



SOMERSWORTH HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Date: 25 March 2015

Place: City Hall, Somersworth, NH

Minutes: Adopted as Amended on 04/22/2015

Present:

George Poulin, Chair
Albert Marotta, Vice-Chair
Martin Dumont, City Councilor
Laura Barry, Alternate
Madeline DeSantis, Commissioner
Arthur Hendrickson, Commissioner
Beth Poulin, Commissioner
Tim Metiver, Building Inspector
Pius Charles Murray, Secretary

Members Absent:

Julie Rowe, Alternate

Petitioners Present:

Michael and Terri Fabrizio (for HDC #02-2015)

Others Present:

Dave Sharples, Somersworth Director of Planning and Community Development

Agenda

I. Call to Order by the Chair at 7:00 P.M.

II. Motion to approve the minutes of the HDC meeting of 01/28/2015 as amended was made by Ms. DeSantis and seconded by Mr. Murray. Motion passed unanimously.

III. Report of Minimal Impact Projects

Mr. Metivier reported that there were no projects of minimal impact approved either in February 2015 or March 2015.

IV. Old Business

There were no items of Old Business.

V. New Business

A. Michael & Terri Fabrizio are seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for window replacement on property located at 33 Lincoln Street, in the Residential Single Family, with a Historic Overlay (R1AH) District, Assessor's Map 11, Lot 157, HDC #02-2015.

Terri Fabrizio described the project to the Commission. She first corrected the description of the building as a duplex not a single family. She furthermore explained that NH HHS Department has required that she either replace the windows or encapsulate the paint with wrap. There will be forty-four windows, double-hung, 2/2 to be replaced. When the Chair inquired if it would be an inside or outside replacement, Ms. Fabrizio replied that while the trim will be temporarily removed to install the new windows, it would be put back. Mr. Hendrickson asked why vinyl siding was needed for the barn; Ms. Fabrizio replied because of the lead paint. Mr. Metivier interjected that lead paint is a known carcinogen which is why it must be addressed. Ms. Barry inquired what type of outside trim would be used? Mr. Metivier replied wood; according to code, the petitioner would have three options: either to encapsulate the paint with a wrap, to replace it with wood, or to replace it with vinyl. The Chair stated that he preferred the trim be made of wood to match exactly. The Chair informed Ms. Fabrizio that the Commission could agree to approve the window replacement only since the barn did not appear on the application. When she was ready to do the barn, she would have to return to the HDC.

Motion to approve HDC #02-205 as submitted with 2/2 windows and with wooden trim was made by Mr. Marotta and seconded by Mr. Murray. Motion passed unanimously.

B. There was no further New Business.

VI. Workshop Business

There was no workshop business.

VII. Communications and Miscellaneous

A. The Chair asked for a brief moment of silence in remembrance of former City Councilor Marcel

Hebert, former city council representative to the HDC, who had passed away just before the January 2015 HDC meeting.

B. The Chair recognized and warmly welcomed City Councilor Martin Dumont as the new city council representative to the HDC.

C. The Chair reported that he had met with the Mayor and Dave Sharples to discuss various HDC issues.

D. The Chair recognized Dave Sharples. Motion to suspend the rules to allow Mr. Sharples to address the Commission was made by Mr. Marotta and seconded by Ms. DeSantis. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Sharples wanted to address the question of Mr. Hendrickson concerning whether or not the city was exempt from HDC regulations.

Mr. Sharples remarked that NH RSAs (68.5) states that with a substantial new use or substantial change of use, the city will inform the Planning Board; a public hearing is not required; highways are exempt. The state understands with this that cities are exempt from HDC regulations. He furthermore explained that the state of NH is not a home rule state which means that cities and towns are only empowered to undertake those powers specified by the state, unlike all five other New England states that allow home rule (the exercise of all powers not forbidden by the state).

E. Mr. Metivier reported that ABK Realty has been replacing the siding correctly. Mr. Sharples said that ABK Realty has been doing the siding only; a letter with a deadline of 06/15/2015 is set for correction of 47 violations on the property; if anything was to be removed, the City wants to see it first was set as a requirement.

F. Mr. Hendrickson mentioned his preference to shrink the city's historic districts. Mr. Sharples asked whether Mr. Hendrickson wanted to do so property by property or by shrinking the polygon-area map of the historic districts; Mr. Hendrickson replied he would prefer to shrink the entire polygon-area map. Another option, Mr. Sharples mentioned, would be to change HDC rules to allow more administrative decision-making which could reduce the number of applicants who had to appear before the HDC itself.

There were two reasons for Mr. Hendrickson's request. On the one hand, many residents who bought property in one of the designated historic districts did not realize that they were responsible for keeping the property up and oftentimes found it too expensive to do so. On the other hand, many homes already have been altered beyond the HDC's ability to insist on maintaining historicity. And once an exemption

is granted or overlooked, neighbors want the same exemption(s). Mr. Sharples recommended that it may be time for the HDC, Planning Board, and City Council to look again at the city's historic districts.

G. The Chair stated for the public that copies of the meetings' agenda were available with Tracy Gora at the Planning Office in City Hall during regular business hours should anyone want to know what the day's agenda is.

H. The Chair brought the HDC decals with him and handed them out to Commissioners to distribute to people they knew who lived in the historic districts.

Mr. Sharples stated that the proposed Somersworth Gateway signs would include the Historic District identification signs either in or around the Gateway signs.

This led to a brief discussion relating to the recent City Council Workshop on the Historic Districts. Councilor Dumont remarked that he was very impressed that the HDC was ahead of the game and he would report such to the city council on signage and the geographic shape of the districts and the criteria used when deciding how a newer home located in a historic district should be treated. Continued and increased coordination between the council and HDC would be very helpful, said Councilor Dumont. Second issue concerned signage identifying the city's historic districts for public knowledge. Mr. Metivier remarked that not only are there decals for individual properties in the historic district but also three signs are to be erected identifying the city's historic districts for the public.

VIII. Adjournment.

Motion to adjourn at 8:15 P.M. was made by Mr. Marotta and seconded by Mr. Murray. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Pius Charles Murray

Pius Charles Murray
Secretary

N.B. An audio recording of this HDC meeting is available. Please note that when microphones are used, voices are much clearer. Please remember to use your microphone for best recording. == PCM