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APPROVED
HDC MEETING
SEPTEMBER 7, 2017

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

Not Present: Vice Chair Jeff Hughes, Irene Bush, and Judy Groppa.

Chair Rowland called the meeting of the New Castle HDC to order at 7:00 pm and noted that all members present would be voting. He also asked everyone to sign in who would be speaking.

1. Public Hearing for Stephen and Stephanie Johnson, 23 Oliver Street, Map 16, Lot 24

Guests: Stephen B. Johnson, Applicant

Chair Rowland stated that the application had been properly advertised and all fees had been paid.

Mr. Johnson said they are looking to make changes on the outside of their house consisting of three things: 1. They would like to move the driveway from the front of the house and put it on the right side of the house, adding they will use brick with grass down the center as shown in picture #5. 2. Would like to have a decorative picket fence in front of the house and included a sample from Strawberry Banke Museum known as a lollipop fence. 3. Lastly, the Johnsons would like a privacy fence in the back of their lot that would wrap around most of the house which would allow their dog to freely roam.

Mr. Johnson stated they would like to park their car on the side of the house and put a small retaining wall on that side between their lot and their neighbors, as it is a little steep. They would like to put more of the lollipop fence on top of the retaining wall. For the driveway, they would put in brick pavers, in a pattern yet to be determined with grass or sod in the center, on which to park the car on the side of the house.

The plans they submitted cover in pretty heavy detail exactly what they would like to install, including pictures of retaining walls (the wall pictured as 1b is on Piscataqua St.) The other motivation for installing a retaining wall is to build up the fill on the side of the house as the gradual erosion has brought the stone foundation into view, rather than brick. They would like to put in some fill so the stone is no longer visible and just the brick is showing and to also stop rodents from entering the house.

Chair Rowland asked if there were any questions. Kate Murray asked whether the lollipop fence was just being placed in the front? Mr. Johnson said they would also like to install a section on the side of the new driveway, on top of the wall, but this fence will not be connected to the two pieces of fencing at the front of the house. Murray then asked where everything is going to drain with the retaining wall? Johnson said it is the low spot on the lot even today alongside their neighbor's. Also the driveway is going to be impervious with the brick and grass.

1 Chair Rowland asked if the privacy fence is on the wall? Mr. Johnson stated that yes as they
2 have such a small lot, they would like to add a privacy fence. Chair Rowland advised that they
3 are allowed 6' in height and if the fence is on top of the wall, he was not sure they could put a 6'
4 fence along with a retaining wall and recommended they check with the building inspector as to
5 whether this is allowed. Rowland added that if they were to put a retaining wall of 1 ½' and a 6'
6 fence on top of that, it would be total of 7 ½' in height and they would need a variance, and
7 advised that the HDC can approve the look of the fence but that they should check with the town
8 office to inquire whether they needed a variance.

9
10 Kate Murray pointed out that the planning board doesn't like stacked parking. Mr. Johnson
11 stated that ordinarily they would park one car on the street but in winter they would probably
12 have to have stacked parking. Chair Rowland stated the HDC does not have purview over grade
13 level items such as the brick driveway so they will just look at the retaining wall and the fencing.

14
15 Chair Rowland opened the hearing to the public at 7:12 pm but there was no one to speak to, for
16 or against and the public hearing was closed.

17
18 Kate Murray moved to accept the application as proposed; Tom Maher seconded. All were in
19 favor, including the Chair.

20
21 Chair Rowland asked the applicant to complete a new application form at the town office and he
22 would then sign it. Tom Maher advised the applicant of the rules with paving, that if you make
23 improvements, you own and care for it.

24
25 2. Old Business: Discussion with Doug Palardy of Great Island Inn

26
27 Guests: Doug Palardy

28
29 Mr. Palardy advised the board that he could put the chain back into the fence or he could put the
30 rope back up, and that he could also put chain on the exterior or perimeter and rope on the ramp.
31 Chair Rowland stated that he looked through the minutes and the board had talked about rope.
32 Mr. Palardy stated he knew the board didn't want new posts and he had donated the chain. He
33 stated that going without a fence isn't good because dog owners take advantage of that space so
34 they do need a fence. Chair Rowland stated that the chain that was there would be fine, but the
35 board specifically did not approve rope.

36
37 On another note, Palardy stated he has been talking to the Building Inspector about street lighting
38 and wondering if independent homeowners and/or businesses would be willing to invest in
39 sodium lights that are being installed and owned by Eversource. He would like to see something
40 more historic looking and not so high up. Maher stated the town has already reached out to
41 Eversource as it is more focused on reducing the cost of lighting as it is the most largest expense
42 for the town. The town wants to replace lights with LED to get a return on investment within 2 ½
43 years and already has a proposal with Eversource. Maher added that if you look at the second
44 bridge going into Portsmouth, you will see the difference in the lights, which is called a Cobra
45 head, as Portsmouth has already begun the process of replacing their lights. Mr. Palardy stated
46 that as a business owner, he would ante up the money to replace lights at his property, if

1 something was approved by the HDC. Tom Maher stated the town would like to have a lighting
2 plan rather than episodic lighting. Mr. Palardy would like to see something nice for the historic
3 district and would like to re-visit the issue at a later time.

4
5 3. Old Business: 32 Walbach St
6

7 Guests: Marilyn and Ken Walker, and Wendy Welton, Architect
8

9 Marilyn Walker stated that she and her husband, Ken, are hoping to buy the property at 32
10 Walbach St, and will demolish the house and build a new one. They are working with Wendy
11 Welton but before they spend too much money on plans, etc. they wanted to get a general
12 concept of what the HDC would approve.
13

14 Chair Rowland advised that the HDC has been working to define the historic district into its own
15 areas as not all of the historic district is of the same era. The design should be reflective of the
16 houses in the neighborhood, not necessarily of those in all of the historic district as there are
17 distinctive areas, such that downtown is oldest and Oliver Street is not as old. The materials
18 used should fit in with the surrounding area.
19

20 Wendy Welton , Architect stated their plans have gone far enough to determine where certain
21 rooms will be on the lot adding that the driveway comes in high on the lot and the existing house
22 is 3' lower than the garage. It would best suit the Walkers' needs if the house was a two story,
23 not a cape, because of footprint issues, as they require an elevator. They are looking at a classic
24 New Englander with a gable front with an L, and there is one behind this property that is fairly
25 new. Their house would be darker in color. They wanted to get the board's gut reaction to their
26 initial drawings. Ms. Welton's drawing did not have a front door in the middle because of the
27 problematic need of an elevator. The Walkers saw examples of bay windows within a block or
28 two of this property and they would like to have a couple bay windows to take advantage of the
29 views.
30

31 Tom Maher thought that a two story house would look pretty tall on this lot because it is so
32 sloped and asked if the bay windows would be facing the Bordens. Ms. Welton stated that the
33 house behind is actually taller than the house in their drawing and that their house would by no
34 means be the tallest.
35

36 Ms. Welton said she could do a high posted cape but it is not the same era as the neighborhood
37 although it can be a satisfying looking house. If we went that route it would bring the roofs
38 down. This neighborhood is not super early, but you do see some mix and they are trying to
39 design something that will fit in.
40

41 Chair Rowland stated he would like to see 6 over 6 windows and he would not want the garage
42 to be a main architectural feature.
43

44 Ms. Welton asked if the board was open to a high posted cape even though it is not the prototype
45 found in 1780. Kate Murray thought their drawing was more farmhouse looking which doesn't
46 fit in with the street. Welton drew the roof line for a high posted cape which brought down the

1 roof lines and suggested it was more town looking rather than farm. She said with dark siding
2 and dark trim it would bring it down as they don't want to be a showy house.

3
4 Maher asked how the garage would be incorporated with a high posted cape and Welton thought
5 it would stay the same as her drawing, advising they are not planning any dormers on the
6 garage.

7
8 Peter Reed asked if they had given any thought to the possibility of moving the building to a
9 different location to preserve it. Ms. Welton said if someone was willing to take the building,
10 had a place to put it and could move it, they are more than willing to let them have the building
11 and preserve it.

12
13 Kate Murray asked how far is the garage from the lot line? Welton advised that the land goes
14 back further and the lot is a funny shape. There's a lot of ledge and blasting is costly and
15 disruptive to neighbors.

16
17 4. Review Minutes of August 3, 2017

18
19 Tom Maher motioned to approve the minutes of August 3, 2017. Elaine Nollet seconded. All
20 approved.

21
22 5. Photovoltaic and Solar Thermal Regulations

23
24 Guest: Sandra Bisset, Chair of Energy Committee

25
26 Chair Rowland had emailed the Photovoltaic and solar regulations to the board and had received
27 comments from Kate Murray, who suggested the panels cover an entire surface, that there should
28 be no fitting around dormers, that the colors should be matt and not shiny, and the frame should
29 also be matt and not shiny. The greater the pitch the more noticeable the panels are.

30
31 Tom Maher said that what is noteworthy about the Chamberlain's project is that it goes right to
32 the roof line. Elaine Nollet said she had suggested to the company rep that they come up with an
33 artificial section to cover portions of the roof not covered by solar panels. Murray stated she
34 thinks the problem is with dormers and that the whole roof should be covered so as not to draw
35 attention to it, that installing a piece here and a piece there makes it very noticeable and hopes
36 that technology improves to fit on the entire roof. The appearance of panels can be minimized
37 by coordinating the color with the roof material.

38
39 Murray added that it has to be reversible and the board will need to educate the community as
40 some people are going to be upset with the changes. Chair Rowland would like to get the
41 wording down for the regulations and then let the town know that the Board will be having a
42 discussion on the changes.

43
44 Peter Reed stated that item 4 should read "while maintaining" and that he is concerned with
45 "balance and scale" as beauty is in the eye of the beholder and suggested the language be
46 amended. Chair Rowland suggested the wording "while not overwhelming the features of the

1 house” or “which are subordinate to” or “while maintaining a relationship to other features of the
2 house”.

3
4 Sandra Bisset, Chair of the Energy Committed stated that the meeting at the Chamberlain’s was
5 very impressive. At the last meeting of the HDC, there was mention of the safety shut off
6 systems for solar designs. She stated that the safety shut off for the Chamberlains system is
7 clearly marked and any this should be made part of the electrical code. The accessibility should
8 be clearly marked and defined on every house for safety reasons and the town should specify that
9 the shut off be on the external part of house and suggested it is something to speak with the fire
10 department about. Bisset told the board that she especially appreciates that they are looking to
11 get more flexibility for each project as you cannot specify one type of roof, or one type of
12 system. Each project should be reviewed consistently and fairly because every situation is
13 different. Chair Rowland stated that is why the board would like to include examples, would like
14 to minimize the impact on the public viewscape and the regulations may also include do’s and
15 don’ts.

16
17 Bisset also wanted to discuss what is going on with Eversource adding that Steve Lieber is
18 working with Portsmouth and they have done significant work. He has had experience in 12 or
19 more communities and they have a reasonable approach for costs. They can put a plan together
20 and we can have a review meeting and discuss what we want to do. She suggested the town look
21 at LED replacements to which Maher was in agreement as he is aware of the significant money
22 paid to Eversource.

23
24 As Chair of the Energy Committee, Bisset stated that back in 2005-2006, PSNH was paying for
25 40 or more of the town’s lights but Eversource was not aware of it, so it was kept quiet. There
26 are currently about fifteen dead lights and suggested they look at Main Street, stating there are
27 actually two out in front of her own house and a couple of others that are out and doesn’t believe
28 we want to go back to fully lit.

29
30 Maher stated that when he first got elected, he was told it would cost \$3,000 per light to replace;
31 he has since investigated and believes the technology alone will pay for itself in two years and
32 the town should just do it, adding that solar should be installed on the community building and
33 zero that out also because the HVAC system there is so old. As we go into town meeting and
34 think about finishing sidewalks, we should include lighting and discuss what sort of lighting
35 posts do we want, or do we want to put it underground? All these are things to think about
36 because while you’re thinking about it, you plan the project. There is degradation of the sidewalk
37 at Main and Cranfield Street and school kids walk there daily. Taking down telephone poles and
38 putting utilities underground would be great, however the codes state that underground utilities
39 have to have separation and our streets are not wide enough and the ledge is sometimes deep
40 under the road. From a financial perspective, it could be cost prohibitive just to do it downtown.

41
42 Bisset added that there are grants out there that the town should look into and CLG will empower
43 us to do that. Maher stated he received a quote for the bulbs of \$250 - \$260 per bulb and they
44 are made locally. The town could work with a consultant to test out light sources adding that he
45 invited the consultant to come to the next Select Board meeting and he would like to move on it
46 this year.

1
2 Bisset suggested Wentworth Road and the corner on 1B near the Coast Guard station would be a
3 good location for a trial of the lights to test the lumen cast. She advised Maher that she would be
4 willing to come to the Select Board. Maher thanked her for taking the ball and running with it
5 adding that we can be a model community.

6
7 Maher motioned to adjourn the meeting; Elaine Nollet seconded, all approved.

8
9 Meeting adjourned at 8:11 pm

10
11 Respectfully submitted,
12 Diane L. Cooley, Recording Secretary