbor Street
Roofline Change

Maurica Miller represented the applicant, who is proposing to change the roofline on a single-family house that was built in 1900. A second story would be added over the small one-story section at the rear of the structure. The pitch of the roof would not be changed. The amount of living space would increase 164 square feet. The pitch of the

roof over the rear entry door would be increased and the roof would be extended to cover the stairs. Architect Scott Brown said the structure has been completely reworked over the years. He said the addition would improve the appearance of the house.

Glenn Richards moved that the structure is not historically significant. Joe Morgan seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 6-0 vote (Glenn Richards, yes; Patricia Peknik, yes; Christopher Fay, yes; Peter McNamee, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Ron Ziembra, yes).

Eric and Louise Lingerman c/o Lisa Mead, Mead, Talerman & Costa, LLC
35 Munroe Street
Full Demolition of Garage

Request for DCOD Historical Report

Lisa Mead represented the applicant, who is seeking to demolish a garage that is over 100 years old and is in poor condition. Glenn Richards moved that the garage is historically significant but not preferably preserved due to its condition. Ron Ziembra seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 6-0 vote (Glenn Richards, yes; Patricia Peknik, yes; Christopher Fay, yes; Peter McNamee, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Ron Ziembra, yes).

The applicant is also proposing to demolish a portion of the existing single-family house. The original structure was built around 1850. A two-story addition was constructed in the early 1900s and a one-story sunroom was added in the 1980s. The applicant wishes to demolish the two-story addition and the sunroom. Because the work would involve the removal of more than 25% of the exterior walls, a DCOD Special Permit is needed from the ZBA. The ZBA must determine that the portion of the structure to be demolished has no remaining substantial market value or reasonable use. Attorney Mead described the condition of this portion of the house and submitted a report from an engineer stating it is structurally deficient. Attorney Mead asked the Commission to determine that, based on its condition, the rehabilitation of the two-story addition would not be feasible.

The applicant is proposing to construct an addition on the west side of the original structure. A deck would be added, along with a screened porch that would connect the structure to a new garage. An in-law apartment would be constructed above the garage and a roof deck would be added above the screened porch. Glenn Richards asked for comments from the Commission members. He said they must decide if the proposed demolition would result in the loss of any important historic fabric. They may also express any concerns they might have on the impact the proposal would have on the historic structure and the streetscape.

Patricia Peknik said the house is in the Ocean Mills historic district, which is characterized by modest Greek-Revival houses that were built for workers. The structure is characteristic of this type and is located on a highly visible corner. She said the addition should be subordinate to the original structure. While the addition would be set back from the front façade, it would still appear to loom over it. The dormers proposed for either side of the two-story garage addition are too large. Christopher Fay said he would not be in favor of the roof deck, which would be very visible from the street.

Attorney Mead responded the City does not have a policy in place that would allow for the design review roof decks. She said the role of the Commission is to comment on the condition of the structure and not to review the proposed design.

Glenn Richards said his report would indicate that the proposed demolition of the two-story addition would not result in the loss of historically significant material due to its condition. The removal of the sunroom is not of a concern because of its age. He said the size, shape and form of the original structure are typical for a working-class house. He will note the Commissioners have concerns about the size of the addition. In addition, roof decks that are highly visible and incongruent with the period of the structure are not recommended.

4. General Business

Correspondence

The Commission was copied on a letter from MHC to Amantha Moore regarding the preservation restriction agreement for the Central Congregational Church at 14 Titcomb Street. The MHC is prepared to approve the draft agreement provided the seven comments outlined in the letter are incorporated into the draft agreement.

Review of NHC Powers and Duties

Jared Eigerman presented a 38-page handbook for the Commissioners that outlines their official role, powers and duties. He described the four areas of Newburyport. The Fruit Street Local Historic District is administered by the Local Historic District Commission. The NHC advised the Planning Board on proposals in the Downtown Overlay District. The Demolition Control Overlay District is under the jurisdiction of the Zoning Board of Appeals, to which the NHC also provides advice. The Demolition Delay local ordinance applies to structures over 75 years old in the remainder of the city and is administered by the NHC. The NHC may hold preservation restrictions on buildings in any of these districts.

5. Approval of Minutes

Glenn Richards moved to approve of the minutes of the May 28, 2020, meeting as amended. Patricia Peknik seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 6-0 vote (Glenn Richards, yes; Patricia Peknik, yes; Christopher Fay, yes; Peter McNamee, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Ron Ziemba, yes).

6. Adjournment

Patricia Peknik moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:25 p.m. Joe Morgan seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.