

APPROVED
HDC MEETING
NOVEMBER 3, 2016 AT 7 PM

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

Not Present: Irene Bush, Jeff Hughes,

Chair Rowland called the meeting of the New Castle HDC to order at 7:00 pm and noted that everyone present would be voting. Chair Rowland also advised that anyone who wants to speak must sign in.

1. Public Hearing for Thomas and Martha Bates, 36 Piscataqua Street, Map 18, Lot 30

Thomas Bates, Applicant

Guests: Holly Biddle and Rita Fusco

Chair Rowland advised that the application was publicized, all fees had been paid and all abutters had been notified.

This is related to the Bates' application of March of this year, regarding the second floor dormering of a bedroom. They have updated the design because the north wall is unstable so before the dormer can be put in, the wall needs to be rebuilt. Applicants believe they need to go all the way down to work on the foundation. It would be better to move the north wall out to the perimeter of the portico that exists which is already part of the square footage allowed and included in the current assessment. This application would take ½ the portico space and trade space with a couple of sheds on the property which are not old; the shed is in the rear of the property and barely visible from Piscataqua Street and is visible from Steamboat Lane. Removing the shed will bring the property into further compliance with zoning; the applicant presented a plot plan for the board to visualize everything a little better (a copy of which is enclosed with these minutes). The square footage being discussed was approved in a building application two years ago with an acceptance of this design without the decks. The applicants are trading the square footage and then adding 12' around the corner edge by the kitchen & portico. (See page A1).

Chair Rowland confirmed with the applicant that they are removing the previously approved dormer on the 3rd floor from their application. Applicant advised that yes, as they would have to do major construction to support the 3rd floor dormer. Chair Rowland also confirmed that they wanted to install all new windows? Yes, the applicants want to install the same window series as the front and side of the house, which are Noah Merrill series made by Matthews Brothers, a Maine company. Chair Rowland confirmed the maker as Matthew Brothers as one of the notes refers to Anderson windows.

Chair Rowland opened the public session. Holly Biddle of 7 Piscataqua Street said that it was a nice addition for the kitchen, making it easier to get to the garage and also increasing the ceiling height would be good for Thomas and that she was all for it.

Rita Fusco of 33 Piscataqua Street is in full support of their plan and appreciates their keeping as close to historically accurate as possible.

The public hearing was closed at 7:14 pm

Kate Murray motioned to approve the application as submitted; removing the shed from the back of the property and deleting the previously approved 3rd floor dormer, filling in the existing portico space for the kitchen, and using Noah Merrill series by Mathews Brothers windows on the addition. Elaine Nollet seconded. ALL IN FAVOR, APPROVED.

2. Public Hearing for Doug and Dan, LLC, 3 Walbach Street, Map 18, Lot 56

Applicant, Doug Palardy.

Guests: Shanna McBurney, Ann McAndrew and Holly Biddle

Chair Rowland advised that the application was publicized, all fees had been paid and all abutters were notified.

Doug Palardy stated that he wanted to discuss only the structure in tonight's application. They would come back next month for the land and lighting. On page 2 of the application, there is a picture of the building, circa 1920, which used to have a front door, and there was no false front on it. The building used to have a store on the ground floor. There was some historic value as the house also had a gas light and was a landmark in Newcastle.

Page 3 shows the front of the house where they want to remove the odd addition which he called a "fake chimney" and two skylights. The chimney stack is in trouble as it has been neglected. They don't intend to have a gas boiler as they will have ductless units and electric heat, so they want to remove the stack and recreate the chimney and cover it with a brick veneer and a cap. This drawing also shows a Juliet balcony for an egress and place of refuge for fire safety.

Page 4 shows the southeast elevation abutting the parking area with an addition of a small balcony. They would like to install 9 over 9 windows even though old photos show 2 over 1 windows. It is unclear as to the year the house was built, but possibly 1775 or 1820. He believes the front was built in 1775 and the rear addition was added in 1820; however, until walls inside are removed, they won't be sure. Will also be removing the stairwell on the side of the house. The front view shows the removal of the odd addition and the side stairwell; the windows will all be 9 over 9 in the same location and same size.

The southwest elevation that faces Henry's will have the stairwell removed and one skylight will be removed to balance everything. They would add a small Juliet balcony on the back of the building for egress or a refuge space in the event of fire; it makes the 3rd floor safe. They have made the balcony as small as possible; they will not be for having dinner or relaxing outside.

For the window replacement, the applicant's preference is for metal clad for longevity. He likes the windows at 19 Walbach Street which are black metal clad; to the eye they look historic. They are also safety approved as they are large enough for a person to get through.

Peter Reed asked about the Juliet balcony and Palardy advised it would just be a place for someone to step out and to the side to get out of the way of any smoke & flames coming out of the window so that a fire truck could get a ladder up to them. Tom Maher asked if they were necessary for the 2nd floor and Palardy advised that as long as the window is large enough to get through, a balcony is not needed on the second floor. The top or third floor is all one unit and goes the expanse of the building. Chair Rowland suggested the applicant check with the Portsmouth Fire Chief as there are 3rd floor apartments at Strawberry Banke and balconies are not required. The Newcastle zoning code says we need to protect the existing architecture in the district and there are no balconies and there are no full size doors on 3rd floors. Rowland stated that he has trouble with approving the balconies.

Judy Groppa asked about the door in the middle of the balcony; applicant advised they could have a window there as opposed to the door and the window could be access to the balcony.

Tom Maher asked the applicant if he was able to find pictures of the building with the large window above the front door as it's an unusually large window. Chair Rowland stated that typically Georgian houses had palladium windows because of the stair landing but this is not a palladium window. Applicant stated that the plan is to replace it with a window the same size as the others.

Judy Groppa asked if they were planning to have shutters? Yes, they are going to remove the aluminum siding and will paint the wood clapboards underneath. There are also a few small details that have broken away that will be fixed. Kate Murray asked about the smaller windows in the back and why they were being made smaller rather than bigger? There are bathrooms located there so being made smaller for privacy.

Peter Reed asked about the brick veneer and Chair Rowland stated he would like to see a sample. Palardy would like to talk to a mason and see if the current brick could be used and sawed down. The issue of the brick veneer was tabled for this meeting.

Chair Rowland also stated he would like to see a sample of the windows as he is not familiar with metal clad but that he could look at the windows at 19 Walbach Street as they are the type the applicant wishes to install.

Chair Rowland opened the public session: Ann McAndrew of Steamboat Lane and a former abutter of the property submitted a letter to the HDC saying she believes the applicant's plan is incomplete because it does not address the land which is twice the size of the building.

Chair Rowland stated that the applicant has made it clear that he is addressing the structure tonight and will address the landscaping at a later meeting.

Shannon McBurney– 18 Becker Lane is in support of the application stating that the proposed architecture has more integrity and the materials will be of higher quality than what is there now. She loves the idea of having an inn and it is hard to believe that it will be worse than what is there now.

Holly Biddle stated that it looks like it will be much better.

Tom Maher stated that there had been a discussion at the work session last month on parking. Chair Rowland stated he has no concerns about discussing the building tonight and addressing the land separately at a future time. What he will be concerned about is location of condensers and things like that but it's only a month to wait to discuss the parking and landscaping.

Chair Rowland closed the public session and opened the meeting to the board for discussion. Tom Maher asked what exactly the board was moving forward on? Rowland stated the changes on pages 3, 4, 5 & 6 with the windows that are detailed, removal of two skylights, removal of the fake chimney or facade, restoring the wood siding and installing the Juliet balcony.

Rowland stated that he likes this project, likes the sympathetic treatment to the building; he likes 90% of the project but has trouble approving the balcony. Removing the door to the balcony and putting a window out to the balcony helps make it a little more palatable. Appreciates that the applicants are trying to take the property back to its original era, but the balcony will be incredibly visible. He just can't believe that there isn't a way to satisfy the fire code without the balcony. Rowland also confirmed that the applicant has agreed to bring in a sample of the brick veneer. Maher stated that if this was a private home, you wouldn't need the area of refuge for the third floor. Pallardy stated that when you have guests who are not familiar with the property, you must have a specific and clearly marked exit.

Kate Murray asked Palardy if he had talked to the Portsmouth Fire Department. Palardy said he has talked to the Newcastle Fire Department and also to someone who does risk assessment and the 3rd floor is definitely a concern. Murray asked if there were any other options. Palardy stated that adding a dormer on Walbach Street, but he's not inclined to do that. Chair Rowland said the dormers are more historically accurate rather than the balcony.

Maher said that what the applicant presented tonight is a smaller foot print than last month's work session which seemed bigger, it looks like it's been scaled down. He asked if the door to the balcony could be changed to a window it might be better, which Rowland agreed it would help.

Judy Groppa feels the balcony is very intrusive and would prefer to approve everything but the balcony and ask the applicant to obtain more information from fire officials as to what they require for egress.

Pallardy stated that another option is that there is currently a staircase on the side of the building that could go to the 3rd floor, but it is visible from Main Street and he believes it is more of an obstruction. Maher asked if the 3rd floor unit is needed to make this project work? Elaine Nollet asked if it would be more unobtrusive if the door didn't have so much glass? Pallardy said he

would consider a wood door or a door that was wood on the bottom and glass on the top. Groppa was concerned because it would set a precedence to approve the balcony.

Chair Rowland was concerned about the metal windows and Doug Pallardy stated that the Portsmouth HDC has approved the metal windows.

Tom Maher motioned to approve the windows, 9 over 9, metal clad, as submitted, except for page 4, the southeast elevation. In that case, we are not approving the door or the balcony. He also motioned to approve the removal of skylights as submitted on page 5 and the new windows on page 5 with the change in size. Motioned to approve removal of the fake façade or “fake chimney” on page 6 and approve the windows as submitted on page 6. We are also not approving the brick veneer on pages 3-6 as the board would first like to see a sample.

Judy Groppa seconded; ALL IN FAVOR. APPROVED.

3. Work Session for Michael Sullivan and Ruth Zikaras, 81 Piscataqua Street, Map 18, Lot 12
(2)

Michael Sullivan presented.

Chair Rowland advised that a letter was submitted from the Gardners, abutters. The condo association has approved the Zikaras’ plans.

Sullivan stated that the board had before them a set of elevations, floor plans, pictures of the existing structure and a rough inventory of materials they anticipate using. This application is for demolition of the existing structure, which offers little historical contribution. We got an unsolicited opinion from a recent re-appraisal which said the highest and best use was demolition. With regard to construction of a new structure, the board had expressed concern about the size and cautioned about stand alone garages, porches, and general siting.

Applicants looked at Greek revival designs in Edgartown, Martha’s Vineyard, as they wish to complement the design styles of structures around them. It is adjacent to the historical society, visible from Main Street and is a condo association property. It is a challenging site with exposed rock, elevation changes and is an irregular shape, which has significant view obstructions with recent construction in front of it. Applicants are committed to go forward without any variances.

Page 3 shows homes adjacent to the property and also on Main Street with some Greek revival details. Page 4 gives the elevation facing Main St, currently the back of the existing structure but we propose having this as the front of the house. Bottom is pictures from Edgartown of similar designs.

The addition to the right is a one car garage and we chose to orient it so the doors could not be seen from Main Street. We noted concerns in prior hearings of varying window sizes but we have utilized two sizes – one size for the garage and another for the house.

Page 5 is a poor man's design as to where the house would be placed on the site with some landscaping details. Chair Rowland said it looks like you've shifted the existing house. The existing structure is a sprawling ranch, so this house is a smaller footprint with a total of 2300 SF including the area over the garage and is rather compact to the site.

Page 6 has the design details with the garage facing east so the doors are not visible from any street. Below you can see the elevation of the existing home. You can also see the porches which face north, which we chose because it has a view of the river. You cannot see the majority of the porch when you look to the top of the hill because of houses in front of it. Knowing a two level porch would be a concern, I searched the historic society archives, and found the Piscataqua Café with a two story porch, as well as the old hotel on the other side of Piscataqua Street. There are also properties which abut our property which have second story porches, and recent approvals from the HDC which have second story porches. I tried to provide homes around the property as well as others recently approved, for precedence of the types of things we are looking for. We want a traditional porch with all wood decking, all wood railings and posts. It would be nice to have the first level be a 3 season porch; we could put inserts of pane glass or screens. It would all be painted white and match the trim. We are proposing a sun room on the northern elevation which is not visible from anywhere off the property.

The last page shows the siting of the house. We would like to put a stone wall in the front as with plows coming up the driveway, a fence probably wouldn't last long. Also will put a 6' fence on the other side of the property which would come close to the handicap ramp at the historical society. This last page also has a shed or small garage for storage with a lower profile, which will have solid wood, shiplap type. The siting of this is where the storage shed is currently located. We would then take the existing shed and move it to the western side of the property and use it as a garden shed. We have sited everything so no variances are required. The driveway is relatively steep so we may have to change the angle of the house on the site to be able to get into the garage but this is essentially where it would go.

The front of the main house will be clapboards and the rest of the structure will be shingled with shutters on the front elevation. Due to all the rock, the house will be on a slab and the slightly elevated foundation will be faux brick, like the white house on page 5 which has a faux brick foundation.

Chair Rowland proposed a site walk by the HDC, stating that while he likes the proposed front elevation, he has concerns about the rear elevation. Rowland also stated that while he likes the Greek revival design, he thought it was a lot of Greek revival and asked if they could "bring it down a notch"? The front, the doors and the corners are all appropriate but need to be a little simpler. Applicant stated they would be open to suggestions.

Peter Reed stated that the image on page 5 looks like a complete 180 from how the current house sits. Sullivan stated he looked at putting the garage/shed on the western side because it wouldn't have been in anyone's way. He also tried to investigate an easement for use of the current driveway, as during the winter it would be preferable because it's an easy straight shot but

apparently there have been previous attempts at that which people didn't like. So now we have to maintain the driveway from Piscataqua Street up the hill.

Rowland stated that he hopes the site walk helps with the location of the detached garage/shed and asked that it be as simple as possible.

Chair Rowland opened the work session to the public but there were no comments.

Rowland stated he would like to schedule a site walk closer to next month's meeting during daylight hours.

4. Work Session for Gary and Josephine Varrell, 32 Walbach Street, Map 18, Lot 57

Tom and Kathleen Conneen, prospective owners, appeared. They currently have a Purchase & Sale Agreement contingent on working through the approvals they need.

Guests: Builder, Andrew Goddard from Copley Properties, realtor, Lisa Paquette of Carey & Giampa and William Tarbell.

Their application is to demolish the house and build a new home and stated they are not aware of any historical significance to the home. Builders have said that because of the nuances of the interior with low ceilings, that it is best to demolish the house.

The tax card indicates there is 2,944 SF and the included plot plan indicates non-conformance to setbacks. Their goal is to be more compliant. Also included some photos to show home styles they would be interested in building, some of which are in the district. The top center one is abutting and directly behind 32 Walbach Street (Moore's house). Also have pictures of features they like and are interested in having a balcony on the water side of the house and have included a couple of examples of balconies on the 2nd floor. Lastly they included a page of exterior materials and colors consistent with the area.

Peter Reed noted that the house was built in 1790. A gentleman stated that this house and the house next door (Borden's house), were moved from the coast guard station and put on that property, also stating that his wife's aunt did renovations in the 60's and more renovations were done in 89-90. At that time, the HDC was non-existent so they were able to do what they wanted to the house. He stated that basically there is no historical value left in the house.

Chair Rowland stated that the historic district is not one entity, there are different districts according to when each was settled and that this area was settled earlier. Some of the pictures of houses presented by Conneen, such as the new house on Seavey Island, is not appropriate to this area and asked that they please try and reference houses closer to this area. The district changed before there was a HDC and our job is to pull that back. Just because you see it, doesn't mean it is appropriate to your district. Rowland also suggested a site walk before continuing down the path of defining what you want.

Conneen stated the first thing is the demolition. Judy Groppa would like to be reassured it is not a 1790 house before voting in favor of demolition. Kate Murray stated there is some historic interest in that it was moved from the coast guard station and the houses have been there quite

awhile and wondered if they had been officers' quarters? William Tarbell stated that he was told that those houses came from the Isles of Shoals to the coast guard station and then moved to their present location.

Conneen asked if there was anything other than building code for lot coverage and building area. Chair Rowland stated that height is a concern of the HDC, but not lot coverage which comes under the planning board. Conneen asked if there were exceptional restrictions or just to conform to code. Rowland advised that height is from grade and you cannot change the grade.

Elaine Nollet suggested asking building inspector to accompany the board on the site walk as they will be looking at the building condition, the importance of the street scape and the architecture itself. Rowland will try to arrange with the building inspector.

Conneen asked about setbacks as they are not conforming now and if they demolish and rebuild, how they apply. Chair Rowland stated he believes that if you remove or demolish the existing structure, the new building must be conforming. The applicant asked who determines if the house is historic? Rowland stated that each board member makes up their own minds as to the individual home, architecturally in terms of street scape and the building's overall condition. It could be a gem that is well past its usable life and it would be ok to tear it down.

The applicant asked about building material requirements. Rowland stated that the board has approved non-traditional materials but would like them to be in keeping with traditional materials. The board always likes brick, wood, and stone but have approved lots of composites and we just approved metal clad windows. If you are going with something non-traditional, it is always good to bring a sample.

Conneen asked how to prepare for hearing, the level of drawings required, etc. and Rowland advised that they should come back for another work session. He advised that the board needs all details for the application such as elevation, site plan, materials for doors and windows, and landscaping, fences and stone walls are also in our purview. Rowland again recommended applicants return for another work session.

Kathleen Conneen asked if a gambrel had been ruled out completely? Rowland stated that he doesn't believe that style is appropriate to the district. However, Tom Maher asked about the house next to the Bordens, which is Bobby Sweets' house, and indicated there is a mix of styles in the neighborhood and they should look at the roof lines. Chair Rowland stated that the gambrel roof itself is not wrong but that there are summer cottage type homes that use the gambrel design and cottage style is not appropriate in this district.

Elaine Nollet said that a classic gambrel would be appropriate. Kathleen Conneen said that she is not sure what the difference between a classic and a cottage gambrel is and Rowland offered to walk around Strawberry Banke Museum to show her different styles.

Tom Conneen said that they are looking for simple lines and a traditional home and thanked the board for the clarification.

Lisa Paquette, the realtor said she showed the home to the Conneens many times and that Tom & Kathleen loved the area and lot and brought in 3 different builders because they originally wanted to renovate the property. They walked through the home with each of the builders, and because of the low ceilings with the different levels, each builder recommended tearing the house down, that a renovation would not work.

5. Work Session for Edmond Tarbell, 14 Shore Lane, Map 16, Lot 8 and 9

William Tarbell appeared.

Tarbell presented a rendering of the Tarbell house done by Abigail Halpern of Wells ME, which she did for a charity event held for the tenants that were burned out.

The Tarbell house was built as a summer showplace before the age of income tax. Tarbell took the original dimension and tried to simplify it and turn it back into a single family house, as it had gone from single to a three family house to pay the expenses. It will be a single family house again with only 2536 SF. It takes the original 86' across but only 28' deep.

The family thought about subdividing the property because it is enormous and having a street front and a water front lot. The setbacks that would have been required would have shrunk each lot so that it would have lost some of its identity. Tarbell wanted to replace the house in its Greek revival style. With its 86' foot length it looked like a barracks. The original house had the 3 gable roof line to break it up, so he broke it into sections attempting to replicate the original house in the center by making the center an exact replica of an 1835 Greek revival in its measurement. The front doorway is recessed which is authentic to Greek revival design. The door on the left goes to the kitchen with a small porch to break up the monotonous run. Several parts of the house are all 28' which is the secret of Greek revival architecture. On the right is the living room with a fireplace. The pediment in the center of the house would have ordinary clapboard to match the carriage house. Tarbell has it pictured with a fan but would like to put a Window in the peak which is authentic Greek revival. He hopes his design will dupe people into thinking it is an authentic Greek revival from 1835.

Chair Rowland asked if the center section protrudes forward. Tarbell answered that yes, the Greek revival is usually a play on geometry and this one does that. It will be the same pitch as the original house.

Tarbell stated that the brick foundation is his first choice because classical architecture has three components, the foundation, the body of the house, and the crown or pediment on top. Exposing the foundation like this, qualifies as a true work of classical architecture. It is a replica that plays by the rules.

Kate Murray stated she is happy to see it as one house and not subdivided. Chair Rowland asked if the existing garage that survived will stay? Tarbell stated that he had the original garage with the doors facing forward, keeping the 1940's garage in the design but that the building inspector, Don Graves, told him that he has a better chance of getting the application passed if the garage doesn't face the street. The existing garage will go away but it serves a purpose because it

contained lawn equipment so they will want to put a shed on the property for this purpose but want to put it somewhere where it will not obstruct anyone's view.

Judy Groppa asked if they would need railings on the front as it looks like there are three steps. Tarbell stated that it will probably need a railing and the drawing will be fine tuned. Rowland asked if Tarbell would like to come back in December for a public hearing and Tarbell replied yes. Peter Reed asked about the different roof lines; Tarbell didn't want the house to look like a long monolithic building. He drew it many times and with the 86' in length, it needed to be broken up or it looked like barracks. The materials will be wood trim, wood clapboard, very traditional, but stated he does need window information, stating he would like to use something that matches the carriage house at 146 Portsmouth Ave. Tom Maher suggested he bring in catalog pictures and circle the windows they like.

Rowland asked if the fence will stay? Tarbell answer yes but unfortunately parts of the original 1835 fence were removed when they cleaned the lot. He had set them to the side before the cleanup and when he came back, they were gone.

6. Review minutes from September 1, 2016

Minor edits were made. Kate Murray motioned to approve the September minutes as amended; Tom Maher seconded. ALL APPROVED.

7. Review minutes from October 6, 2016

Minor edits were made. Elaine Nollet motioned to approve the October minutes as amended; Kate Murray seconded. ALL APPROVED.

8. New Business

Kate Murray asked if the board had any interest in becoming a certified local government program stating it would give the board more control over demolition, more control over everything regarding historic preservation and the board could get a grant to do a survey. There are 8 to 10 criteria and the board is already doing most of it. It gives a little more authority to the board, and an opportunity to get grants, and the town would be certified. Murray will forward information to the board for their review.

Elaine Nollet stated that she is going to see Nancy Borden and will get some history from her as to the house at 32 Walbach Street.

Chair Rowland scheduled the site walk for the Verrell house for November 15th at 3 pm and stated he would contact the building inspector.

Roland suggested after Thanksgiving for the Sullivan site walk and scheduled for Monday November 28th at 3 pm.

Kate Murray motioned to adjourn; Elaine Nollet seconded. ALL APPROVED

Adjourned at 9:20 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Diane L. Cooley, Recording Secretary