

Newburyport Historical Commission
City Hall Conference Room
May 9, 2018
Minutes

1. Call to Order

Chair Sarah White called a regular meeting of the Newburyport Historical Commission to order at 7:32 p.m.

2. Roll Call

In attendance were members Sarah White, Malcolm Carnwath, Stephen Dodge and Ron Ziemba. Ned McGrath was absent.

3. Public Hearings

Virginia Lasala

15 Eagle Street

Partial Building Demolition

Lisa Mead represented the applicant, who is proposing to demolish a small addition at the rear of the structure and construct a two-story addition in its place. The Commission members worked with the applicant at length during the March 20 and March 28 meetings in an effort to reach an agreement on the design and avoid the imposition of a one-year delay. Attorney Mead reviewed the most recent revisions to the plans. The shed dormers were deleted and replaced with Nantucket dormers, a flat roof was added to the rear addition to reduce its impact on the main structure, the southern façade of the addition was aligned with the main structure and brick facing was added to the chimney. Wood clapboard siding is to be used on the addition and the windows shall be two-over-two to match those on the existing structure.

The hearing was opened to comments from the public. Stephanie Niketic, 93 High Street, said the Newburyport Preservation Trust opposes the plan due to the size of the addition in relation to the modest house. She read comments submitted by Linda Miller, co-president of the Trust, who could not be present at the meeting. Ms. Miller wrote the ganging of the windows on the left side of the structure is historically incorrect and the chimneystack should extend above the roofline. Erik Kaminski, 19 Eagle Street, said he approves of the plans.

The Commission members approved of the changes made to the plans but agreed the chimney should extend above the roofline.

Sarah White moved to approve the changes as presented with the condition that additional courses of brick shall be added to the chimney above the roofline if the budget allows. Stephen Dodge seconded the motion. The motion was approved with Ron Ziemba abstaining.

4. General Business

A. Claudia and Vahid Karimi c/o Scott M. Brown, Architect

43 Fair Street

Roofline Change

The Commission voted at its March 28 meeting that the structure is historically significant. The Planning Office did not file this decision with the Building Commissioner within the required 21 days. This conveys a constructive approval for the plans and the Commission may no longer impose a demolition delay. Mark Griffin said the applicant is seeking a special permit from the

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Zoning Board for an upward extension of a non-conforming setback. It must be proved the proposal is not more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing structure. Sarah White said while the Commission does not have purview over the extension of the pre-existing non-conformity, it does have purview over the roofline change. The Zoning Board has asked the Commission for input on the project, which allows requests to be made that exceed what otherwise might be allowed.

Scott Brown said the roofline change is being proposed to raise the ceilings of two bathrooms located in the rear el. The pitch and details of the existing roof would be matched. The plans were changed to reflect a request previously made by the Commission to vertically alignment two windows so they would be symmetrical.

The discussion was opened to comments from the public. Tom Kolterjahn, 64 Federal Street, relayed the concerns of the Newburyport Preservation Trust. The middle window on one façade should be retained to be in keeping with the historic pattern. The applicant intends to remove the windows, trim and clapboards. The Preservation Trust would like the windows to be restored and their trim and molding preserved. The upper clapboards appear to be original to the house. Because the interior of the structure was gutted, the group feels strongly that the exterior should be preserved. Mr. Kolterjahn concluded by saying the exposure of clapboards should not be greater than 3.25”.

Dianna Kinosian, 42 Temple Street, said the mission of the NHC is to protect houses such as this, which has existed since around 1730. She does not support the proposed change to the roofline. She said the structure anchors the street.

Diana Kerry, 33 Temple Street, said too many historic structures are being lost and she feels strongly the Commission must work to protect them. She said the historic features of this structure must be preserved.

Susan Williamson, 39 Temple Street, said people come to Newburyport to live amongst its history but do not treat historic structures with respect.

Leslie Kulig, 29 Temple Street, said once historic features are removed they can never be replaced.

Stephanie Niketic, 93 High Street, said the Zoning Board is concerned about the selection of materials and this provides an opportunity to establish best practices.

The owner of the property, Vahid Karimi, said he chose to move to the city because of its historic character. He intends to preserve many of the historic elements of the structure but wants to his home to be safe and comfortable. He said it is necessary for comfort to raise the ceilings in the bathrooms and many of the windows are not operable. The public comment portion of the meeting was closed.

Stephen Dodge said he does not find the roofline change to be substantial. He said the trim should be replicated if its preservation is not possible. Malcolm Carnwath recommended keeping the original materials but he does not oppose the roofline change. Sarah White said she also is not opposed to the roofline change because it does not involve the original structure but would wish to place certain conditions on it approval.

Sarah White moved to approve the roofline change on the addition with the conditions the existing historic windows shall be restored, the window trim and moulding shall be restored and replicated where necessary, the siding shall be wood and not a cementitious material, the

exposure on the clapboards shall be 3.25” and the middle window on the second story of the right elevation shall be retained. Stephen Dodge seconded the motion. The motion was approved with Ron Ziembra abstaining.

John Leydon

2 Beck Street

Informal Discussion

The applicant is proposing to replace the deteriorated balusters on a deck. The balusters are made of pine and are not original to the structure. The form of the existing balusters and top rail would be replicated in red cedar or mahogany. The footprint of the deck would not be changed. The top rail would be lowered if allowed by the Building Commissioner.

Sarah White moved to inform the Planning Board the Commission approves the plan to replace the balusters and top rail of the deck with the condition no composite materials shall be used. Stephen Dodge seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Michael O’Rourke, Nobleport Construction

11 61st Street

Historical Significance Determination

The applicant is proposing to demolish a seasonal cottage on Plum Island that is at least 75 years old. Sarah White moved the structure is not historically significant and to release it for demolition. Stephen Dodge seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Erik Kaminski

339 High Street - Barn

Historical Significance Determination

Matthew Cummings, Cummings Architects, described the plans for the adaptive reuse of a barn. The applicant wishes to raise the floor of the barn, which is 15” below the driveway. Carriage doors would be added on the first floor, which would be used as a pool cabana. Living space would be created on the second floor. The Commission members were in favor of the proposed door and the small windows. They recommended the hayloft be retained.

Sarah White moved the barn is historically significant. Stephen Dodge seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. A public hearing will be scheduled.

Erik Kaminski

339 High Street - House

Historical Significance Determination

Matthew Cummings described the plans to raise the rear portion of the house in order that the floor is level with the front section. The front of the house would be preserved and the windows restored. Sarah White moved the house is historically significant. Malcolm Carnwath seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. A public hearing will be scheduled.

FRCA of Newburyport LLC c/o Lisa L. Mean, Mead, Talerman and Costa LLC

260 Merrimac Street – Towle Building

Draft Preservation Restriction

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MHC approval has been received for the preservation restriction on the Towle building. Sarah White moved to approve the preservation restriction for 260 Merrimac Street. Stephen Dodge seconded the motion. The motion was approved with Ron Ziemba abstaining.

Sarah White moved to allow the chair to sign the preservation restriction for 260 Merrimac Street. Stephen Dodge seconded the motion. The motion was approved with Ron Ziemba abstaining.

Erik Ekman reported the interpretive signage would be installed this week and the viewing area would be completed next week. The doors and windows for the 1690 House are to be delivered the week of May 21.

5. Correspondence

- Letters were received from MHC concerning preservation restrictions for 48 Boardman Street and 28-30 Pleasant Street.
- A letter was received from MassDOT requesting comments on plans to resurface portions of Route 113. Sarah White moved to issue a response stating the work would potentially have a negative impact on historic assets and requesting additional information. Stephen Dodge seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

6. Minutes

Sarah White moved to approve of the minutes of the March 28, 2018 meeting. Stephen Dodge seconded the motion. The motion was approved with Ron Ziemba abstaining.

7. Adjournment

Sarah White moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:55 p.m. Stephen Dodge seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.