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APPROVED
Historic District Commission
January 2, 2014

10 **Work Session Re: Jennifer Gray, 83-85Piscataqua St.,Map 17, Lot 37 & 38**

11 **BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Irene Bush; Patty Cohen; Peter Follansbee; Kate Murray;
12 Elaine Nollet; Peter Reed; Rodney Rowland;

13 Due to Chairman Smith's absence this evening, Vice Chairman, Peter Follansbee, will become
14 Acting Chair for this meeting. Acting Chair Follansbee called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

15 **Work Session Re: Jennifer Gray, 83-85Piscataqua St., Map 17, Lot 37 & 38:**

16 **GUESTS:** Jennifer Gray, applicant; Attorney Bernie Pelech, representing the applicant;
17 Bill Greenier, Contractor; John McDaniel, Architect

18 Acting Chair Follansbee announced this was a work session for Jennifer Gray. 83-85 Piscataqua
19 St., Map 17, Lot 37 & 38.

20
21 Jennifer Gray has been a resident in New Castle for the past eight (8) years. She introduced Bill
22 Greenier, Project Manager, and John McDaniel, Architect. Gray gave the following property
23 description. Currently, there are two summer "camps" on the property that were built in the
24 1970's. They are not winterized and both are mold-ridden, making them uninhabitable. She
25 pointed out that they do not reflect the character or architectural landscape of historic New Castle
26 and presented photos of the current structures, (Attachment A.)

27
28 **Proposed Changes:**

29
30 She proposed to remove the existing structures and replace them with a single-family, traditional
31 Cape that fits well within the neighboring properties and character of the New Castle
32 community. The home will be a modest 3-bedroom, 2 ½ bathroom home with an attached
33 garage.

34
35 **Structure:**

36
37 The proposed structure is a traditional Cape, chosen for its simple and clean design as well as its
38 prominence in the neighborhood and throughout New Castle.

39
40 **Scale:**

41
42 The proposed footprint will be 1,749 SF which is smaller than the current footprint of 2018 SF
43 and similar or smaller than neighboring properties. The height of the proposed house is 28 feet,
44 which is the typical height of Capes and a median height of homes in the neighborhood. It has
45 about 2300 SF. of living space.
46

1 **Features:**

2
3 Features of proposed home will include – neutral colored cedar shakes and clapboards;
4 traditional cottage-style windows; carriage-style doors and garage doors; farmers porch and 2nd
5 floor evening deck.

6
7 Gray pointed out that the building envelope is long, narrow, and parallel to the street; she
8 explained in detail the front elevation, (Attachment B) and referred to photographs given to the
9 Board describing pictures of properties in the neighborhood, (Attachment C.)

10
11 Bill Greenier, Project Manager, addressed the HDC Application Check List, and explained the
12 roofing material; siding material; windows; trim; front door; and foundation facade, (Attach. D.)

13
14 Greenier commented on the farmer's porch on the front and noted they would like to go with an
15 Ipe Decking, a true wood decking; and the ceiling of the farmer's porch would be very
16 traditional. He also explained the detail of the fascia trim and soffits.

17
18 Greenier commented on the wood front door and the garage door which is a fiberglass door.

19
20 Acting Chair Follansbee asked if they were wood shakes. Greenier replied yes.

21
22 Cohen questioned the scale of the upper deck and asked for the dimensions.

23
24 Greenier replied the upper deck dimensions would be 13ft. x 9 ft.

25
26 Reed pointed out that the dark color shingle was overwhelming to the building.

27
28 Greenier replied they are going to use an architectural shingle. They have not talked about color,
29 at this point, and he agrees with Reed.

30
31 Acting Chair Follansbee asked for the Board's comments.

32
33 Nollet likes the proposed plan and thanks the applicant for respecting the neighborhood.

34
35 Reed asked if the applicant has showed the proposed plans to the abutting properties.

36
37 Greenier replied no.

38
39 Bush asked for clarification regarding the shakes on the front of the house. In her opinion, it
40 seemed to look like a Maine Cape.

41
42 Rowland agreed with Bush regarding the shakes/clapboards on the front of the house and also
43 that the proposed house plans seem to have too many design elements especially when one looks
44 at the superimposed photographs of the neighborhood.

45

1 Rowland further said this house has all of the elements, it has shakes, clapboards, square
2 windows, 6/1 windows, a round vent, triangular pediment, columns with graduated bases, and
3 flutes. When he looks at the streetscape, he does not see that. The streetscape has 1 or 2 details
4 but not all of the elements.

5
6 Rowland emphasized there is too much going on regarding the architecture. He likes the design
7 a great deal as he likes the way it is stepped and emphasized that it would fit in the neighborhood
8 nicely. To summarize, there seems to be too much going on in terms of architectural style.

9
10 Rowland would like to see simpler columns. There are columns on the street but they are either
11 round or square. He would like columns to be simpler.

12
13 Murray said it looks like a lovely house but when she looks at it, she does not see this as an
14 historical house in New Castle. It gives her a sense that this would be a house in California but
15 not in New England.

16
17 Rowland said this house would belong in his neighborhood of Walton Road in New Castle. In
18 the Historic District he does not see all of these elements in one spot.

19
20 Acting Chair Follansbee agrees with Rowland and said the house seems to have too many
21 different elements. He would prefer to see one style and not incorporate all of the styles. He
22 commented on the garage doors on the front of the house and pointed out that none of the houses
23 in the neighborhood have garage doors in the front.

24
25 Greenier replied that is the problem with this lot as this house cannot be turned 180 degrees.

26
27 Nollet feels the columns could be an easy fix to simplify.

28
29 Rowland suggested the Board could look at various elements and figure out a way to simplify
30 them.

31
32 Cohen has concerns regarding the front door and pointed out that the door design contributes to a
33 more modern treatment. The transoms make it look very busy over all instead of the straight 8/1.
34 She has concerns regarding the transoms above all of the other windows on the front elevation as
35 well as the treatment on the front door. She thanked the applicants for respecting the historic
36 district, the height, and making that effort to being sensitive to the neighborhood.

37
38 Attorney Pelech said the two existing structures do not meet many of the setbacks and this plan
39 meets all of the setbacks. They are here for a work session this evening and they appreciate the
40 Board's comments.

41
42 Cohen pointed out that she likes the scale on the upper deck.

43
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45

1 Rowland likes the scale of the dormers but noted there are three different styles. There is the
2 arch roof on one side and more of a traditional roof on the back. The elements of the three
3 dormers are fine but the applicant needs to make them blend. If one looks at the houses in the
4 photograph, (Attachment C) there is a lot of uniformity.

5
6 Nollet noted that the dormer indicating the dining room is pushed back does not give her as
7 much concern.

8
9 Rowland asked for clarification regarding the roof shape of the second floor porch. Is it a
10 cathedral effect inside? Greenier replied yes.

11
12 Acting Chair Follansbee feels that particular dormer is out of scale with the surrounding roof.
13 The central roof is more in scale, it is more horizontal, and the one on the left seems to be
14 overstated a bit.

15
16 Discussion followed among the Board on the various roof pitches.

17
18 Bush wondered if the lower porch treatment should not look more like the upper porch treatment
19 as this would give it a simpler look.

20
21 Acting Chair Follansbee asked for public comments.

22
23 Peter Rice commented favorably.

24
25 Acting Chair Follansbee asked for further public comments. There were none.

26
27 The Chair summarized the suggestions for the applicant.

28
29 Simplification;

30 To remove the massing and to remove some of the architectural elements to one
31 architectural style;

32 When one looks at the streetscape image, those buildings seem of have one or two
33 stylistic features;

34 The columns need to be made into a single style;

35 To make the dormers blend;

36 Transom needs a more traditional treatment on the front door;

37
38 Attorney Pelech likes the Board's suggestions about the upper level and taking that arch out.
39 They plan on returning next month for a public hearing.

40
41 Acting Chair Follansbee closed the work session for Jennifer Gray.

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43 **Review of the HDC Minutes of December 5, 2013:**

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45 **Nollet moved to approve the HDC minutes of December 5, 2013, as presented. Cohen**
46 **seconded the motion. Approved.**

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Adjournment:

Nollet moved to adjourn the meeting. Rowland seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Anita Colby
Recording Secretary

- Attachment A: Photographs of the two current summer “camps”.
- Attachment B: Drawing showing the front elevation
- Attachment C: Photographs of Properties in Neighborhood
- Attachment D: HDC Application Check List