

NASHUA HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Monday, June 13, 2022, 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.

HDC Members:

Mariellen MacKay, Chair (on zoom)
Robert Sampson (arrived at 6:35)
Robert Vorbach
Chris Barrett
Maggie Harper
Bill Slivinski
Bill Quinn

Also present:

Carter Falk, Deputy Planning Manager/Zoning
Kate Poirier, Zoning Coordinator
Matt Sullivan, Community Development Director (on zoom)

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

MINUTES:

April 25, 2022

MOTION by Mr. Barrett to approve the minutes as presented, waive the reading, and place the minutes in the file.

SECONDED by Mr. Vorbach.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7-0 BY VERBAL ROLL CALL OF THE MEMBERS.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. Taylormade Realty, LLC (Owner) Davis & Towle Insurance Group (Applicant) 11 Concord Street (Sheet 43 Lot 5) requesting approval to replace existing ground sign**

with a new ground sign. RC Zone, Ward 3. [CONTINUED FROM 5-16-2022 MEETING]

Voting on this case:

Mariellen MacKay
Robert Sampson
Robert Vorbach
Chris Barrett
Maggie Harper
Bill Slivinski
Bill Quinn

Josh Messinger, Advantage Signs, Concord, NH (on Zoom). Mr. Messinger said he is representing Eaton Berube. He said that it would have a concrete base with a stone veneer, it is granite, with an aluminum frame with a painted sign faces and acrylic lettering that would stand out from the sign to make it dimensional. He said that it is replacing an existing sign that would be demolished and replaced with this new sign.

Mrs. MacKay asked if the dimensions would be the same.

Mr. Messinger said it will be the same size.

Mr. Barrett asked if the sign would be lighted.

Mr. Messinger said the sign would be up lit from a flower bed, but it is not part of his scope of work. He said that the customer prefers it to be up lit, and not internally lit.

Mr. Slivinski asked if it is in the same location.

Mr. Messinger said it will be the same location.

Mr. Vorbach said that he likes the masonry component, and the design is interesting, it has some character to it.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR:

No one.

SPEAKING IN OPPOSITION OR WITH QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS:

No one.

END OF PUBLIC HEARING, BEGINNING OF PUBLIC MEETING:

MOTION by Mr. Barrett to approve the request as presented and advertised.

SECONDED by Mr. Quinn.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY PER VERBAL ROLL CALL OF THE VOTING MEMBERS.

- 2. Parent Realty, LLC (Owner) Grey Nuns Thrift Shop (Applicant) 11-15 Main Street (Sheet 68 Lot 9) requesting approval to reface existing wall sign. D-1/MU Zone, Ward 3. [CONTINUED FROM 5-16-2022 MEETING]**

Voting on this case:

Mariellen MacKay
Robert Sampson
Robert Vorbach
Chris Barrett
Maggie Harper
Bill Slivinski
Bill Quinn

No one present to provide testimony – case will be heard later in the agenda when they arrive.

- 3. Patricia M. Thurber Rev. Trust (Owner) 40 Concord Street (Sheet 67 Lot 99) requesting approval to construct an attached 11'-8" x 9'-8" solarium on back of approved addition. RB Zone, Ward 3. [CONTINUED FROM 5-16-2022 MEETING]**

Voting on this case:

Mariellen MacKay
Robert Sampson
Robert Vorbach
Chris Barrett
Maggie Harper
Bill Slivinski
Bill Quinn

Pat Thurber, 40 Concord Street, Nashua, NH. Mrs. Thurber said that this is the wind-up of the property, and it will be the beautification of fixing up this lot. She said it will be an attached solarium on back of the approved addition, it will be part of the landscaping plan for the back yard, and will not be visible from any of the three surrounding streets, Concord, Ayer and Rogers Streets. She said that the addition is virtually all complete. She said that the solarium would be constructed by Four Seasons, and the foundation will be done by Roth Builders. She said that the neighbors have not voiced any objections.

Tracy Turmelle, GM Roth, Nashua, NH. Mr. Turmelle said that the location of the solarium is tucked into a back corner, and won't be visible from any of the roads, and held the height below the existing eave to minimize the impact from the neighbor to the back. He said it's a minor structure in comparison to what is already there. He said it's a simple design and will be the same color bronze as the windows.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR:

No one.

SPEAKING IN OPPOSITION OR WITH QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS:

No one.

END OF PUBLIC HEARING, BEGINNING OF PUBLIC MEETING:

Commission members all expressed support for the application.

MOTION by Mr. Sampson to approve the request as submitted.

SECONDED by Mr. Vorbach.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY PER VERBAL ROLL CALL OF THE VOTING MEMBERS.

- 4. Nashua Historical Society (Owner) 5 Abbott Street (Sheet 67 Lot 54) requesting approval to construct 11'x34' shed roof over HVAC units on ground on back side of building. RC Zone, Ward 3.**

Voting on this case:

Mariellen MacKay
Robert Sampson
Robert Vorbach
Chris Barrett
Maggie Harper
Bill Slivinski
Bill Quinn

Dennis Parker, representing Historical Society. Mr. Parker said he's been with the Historical Society for about 25 years in different capacities, and now is in charge of maintenance and grounds. He said that they've been getting a lot of water issues into the basement towards the rear of the building. He said that the chain-link fence back there houses the HVAC system and heating systems. He said its cordoned off to reduce vandalism and people going in there. He said that water is still coming in the basement, and they use the basement for archiving and donated items that come in.

Mr. Parker said that the proposed roof would shed the water away from it. He pointed out the pictures, and identified the handicap walk, and they would also like to tie it in with the proposed roof, as it gets a lot of snow and ice on the ramp, so it would be a similar roof structure, with the same architectural shingles, with four or five posts, and will put back the chain-link fence and attach it to the posts, with a gate.

Mrs. MacKay asked if the roof tie-in by the handicap ramp needs a separate application.

Mr. Falk said it would, as the Commission does not have any pictures or drawings of it, and it was not advertised. He said that if the Commission feels that it is a minor amendment to what was advertised, possibly it can be considered tonight, but it was not advertised.

Mr. Parker said that they got approval in their bid to add the other portion of roof, but understands that it would need to be re-advertised.

Mr. Falk said that it should be re-advertised.

Mr. Barrett asked if the side of the roof area would be open or closed.

Mr. Parker said that it is proposed to be closed in, and put in a finished ceiling in it, some type of wood structure, or veneer, that could be painted and be waterproof.

Mr. Slivinski asked if the posts would be painted white.

Mr. Parker said they would, to blend in with the existing colors. They would be 6"x6" posts, and the fence would be put back with the gate.

Mr. Quinn asked about the end, of the new structure, if it would be mimicked what is there, so that there would be the siding that is on the end triangle.

Mr. Parker said yes, they can put some horizontal siding there.

Mr. Quinn asked if the roof line would cut across the window as shown in the drawing.

Mr. Parker said it would, very insignificantly, maybe the bottom pane on the right. He said it's a stairwell in that back hallway, so you'd see it as you walk up the stairs to the second floor, it's just a view from the stairwell. He said that the contractor will try to make it below.

Mr. Slivinski asked if the roof pitch can be brought down to avoid the window.

Mr. Parker said that the drawing is not to scale, so perhaps it can be brought down under the window. He said that the chain-link fence would be removed at this point, as it won't be needed anymore, but just during construction.

Mr. Slivinski said that the pitch can be lowered, and does not want the window to be covered.

Mr. Parker said that he'd make that a priority.

Mr. Barrett asked if there is a zoning code that would prohibit that.

Mr. Falk said he didn't believe that it's a required window for egress, but the window is not an egress window as there is no outside stair. He said that there are numerous other windows in the building.

Mr. Vorbach said that if he can get below the corner of the window it would be great, it still would be a decent roof pitch. He said that he would do everything possible to adjust the pitch of the roof and leave the window alone.

Mr. Parker said that the roof flashing is going to be cut into the brick, and then come out down under the shingle, and then come out and down under the shingle. He said that without the fence there now, there isn't a height limitation, so it can be tipped and put right below the window, because it was only about 8 inches off of missing the entire corner, so the roof can be dropped down one foot, still have good pitch, and miss the window and then have the metal flashing go right along the brick. He said he's comfortable that it can be done.

Mr. Vorbach said that with the 6x6 posts, there would be a header on the posts to support the rafters, the height of the header can be adjusted, and adjust the roof pitch.

Mr. Falk asked how tall the fence is, and how high is it above the mechanical equipment.

Mr. Parker said that the fence is 7-8 feet tall, existing, and the mechanical units are much shorter. He said that they need one access point on the side or the front so they can be accessed, there are four condensers in there and the heating unit.

Mrs. MacKay asked how the Board wants to look at the roof part by the ramp.

Mr. Vorbach said that they should be looking at something visual, what it would look like aesthetically.

Mr. Barrett said that he doesn't have a problem approving this as long as they can drop it down and make sure it doesn't block the window.

Mr. Parker said that he doesn't have a problem coming back.

Mr. Slivinski said that he'd like to see them come back with a drawing showing how everything is going to fit together after the measurements are checked, and the pitch of the roof can be lowered, and the window not covered. He said that he would like to see something better than what he's seen tonight. He recommends tabling the whole application it and having it come back.

Mrs. MacKay asked if this can be conditionally approved, or approved based upon what the presentation was this evening, and with the caveat that they would come back to do the overhang.

Mr. Falk said that the Commission can put forth a motion for support, with a condition that the roof is lowered a little bit to avoid the window, and since we don't have any plans for the other roof area over the handicap ramp, that has to come back anyways, so that part of the case cannot be tabled, since we have nothing to table. He said it would be a new application.

Mrs. MacKay asked if they want the project to start sooner rather than later.

Mr. Parker said that the contractor has scheduled them for the first part of August. He said that they just don't have the funds for the design part of it, and the contractor is a master carpenter in his 70's that doesn't do drawings for them.

Mr. Vorbach said that if they're coming back for the ramp, when they do that, just bring in adjusted visual plans of the enclosure, the valid point is that during our time, we are designing in the meeting, that is an issue. He said that when he looks at the sketch, he understands completely what they are doing, and the details are existing with regards to the architecture, but the submitted sketch, with the shed end and the window issue, he said he'd rather see a little bit more detail in terms of aesthetics, and not hiring an architect. He said that the Commission shouldn't be designing at the meeting.

Mr. Slivinski said that he would vote to approve it if he brings back a diagram back in that we are going to approve.

Mr. Quinn said that we should do try to do what we can, given the Society's status. He said he'd like to get that condition put through as well, we can do an additional approval, noting what the Society means to us.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR:

No one.

SPEAKING WITH OPPOSITION OR WITH QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS:

No one.

END OF PUBLIC HEARING, BEGINNING OF PUBLIC HEARING:

MOTION by Mr. Vorbach to approve the shed roof enclosure for the Historical Society with the condition that when they return for the roof design over the ramp, that they also bring in a modified drawing showing the changes that the Commission has discussed at this meeting, including dropping the roof pitch, a little more visual of the shed end, and structure, so it comes back with the design of the roof over the ramp.

SECONDED by Mr. Slivinski

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 5-0 (Ms. Harper and Mr. Sampson abstained)

- 5. Diastole Holdings, LLC (Owner) Kirk Macnaught (Applicant) 53-59 Main Street (Sheet 78 Lot 36) requesting: 1) to replace existing non-functioning gooseneck lights and horizontal light bar with new bronze gooseneck lights; and, 2) to complete installation of new windows with bronze break metal wrap around windows. D-1/MU Zone, Ward 3.**

Voting on this case:

Mariellen MacKay
Robert Sampson
Robert Vorbach
Chris Barrett
Maggie Harper
Bill Slivinski
Bill Quinn

Kirk Macnaught, 53-59 Main Street, Nashua, NH. Mr. Macnaught said that part of the installation of the windows includes this metal trim around the windows, it's a wrap that goes around it. He said that the windows are not weatherproof. He said that the wrap from the original windows are still there, so this would cover up the wood that you see with the same colored metal. He said that the other request is the gooseneck lights, and one of them has already fallen off, and it's been hanging off the building. He said that there is a long horizontal fluorescent light that will be replaced as well.

Ms. Harper asked what kind of bulbs would be used in the goosenecks.

Mr. Macnaught said he's not sure, but does not want them to be visible, or hanging below.

Mr. Vorbach said that they should be exterior grade LED lights.

Mr. Slivinski said that the last time he was here, he promised one projecting sign.

Mr. Macnaught said that the person coming in to use the building, they are supposed to come back with the signage they want to use. He said that he isn't sure what he wants to do.

Mr. Quinn said it may be good to give the tenant a heads-up because there is a longer lead time for meetings.

Mr. Falk said new businesses can put up a temporary banner for 30 days.

Mr. Vorbach said he knows the building was divided up, so the transom brings cohesiveness and the different door fronts, or store fronts below the transoms, and realizes that Mr. Macnaught inherited this, so the transoms begin to give the elevation a cohesiveness, and how those storefronts are dealt with will be interesting to see how it evolves over time. He said that as far as the lighting is concerned, it will be an improvement, as what is there now is a hodgepodge.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR:

No one.

SPEAKING IN OPPOSITION OR WITH QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS:

No one.

END OF PUBLIC HEARING, BEGINNING OF PUBLIC MEETING:

MOTION by Mr. Barrett to approve the application as presented.

SECONDED by Mr. Sampson.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7-0 PER VERBAL ROLL CALL OF THE MEMBERS.

- 6. Teas Family Rev. Trust (Owner) 93 Concord Street (Sheet 47 Lot 37) requesting approval to convert a second-story open porch into a 10'-1" x 17'-1" enclosed sunroom. RA Zone, Ward 3.**

Voting on this case:

Mariellen MacKay
Robert Sampson
Robert Vorbach
Chris Barrett
Maggie Harper
Bill Slivinski
Bill Quinn

Frank Teas, 93 Concord Street, Nashua, NH. Mr. Teas said that his house was built in 1852 and they bought it in October, 2016. He said that they'd like to enclose a deck off the bedroom that is in disrepair. He said that he has a son that has a rare genetic disorder in that he wants to fly. He said that they've had to lock the door on both sides with keys so the space cannot even be used, and thought the best thing would be to incorporate it into living space as a sunroom, it would mirror what is below, a three-season porch.

Mr. Teas said that the porch below is plumbed for heat, but is not used, as the water to that room is shut off. He said that they've engaged Steve Miller's firm to do the drawings, and submitted pictures of different vantage points of the home. He said it's about 170 square feet that would be enclosed.

Mrs. MacKay asked if it would be screens or windows.

Mr. Teas said windows.

Mr. Barrett asked if they would be matching the same windows as below.

Mr. Teas said that they've tried to source those windows, actually, the windows down below should probably be replaced, they're beautiful windows, made by the previous owner, but they're not in great shape, but they're also about \$15,000 per window.

Mr. Barrett asked what type of siding is on the lower portion.

Mr. Teas said it is clapboard, wood, and it will match up above. He said that he will be painting the whole house, same color.

Mr. Vorbach said that in looking at the elevation, the roof for the addition works well, it is blended architecturally, the windows are the same character as the main house. He said that from a standpoint of design, it belongs.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR:

No one.

SPEAKING IN OPPOSITION OR WITH QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS:

No one.

END OF PUBLIC HEARING, BEGINNING OF PUBLIC MEETING:

MOTION by Mr. Slivinski to approve this request as submitted.

SECONDED by Mr. Vorbach

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7-0 PER VERBAL ROLL CALL OF THE MEMBERS.

Mrs. MacKay read the advertisement for Case #2 again, and there is no one present to make a presentation.

MOTION by Mrs. MacKay to table the case to the 7-25-2022 meeting.

SECONDED by Mr. Barrett.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7-0 TO TABLE TO THE 7-25-2022 MEETING BY THE VOTING MEMBERS.

Discussion:

Riverfront Development:

Matt Sullivan, Community Development Director, City of Nashua. Mr. Sullivan said that he is on a pre-planned out-of-state trip. He said that the VHB team will be making the bulk of the presentation. He said that the Riverfront Development plan was adopted by the City by the Board of Alderman in 2017, and laid out visions for substantial modifications to the area, particularly in the downtown core. He said that there is a funding source in place and now moving ahead with the permitting process. He said that there is a possible role for the HDC to play on the north side of the river, related to cantilevered walkways, federally installed, in several locations. He said that the expectation is that the HDC will hopefully have some questions and be prepared for some future comments to modifications as well, recognizing that jurisdictionally, the role may be limited, but would like the HDC to play a role in what this project will look like.

Peter Walker, Environmental Scientist, VHB. Mr. Walker said that he's helping the City work through some of the design and regulatory reviews, and Quin Stuart is an Architectural Historian who's been integral to the team. He said that the project is managed by Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director, who cannot attend tonight.

Mr. Walker shared his screen for the Commissioners. He pointed out an aerial photo of the district, and what this project is about is increasing connectivity in the downtown for pedestrians, cyclists, non-motorized transportation, to improve access to the river, and create opportunities for recreation, and will promote economic development. He said that the project extends from the Clocktower Place area to the PanAm railroad bridge.

Mr. Walker pointed out the western side, some landmarks, including the Greeley House, and it enumerates all the individual elements of the proposed project. He said that they want to start construction this summer, and one of the first action items is the Cotton Transfer Bridge, but the issue with it is that it does not have good ADA access on the north side, so the plan is to construct an ADA-compliant ramp, along with some crosswalk and pedestrian improvements and streetscape improvements. He said that a good model of what is being planned is already in place, by the Peddler's Daughter, going towards Margarita's and the PanAm Bridge, there is already a cantilevered boardwalk section, and there will be a similar segments of boardwalk, and there is an existing path that will be integrated into the project, and there will be a new pedestrian pathway downstream of the Jackson Falls Dam, a new pedestrian bridge across the Nashua River will be built, in part because the existing pedestrian pathway on the bridge is really substandard, so there will be a new section of pathway on the south side of the river, but not within the Historic District.

Mr. Walker pointed out Main Street, Water Street, and the Parc de La'Renaissance on the south side of the river. He said that in that area, there is already some small green space at the Parc, and the plan is to dramatically increase the size of the green space in the park area. He said that

the drawings are all conceptual designs, they're not exactly what is proposed to build, they'll be refined. He said that where you currently see parking, adjacent to the park, the entire area between the river and Water Street will become green space and hardscape for public use, so the parking will be relocated elsewhere, specifically on Water Street. He said that they would be building a boardwalk along 4 Water Street, there would be a floating dock so people can access the river for kayaking.

Mr. Walker showed a plan for Parc de L'Renaissance showing a pier going down to a floating dock, and showing how the redeveloped park pathway would connect to a boardwalk down to that area, and then further to the east adjacent to 4 Water Street. He said that the building at 4 Water Street does not meet National Register eligibility, as there are concerns about structural integrity. He said that the northwest area does include a portion of the Historic District, including the Eversource substation. He said that there would be a visual screen added to it, it would be a very interesting layout added to it, it would be a new steel structure.

Mr. Walker said that the entire area from Peddlers Daughter to the Jackson Falls Dam is already halfway developed there, but from the Jackson Falls Dam downstream to the railroad, a new substantially improved pathway would be built. He said that the new pedestrian bridge would connect people from the southern to the northern bank of the river, and along the southeast portion where there is a gravel pathway, in need of improvement, they'll be doing a similar design of a paved pathway and a metal railing, and the ramp section will be an ADA-compliant ramp.

Quinn Stuart, VHB. Ms. Stuart has been working with the project team, and said that they are working with an archeological firm to cover this. She said that they are going to have a two-prong attack on the project, one is local and one is Federal.

Ms. Stuart pointed out the yellow dashed line on the map, Greeley House to the left of the district, although there is nothing physically happening with that property, there will be repair and rehabilitation of the pathway along the river, with the addition of the guardrail. She said that the new screen at the substation will be visible from the Greeley House property.

Ms. Stuart said that for 53-59 Main Street, that is where they are proposing a cantilevered boardwalk, similar to the Peddlers Daughter. She said it will have wood decking with a matching rail, it will look unobtrusive, and will pull in the existing aesthetics from the Peddlers Daughter, and will tie into the paved portion of the trail. She said that the remainder of the improvements will be rehabilitation of paths, with more striping and delineation of the paths for pedestrian safety.

Mr. Sullivan said that it is important to keep an open line of communication going with the Commission moving forward.

Mr. Sampson asked if there will be any effort to identify the historic character of the buildings that are in the area, such as where Margarita's is, it was the hydro station built in 1919-1920, it had some of the most modern turbine alternators built at that time. He said it would be great to identify the original use of some of these old historic buildings.

Mr. Sullivan said he didn't think there was anything contemplated right now, but that is a great idea, whether it is with a placard or sign, something that could be educational.

Mr. Walker said it is something that they can relay to the design team, and they've been working with the State Deputy Historic Preservation Officer, and at this point, they're at the end of the building identification phase, and it would be nice to look at these historic buildings for inspiration in the design, but also in terms of making sure that we understand what the resources are out in this area.

Mr. Quinn said that the plaques that discuss the history are equally as important to help tie it all together, and explain what the building was, what it's purpose was, and perhaps give some meaning to the design. He said that as all the boardwalks are tied in, he asked if they will all be similar and compatible.

Mr. Walker said that the design is intended to be cohesive and recognizable throughout the entire loop.

Mr. Vorbach asked about the substation screening, and asked if it is weathering steel, or painted steel. He said he is in favor of the organic design.

Mr. Walker said it is currently going to be weathering steel.

Mrs. MacKay said that she really likes what she sees with this, it is aesthetically pleasing, and having plaques showing the building history, there is a lot of culture here to be identified.

Mr. Vorbach said that he appreciates the cohesiveness, and the thought level that is being put into this design.

Mr. Slivinski asked if there is any room down there for any commercial development, such as coffee shops. He asked if this area would be a speed path for bicycles and skateboards.

Mr. Walker said for commercial activity, the answer is no, it is all City property or easement property to the City, the only place is perhaps near the dock area, as there may be kayak rentals, but nothing is planned now. He said that it is intended to be public space. He said that for bikes, particularly on the south side, the design will not be conducive to fast speeds for bikes, it is intended to serve bicyclists.

Mr. Sullivan said that there are opportunities for local controls for skateboards, and the City discourages the use of them on sidewalks.

OTHER BUSINESS:

None.

MOTION TO ADJOURN by Mrs. MacKay at 8:15 p.m.

CF/cf