

Newburyport Historical Commission

October 26, 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 Andrew Bernhardt, Biff Bouse, Joe Morgan, Glenn Richards and Chris Sawtelle and alternate member Ed Noymmer. Christopher Fay and Marc Cendron were absent. Alternate member Alan Marquis was present for part of the meeting. Also in attendance were Planner Katelyn Sullivan and note taker Gretchen Joy.

3. Demolition Delay Applications

a) 16 54th Street

Chris Crump represented the applicant, who is proposing to extend two existing shed dormers to the full length of roof. He said the original structure was constructed on a solid foundation around 1940 and has been modified over the years. Sometime after 2016, shed dormers and a side entrance were added and windows were removed.

Biff Bouse moved that the structure is historically significant. Chris Sawtelle seconded the motion. The motion failed by a vote of 2-3, as four positive votes were needed for approval (Glenn Richards, no; Biff Bouse, yes; Joe Morgan, no; Andrew Bernhardt, no; Chris Sawtelle, yes).

b) 99 Ferry Road

Ben Taylor and Scott Brown represented the applicant, who is proposing to change the roofline of a house that was constructed around 1879. The structure is not listed on the District Data Sheets and has no Form B. Past building permits reveal that it has been modified several times over the years, most significantly in 2016, when the dormers were added.

Joe Morgan moved that the structure is historically significant and should be considered for preservation. Biff Bouse seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote (Glenn Richards, yes; Biff Bouse, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Andrew Bernhardt, yes; Chris Sawtelle, yes).

Scott Brown said the rear addition is to be removed in its entirety. This addition is older than 75 years, but he is not able to tell if it was original to the structure. It would be replaced with a new addition on a larger footprint. He said the length of the lot would easily accommodate the long addition. The rear portion of the lot is minimally visible from the street. The lot is bordered on its two long sides by City land that is not developable.

The main portion of the house would not be altered. The applicant is proposing to replace the casement windows in the front sunroom with awning windows. The sunroom was not original to the structure. There would be no other changes to the front façade.

Biff Bouse said the massing of the structure is unusual and the proposal would create symmetry. The portion of the building to be removed is not of value.

Andrew Bernhardt said he is concerned about the length of the addition. Glenn Richards said the lot is wooded and the addition would not be highly visible.

Chris Sawtelle said the ell should be preserved, as it was a part of the original Greek Revival box. Scott Brown said the foundation of the ell is not in good condition.

Joe Morgan said the addition passes the age test but has no features that provide historical interest. The proposed addition would be subordinate to the original structure and would not have an adverse impact on its historical value, especially in light of the alterations that have been made.

Andrew Bernhardt moved that the structure is preferably preserved. Joe Morgan seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-1 vote (Glenn Richards, yes; Biff Bouse, yes; Joe Morgan, no; Andrew Bernhardt, yes; Chris Sawtelle, yes).

Andrew Bernhardt moved that the proposal would not adversely impact the historic structure and to accept the plans as submitted. Biff Bouse seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote (Glenn Richards, yes; Biff Bouse, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Andrew Bernhardt, yes; Chris Sawtelle, yes).

4. DOD/DCOD Advisory Review

None

5. General Business

a) Correspondence

A letter was received from MHC stating the preservation restriction for 344 Merrimac Street has been approved.

An announcement was received about the FY24 survey and planning grant cycle.

6. Updates from the Chair

The subcommittee has been working to revise the draft preservation restriction for the Old Gaol. The list of features that were not to be protected was too extensive and was not acceptable.

In April 2022, the Commission provided a DCOD Advisory Report on 22 Market Street for the ZBA in which it was noted that the applicant had agreed to repair and restore the historic windows. The applicant is now requesting a minor modification to instead replace the windows. The item will be on the agenda of the November 9 meeting. Chris Sawtelle said the structure has been exposed to the elements for over a year, which he is concerned is causing damage.

7. Minutes

Joe Morgan moved to approve the minutes of the September 14 meeting. Andrew Bernhardt seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote (Glenn

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Richards, yes; Biff Bouse, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Andrew Bernhardt, yes; Chris Sawtelle, abstain; Alan Marquis, yes).

8. Adjournment

Andrew Bernhardt moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:19 p.m. Chris Sawtelle seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 6-0 vote (Glenn Richards, yes; Biff Bouse, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Andrew Bernhardt, yes; Chris Sawtelle, yes; Alan Marquis, yes).