

Newburyport Historical Commission
City Council Chambers
May 23, 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, Ron Ziemba and Glenn Richards. Ned McGrath participated by telephone.

3. Public Hearings

Erik Kaminski

339 High Street - House

Matthew Cummings described the plans to raise an ell at the rear of the structure in order that its floor is level with that of the main house. The ridgeline would be raised three feet and the porch would be widened four feet.

The hearing was opened to comments from the public. Tom Kolterjahn, 64 Federal Street, said the project is a delightful one and he is thrilled the house is being preserved. Caleb Barlow, 366 High Street, said he is in favor of the roofline being raised and is pleased the footprint would not be changed.

The Commission members spoke in favor of the project. Stephen Dodge said he wishes the approach being taken would be used for other structures in the city. Ron Ziemba said the changes would be beneficial to the house and he likes the new roofline.

Sarah White moved to approve the raising of the rear portion of the structure with the condition the applicant shall return to the Commission if it is found that any portion of the structure must be demolished. Stephen Dodge seconded the motion. The motion was approved with Ned McGrath and Glenn Richards abstaining.

Erik Kaminski

339 High Street - Barn

Matthew Cummings described the plans for the adaptive reuse of the barn. The applicant wishes to elevate the barn, which is 16" below the level of the surrounding ground. 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 hayloft door would be retained, as the Commission members recommended at the May 9 meeting, but the applicant is proposing to relocate and replace it. The plan for the windows has been changed from that which was presented at the previous meeting.

The hearing was opened to comments from the public. Caleb Barlow, 366 High Street, said this is the type of development that should be supported and the proposal would be an improvement over the existing conditions. Tom Kolterjahn, 64 Federal Street, said the project is an excellent example of adaptive reuse.

Stephen Dodge said he supports the project and windows as proposed. Sarah White moved to approve the raising of the barn 1 foot 9 inches with the condition the existing hayloft

door shall be reused in the proposed new location if structurally possible. Stephen Dodge seconded the motion. The motion was approved with Ned McGrath and Glenn Richards abstaining.

4. General Business

Plum Island LLC

79 Parker Street

Historical Significance Determination

Lisa Mead represented the applicant, who is proposing to remove a summer kitchen. Sarah White moved the structure is historically significant. Stephen Dodge seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. A public hearing will be scheduled.

Susanne Cameron

5 Milk Street

Historical Significance Determination

The applicant is proposing to alter the roofline of a structure that dates from the 1850s. Sarah White moved the structure is historically significant. Stephen Dodge seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. A public hearing will be scheduled.

58 Middle Street Realty Trust

50-58 Middle Street

Draft Preservation Restriction

Lisa Mead presented a draft of the presentation restriction that would be placed on the structure as a part of the approval process for the variance needed to divide the lot. The house, which was constructed between 1900 and 1904, is a contributing structure to the National Register District. Attorney Mead reviewed the requirements of the Zoning Board of Appeals, which include the replacement of the vinyl siding with cedar clapboards and the replacement of the first-floor bay window with two windows that match those on the second floor. All windows are to be two-over two aluminum-clad wood with simulated divided lights. Boston City Hall paving brick would replace the existing asphalt driveway and would be used for the driveway on the new lot. The existing asphalt walkways would be replaced with natural stone. Sarah White moved to preliminarily approve the preservation restriction and accompanying plans as presented. Stephen Dodge seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Ted Nelson

190 High Street

Draft Preservation Restriction

Ted Nelson presented a draft of the preservation restriction that would be placed on the main structure and carriage house as a part of a Section 6(C) permit from the Planning Board to allow a third unit to be added to the property. A driveway would be constructed to the right of the house if it were to become a rental unit. This would require the width of the deck to be reduced two feet. Two units for central air conditioning would be added and the siding would be replaced on a portion of the rear façade to reduce maintenance requirements. The Commission members commented that the material used should not be vinyl and recommended the use of

Boral siding. The wording of the restriction should be broad enough so as to not prohibit the use of cedar clapboarding at a future time. The driveway shall be of permeable pavers or crushed stone and not cement, asphalt or bituminous. The members also said the restriction should prohibit the removal of any of the structures' historic features. Photographs of these details, the deck and the area where the siding is to be replaced should be embedded in the document.

5. Minutes

Malcolm Carnwath moved to approve of the minutes of the May 9, 2018 meeting as submitted. Stephen Dodge seconded the motion. The motion was approved with Glenn Richards abstaining.

6. Correspondence

- The Commission was copied on a letter from MHC to Attorney Mark Griffin commenting on the draft preservation restriction for 48 Boardman Street. The members had no further comments.
- The Commission was copied on a letter from MHC to Attorney Lisa Mead commenting on the draft preservation restriction for the First Unitarian Universalist Church. The members had no further comments.
- The Commission was copied on a letter from the Building Commissioner stating the structure at 19 Merrill Street was to be removed due to the existing conditions and poor construction practices that have made it unsafe. The NHC was not afforded time to comment on this action. The members described the demolition as unconscionable and discussed at length their concerns about the process. Tom Kolterjahn commented building inspectors often do not understand the structural differences between historic structures and modern construction. He said the house on Merrill Street was strong enough to withstand being elevated. If the Building Commissioner were concerned about public safety, the house could have been shored up to allow the process to be followed and an independent professional consulted. Glenn Richards will draft a letter for discussion at the June 13 meeting. The letter would be sent to the Mayor, City Council, Planning Department and Building Department. Sarah White moved to request that the Planning Director and Building Commissioner attend a future meeting to discuss the process. Ned McGrath seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

7. Adjournment

Malcolm Carnwath moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 p.m. Sarah White seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.