

Somersworth Historic District Commission

Somersworth, New Hampshire

Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday, 27 March 2013

Members present: George Poulin, Chair; Madeline DeSantis; Coty Donohue, City Councillor; Arthur Henrickson; Albert Marotta; Julie Rowe, Alternate; Pius Charles Murray, Alternate

Members absent: Sherie Dinger, Alternate; Tim Metivier, City Code and Health Officer

Representative for petitioner: Troy Walters on behalf of Glocal Investments, LLC

Call to order: At 7:04 P.M. by the Chair

Approval of minutes of previous meeting: Motion to table approval of minutes of previous meeting made by Arthur Hendrickson, and seconded by Albert Marotta. Motion passed unanimously.

Projects of Minimal Impact: The Chair reported no reports of projects of minimal impact.

Old Business: The Chair reported no Old Business

New Business:

- A. Glocal Investment, LLC, is seeking a certificate of appropriateness to reroof and replace posts on property located at 3 Market Street, in the Business Historic (BH) District, Assessor's Map 11, Lot 95, HDC #02-2013. Troy Walters represented the owner.

The Chair asked Mr. Walters about the specifics of the project. Mr. Walters explained that a car accident three weeks ago knocked down three posts which also damaged the small shed roof above the store's entrance thus necessitating repairs to the posts and roof. The shed roofing will be replaced by rubber roofing and the 4x4 wood posts would be replaced was too wide. Mr. Walters referred the Commission to the pictures attached to the application.

The Chair asked Mr. Walters about the proposed new columns, recommending that they be boxed and painted to preserve the original intent. Mr. Walters explained that although only three wooden posts had been affected by the car accident, the owner would actually be installing five steel/concrete columns because the originals were too far apart according to current safety standards. Mr. Marotta thanked Mr. Walters for the investment of more than \$500 in the proposed renovation. Mr. Marotta further inquired whether the railings in front would be painted and Mr. Walters said he would replace them because they had rotted out and would bring the matter up to the owner of the builder to bring them up to pre-loss condition.

The Chair asked for a motion to allow Glopal Investments to replace rubber roof, and replace the posts with columns and box them in 4x4, 1x1 wraps (or something similar that fitted the columns best). There being no further objection or discussion, Mr. Hendrickson made the motion and Ms. Rowe seconded; motion passed unanimously. Mr. Walters then asked when the certificate would be ready; the Chair responded that it might take several days but the paperwork would be submitted the next day to the Planning Office.

B) The Chair reported no additional New Business

Workshop Business

A) Discussion on fences and signs in the Historic District

1. Mr. Hendrickson led a far-ranging discussion on fences. Mr. Hendrickson wanted to discuss the nature and mission of the Historic District Commission because there had been new members named to the HDC recently. He recommended Fitzwilliams's description of the mission of Historic District Commissions. Mr. Hendrickson emphasized that the purpose and nature of the Historic District Commission is to preserve as closely as possible construction in its original state or as near to the original state as possible. According to Mr. Hendrickson, recent approval of steel or aluminum fences by HDC does not reflect the original design and thus should have been deemed inappropriate. The HDC does have the authority when it chooses to exercise it to require owners to make historically accurate renovations. A second issue discussed by Mr. Hendrickson was enforcement of HDC's decisions; the Chair responded that there is a process but that it is lengthy and complex. The problem of satellite dish placement and placement of antennae according to Mr. Hendrickson represent additional areas of concern. Consistency in rulings is important to avoid potential legal problems in the future. Mr. Hendrickson asked if copies of Fitzwilliams's mission statement for Historic District Commissions could be sent to HDC members.
2. The Chair led a discussion on signs. The Chair began his discussion by talking about the sign, rather than a banner, at a local pizza place downtown. Mr. Marotta replied that banners had been allowed by HDC on a temporary basis but not on a permanent basis. Mr. Marotta told the story of how he installed a sign for his business in the Historic District that did not strictly speaking meet requirements for the area. Mr. Marotta suggested a formal process by which communication could be shared between the HDC and Planning; the Chair reported that such a process does exist but is complex and lengthy.

B) The Chair reported no additional Workshop Business

Communications and Miscellaneous

The Chair reported no communications or miscellaneous business.

Adjournment

Mr. Marotta made and Mr. Hendrickson seconded a motion to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:50 P.M.

An audio copy of the minutes of this meeting is also available.

Respectfully submitted,

Pius Charles Murray

Pius Charles Murray
Recording Secretary