

## **Newburyport Historical Commission**

September 14, 2023

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 Joe Morgan, Biff Bouse, Christopher Fay, Andrew Bernhardt, Glenn Richards and Marc Cendron and alternate members Ed Noymer and Alan Marquis. Member Chris Sawtelle was absent. Also in attendance were Planner Katelyn Sullivan and note taker Gretchen Joy.

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

#### **a) 14 Payson Street**

Lisa Mead represented the applicant, who is proposing to change the roofline of a porch on the side of a single-family home. The structure was constructed around 1890. It is listed as contributory on the District Data Sheets and has no Form B. The side porch appears on the 1914 Sanborn map, but is not shown on the 1924 Assessor's map. The applicant is unable to prove that the porch is not over 75 years old.

Marc Cendron moved the structure is historically significant and considered for preservation. Joe Morgan seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 7-0 vote (Glenn Richards, yes; Biff Bouse, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Andrew Bernhardt, yes; Ed Noymer, yes; Marc Cendron, yes; Christopher Fay, yes).

The applicant is proposing to remove the side porch and construct a two-story addition on a larger footprint in the same location. The newly constructed section would be flush with the rear addition and the front façade. Both the existing rear addition and new addition would be clad with cedar clapboards with a seven inch reveal to differentiate them from the original structure, which has siding with a four inch reveal. The existing eight-over-eight windows would be replaced with six-over-one windows. The arches would be removed from the attic windows on the front and rear of the house when those windows are replaced. The second-story portion of the front bay window would be removed and two double-hung windows would be installed. The shingles on the roof of the front bay would be replaced with a standing seam metal roof. A second-story deck would be installed on the existing addition at the rear of the structure.

Attorney Mead said the structure has undergone many changes over the years. There is an eclectic mix of structures in the neighborhood. Eleven letters of support have been received.

Joe Morgan said much work is proposed for the most visible façade of the building. With the removal of the historic bay and the scalloped and sawtooth shingles, the most valuable character defining features would be destroyed. The differing reveal proposed for the siding would clash with the existing siding. He said the changes proposed for the front façade would be a gratuitous destruction of the building's historic façade and would not be acceptable.

Biff Bouse said the removal of the upper section of the bay window does not make sense. The arched windows at the front and back of the structure are characteristic of the style and should also be retained. He said he would not support the application.

Christopher Fay said that among the mixture of styles in the neighborhood, this house stands out and should not be changed.

Glenn Richards said the applicant is proposing to remove historical features without a clear justification. The structure's character defining features should be preserved. The remaining Commission members were in agreement with the comments made by the others.

Attorney Mead asked if the members were opposed to the concept of the addition. Biff Bouse said the addition should not be flush with the front and rear facades. The angling out of the corner of the first floor should not be removed.

Joe Morgan said the addition would compromise the front façade. The applicant should seek instead to add living space at the rear of the structure.

Glenn Richards said the addition should be set back at least six inches from the front façade so that its profile would remain discernable.

Marc Cendron moved that the structure is preferably preserved. Ed Noymer seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 7-0 vote (Glenn Richards, yes; Biff Bouse, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Andrew Bernhardt, yes; Ed Noymer, yes; Marc Cendron, yes; Christopher Fay, yes).

#### **b) 217 Northern Boulevard**

Lisa Mead represented the applicant, who is proposing to modify a Dutch-colonial style house on Plum Island that was built around 1900.

Biff Bouse moved the structure is historically significant. Ed Noymer seconded the motion. The motion failed by a 1-6 vote (Glenn Richards, no; Biff Bouse, no; Joe Morgan, no; Andrew Bernhardt, yes; Ed Noymer, no; Marc Cendron, no; Christopher Fay, no).

#### **4. DOD/DCOD Advisory Review**

None

#### **5. General Business**

##### **a) Correspondence**

A letter was received from MHC stating it would not object to an installation of antennae at 30 Pleasant Street provided the NHC approves the plans. The Commission has not received any plans to review and it does not appear the project will be moving forward at this time.

##### **b) Review of draft CPC Frog Pond Letter**

The NHC submitted a letter of support for the Bartlet Mall Frog Pond CPC grant application on March 30, 2022,. The scope of work in the bid documents that were issued on August 1, 2023, varied from the project that was presented in 2022. Joe Morgan drafted a revised support letter to the CPC dated September 8, 2023, in which he

stated that the substantial changes to the plans may adversely impact the historic landscape. He wrote that a freestanding pump house would be an incompatible and intrusive structure within the contours of the kettle pond. The granite curb that was to be installed around the perimeter of the pond has been replaced in the current plans with a granite block wall at sitting height. Finally, the original plans showed the granite curb would be supported by a concrete foundation. This foundation has been omitted from the plans, which could allow the granite blocks to misalign. Mr. Morgan wrote that a concealed mechanical vault and a low-profile granite curb should meet the project objectives while protecting the historic landscape.

#### **6. Updates from the Chair**

The September 28 NHC meeting will be cancelled.

#### **7. Minutes**

Marc Cendron moved to approve the minutes of the July 27 meeting. Andrew Bernhardt seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 6-0 vote (Glenn Richards, yes; Biff Bouse, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Andrew Bernhardt, yes; Ed Noymer, yes; Marc Cendron, yes; Christopher Fay, abstain).

#### **8. Adjournment**

Joe Morgan moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:29 p.m. Marc Cendron seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 7-0 vote (Glenn Richards, yes; Biff Bouse, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Andrew Bernhardt, yes; Ed Noymer, yes; Marc Cendron, yes; Christopher Fay, yes).