

## **Newburyport Historical Commission**

July 9, 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 and note taker Gretchen Joy.

### **3. Demolition Delay Applications**

Brian Morris c/o Scott Brown, Architect

286 High Street

Roofline Change

The applicant is proposing to add a dormer on the former Christian Science Church. The building was constructed in 1943 and converted to a private residence in 2010. Patricia Peknik moved the structure is historically significant and preferably preserved. Glenn Richards seconded the motion. Joe Morgan said he does not think the building is historically significant. It is barely over 75 years old and it no longer serves its original function. It has been significantly altered to serve as a residence. Glenn Richards said the structure is an iconic part of High Street. Patricia Peknik said the Commission would not be able to review the plan for the dormer if the structure were not determined to be preferably preserved. The motion was approved by a 5-1 vote (Glenn Richards, yes; Patricia Peknik, yes; Christopher Fay, yes; Peter McNamee, yes; Joe Morgan, no; Ron Ziemba, yes).

Scott Brown said applicant is seeking to construct a dormer to add light to a bedroom. He explored the option of setting the dormer back 18" from the exterior wall, which could be done by right under the zoning ordinance, but found this would have a negative impact on the interior space. The proposed dormer would be flush with the exterior wall but the depth of the eave would give the impression that it has been set back. Mr. Brown said the dormer would not be very visible from the public way.

The hearing was opened to comments from the public. Stephanie Niketic, 93 High Street, said the labeling of the structure as intrusive on the district data sheet is not a comment on its desirability. The building was not 75 years old when the form was completed. She said the structure is an important and beautiful one. It was constructed during colonial revival era, when not much building was taking place. The exterior was not greatly altered when it was converted to a residence. She said the building is large with a great deal of space. She asked the owners not to add the dormer. Tom Kolterjahn, 64 Federal Street, said the wonderful building has a positive and dramatic presence on High Street. The dormer could be the first step towards additional changes. He would not want to see the building altered by a dormer.

Ron Ziemba said the dormer would improve the interior of the structure. He would not approve of the dormer if the building were still a church, but he finds it

acceptable for a residential structure. Patricia Peknik said the role of the Commission is to consider the impact of a proposal on the exterior of a building. She said the structure is a rare example in the city of WWII architecture and a reminder of democratic principles. She is opposed to the addition of a dormer on the publicly visible elevation of this beautiful house. She said dormers can ruin the balance of a structure and they do not do much in terms of providing light and air. Christopher Fay said he would not be in favor of the addition of the dormer, although he acknowledged the proposed one would be small and unobtrusive. Joe Morgan said the historic character of the building has already been altered. He pointed out the fenestration pattern is very different on this side of the structure than on the opposite side. He could support of the addition of the dormer because would not be very visible from the street. Glenn Richards said he would find the change to the fenestration pattern to be more obvious than the addition of the dormer would be. Peter McNamee said the change to the windows has already disrupted the symmetry of the building, but the dormer would be more intrusive.

Ron Ziemba moved to approve the plans as submitted. Joe Morgan seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-2 vote (Glenn Richards, yes; Patricia Peknik, no; Christopher Fay, no; Peter McNamee, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Ron Ziemba, yes).

### **Jennifer and Hunter Flynn**

#### **44 High Street**

#### **Roofline Change**

Lisa Mead and Scott Brown represented the applicant, who is proposing to alter the roofline of a single-family structure that was constructed between 1850 and 1889. Christopher Fay moved the structure is historically significant and preferably preserved. Ron Ziemba 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).

A one-story section was built at the rear of the structure sometime prior to 1906. An addition was made to this section in 2001. Both the section and the addition would be demolished. A two-story addition would be constructed in its place on a slightly larger footprint. The materials and trim would match that of the main structure. The addition would not be visible from High Street and would be minimally visible from Bromfield Street.

No one from the public spoke in support of or in opposition to the plans. Joe Morgan moved to approve the plans as submitted. Ron Ziemba 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).

## **4. General Business**

### **Central Congregation Church**

Glenn Richards reviewed the chronology of the project to replace the windows on the rear portion of the structure. CPA funds were used for the project, which requires that a preservation restriction is placed on the structure. A restriction was drafted that did not include the rear portion of the building. In 2019, MCH reviewed the restriction and listed

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37 points that needed to be addressed. One major issue was that the restriction must apply to the entire structure. The preservation restriction was resubmitted and in May, 2020, MRC required some additional corrections. Amantha Moore requested a continuance and said the restriction would be redrafted to include the standard language and would be resubmitted to MHC. Glenn Richards moved to the continue the matter until the time a response has been received from MHC. 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).

**5. Approval of Minutes**

Christopher Fay moved to approve of the minutes of the June 25, 2020, meeting. Peter McNamee 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**

Christopher Fay moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:42 p.m. Glenn Richards seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.