

Somersworth Historical District Commission Meeting

Wednesday, April 24, 2019

In Attendance:

Laura Barry, Chair
Richard Brooks, Vice-Chair
Edward Levasseur, City Councilor
George Poulin, Commissioner
Lindsey Gagnon, Commissioner
Tim Metivier, Building Inspector

In Absentia:

Pius Charles Murray, Secretary
Matthew Gerding, Commissioner

Petitioners Present:

Mark Davenport
Jeff Duchane
Charles Knight
Feng Xia

Called to order: 7:00pm

1. Meeting Minutes
 - a. Ms. Barry motioned to table both minutes for the prior meeting and the meeting before that as both secretaries for those meetings are not in attendance and Mr. Levasseur seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0
2. Projects of Minimal Impact Report
 - a. Mr. Metivier reported 2 months' worth of projects as last month's report was not in the packet. February: 30 Prospect Street to re-roof their barn was approved. March: 4 Main Street to hang cast aluminum sign was approved.
3. Public Comments
 - a. None
4. Old Business
 - a. None
5. New Business

Hello to our new member Lindsey Gagnon and thank you for taking the minutes.

a. Mark Davenport, 61 Winter Street, HDC #011-2019

- i. Mr. Metivier provided a brief description of the proposed project.
- ii. Mr. Davenport introduced himself and stated that the project was to replace the garage door with a 4 panel (instead of 5 panels) black door and the top panel would have the 2 glass inserts, which is similar to what is already there.

- iii. Mr. Brooks asked if the door opening would change at all and Mark said it will be basically the same just the door itself will be different by having 4 panels instead of 5 but that's it.
- iv. Motion to approve by Mr. Poulin seconded by Mr. Brooks. Motion passed 5-0.

b. John Jackman, 7-9 Prospect Street, HDC #013-2019

- i. Mr. Metivier provided a brief description of the proposed project and noted that an application for the bottom floor windows was approved previous by the HDC. The applicant is looking to install the same 1 over 1 windows but this time on the top floor as at the time the applicant was unable to replace them all.
- ii. Applicant not in attendance.
- iii. Mr. Brooks noted the front facing windows are 1 over 1 and the back right hand addition to the building has 6 over 6 and suggested that the same style be used to keep the character of the building. Ms. Barry reference that she believes 1 over 1 is the older style windows and not the 6 over 6 so that may not matter for the character.
- iv. Mr. Poulin asked if all the bottom windows are currently 1 over 1 and Mr. Metivier stated they are.
- v. Mr. Poulin and Mr. Levasseur both preferred the windows stay as they are in the previous approval so that they would all be the same.
- vi. Ms. Barry asked if the storm windows would be removed and Mr. Metivier said the storm windows would need to be removed based on the way the new windows being installed function.
- vii. Motion to approve by Mr. Levasseur seconded by Mr. Brooks with the amendment that there would be no change in size or the trim is altered in any way. Motion passed 5-0.

c. Hilltop School LLC, 17 Grand Street, HDC #017-2019

- i. Mr. Metivier provided a brief description of the proposed project.
- ii. Jeff Duchane came as the representative for Chinburg Properties and Hilltop School LLC and also described the project.
- iii. Mr. Brooks asked if the patios would be elevated or ground level and if there would be fencing. Mr. Duchane said it would be ground with no fencing as they have done in past projects that are similar. Mr. Brooks also asked what materials would be used and Mr. Duchane said it would be stamped concrete.
- iv. Mr. Brooks then also asked what style of door used for the opening to the patios. Mr. Duchane was unsure of the plans regarding the doors. Ms. Barry brought up the fact that this project is also overseen by the National Park Service and that the doors would need to be approved by them always. Which means the NPS would likely require the applicant to install or salvage something similar to the original. The applicant was then able to find that the plans stated that the doors are to be salvaged. More discussion continued on which doors would be used and so forth.
- v. Mr. Levasseur asked if the patios would only be used for the specific units they are attached to and the applicant noted that is correct.

- vi. Ms. Barry asked the applicant if the tenant of the units attached to each patio would have any restrictions to what they could put on or around the patio. The applicant noted that this hasn't been discussed with the management team yet but that there would likely be rules regarding this.
- vii. Motion to approve by Mr. Poulin seconded by Ms. Barry. Motion passed 5-0.

d. Charles Knight, 31 Maple Street, HDC #015-2019

- i. Mr. Metivier provided a brief description of the proposed project.
- ii. Mr. Knight introduced himself and explained that the fence would connect the existing backyard fence to the front yard and would be galvanized chain link. With 8ft on the front left side and 53ft on the right side at 6ft high.
- iii. Ms. Barry asked if the owner would be interested in changing the color of the fencing from galvanized to black. Mr. Knight was willing to change the color to black but had originally picked galvanized to keep it matching with the existing fence. Mr. Brooks agreed the black would be his preference.
- iv. Motion to approve by Mr. Brooks with the amendment that all new fencing material would be black, seconded by Mr. Levasseur. Motion passed 5-0.

e. Feng Xia, 66-70 High Street, HDC #09-2019

- i. Mr. Metivier provided a brief description of the proposed sign.
- ii. Feng Xia and Jason attended representing their business.
- iii. Mr. Brooks asked Mr. Metivier if there would be other signs coming up for this applicant. Mr. Metivier noted there are none at this time but there is one in the window that appears to be paper and if it doesn't take up more than 50% of the existing pane that it would not need to come before the HDC.
- iv. Mr. Brooks asked if this sign is considered an internally lit sign and Mr. Metivier noted it would be considered so and went into further discussion on the difference between this and a neon sign.
- v. Ms. Barry asked Mr. Metivier if the sign can have the flashing mechanism can be turned off and he believed so and the applicant said yes it can be turned off.
- vi. Mr. Brooks noticed that there are a lot of the businesses that have light up signs even though they are not approved and Mr. Metivier remarked that the code enforcement office is working towards addressing this with their new code enforcement officer. Discussion ensued regarding the LED and neon regulations in the ordinances including the time of day and so forth that are required. Current city sign ordinance is under review/redesign to help better regulate this process and HDC will look to do the same.
- vii. Motion to approve by Mr. Levasseur with the amendment that the sign not be flashing and off after business hours. Ms. Barry seconded the motion. Vote with hands Mr. Levasseur, Ms. Gagnon, Ms. Barry to approve, Mr. Brooks obtained, and Mr. Poulin voted no. Motion passed 3-2.

f. Other new business: None

g. Closing comments by visitors: None

6. Workshop Business

- a. Fencing and sign ordinances are in progress. Waiting to hear back from city on changes or recommendations based on what was submitted by HDC. However this may be

tabled at the city council meeting as they are in the works with updating their ordinances for zoning and signage. Mr. Brooks noted his concern that signs won't get appropriate attention if regulation of them is removed from HDC and moved to the sign committee solely. Mr. Metivier also reminded members how difficult it is to keep up with all of the changes in the city additionally to notice each sign that may have been changed or updated without approval. Asking additionally that citizens speak up if they notice something that may have been done without proper permissions as that helps with the process.

7. Communications and Miscellaneous

- a. May 4th is the Spirit Up Cleanup Day. Ms. Barry suggested that the HDC could help clean up the Horn Cemetery, as they did last year, or another area that may need attention and asked members if there is another area that may need more help.
- b. Congrats on Mr. Levasseur being a home owner.
- c. Mr. Metivier to report any activity that is ongoing in the HDC for board members in an email as he was unable to compile it for tonight.
- d. Summersworth Historical Society and Museum is holding a first responders event on May 5th from 12:30 to 3:30.

8. Motion to adjourn by Mr. Levasseur second by Mr. Poulin @ 8:15pm

Respectfully submitted,
Lindsey Gagnon