

# NASHUA HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Monday, March 27, 2023, 6:30 p.m.

**NOTE: City Hall is now open to the public after the Governors Order has expired. Therefore, the Historic District Commission is meeting in Room 208 at City Hall. The public as well as applicants may still access the meeting via Zoom. Note – this meeting is a non-scheduled special meeting, held between two normally scheduled meeting dates.**

## *HDC Members:*

Robert Vorbach  
Ald. Patricia Klee  
Chris Barrett  
Bill Slivinski  
Maggie Harper  
Ald. Derek Thibault

## *Also present:*

Carter Falk, Deputy Planning Manager/Zoning  
Kate Poirier, Zoning Coordinator

Mr. Falk called the Roll Call; the attending members indicated their presence by verbal confirmation.

## **MINUTES:**

February 13, 2023

**MOTION** by Ald. Klee to approve the minutes as presented, waive the reading, and place the minutes in the file.

**SECONDED** by Mr. Barrett.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VERBAL ROLL CALL OF THE MEMBERS.**

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

None.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

- 1. Focal Realty Trust, Michael Craven, Trustee (Owner) Michael Craven (Applicant) 30 Concord Street (Sheet 67 Lot 9) requesting approval to remove an existing two-story porch and construct a new 16'x22' two-story addition at the same location on southern elevation of house. RB Zone, Ward 3.**

Voting on this case:

Ald. Patricia Klee  
Chris Barrett  
Maggie Harper  
Bill Slivinski

Robert Vorbach, Vorbach Architecture, Nashua, NH. Mr. Vorbach said that the packet shows a bump out, the bay, and the elevation that shows the porch element. He said that it was a business, computer related, and it left, and the owner does not want a mixed use, so it would be converted into a one bedroom apartment.

Mr. Vorbach said that the building is a hodgepodge of materials and details. He said that he tried to strip away the 8-inch aluminum siding to determine what used to be there, and he passed around a picture showing the original clapboard. He said that he started with the premise of what was originally there, what is buried underneath the aluminum. He said that the windows are variable, from vinyl replacement to original. He said that the bay windows are two over two taller windows, and the windows to the front are six over six, and they are black, light gray with a dark gray trim, and plan on keeping that color palette.

Mr. Vorbach said that from the porch, you come into a double door central hallway, and the unit would be to the left, and there is an existing room with a bay window and an inert fireplace, that will be the living room. He said that the addition, 16'x22', where the porch is, will be a three-quarter bath, and a kitchen dining area, from there, existing conditions will be dealt with once construction starts, and would like to do a basement so that the mechanicals and storage can be done. He said that there would be stairs down to a basement area, and stairs from the living area up to a single bedroom, for a one-bedroom unit. He said that the 16'x22' box replaces the existing porch.

Mr. Vorbach said that for the elevations, he said it is natural materials right now, a wood corner, and there is AZEK wrapping the corners for a better crisper look, and the intent is to respect what was there, and work with materials that are in place. He said for the windows, they would be Marvin, there is integrity, they are black, and that kind of window unit has a fiberglass exterior with a wooden interior. He said that the existing windows are wood, they are not vinyl replacements. He said that they would have simulated divided lights, which mimics the existing windows.

Mr. Vorbach said that the door is a craftsman style, intended to belong in context. He said that there would be an exterior door from the kitchen/dining area to the property, which is an open green area to the south. He said that the proposal is to make the building all residential, and provide a unique unit type, without eating up too much square footage.

Mr. Slivinski said that it certainly looks a lot better.

Mr. Vorbach said that there is an effort to clean up the property, and the porch element as it is now is basically useless, and has no functional aspect.

Mr. Craven said that the photo is a little old, it is when he first acquired the property, it has been cleaned up.

Mr. Vorbach said that the trim work will also be restored and painted, so the aesthetics of the building will be brought back.

Ald. Klee asked to confirm the exact location of the addition on the building.

Mr. Vorbach confirmed the location. He said that the house has had other additions to it, there is an interesting hodgepodge of materials, they are trying to respect the architecture and put something there that belongs.

Ald. Klee asked if the windows would all go to aluminum.

Mr. Vorbach said that the initial focus is the addition, over time, that will be looked at, as some of the original windows are not in good shape, so a strategy is being developed to have some consistency, especially the Concord Street elevation, and the elevation facing Bridges to the south.

Mr. Barrett asked if they are going to match the colors.

Mr. Vorbach said that the aluminum siding is a light gray, the 8-inch siding. He said that the intended palette is black windows, matching the original, a light gray clapboard, and the trim casing for the windows would be a dark gray. He said that they do not intend to paint the original aluminum.

Mr. Barrett asked how many parking spaces are available.

Mr. Craven said currently, there are five spaces.

Mr. Slivinski said that it's going from 5 units to 6 units, and it will have to go to the Zoning Board for permission.

Mr. Craven said that is correct. He said that they will adjust the parking area to get additional parking spaces.

Mr. Slivinski asked if the project is taking away any green space.

Mr. Vorbach said it's a little bigger than the porch footprint, but the existing dimensions were just not viable for a unit, so it was extended, about four feet from what the porch was, to get a workable kitchen/dining area.

Mr. Falk said that the proposal meets all the setbacks and open space, and for the use, it will require Zoning Board of Adjustment approval for required land area, also, it will need a Conditional Use approval by the Planning Board. He said that they will need 1.5 parking spaces per unit, so nine spaces will be required.

Ms. Harper asked if there are any gutters proposed.

Mr. Vorbach said that there are no gutters on the upper roofs, and the overhang is enough where water will run off and not impact negatively. He said that there are gutters on the lower roofs with this.

## **SPEAKING IN FAVOR:**

No one.

## **SPEAKING WITH OPPOSITION OR WITH QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS:**

Linda Willette, 4 Davis Court, Nashua, NH.

Ms. Willette said that she did not see the entire application online. She said that the building was built between 1840-1860, it's an Italianate style building. She said that there have been a lot of changes to the building. She said that she is not sure how far the replacement addition comes out past the bay window, so as you're standing on Concord Street, it's hard to scale off how far out it comes and what it will look like. She said it would be the east elevation.

Mr. Vorbach said it comes out about 5'-6".

Ms. Willette said that a lot of the windows have been changed, most likely not with the current ownership. She said she doesn't recall any plans coming before the Commission to change all those windows to vinyl. She said that the siding on the carriage house has changed from vertical boards to vinyl siding, also without coming here.

Ms. Willette asked about the roof, if it would be pitched south.

Mr. Vorbach said it is a gable pitch, north and south, the west elevation is a gable end that matches the existing gable, and it's an interesting corner, as this roof has to tie into the upper roof to make any sense. He said he's matched the detailing of the main roof.

Ms. Willette said that they'd take the porch off, and it would be a pitched roof, back to what would be the original house. She said it looks like the ridge will meet the ridge that is sloping the other way.

Ms. Willette asked if he had an elevation.

Mr. Vorbach said at this point no, as the focus is on the south and west, that is where most of the architectural detail is.

Ms. Willette said it will project out 5 feet beyond the house.

Mr. Vorbach said that it will have the same detailing as the existing gable end, there is no change in the detailing.

Ms. Willette said that it would be good to have that elevation, as it is the one that faces the public way.

Mr. Vorbach said that the south elevation is the most visible, and then the west elevation is a Kleeve gable end. He said that the debate was how far to go out beyond the existing bay, to make a functioning unit, and it came out to 6 feet, so the detailing will lock right in with the existing view.

Ms. Willette said that she thought that the RB Zoning district, at one time, was zoned for two units, and apparently that has gone by the wayside, but six units seem like a lot.

Ms. Poirier said that three or more units are allowed per a Conditional Use permit, subject to review and approval by the Planning Board.

Mr. Falk said that generally, the RC zone is more intensive with respect to apartments, but in the RB Zone, it is allowed as long as you have the land area. He said in this instance, the owner is short of the required land area, and must first go to the Zoning Board, about 37,000 sq.ft of land is required for six units, and there is approximately half of that.

Ms. Willette said that she appreciates the clapboards and trying to match what was found under the existing porch. She said that the doors are proposed in a Craftsman style, which is much later than the Italianate style, so maybe something more neutral may be considered, and it wouldn't further confuse the picture of what the building looks like.

Ms. Willette said that overall, is happy to see someone taking an interest in this building and wanting to improve the building.

Mr. Vorbach said that the double front doors are ornate, so the choice was to get something more neutral.

Ms. Willette said that she is suggesting something not of a particular time period, perhaps not the craftsman style door. She said that she didn't want it to mix the period.

Ald. Klee said that it sounds like things have been done over the years without coming to the Commission, or other Boards. She said that she appreciates that they are here now seeking approval, and it may be hard to make the whole building homogenous, things will be done over time, and understands that this will help to get a clean, even focus. She said that the door looks somewhat vanilla, and this is the best that can be done for this improvement.

Mr. Vorbach said that this is the main elevation of the addition, the south elevation, and didn't want to pick an Italianate door, they're just too fancy, and opted for something a little simpler, it will be painted black, and won't stand out. He said that the windows, two over two, six over six, and kept that, the east elevation is the smallest elevation. He said that the west elevation will have an egress window for the bedroom, and a kitchen window, and small windows for the basement area.

Mr. Barrett asked about the south elevation, and asked why the windows are mixed-matched. He asked about the transom window.

Mr. Vorbach said that it is a high transom, it would go over a bed, to allow natural light to come in, and allows furniture underneath.

Ms. Willette said that she just wanted the door to not be of a different period of architecture that the house doesn't reflect. She said that she understands that it's a rehab project, not a restoration project.

**END OF PUBLIC HEARING, BEGINNING OF PUBLIC MEETING:**

Ald. Klee said that she doesn't have an issue with the door as presented. She said that the key is to give some authenticity to the historic building.

Mr. Vorbach said that the door on the south elevation shows six lights, the other door shows two. He said that the intent was to respect what is there, and contextually, sometimes there is a mix of windows in these older homes.

Ald. Klee said that she drives by this house frequently, and to remove the porch will add and enhance the area, and is happy to see it. She said from a historic point of view, it may not be perfect, but prior owners didn't appear to come to the Commission, and we can't punish the current owner. She said that this is a good fix.

Mr. Vorbach said that the process of design here has been a challenge.

Mr. Slivinski said that he believes Mr. Vorbach has done a great job to improve the property, you can't make it go back and become something historic, but the project is improving it, and is in favor. He said he doesn't care about the door.

Ms. Harper asked about the transom window, and suggested a six over six, and asked if there would be enough room for a bed up against the wall.

Mr. Vorbach said he did look at a double hung, with a bed in-between. He said he thought it would be more interesting with the transom window.

Ms. Harper said it would be two different windows on the side, and then two matching windows.

Ald. Klee said that she would recommend that the transom window be changed to a six over six, it may balance better.

**MOTION** by Mr. Barrett to approve the application as submitted and presented, to have the transom window change to a six over six on the south elevation, second floor.

**SECONDED** by Mr. Barrett.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY PER VERBAL ROLL CALL OF THE COMMISSIONERS.**

Mr. Slivinski voted in support.

Ms. Harper voted yes.

Ald. Klee voted yes.

Mr. Barrett voted yes.

Mr. Vorbach – abstained.

Ald. Thibault had to leave to attend another meeting.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

None.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN** by Ald. Klee at 7:13 p.m.

CF/cf