

Somersworth Historic District Commission Meeting

Wednesday June 26th, 2019

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

Absent: Plus Charles Murray, Secretary

Petitioners Present:

Bob Flannery
Howard Gross
Costa Hasiotis
Michael Crosbie
Peter Braut

Called to Order: 7:00 pm

1. Meeting Minutes

- a. Motion to approve by Mr. Brooks. Seconded by Mr. Poulin and Mr. Gerding

2. Projects of Minimal Impact

- a. Conrad Fredette of 118 High Street was approved to re-roof the building.
- b. Thomas Argue of 21 Hamilton Street was approved to re-roof the building.
- c. Andrea Lovell of 63 Prospect Street was approved to re-roof the carriage house.
- d. Ms. Barry asked whether the minimal impact reports from the previous month had been approved, to which the commission checked the previously approved May 2019 minutes and saw that they were discussed and approved.

3. Public Comments by Visitors

- a. None

4. Old Business

- a. None

5. New Business

- a. Alton Rollinsford LLC, is seeking a certificate of appropriateness to repair front steps on a property located at 15-17 Grove Street, in the Historic Moderate Density (HMD) District, Assessor's Map 11 Lot 32, HDC#23-2019
George Poulin recused himself for this hearing and went to sit in the audience.

- i. No applicant was initially present to discuss the application. Mr. Metivier mentioned that there is a history of five previous no-shows to HDC application discussions, and that for this current application there had been a work-stop on court-ordered work on the property. Ms. Barry asked whether there were any abutters or neighbors that wished to speak about the property.

Mr. George Poulin, of 12 Grove Street, spoke as an abutter and explained that he has spoken with City employees for some five to six years about maintenance needs on this property. Mr. Poulin explained that the poorly maintained front steps are not fair to tenants and that the project needed to be done. He was also curious about the masonry being done, and what would be removed or replaced. Mr. Poulin also asked the Commission to make sure that the applicant used cast-iron railings, and to make sure that any pressure treated wood be painted within 60 days. He finished by saying that he believes this property, in its current state, is lowering the property values of neighboring properties.

After Mr. Poulin spoke, Mr. Bob Flannery came to speak about the property, and showed up late to the meeting, however was willing to speak on behalf of the property. Mr. Flannery said that he understands that things need to be done, and that he is willing to do them. Ms. Barry asked about the front steps, and whether they would be removed or replaced. Mr. Flannery said the masonry would be removed and replaced with a wood structure made of pressure treated lumber. Mr. Brooks asked whether there were more specific visual plans, to which Mr. Flannery said there were not. Mr. Levasseur asked whether he would keep the square footage the same, to which Mr. Flannery said he would. Mr. Gerding asked whether the work to the roof overhang would involve any of the historic bracketing, to which Mr. Flannery said it would not and that no details would be touched. Ms. Barry asked whether the railing would have balusters, to which Mr. Flannery said it would. Ms. Barry followed up to ask whether the railing on the second set of stairs would also be made of wrought iron, to which Mr. Flannery said it would. Ms. Barry asked whether these fixes would bring the property to code, to which Mr. Metivier said that they would. Mr. Brooks asked whether the second set of stairs would turn 90 degrees and follow the façade of the building, to which Mr. Flannery said they would. Mr. Brooks asked about lattice work for under the stairs, to which Mr. Flannery described that he would use 1 x 4 inch vertical slats spaced evenly for both sets of stairs.

Motion to approve made by Ms. Barry, with amendment to include that the front steps will be removed and replaced with pressure treated lumber which would be painted by the end of October 2019.

Motion seconded by Mr. Gerding

Motion Passed with ammendments made by Ms. Barry.

b. Howard Gross, is seeking a certificate of appropriateness to remove back deck and replace with steps on a property located at 32 Prospect Street, in the Historic Moderate Density (HMD) District, Assessor's Map 11 Lot 74, HDC#20-2019

- i. Howard Gross was in attendance to discuss the application. He explained that the submitted plans aim for a more attractive and functional deck, and that the yard is used more than the deck so it is less necessary. Ms. Gagnon asked whether the small deck platform to the right was to accommodate the door, to which Mr. Gross explained that the door on the right is the functional door, while the door in front of the stairs is not functional. Mr. Gerding asked whether the platform would come in front of both doors and then whether the stairs would still be in the same location just pushed forward due to the platform, to which Mr. Gross said yes. Mr. Brooks asked whether the railings would match existing railings on the house, to which Mr. Gross said that they would. Ms. Barry asked whether there would be a lattice or barrier under the deck, to which Mr. Gross said there would not be. Mr. Poulin asked that Mr. Gross paint the pressure treated wood, to which Mr. Gross said he would. Mr. Metivier explained that this was a court ordered repair, and that the painting would need to be completed in the 60 day time frame. Mr. Poulin began a motion to accept, however Mr. Brooks wanted to ensure that there was an ammendment to include that the railing match the existing house. Mr. Gross explained that there were two different types of railing on the other decks, and Mr. Brooks explained that it was fine as long as he matched on of those railing types.

A motion was made by Mr. Poulin to approve the application with the ammendments that the deck will be painted in 60 days, and that the railings match at the type of one of the other decks on the house.

Mr. Levasseur seconded this motion.

Motion passed with amendments made by Mr. Poulin.

c. Costa Hasiotis, is seeking a certificate of appropriateness to remove a 10' x 6' deck and replace with a 20' x 7' deck on a property located at 25 Lincoln Street, in the Residential/Single Family with a Historic Overlay (R1AH) District, Assessor's Map 11 Lot 159, HDC#26-2019

- i. Costa Hasiotis was present to discuss this application. Mr. Hasiotis explained that he would be doing the project himself and that he hoped to expand the usable outdoor space for his family with this deck because there is not currently much available due to the yard and driveway. He explained that the

deck would have trex boards as the surface boards, and pressure treated boards for the structure. Ms. Barry asked about the railings of the deck, to which Mr. Hasiotis explained that they would be plastic/composite in white to match the house. Mr. Hasiotis explained that they also wanted to do a small platform and stairs at another location on the house, along with this application. Ms. Barry asked Mr. Metivier whether this would be up to code enforcement, to which he explained that this could be included for approval, however a separate application would need to be submitted to code enforcement, but Mr. Hasiotis would not need to return to the HDC for approval. Mr. Poulin mentioned that the current stairs on the deck do not have coverings on the rises, to which Mr. Hasiotis said that this would be fixed when they redo the deck. Ms. Gagnon asked whether the stairs would be the same as they are now, to which Mr. Hasiotis said that they would be in the same location. Ms. Barry asked whether the board had an issue with the addition of the second deck, to which the board did not. Mr. Metivier asked whether Mr. Hasiotis could explain the new lattice on the deck. Mr. Hasiotis said that they would be using either wood or cedar lattice and would do either diagonal or straight up and down boards, and that there is no other lattice on the house to match to. Mr. Poulin said that it is on the side of the house and is not visible, so this is not much of an issue. Mr. Levasseur clarified that the second deck would have the direction of the stairs changed from north-pointing to west-pointing, to which Mr. Hasiotis confirmed.

Ms. Gagnon made a motion to approve the application with the amendment that the secondary deck would be replaced as well with the change in the direction of the stairs from north-pointing to west-pointing. Mr. Poulin seconded the motion.

Motion passed with amendments made by Ms. Gagnon.

d. Michael Crosbie, is seeking a certificate of appropriateness to repair the 3 bay garage on a property located at 138 High Street, in the Residential/Business with a Historic Overlay (R/BH) District, Assessor's Map 10 Lot 161, HDC#25-2019

- i. Michael Crosbie was in attendance to discuss the application. Mr. Crosbie explained that he received a complaint from code enforcement about the back wall of the garage on the property, and he was planning to repair. Mr. Crosbie brought his builder, Mr. Peter Braut, to help explain. Mr. Brooks asked whether there were any garage doors, to which Mr. Crosbie explained that there were but they were rotten and had fallen or been pushed up into the ceiling. Mr. Brooks asked whether he planned to leave the doors open, to which Mr. Crosbie said he did. Mr. Gerding explained that Mr. Crosbie had said in his application that he would be leaving the exterior the same,

however it appeared that it required work, to which Mr. Gerding asked whether he would be willing to fix and replace in-kind. Mr. Crosbie said that yes, anything that needed to be fixed on the exterior would be fixed with like materials. Mr. Brooks asked whether the windows on either end of the garage, which appear broken and boarded up, would be fixed. Mr. Crosbie said that they would remain boarded. Mr. Metivier mentioned to Mr. Crosbie that he needed to ensure that all aspects of the building are fixed to code, so that he is no longer out of compliance, and that his application may not cover all of these repairs. Mr. Metivier advised Mr. Crosbie to address these issues now so that he did not need to return to the board. Mr. Braut asked whether there was a list of violations, to which Mr. Metivier said that the applicant had been mailed a list, and that the City had a list but not on-hand. Mr. Braut explained that all rotten wood would be replaced with either conventional wood or pressure treated wood. Ms. Barry clarified and asked that any exterior boards be replaced with in-kind cement boards.

Mr. Levasseur made a motion to approve with the ammendment that any broken siding be replaced with in-kind cement boards.

Mr. Brooks seconded the motion.

Motion passed with amendments made by Mr. Levasseur.

6. Workshop Business

- a. Mr. Brooks asked about the sign portion of ordinances that the Commission had approved. Ms. Barry explained that the ordinances had been sent to city council, however because the fiscal year ends on June 30th, 2019 that the ordinances needed to be either approved, denied, or moved in order for them to stay alive into the next fiscal year. Thus, the city council voted to move the ordinaces to the Government Operations Committee. Ms. Barry explained that the HDC would collaborate with the Government Operations Committee, host a new workshop, and then send the ordinances to council. Mr. Levasseur said that he is also on the Government Operations Committee and that this is a good next step.

7. Communications and Miscellaneous

- a. Mr. Poulin mentioned that the gentleman from the first application of the night had been a no-show previously, to which Mr. Metivier explaiend that the no-shows had not been with the current owner.
- b. Ms. Barry said to keep an eye on the Forest Glade Cemetery, as there will be many upcoming events. She explained that there is a Irish event coming up that sounds exciting
- c. Ms. Barry explained that Chinburg properties will be doing the Carey Cottage in Portsmouth, and preventing its demolition.

- d. Mr. Metivier explained that the Hilltop School renovation has all permits approved, and that the demolition of the interior is complete, thus they will be moving forward with completing the interior soon.
- e. Ms. Barry stated that there have been charges brought against the individuals suspected of starting the fire in the old bleachery.

Adjournment:

Motion made by Mr. Levasseur

Seconded by Mr. Brooks

Meeting adjourned at 8:09pm

Meeting Minutes Taken By Matthew Gerding