

1
2 APPROVED
3 NEW CASTLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
4 JULY 7, 2016 AT 7 PM
5

6 Board Members Present: Rodney Rowland, Chair, Irene Bush, Tom Maher, Kate Murray, Elaine
7 Nollet, Peter Reed and Judy Groppa.

8 Not Present: Jeff Hughes,
9

10 Chair Rowland called the meeting of the New Castle HDC to order at 7:00 pm and noted that he,
11 Irene Bush, Tom Maher, Kate Murray and Elaine Nollet would be voting.

12 Chair Rowland also advised that anyone who wants to speak must sign in.
13

14 1. Public Hearing for James Pappas, 104 Main Street, Map 18, Lot 3

15 Dixie Pappas appeared for the applicant.
16

17 Chair Rowland advised that all fees have been paid and abutters have been notified.
18

19 Applicant is looking to replace 24 windows and the front door at the property will be replaced
20 with a solid door and 6 over 6 windows, which will be more energy efficient. The door will be
21 black, possibly dark green.
22

23 Chair Rowland asked if there were any questions from the Board? A neighbor had no objections
24 to the applicant's requests. .
25

26 Irene Bush motioned to approve the application as presented, dated 7-7-16. Tom Maher
27 seconded; APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.
28

29 2. Public Hearing for Barbara and Ed Bouchard, 111 Main Street, Map 13, Lot 17

30 Barbara Bouchard, Applicant
31

32 Chair Rowland advised that all fees have been paid and abutters have been notified.
33

34 The applicants wish to remove the existing stairs. They would like to put in a granite step, which
35 will be a slab with one step, exactly the same configuration as the existing step, give or take 1/2".
36 It will be thermos granite, which is a rough riser and the railing will be wrought iron.
37

38 Chair Rowland asked if the granite step would be in front of the door and flanked by steps?
39 Applicant answered yes, as it is now. Kate Murray asked if they were replacing the brick
40 pavers? Bouchard answered that they are doing pavers in front of the house out to the street but
41 will not do pavers along the street in an economy measure, but they would like to. It will look
42 the same but better.
43

44 Peter Reed asked what is thermo granite? Barbara Bouchard answered that the surface of the
45 granite is roughened and that the Historic Society has it. It's used as a safety measure. Tom

1 Maher explained that it is like different granite tops are glossy, others are permeable or not
2 permeable. Bouchard explained that it is roughened up like coarse sandpaper.
3 Maher asked if there was anything being done beyond the granite step? Bouchard responded that
4 where the step touches the wood under the door jamb, they cannot see what is below it and it
5 may be rotted, but there are no other design changes.

6
7 Kate Murray confirmed that the white fencing in the picture is going away. Yes, it is being
8 replaced by the wrought iron rail as drawn.

9 Chair Rowland asked if there were any questions from the public? No one spoke. Close public
10 hearing at 7:11

11
12 Kate Murray moved to approve the application as presented on 7/7/16; Tom Maher seconded;
13 APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

14
15 3. Review the minutes of May 3, 2016

16
17 There being no changes, Elaine Nollet moved to approve the minutes of May 3, 2016; Tom
18 Maher seconded; UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

19
20 4. Election of Officers:

21
22 Chair Rowland advised that the board is supposed to elect the Chair and Vice Chair annually

23
24 Irene Bush moved to nominate Rodney Rowland as Chair; Elaine Nollet seconded;
25 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

26
27 Chair Rowland advised that Irene Bush would like to step down as Vice Chair. Chair Rowland
28 would like to nominate Jeff Hughes but has not had the opportunity to speak with him to inquire
29 if he will accept the position. Jeff is currently an alternate. Chair Rowland will send Hughes an
30 email asking if he will agree to accept.

31
32 5. New Business

33
34 Chair Rowland presented a memo to the board with proposed changes to the existing ordinance
35 which would more clearly delineate the historic districts in town. He receives many comments
36 from applications that “it exists in the district so I thought would be OK”. He explained that the
37 historic district is not one big mass as it was established in two votes and he wants to make it
38 clear that each region is treated separately. He asked board members to review the memo and
39 think about the wording of the change to be discussed at a future meeting. The Council will have
40 to review proposed changes.

41 Kate Murray stated she would like to physically see an overlay of the village part and the second
42 part of the district to be more specific as to delineation of district 1 and district 2 and hopes to
43 find this online.

44
45 Chair Rowland stated the second item on the memo is that the Board should send nominations to
46 the Select Board. The present ordinance doesn’t read that nominations are to come from the

1 board, so would like to change the existing language that Select Board will act on nominations
2 sent by the HDC Board. The wording for Planning Board, ZBA, etc. should be reviewed to see
3 how the ordinance is worded.

4
5 Peter Reed is concerned that in the future, the Board may be running a risk that homeowners may
6 come in and state “I am close to District 1 and I want to be measured by that or be assessed by
7 District 2 standards”. He is concerned that by drawing a line down the middle of the street, it
8 may cause problems.

9
10 Chair Rowland stated the board will have to be specific about the areas being designated but will
11 also remember that it is not set in stone and the board will have to take a look at each application
12 stating “It’s a flavor, there are several later houses in the early part of the district and just
13 because there is a certain architectural detail on Oliver Street doesn’t mean it’s appropriate for
14 Main Street. We need to try to make it clear but not so specific, the language in the ordinance
15 will be key.”

16
17 Judy Groppa asked if they should add language about being “stylistically compatible”? It is
18 already in there.

19
20 Rowland stated he is trying to get away from a homeowner thinking that just because there are
21 examples elsewhere in the district, that it is appropriate everywhere in the district. Again he
22 asked board members to review the wording and think about the language, to be discussed at a
23 future meeting.

24
25 Elaine Nollet recalled the meeting about the Gibsons’ chimney, and people asking who has the
26 ability to impose a fine when applicants do not comply with the board’s approval of their
27 changes? She reviewed the book and discovered the fine is up to the building inspector not up
28 to the board; the fine can be \$275 per day. Imposition of Fines is on page Z84. Irene Bush
29 asked if it also applies to other things besides HDC and Yes it also applies to the other boards.

30
31 Tom Maher stated that as a new member of the board he had a few questions. Some houses are
32 not historical but the board may have some others that they want to protect . . . how do you set up
33 the historic district? How do you re-define it? Chair Rowland stated that he doesn’t think the
34 board can do that. Board members believe there are houses that should be in the historic district
35 but some residents don’t want to be under HDC as it is more restrictive.

36
37 Rowland stated there are historic houses in Portsmouth that have been lost because they’re not in
38 the historic district. Irene Bush asked if Maher was saying they should increase the historic
39 district? Maher stated there are certain homes built in 1920’s that maybe should be included,
40 such as on Laurel Lane – Laurie Clark’s house which used to be a boarding house for women
41 who came to the island for the summer. It’s a tremendous house with great bones but it is not in
42 the district. She is now sub-dividing and building a new home. He would hate to think that the
43 house could get bulldozed.

44
45 Kate Murray stated there would probably be an argument for almost all the houses on the island.
46 Irene Bush stated she sometimes wondered how they drew the line where they did. Maher stated

1 that if someone came here and had deep pockets, they would be able to do what they want to do
2 and a property could change drastically.

3
4 The Morse House on 1B was pointed out as an example as it looks like it is being subdivided but
5 Murray was told they are putting in a pool and tennis court, they are building a house and a guest
6 house. She said it went through the planning board in one month and that if you're not near
7 wetlands, it's easier.

8
9 Chair Rowland asked Maher if he had other questions. Maher stated he has done a walk through
10 with Planning; the town doesn't have a legal budget to hire outside counsel so there is limited
11 ability to stand up for what is on the books. Kate Murray stated that we rely on good will and
12 neighbor pressure.

13
14 Rowland stated that next month there will be a work session with a couple who bought the house
15 on the corner Cranfield and Main Streets. It has a tower in the back which is awful. The
16 husband is on the board of the Portsmouth HDC. Rowland may have to recuse himself as the
17 applicant and I used to work together at Strawberry Banke; he is a great guy and already restored
18 a couple of homes in Portsmouth.

19
20 Jon McCormack did not show up for hearing on his changes. Kate Murray stated that she would
21 like to see a picture of the change in the windows he is requesting and it looks like he is also put
22 siding on the house. Elaine Nollet stated McCormack indicated at his first meeting that if he
23 started working on the siding and found rot underneath, he would come back before us.

24
25 Reed motioned to adjourn, Kate Murray seconded. All approve. Adjourned at 7:40 pm.

26
27 Respectfully submitted,
28 Diane L. Cooley, Recording Secretary