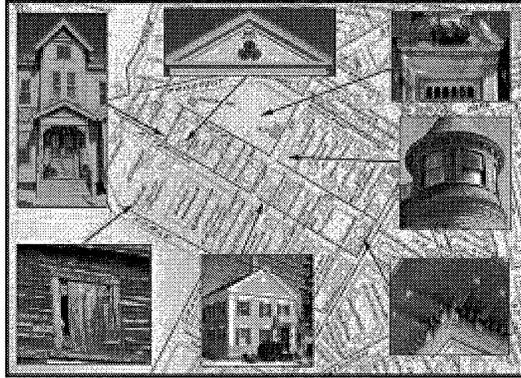


SOMERSWORTH HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION



Minutes of Regular Meeting held on Wednesday, 28 May 2014

Final Copy
Approved at July 23, 2014 meeting

Members present: George Poulin, Chair; Councilor Marcel Hebert; Madeline DeSantis; Arthur Henrickson; Beth Poulin; Tim Metivier, City Code and Health Office; Charlie Murray, Recording Secretary

Members absent: Julie Rowe

Petitioners present: Dana Scott (HDC #05-2014); David Baker (HDC #05-2014); Liz Carter (HDC #05-2014); Christopher Chartier (HDC #07-2014)

Meeting Called to Order: At 7:00 PM by the Chair

Approval of Minutes: Minutes tabled as there were no minutes of the 23 April 2014 meeting prepared.

Projects of Minimal Impact: Mr. Metivier reported that HDC #06-2014, a request for tree and stump removal at 74 Noble Street submitted by Randolph Vachon, was approved by his office.

Old Business:

- A. 335-337 Main Somersworth, LLC is seeking a certificate of appropriateness for exterior renovations on property located at 67-73 High Street, in the Business Historic (BH) District, Assessor's Map 11, Lot 63, HDC# 05-2014.

Petitioners representing this petition were Mr. Scott, Mr. Baker, and Ms. Carter.

Mr. Baker explained that the renovations listed in this petition were to be done to be exterior of the building, front and second floor. The Chair wished to clarify that the renovation would include the rear of the exterior. Mr. Hendrickson inquired whether there would be grids within the windows and if the door would be made of steel, which he would be opposed to in a renovation project in the historic district. Mr. Scott offered to substitute either vinyl or wooden doors; Mr. Hendrickson replied that a wooden door would be most appropriate.

Mr. Scott further stated that the renovation would use regular brick to remain as close as possible to the historic nature of the building. Mr. Scott also stated that they were not yet ready to renovate the front exterior but they would return to the HDC when they had plans made. The two doors, Mr. Scott explained, would remain in the same place.

Mr. Hendrickson recommended considering clapboard for the front exterior renovation. Mr. Metivier said that there was already a wooden building across the street from this property under discussion so clapboard would fit in with the neighborhood. Mr. Scott thanked Mr. Hendrickson for his recommendation and stated that they would consider panel, clapboard, and a small amount of brick as they planned the renovation of the front exterior of the building. Council Hebert inquired about the skylight. Both Mr. Scott and the Chair stated that the skylight had already been approved to be removed.

Concerning the removal of the stairway, Council Hebert inquired about the number of entrances. Mr. Scott said that the exit door in the back would remain and that there would still be two exits as the building code required explained the Chair.

Motion to approve HDC #05-2014 as amended (the doors were to be wooden not steel) was made by Ms. DeSantis and seconded by Councilor Hebert. Motion passed unanimously.

- B. The Chair reported no further Old Business.

New Business:

- A. The Chair tabled the election of New Officers until after hearing HDC #07-2014.
- B. Christopher Chartier, on behalf of Wells Fargo Bank NA is seeking a certificate of appropriateness for exterior renovations on property located at 38 Highland Street, in the Historic Moderate Density (HMD) District, Assessor's Map 11, Lot 46, HDC #07-2014.

Mr. Chartier represented himself before the HDC.

Mr. Chartier explained that the bank had asked him as part of his purchase agreement with the bank to seek approval from the HDC for several items: (a) removal of a tree which is leaning on the house; (b) installation of handrails on stairs; (c) reconnection of downward spouts with partially sealed gutters; and (d) a repointing of the chimney.

According to Mr. Chartier, the bank wanted these improvements to safeguard its investment as it prepared to sell it to Mr. Chartier. Also according to Mr. Chartier, the bank had already done some work on the house (it closed covered the gutters separating them from the downspots); Mr. Metivier suggested the bank should apply for an after-the-fact building permit for its renovations on the property.

Mr. Hendrickson stated that the planned guardrails were not original. Mr. Metivier explained that in rare instances such as this one bank building regulations were more stringent than the city's building code; based on the gradation and number of stairs, the city building code would not have necessarily required the installation of handrails. The Chair asked if the proposed handrails would be pressured wood lumber painted the same color as the rest of the building; Mr. Chartier responded yes.

Mr. Marotta inquired which of the four items listed on the petition were mandatory. Mr. Chartier said that all of them were. Mr. Metivier replied that the chimney repointing would not require a building permit; and that the tree removal could have been handled under minimal impact. Mr. Chartier said that due to time limits he wanted to make sure he had everything covered so he could receive approval from the HDC in time to finalize the purchase of the house from the bank.

Mr. Marotta moved that items #1 (tree removal) and #2 (installation of handrails) be included for approval and that items #3 (reconnecting downward spouts) and #4 (chimney repointing) be removed from the petition. Seconded by Mr. Murray. Motion was passed unanimously.

C. Election of Officers

The Chair stated that the Commission was to elect a new Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary for the coming year.

Mr. Hendrickson moved that the current slate of officers remain. Mr. Murray asked who the Vice-Chair was, to which the Chair responded that Mr. Marotta was (who seemed surprised at his designation but kindly accepted nomination as Vice-Chair). Mr. Metivier pointed out that the current slate of officers would include Ms. Poulin as Secretary. The Chair decided to hold votes for each office separately.

Motion to re-elect George Poulin as Chair was made by Mr. Hendrickson and seconded by Ms. DeSantis. Motion was passed unanimously

Motion to elect Albert Marotta as Vice-Chair was made by Mr. Hendrickson and seconded by Ms. DeSantis. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion to elect Pius Charles Murray as Secretary was made by Mr. Hendrickson and seconded by Ms. Poulin. Motion passed by majority vote with Mr. Murray abstaining.

Workshop Business:

- A. Mr. Hendrickson inquired about the status of the city's investigation into the property owned by Mr. Goldstein in Somersworth. Mr. Metivier reported that both he and the Fire Chief had made a visit to 55 Green Street and were allowed in by a number of tenants. With the exception of one apartment which did not appear to have any violations, the other four they visited all had some form of building code violation (e.g. lack of fire alarms, etc.). Mr. Metivier said that he and the Fire Chief would make recommendations to the City Planner to take to the attorneys. Because Mr. Goldstein understands the legal system well, both Mr. Metivier and the Fire Chief think it would be better for the city to use attorneys throughout the process to make sure it is done correctly. Mr. Metivier thought that Mr. Goldstein's property was in violation of at least several New Hampshire state statutes or rules including RSA 48, 58, 674, and SAC 109. Mr. Metivier was hoping to convince Somersworth to work with both Rochester, NH and Dover, NH where Mr. Goldstein also owns property so that all three communities would institute legal action simultaneously. Mr. Marotta asked if Mr. Goldstein really was in violation of actual New Hampshire state laws, to which Mr. Metivier thought in his opinion Mr. Goldstein was, which would give the city's case a stronger basis.

A question was raised whether the tenants were Section 8 tenants. Mr. Metivier responded that when he and the Fire Chief asked one tenant what their status was the answer was Section 8 from Manchester. Mr. Metivier explained that they actually fall under New Hampshire Housing Finance located in Manchester. One couple, according to Mr. Metivier, who had moved in November 2013 had had an inspector visit once, noting building code violations, and saying he would be back in one month to monitor progress but had not been seen since.

Mr. Metivier did not know at which court level, District or Superior, legal proceedings might begin.

- B. The Chair requested input for the next HDC workshop. After discussion, the Chair decided to hold the next HDC Workshop one hour before the regularly July meeting, 23 July 2014. The themes of the workshop will include a discussion on the HDC decals and their distribution, and HDC signs and their posting. In the meantime, the Chair directed Mr. Metivier to have the decals, which would be donated, made.
- C. The Chair reported no additional Workshop Business.

Communications and Miscellaneous:

- A. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Somersworth HDC is set for Wednesday, 25 June 2014 at 7:00 PM.

B. The Chair reported no additional communications or miscellaneous items.

Adjournment:

A. Motion to adjourn at 7:50 PM was made by Mr. Hendrickson and seconded by Mr. Murray. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Pius Charles Murray

Pius Charles Murray
Secretary

