

SOMERSWORTH HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
October 25, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT: Laura Barry-Chair, Richard Brooks, George Poulin, Kimberly Shoen, Timothy Metivier-Alternate, Elizabeth Nguyen-Alternate, Matt Gerding.

EXCUSED MEMBERS: Adam Young, Timothy Monahan

STAFF PRESENT: Michelle Mears, Director of Planning and Community Development

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

1. Approval of the minutes of the meetings:

- a. September 27, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes

Amended Members present to remove Elizabeth Nguyen, Matt Gerding and Timothy Monahan-Alternate.

Tim Metivier MOVED to APPROVE the meeting minutes of 9/27/2023 be accepted as presented and the members present section would be amended as to be accurate.

The MOTION was SECONDED by Matt Gerding.

The MOTION CARRIED 7-0-0.

2. Projects of Minimal Impact Report.

Ms. Mears stated the following was approved as projects of minimal impact:

- 21 Maple Street in the Residential/Single Family/A with Historic Overlay (R1AH) District, Assessor's Map 11, Lot 129 HDC#33-2023. Application to install solar panels on an existing roof was **approved**.

3. Public comments by visitors.

Dave Witham, Somersworth City Councilor, 10 Rouleau Drive

- a. Proposed zoning ordinance amendment to reduce size of Historic District that he has brought before the City Council. States that he wants the process to be open and transparent to create dialogue and conversation around the subject. States that even though he is sponsoring the legislation he is not yet married to supporting it one way or the other. There has been much conversation around the Historic District over past several months. States that he took a tour of the Historic District, a good portion of it, with member Brooks on 10/22 and found it to be very informative. He looks forward to conversations with members of this board. It was discussed at this past Monday's Council meeting that a workshop between City Council and Historic District Commission would be a worthwhile endeavor and he supports that. The ordinance revision has been sent onto the City's Economic Development Committee, which is a subcommittee of the City Council for their first look at this ordinance change with suggestion that it comes from them with recommendation to meet with the Historic District. It already had its first reading, at the next Council meeting, by way of practice, there will be a public hearing on this at which time the Council could act on it, or could table it, re-refer to another committee or take any other number of actions. Handout presented is a map of the Historic District and historic mill district. Historic district (yellow color/beige color) and

October 25, 2023 HDC Minutes

historic mill district (purplish or mauve color). Top sheet looks at both districts in their entirety and second sheet outlines in red the Historic District largely up on hill and last sheet focus on historic mill district.

Two specific proposed changes – 1. To the north, it would eliminate the sliver of properties to the north side of Winter Street along the river and railroad tracks to north side of Winter Street. Very few properties in that area, most not in state to be developed as it's a very steep banking. One property is right down by Market Street which is the former Breton's Cleaners property which is a vacant lot now. 2. The other sliver that's proposed for elimination by way of ordinance draft is to easterly side of High Street between Constitutional Way and Pleasant Street, starting at about Coolidge Law Office and ends at property on corner of Pleasant Street that has large concrete retaining wall there. Looking at the historic mill district, largest area for change is to southerly side of Washington Street, the area outlined in darker black would remain and area not outlined would be eliminated by way of ordinance change. In that area, there are a number of mill row houses along Broad Street is a notable area for that as identified through walking tour. This area is encompassed in the removal. Just bringing to everybody's attention to be open, honest and transparent and all open to continued debate. Even at the council level, any amendments to the draft ordinance change, could be defeated in full, supported in full or something in between.

- b. Woodard Openo, resides at 25 Grand Street. States that he researched and put together the prospect hill historic district in 1986 and would like to comment on the proposed changes to that district. He notes that Gershom Horne had early gristmill and called Great Falls and sold a lot of the land to start the Great Falls Manufacturing company and his house at corner of High Street and Grove Street. There is hair salon there now. Most of prospect hill was his farm. He passed away in 1832 and his heirs subdivided the land in 1848 and sold a lot to town and put the high school there known as Prospect High School in 1849. Many of the homes were built in 1850s primarily in Greek revival style and many with attached or separate barns. He states that this is a unique neighborhood in Somersworth and should be preserved intact. If you start taking pieces here and there, it's going to destroy the district and the way it's laid out now, it makes sense because it ends at naturally bounding streets. The Gershom Horne Farm is important part of early Somersworth history. He states he is not familiar with downtown historic district, the mill historic district but Somersworth has unique surviving early mill housing and you should make an effort to preserve that.
- c. Kevin Szmyd, Portsmouth – I read in Foster's paper that there was an issue in which a developer was in conflict with the Council in which the developer wanted to build clapboard apartment building five over one. I just wanted to say I stand firmly with the Council's decision to enforce that the façade of that building is made of brick. I think it's important to the town's history. It may be cheaper to put clapboard on as it's a common building material but in order to preserve the characteristics of our estate we should strive to keep our standards firm.

4. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Any old business to come before the Board
None.

5. NEW BUSINESS

October 25, 2023 HDC Minutes

Laura Barry, Chair, proposed to rearrange agenda to move 85 Elm Street to position C and Victoria Bourque to position B. Opened for discussion. Kim Shoen agreed 85 Elm Street would be longer and Victoria Bourque would be quicker to review.

Kim Shoen MOVED to Rearrange the Agenda.

The MOTION was SECONDED by Tim Metivier.

The MOTION CARRIED 6-1-0. (Richard Brooks Opposed)

- a. **Daniel Vincent is seeking a certificate of appropriateness to relocate a window and door, and remove square footage from a previous approval at a property located at 19 Linden Street in the Business with Historic Overlay (BH) District, Assessor's Map 11 Lot 198, HDC#12-2020, HDC#29-2023.**

The applicant was before Historic District in May 2020 and received a certificate of appropriateness to construct 916 sq. foot addition to existing carriage house and detached apartment. Applicant is now seeking to modify the approval by reducing footprint and relocating the windows indoors as shown in his application. The application is complete.

Dan Vincent, 259 Main St, owns property at 19 Linden Street. Page 21 shows floor plan of approved project approved additions of the HDC; since approval two rectangular spaces have been built but large square closest to bottom of the page has not been built and most likely not be built because of the cost of materials. Asking to add 10 windows; Everything is remaining the same from the other approval except for the placement of the windows. These were the exact same windows approved originally. Floorplan shows where exactly windows will be installed within the new structure and compliance.

Kim Shoen – thanks for walking us through and the pictures. When I read the application, I was struggling a bit so the pictures were fantastic. Love that you salvaged the door from the church and have no concerns about this.

You are seeking approval to put windows where you are building as opposed to where you are no longer building? Vincent replies, “Yes”

Laura B – notes that Tim and Liz are both voting members tonight.

Tim Metivier – Thank you for the narration; I have been with board since 2009 and you hands down create the most complicated looking application. However, the numbering and narration did simplify it quite a bit. Adding 10 more windows than you currently have and all will be same style that was approved. No issues or concerns. Glad you are not going with vinyl siding and kept clapboard and maintained trim.

Matt G – Thank you for application and the details and images. I see nothing to take issue with this application and will be in support of it.

Richard – Kim said everything I was going to point out and I have no disagreement with this plan.

Laura B – asking for comments from abutters or commenters – there were none.

George P – great job so far and no doubt it will come out the same. I'll take the door if you decide not to use it.

Liz – if there is a change more or less of where the windows and doors would go, he would have to come back; put a condition on the motion regarding the windows moving a matter of 6”.

October 25, 2023 HDC Minutes

MOTION: Kim Shoen MOVED that the application of Daniel Vincent be ACCEPTED as submitted with stipulation that the windows do not move more than a foot in either direction and there's no change to any of the terms of the windows that was discussed tonight with an **Amendment** added to follow 2021 approval of window type and trim by Tim Metivier.

The MOTION was SECONDED by Richard Brooks

The MOTION CARRIED 7-0-0.

- b. Victoria Bourque is seeking a certificate of appropriateness to remove and rebuild a porch and reapproval for window and roof replacements at a property located at 34 Highland Street in the Historic Moderate Density (HMD) District, Assessor's Map 11 Lot 45, HDC#35-2023.

Ms. Mears – The applicant was before the Commission in September 2022 for review and approval to repair porch, rotted wood around the base, floorboards and upper trim, replace rubber roof on porch and replace windows and stormers with vinyl clad windows; 3 windows on 2nd floor facing street and 3 on 2nd floor facing driveway. Applicant received building permit for the work approved under the HDC application. The building permit expired and the work was not completed. Applicant is now seeking to have window replacements reapproved by HDC and alter porch per a new renovation plan. Applicant is also seeking to demo existing porch, construct new roof and add supports and footings and leave porch open air rather than screened in as it currently is.

Laura B asked if there was anything they would like to add about the application.

Victoria Bourque applicant— the windows are done but my builder was unable to come after I got the approvals last fall and it is just in such disrepair and I'm very sad about it. But the amount of time to try and recreate the curved porch roof, it's just literally rotting. Also, a safety concern at this point. So, I decided to recreate something similar to my neighbor's property. He's just got an open porch with some Victorian posts and railings along the bottom.

Matt G – What type of materials will be used for porch? And will the roof be a regular asphalt shingle roof? Is it possible to mirror the railings on the front of the house? We would like to chat with builder to ensure he builds to the specifications.

Bourque – Victorian wooden posts; nice looking brackets and hoping to save the floor. Does not think it's original to the home will sand it down and paint it and there's stone steps at the porch entry and from pictures provided, those are not in great shape either so probably going to be wooden steps. What's there now has been pieced together over old original very small porch and they were built over. It also has a rubber roof covered in moss that insurance company wants me to take care of. I would like to go with asphalt shingled roof, dark gray. I would like to keep it wood if I can, only metal might be the rails. If approved, the builder will start in 2 weeks. I don't have detail on round vs square posts. I can match the balusters. If it's not going to go, I need to take it down as it's very unsafe.

Richard B— The porch in the picture looks like it was enclosed but striped of any details as it doesn't look period correct enclosure. Roof is sagging. Not exactly duplicative of your neighbor, correct? I have no disagreement with you redoing the porch. When will work be

October 25, 2023 HDC Minutes

scheduled? Hard to picture what is going to be there. Missed the contractor sketch thank you. Will it be round posts rather than square ones?

Laura B – I would be ok with square at the bottom and bracketing to fit in with the style of the house; not opposed to losing the round part in the back of the house as it doesn't look period appropriate to me. We can put in amendment that this gets screened in later. We need more information that has the details for brackets, posts, etc. We can table the application.

Liz N – There are not a lot of details. Nothing showing what we're approving. Changing to a sloped roof off the house easier for water management and snow. Some consideration needs to be given to what happens where that board meets the end. What will you see at the end of the porch?

Bourque - clarified the Board wanted to see the support posts, brackets and what kind of railing and it won't be plastic or metal. May need to get a better drawing or specifics to show exactly what I want the porch to look like. I need to have my builder involved.

Kim S – I find the application incomplete; unfortunately, this board has had some problems with people who say we're going to do X and then it doesn't look like what we thought it would look like. I like the curve on the back.

Tim M – I have concerns about the redesign of the roof to pitched roof; I am opposed to diamond lattice. I would rather have vertical lattice. Detail of the curve should be maintained.

Tim M asks— Can we approve the platform to get contractor onsite, remove existing porch, build the deck and the deck bords and then come back before the HDC for the details of the trim, the roof and the columns?

MOTION: Tim Metivier MOVED that the request of Victoria Bourque for a certificate of appropriateness to remove and rebuild a porch and reapproval for window and roof replacements at a property located at 34 Highland Street be CONTINUED to a future meeting to allow Victoria to have her builder there and provide specifics on details of the trim, the roof and the columns.

The MOTION was SECONDED by Kim Shoen
The MOTION CARRIED 7-0-0.

- c. **85 Elm Street Somersworth LLC is seeking an amendment to a certificate of appropriateness to alter building design and materials for a property located at 85 Elm Street in the Business with Historic Overlay (BH) District, Assessor's Map 10 Lots 177 and 176, HDC#31-2022.**

Ms. Mears – The applicant is seeking an amendment to their previously approved design for a new multi-unit building. Applicant is proposing to alter the exterior of the building to accommodate interior use changes. Applicant is proposing composite lap siding with either exposed stamp concrete or brick foundation, which is included in the packet. The original approval included fiber cement siding and brick. The interior use will be reviewed by the Planning Board.

October 25, 2023 HDC Minutes

Laura B – anything you would like to add about the application?

Robert Previti and **Ben Stebbins** of 85 Elm Street Somersworth LLC and **Adam Morrill**, architect were in attendance to represent the application.

Previti stated we've been before the HDC before. On October 4th we took an appeal from a denial of this Commission up to the ZBA. They affirmed your decision denying the complete removal of brick from our building, which we took as a community consensus in a way of what kind of the flaws were in our design. We would like to present a plan that responds to some of the comments from the ZBA board members, some of the HDC members as well to take elements from mill buildings in Somersworth, particularly the Queensbury Mill building which has a brick foundation. We will be presenting two designs tonight that have a stone foundation on the first story of the building along Elm Street with clapboard design on the upper floors. The first iteration that Adam is going to show is red brick, which is very consistent with the Queensbury Mill, particularly in this design. Also, if I had to pick one, if my opinion is given any weight, I like the second option that we're going to present which is concrete foundation that is meant to look like granite. The agent's house right next to our proposed building has granite foundation so we like the idea of marrying the style of the stone foundation with clapboard from the Queensbury Mill building with the granite feel of the agent's building that's already on site. These are the two designs for your consideration tonight and hope we'll be received favorably once Adam presents the plans themselves.

Laura B – Do you have something to show?

Morrill – As Director Mears mentioned, there's a few adjustments to this application from previously approved that includes composite siding for fiber cement as well as two alternative options for the Elm Street lower base foundation as we come out of the hill along church street. Page 2 in the packet shows neighboring buildings and local context and page 3 includes onsite photos. These should be familiar to you in the course of this process. Page 4 illustrates the Queensbury Mill, that has the lower-level masonry, brick foundation coming out of the hillside, is painted brick and clapboard above lap siding and stacking windows. Page 4 shows the stamped concrete version as mentioned this speaks to the agent's house and part of our previously approval was stamped concrete. We found it to be important to include some of the materials that we had already presented to the board. First photo shows lower corner at Elm Street and Church St. As you work down towards the warden's house towards Lafayette, you can see exposed foundation approaches about 9.5 to 10 ft. with clapboard siding that we had originally had approved facing the agent's house at this corner. Page 7 is very much the same. There also has been discussion about the windows during previous sessions and we still include the double windows. As this is a modern building with smaller compartmentalized interior layout, it was very important to both future tenants and the ownership team to provide more windows and more light than previous mill buildings would have had that had a much larger open footprint so that was an important feature to provide adequate interior environment conditions to the project. It does still include that mulled window. Page 8 and 9 shows the 2D elevations. The lap siding continues along the entry side to Green street. On the Elm Street rendering, you can see the top four floors. It's the same language around the entire building with the exception that the Green street sides about 3 and a half stories exposed as opposed to 4 stories you'll see elsewhere on the building. This is just the nature of the grade change that you're seeing across the site. Page 10 shows the brick version of this. A red brick, water struck look, brick which was another material that we had discussed during previous

October 25, 2023 HDC Minutes

approvals. Same condition as far as balance of the building. As mentioned, there's a favor to the granite look as it looks better for this building in a sort of subjective interpretation but you can see that providing that mass there on that first floor does match what the Queensbury Mill has for its lower level. This is really the gist of the changes with the exception as we previously had proposed that lower level was another item that was infilled previously, there was a parking garage and now there's units on that level. Thank you.

Laura B – Thank you, please take a seat and we'll have comments by visitors.

Matt DiNola – I am an abutter on two sides, the only direct residential abutter on this project. I've previously said on the face of it, I'm in favor of the project but want to reiterate that we need to come up with a solution that's going to work both for the town and the neighborhood, and for the project itself. It's going to benefit the whole downtown area, the amount of people it will bring in, it could bring new jobs for the downtown. I want to see that. I don't want us to forget the lessons of the past urban renewal back in the 1950s and what happened to our downtown so we need to find a compromise that will work for both the city and for the developers and for me as I have to look at it. Let's try to keep an open mind and see what we can come up with. Thank you.

Laura B.– Moving on to board discussion.

Richard B. – Thank you for coming back to discuss further. I've spoken out against this size wise. I'm willing to look by that. I understand we need this as well. Of the 2 proposals, I actually prefer the block or granite look at the bottom. I've walked around the area a couple of times since the last time we met and I'm amazed at how much granite is around that entire property. Is there any chance you could use some of that granite to put along the front and not actually build the building with it. I don't mean structurally but just use it on the wall for the basement area? A thought as there's so much of it. If not, maybe save it for the retaining wall there in the parking area after the old Somersworth hotel comes down. The old granite could add character to this environmental scape where retaining walls might be needed there. Previti stated we are trying to reclaim some of that granite. I can't remember if it was in the HDC or Planning Board approval but we've committed to doing that. And we would like to do it as there's a lot of it. There are benches pulled out of that granite and possibly do some additional items with that granite

Brooks stated, I don't have a problem with the clap board all in all. Looking at the windows; I've actually reviewed all the proposals that we've discussed from the very beginning to the most recent one and something that caught my eye was the very first one you guys brought to us actually had paired windows, the entire length of the building so it has exactly that mill look that I expressed several times here. Could we do the paired windows the entire way to have that standard one style of window the whole way and lose the white panels in between the windows as that just puts a modern look to it is what loses the character of the district. Those were a couple of observations that jumped out at me and hopefully you'd consider that.

Matt G – I'm curious about the process that we have in front of us tonight. What will we ultimately be deciding on? We have two possible proposals. Are you thinking of tonight in terms of how you first came before the Board with conceptual review. Are you looking for

October 25, 2023 HDC Minutes

feedback? Are you planning to come back? Or just looking for one of these to be decided on now?

Previti stated ideally, we would like a decision tonight. We've been in the design process for a long time and further design iterations without an end in sight could be open ended. If the consensus of the commission tonight is there's general support for the project with some design changes, depending on what those are, we'd be willing to consider a redesign to the extent.

Stebbins stated I went back and watched all of the HDC meetings and if you watch them, you have board members that switch halfway through what they want. We are open to look at minor changes that aren't going to have us redesign this whole building six more times. Everyone has their own design point that is so subjective that we can't please every single person. It's a mish-mash of a building and it starts to look silly and then we have to pull things out and it just goes back and forth.

Gerdin stated I would agree as I don't want another meeting where we agree upon design and then you come back with a new design as well. A lot of the hangups have been around brick. In your proposal it sounds like at least with the brick you're proposing the new brick veneer which is great and a bit more cost effective. In your original plans for previously approved design, were you also planning on brick veneer or had you thought full brick? Have you looked into some sort of stamped concrete for like the brick appearance to lower costs? I was just trying to think of alternatives to allow for more of the brick appearance on the building, with less costs for you folks as I know that was the concern.

Morrill stated technically brick veneer is a full brick, it's just not load bearing so there would be a stud wall behind it. There are ways to stamp brick to make it look like stamped concrete. You are basically applying a paint to your concrete. I can't guarantee how long it would continue to look like brick.

Previti stated of the two designs we presented tonight, we brought forward the stamped concrete option as we thought it fit well with the agent's house and that it was an elegant compliment to the clapboard in terms of coloration and thought that it worked better than the brick. As to material in that location, whether we use brick veneer or use stamp concrete, we're agnostic.

Liz N. – My first time reviewing the project as I'm new to the Commission. I like the way you've used the darker tone to create variation. I heard Richard doesn't appreciate the white verticals, but I think that's really important because if you didn't have that and you use white trim on this dark piece, it would just stand out like applied stamps on the façade. Green Street, the end cap, where you have a step in the façade and you go back and use the white infill, it looks like you were proposing white on that inside corner of the dark. I would prefer that whole west elevation and that little white sliver there on the north for that all to be the dark theme.

Morrill stated on the Church Street side, we do add the flat plane there, are you ok with it on that side so Church Street.

Nguyen stated ideally it would match the Church St. side, at this time it does not due to the step in the building.

October 25, 2023 HDC Minutes

Morrill clarified it was in part due to the software program and building footprint relative to the setbacks.

Nguyen stated the other question – basement course on Elm Street, you have two exit and entry doors there. Are you going to consider if you need any small roof or awnings to help identify them, help people find them, stay dry when unlocking.

Morrill stated this is really for a tenant entry point. This is not the main entrance of the building. The main entrance is on the inside of the L, on inside corner, and the approach was to downplay it.

Nguyen stated she was ok the way it is. Also, I like the stamped concrete for granite look. I do object to calling it or something equal in here. I think we have to approve the specific materials that you've provided. If you want to buy something else, that should come back to us just to reapprove that sample if you change the product.

Laura B – Very happy to have you guys come back. You took my comments from last meeting about alternative stamp concrete when asking about veneers that looked like brick not necessarily being brick. I'm looking very much to Queensbury Mill because this is the best example of what you're working within our City itself. I agree to keeping to that first floor, I went around the building and actually like the stamp concrete a bit more when I was standing by museum looking up hill. When I came around Green street, we don't have any veneer or stamp concrete, I think if this level was up there, I would want the brick more but again I think it's appropriate not to mimic the Queensbury Mill going up the side of the hill and having that being shorter façade that you're missing that story. I would be okay with either the brick or the stamp concrete. I do agree with Liz on the windows. The only reason I say that is because when I'm looking at Queensbury Mill and I do know that these are probably later additions to it, they did have some paired windows and it helps define this as new construction building. It helps define that these aren't big open rooms, just my personal opinion on this.

Richard B. – If we look at page 7 – this view you see very minimal white infill between the windows, you see more clap board and looks more like a mill to me. Looking the white panels between the windows looks more appealing, more like a mill building. Even if it's the paired windows all the way, just a uniform window. The stamped concrete looks like granite, I'm fine with that too. Actually, prefer that now that I've seen it. I hope I'm not the one that's been flip flopping. These improvements would make me say this looks like a mill and fits the character of the Historic District.

George P. – Loving the stamped brick design. Glad you are using the granite. I think it looks great and you guys will do a good job.

Matt G – I do prefer the stamp concrete. The greys match much better with stamped concrete whereas the red brick doesn't go with that. My question is the stamp concrete is only visible on Elm Street side, not going to be visible on any of the other sides, even on the Green Street side. Can we see the stamp concrete around the entirety of the building so it's not just on one side and visible around the whole thing?

Previti stated some portion of the building tapers into the hill, that's what we were trying to do with our design.

October 25, 2023 HDC Minutes

Morrill stated even from high elevation on Elm Street side of the site, in a lot of places our finished floor is actually below grade so we do have a little bit of foundation extension but then hit the window portion of the exposed foundation that is received that stamped finish. In order to do that, it would complicate the windows and things and not continuing it across the face because there is such a long grade there. You would end up turning the 3 or 4-story section into one level of concrete, 2 levels of another material, then the white band and another top so it would look like wedding cake layers that we are trying to avoid.

Matt G – Could you accomplish with brick veneer? First proposal?

Morrill stated it turns building vertical conditions to horizontal condition.

Previti added it's not going to look good if we did that. Because it's a long gradual slope, it doesn't blend well. It works on Queensbury because it's a steeper slope.

Tim M – what's the dimension of the pattern of the granite pattern?

Morrill stated 18 by 30 or 24 by 36.

Metivier stated you were last here to propose the siding instead of the brick, foundation aside. Is there a difference between the proposal from the last time to this time, excluding the foundation? The topic of discussion tonight has all been based on brick veneer foundation, stamped concrete foundation, however, the last occasion you were here, you were proposing to remove the brick façade and put clapboard. My questions were not to talk about the foundation, whether exposed, brick or stamped. Is there a difference between what was discussed last time you were here with the clapboard siding versus this time? The difference between denial from ZBA and the HDC is that you've added either a brick or granite foundation.

Previti stated no, our thought process was we took the plan that was denied both here and ZBA, took comments from this board and ZBA about the way that brick and clapboard and stone and clapboard used together in mill buildings in this area. Yes, consistent with the Queensbury Mill.

Richard B. – The previous approval that we did approve that had the foundation, the parking underneath, looking at the windows here, I see a pair of windows, single windows, single window, pair, single, single, single and goes back into pairs. This time, I see a lot of pairs and only a few singles but it does seem like more pairs and I like that uniformity. I would love to see that the whole way if possible. Again, the white panels between, I'd rather see clapboard on the whole side, it cleans it up. Back to the foundation the stamp concrete looks good as it looks like the agent's house next door.

Laura B. – talking about the size of the pattern of the stamped concrete. I like the idea of a little bit bigger pattern. Does the board have any comments?

Matt G.– If I were to pick for the stamped concrete, I would also say bigger pattern.

Kim S. – I have a question. I don't care either way on stamped concrete vs. brick as I'm voting no regardless.

October 25, 2023 HDC Minutes

Matt G. – Questions about the bump ups and size and depth. The stairwells are kind of a little off, like pulled out from the rest of the façade. I don't see them visually in the floor plans and curious if that would be included in there or not. Need clarification like that actual depth of those bump outs.

Morrill stated those bump outs are 1 ft.

Kim S – Tim M. asked if the developers were changing anything else on this plan from the previous approval. On page 18 of the documents that they gave today, it says on the top left corner, proposed material composite siding manufactures, all side, model ascend composite siding, specification 7 in exposure. It then says next to that previous material, fiber cement siding manufacture James Hardy, Hardy plank lap siding night gray, smooth 8 in exposure. Are you proposing tonight that you are changing that material since that says proposed material in previous material or did that somehow get through the original documents as that's different than your other proposals.

Morrill stated no, we misunderstood your questions. That is a substitution of material.

Kim S – When Tim said to you are you changing anything else, your response was no and that's not happening.

Previti stated I thought Tim was referring to the window placement, the bricks, the physical design, not the brand name.

Kim S – with all due respect, it's not just the brand of board, it's a 7 in exposure versus an 8 in exposure which gives a very different look on the side of the building. Is there anything else gentlemen that you're proposing to change tonight?

Previti stated we have some materials to pass out and if we change the materials, we'd have to come back for what was approved right?

Kim S – Yes, part of my concern is the change that goes through when you and I get disparaged for my level of aggression. But when Tim said to you, are you changing anything else, your answer was no. Let me ask you – before we look at the materials, what else are you proposing to change today?

Previti stated it's in the packet. If you want to play this game, you can go through every change in the plan.

Kim S – it's not a game. We asked a question and you weren't honest about it.

Previti stated no, I honestly answered the question I thought I was being asked. You can go through and run a red line for yourself on every change for every plan and determine it, I just won't be helpful on that question. If I'm going to get targeted later on this, isn't a cross-examination.

Kim S – It's a record.

October 25, 2023 HDC Minutes

Laura – Please hold. We are on proposed materials. Everyone please goes to page 18. We have proposed materials and previous, so let's go page by page and see if there are any specific questions about the new material vs. the old material. Do we have questions from board members for page 18 and 19 as those are the materials in question and Tim you had specifics about material.

Tim M – the specifics in my opinion, the board heard a proposal to change the brick siding to clapboard siding. That was denied. That denial was upheld by the ZBA. This proposal is to remove the brick and put clapboard. We heard that case and we made a decision. In my opinion, there's no difference by the meat of this except for the stamped concrete on the foundation. There's no difference in the denial that we denied and the ZBA upheld. The application presented here is not much different than the denied application we heard last time.

Laura B. – correct. The difference is strictly the foundation material at this time.

Kim S. – No, that's not what they just said.

Tim M. – we've been discussing the foundation and appearance of stamped concrete and brick but they're not proposing the brick to be reinstalled as siding and I understand everything they've said. My understanding from the last meeting, they were proposing to not do brick siding, they want to do clap board siding and they're here to say we don't want to do brick siding, we want to do clapboard siding but do stamp concrete and or brick foundation as a trade. The foundation details were not discussed at the last meeting to this detail. We denied the removal of the brick and that appeal was upheld and supported that decision. It would be wrong for us to reverse our own denial and reverse what the ZBA upheld.

Laura B. – I don't feel your way. They had clapboard on this foundation level. I don't understand how you feel that this is the same.

Tim M. – This is what was approved – holding up a proposal. And that's not what they're here to ask for.

Laura B. – Correct. This is a new application on a new design.

Tim M. – But the basis of the first denial was to do brick and we all denied them removing the brick. They are here asking the same question with the caveat of we'll stamp the foundation or brick veneer the foundation. That's why I asked the way I asked is there any difference between foundation aside between last application and this application and the answer is no. Why are we hearing again if we've already decided on the same case. It's a point of law and order. I'm not disrespecting them. I appreciate them coming back with due diligence. First appearance was a year and two months to the date; three workshops through that. They've been back and forth and I get it their last attempt and only submission was approved and it was approved with the brick siding. This application is to amend the brick siding and add stamped foundation but we denied the removal of the bricks so I'm not understanding how we continue to be asked the same question and provide different answers.

October 25, 2023 HDC Minutes

Laura B.: The first-floor level on one of the sides has changed. Whether you consider it a siding change, a foundation change, that's changed from the first one. Whether this was approved or not approved. A change has been made just like a previous application tonight with the proposed changes. That's why they are back before us. I'm understanding why we're questioning the change because we just saw another board applicant that came back because there was a change.

Richard B.– I get where Tim's coming from. I've already voted against this twice; merely the size and then having the brick strips going up gave it a different façade, looked like a half-done building instead of one big façade like a mill would have. That's my opinion. Tim's looking at it a little different and we are all looking at this a little different. I see the plan different from what the board denied, went to the ZBA as it removed the brick and there was no brick whatsoever. We now have brick or concrete block on basement level of some sort of rock masonry material is going back. So, we're getting some back and I like the cement black with stamped cement that looks like granite block and it blends with the big house next door. I go back to picture 11 and it looks like a mill to me. I want to make a motion as we've been too long at this with amendments to the plan.

Kim S. – I have a real issue with this. We're supposed to approve this. We've specifically said, is the only thing you're coming here to change is the brick façade issue vs. the stamp concrete. In fact, midway through we find out that there are other proposed materials that to me are significant. 8 in exposure vs. 7 in exposure is significant. What else are we missing. I'm reluctant to even have a vote on a material application change until we know absolutely everything that is being proposed to change. If we vote today, the only vote can be we only give you permission to do stamp concrete or brick. We are not agreeing to other changes in any other materials that we have previously opposed. Otherwise, you're giving them carte blanche to change materials that we have not discussed, that we have not seen visuals of, that we have not seen materials of and that's concerning, particularly with this group.

Laura B. – I understand your opinion. I will let the board discuss this but for me personally I don't think that it would change my vote from an 8 in exposure to a 7 in exposure. If you do have those examples, I'd like for them to be passed around. Any other comments around materials?

Matt G. – If we were to accept the proposal tonight, those changes are included in the packet. These gentlemen are not trying to pull the wool over our eyes. They do outline on page 18 and 19 the previous and currently proposed material changes. If we approve it, it would be approving the things outlined in the packet on page 18 and 19. I think it was a misunderstanding of what was being asked.

Tim M. – On page 19, you mention the two different proposed different composites. Was that based on changing manufacturers? You went to all side to hardy plank or the other way around.

Stebbins stated yes, another similar option is like LP smart side. So, it's going from full concrete to composite of wood in PBC type thing.

Morrill stated the technical term that they refer to is a bible board, glass fiber reinforce polymer, it's less susceptible to expansion and contraction versus the hardy plank.

October 25, 2023 HDC Minutes

Tim M. – if you aren't familiar with hardy plank, visit CVS and look at the wall and you'll see how that's all busted up just from being installed correctly. I want to be clear, if it all looked like this gray siding and stamped concrete, personally, I don't care. My point of order was do we or did we not already hear this case? And wasn't a decision already made and is there an ability for us to reverse such a decision after it's been appealed. That was my point and I don't believe we do.

Laura B.- Is there further conversation or questions or do we have a motion? Richard, I believe you said you might have one.

Richard B.: I'm willing to make a motion.

Motion to have stamp concrete foundation, all thin bump out towers removed, leave bump out at the end, the book ends on Church street and Green street, remove white panels between windows to make it a horizontal clapboard, leave main entrance bump out, 5 degrees on Elm street would remain.

Laura B. : do we have a second for this motion?

Liz N. – Where the towers come out, you want double windows correct? I disagree about the windows on the paneling between the windows. So, if I don't vote do we have another chance to vote on the project?

Laura B. – Yes, you can ask him to amend his motion.

Laura B. – I don't love the idea of getting rid of the white, also not a fan of getting rid of the bump outs. Move forward with the stamp concrete foundation and wouldn't change anything else at this point as I don't mind the windows as stated and don't mind bump outs.

Do we have a second?

George B. – Second the motion

Richard B.– I think we're breaking it up and it doesn't look like a mill building, looks modern.

Tim M. – To the bump out aspect from a design and structure. These are not stair towers; it is common to have stair towers on mill buildings that are more pronounced.

MOTION: Richard MOVED that the application of 85 Elm Street Somersworth LLC be ACCEPTED to have stamp concrete foundation, all thin bump out towers removed, leave bump out at the end, the book ends on church street and green street, remove white panels between windows to make it a horizontal clapboard, leave main entrance bump out, 5 degrees on elm street would remain.

The MOTION was SECONDED by George.

The MOTION CARRIED 2-5-0. **The Motion does not pass**

MOTION: Laura MOVED that the application of 85 Elm Street Somersworth LLC be ACCEPTED Move forward with the stamp concrete foundation and wouldn't change anything else at this point as I don't mind the windows as stated and don't mind bump outs
The MOTION was SECONDED by George.

October 25, 2023 HDC Minutes

The MOTION CARRIED 5-2-0. Motion passes with the stamp concrete foundation and everything else as stands.

Kim S. – Point of clarification? Everything else stands, we're not amending anything else right?
Laura B. – As stands as in this packet with the proposed material as stated.

Tim M. – Just for the record, my no and denial were based upon the fact that we've already heard this and it was already denied.

6. WORKSHOP BUSINESS

- a. Looking into doing plaques for the Historic District and partnership possibly with the Somersworth historic museum. A Subcommittee has been formed and another meeting is going to be on the 15th at 6pm. If anyone would like to join, I encourage you to please do so.
- b. No updates on street signs. They are approved. Waiting on wayfinding signage to bring back to EDC.

7. COMMUNICATIONS AND MISCELLANEOUS

- a. Looking for update on the signage downtown in the HDC so if we can get the city plan to comment.
- b. The stone wall on Winter street that was constructed without a permit. We granted them approval as long as it was going to be clad in stone. It's not completed and hasn't been for well over a year and half.

Ms. Mears – Code compliance officer has done research. That property has changed hands 3 times since this last came into approval so he is reach out to the new property owners to try and get this back into compliance. He also sent a courtesy notice of violation.

MOTION: Tim M MOVED to adjourn the meeting.

The MOTION was SECONDED by Matt G.

The MOTION CARRIED 7-0-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:12pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Shoen, Historic District Commission Secretary
