

# Exeter Historic District Commission

*Approved as Submitted, May 20, 2011*  
Nowak Room, Exeter Town Office Building  
February 17, 2011

**Introduction:** *Members present were Julie Gilman, Wendy Bergeron, Judith Rowan, Fred Kollmorgen, and Chairwoman Pam Gjettum.*

## **Call Meeting to Order**

Chairwoman Pam Gjettum called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. in the Nowak Room of the Exeter Town Office Building.

## **New Business: Public Hearings**

### **1. The application of Baystate Financial Services for new signage at 149 Water Street. The subject property is located in the WC-Waterfront Commercial zoning district. Tax Map Parcel #82-7. Case #11-04.**

The application was presented by the owner of Baystate Financial Services for a new sign at 149 Water Street. The sign would be made by Cerado Signs, would be made of 3/4 inch plywood at 36 inches by 24 inches, and would be painted teal and white. It would be installed to hang over the front door to match the surrounding signs along the street and would be two-sided. Julie Gilman made a motion to accept the application as presented, Judith Rowan seconded: Vote unanimous.

Additional discussion ensued concerning the appropriate height to hang the sign, at least eight feet high. Fred Kollmorgen moved to approve the application as presented, Julie Gilman seconded: Vote unanimous.

### **2. Continued Discussion of the application of Geoffrey Andrew von Kuhn for proposed new construction, change in exterior appearance and window replacement at 89 Front Street. The subject property is located in the R-2, Single Family Residential zoning district. Tax Map Parcel #73-301. Case #11-03.**

John Taylor, representing Geoffrey Andrew von Kuhn, presented the application. This application is a continuation of a previous application discussed at a previous HDC meeting, two weeks prior. During that meeting, it was agreed to wait on the items involving demolition, landscape, and other design details in order to provide enough time to allow additional information for the HDC. On items involving demolition, the HDC looked toward a response from the Demolition Review Committee (DRC). After a site visit and review meeting, the DRC presented the HDC with a formal letter of their recommendations. The letter included recommendations to remove the privacy wall and up to two bays of the back porch located along the east driveway due to deteriorating conditions. In an effort to retain the historic character of the house, the DRC recommended to retain the connector between the two barns.

**Items 3 and 4:** The original items three and four involved the demolition of the existing east porch (item three), and rebuilding a porch to mimic the one located in the west (item four). John Taylor explained that after meeting with the DRC, there was a decision to change the

application to remove only one or two bays of the existing east porch in order to retain the historic character of the building. The privacy wall would be included in this demolition. The HDC began a discussion on what would be removed from the existing east porch. Fred Kollmorgen made a motion to approve item three of the application: the removal of no more than two sections of the existing east porch and existing privacy wall which abuts the north porch, Julie Gilman seconded: Vote unanimous.

Item four was removed from the original application. Fred Kollmorgen moved to disapprove item four, Judith Rowan seconded: Vote unanimous.

**Item 8:** The Board discussed item eight which involved the addition of quoining in order to repair damage along the board siding. The HDC had requested a response from the Heritage Commission on this item. The Heritage Commission felt the addition of quoining would be an inappropriate element for the austere Italianate architecture of the building. The HDC discussed the item with the applicant and agreed with the Heritage Commission's response. Fred Kollmorgen moved to disapprove item eight, Judith rowan seconded: Vote unanimous.

**Item 9:** Item 9 included the removal of the existing connector between the two barns to be replaced with a larger, full-size, second story connector, allowing travel between the two structures. The existing connector is a more recent addition to the property and Mr. Taylor expressed his concerns of it being in danger of collapsing. In the letter written to the HDC, the DRC felt the connector to be of important character, defining the appearance of the two barns in its present form.

Mr. Taylor explained that he disagrees with the findings of the DRC and presented pictures to the Board disproving the original state of the connector due to the construction method. He then presented and explained his reasons for the proposed design, stating that the second story connector would be the most appropriate method to connect the two barns.

Amy Bailey, member of the DRC and Heritage Commission, explained that during the site visit, the DRC discovered elements of the connector such as the arch and back wall which appear to be older than the rest of the connector. Although the rest of the construction appears to be of a more recent construction, Ms. Bailey felt that the connector itself is character-defining of the rest of the building and distinguishes this particular property type. Ms. Bailey also explained that the DRC should not be involved in the suggested design of the connector, but rather as a committee to inform the HDC on historically-defining elements of the house.

Fred Kollmorgen began a conversation concerning the work needed to repair the existing connector and the

Fred: kept the existing connector, we would have to fix it. I dont think the replacement is that much worse than the existing. Julie: filling in that void that defines those two shapes. Fred: if thats going to be an apartment, there should be some kind of weather connection from the house. Judith: in terms of this characteristic design... what defines it? Any special meaning to having that pieces. Without the connector, it would appear as 2 separate structures instead of one building.

Judith: have you thought about alternative ways to get to barn A to barn B? John: we would like to have a 2nd floor connector, it would be aesthetically nice, and the barn is in great shape, if they want to do something to it, it would allow access. If connector wasn't acceptable, we would like to remove the existing connector. I have respect toward HDC, but architecturally, we felt it didn't fit in. We think that piece was added in the 30s. Because of the way its constructed, noone feels its original to the building. Julie: but we are looking at the character of the building over time. John: if we take the logic of why its there, we would like to use the same logic and raise the connector.

Julie Gilman made a motion to deny the removal of the existing connector of the two barns, Judith Rowan seconded: Vote passes by majority, three to one.

John: we'll probably need to remove it to rebuild it. I don't know how that process works, but I can talk to Doug Eastman to have him look at it. We would remove it and leave it off for the period of construction and through the landscaping work. That will allow access to the backyard. There's not access currently, the oak tree would be in the way. What is the appeal process? Fred Kollmorgen: you go to the ZBA, every second tuesday. 30 days. Julie: if you are going to take it down, please retain the walls to put back up. John: there's nothing salvagable, it's all rotting. Someone is welcome to see it for themselves. Judith: i think this is important enough to merit a site visit. We would like to retain this architectural feature. Fred, Judy and Julie all agreed to visit the site.

**Item 14:** The applicant requested the removal of item 14: addition of balusters to the roof porch. Fred Kollmorgen moved to disapprove item 14, Judith Rowan seconded: Vote unanimous.

**Item 15:** The final item on the application was presented by the landscape architect,

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Landscaping, Item 15:  
Landscape architects, ???

Help restore the landscape. Existing vegetation: large ash tree, linden tree: both are in declining health. Town arborist has looked at it too.

Proposing for the front: keep the posts that frame the driveway entrance. Driveway config will be relatively the same. Asphalt courtyard and cobblestone accents already exist. They will stay the same, and we are proposing the same materials. We will be recycling the same material for the front walkway. Supplement that with matching antique sidewalk. Small retaining wall on the side of the house. Steep slope: 30" to 3'. Proposing a low retaining wall, control erosion. Small stone buttresses with a walkway to the front door, we are replacing that walkway with a different paving pattern. Stepping stone walk to the street. Draw some of the attention to the front of the house. Bluestone stepping stone.

Original granite posts, had gates on them at some point. We would like to put iron gates back on that location. Open 99% of the time. Matching walkway gate with 2 granite posts to match the driveway posts to the front door. Low hedge around property. We will try to protect the oak tree, it will be fenced off. Low hedge around the sidewalk, like neighbors.

Back of the house: Unattractive part of property that shows the church yard. We are proposing a taller hedge along that edge of the property. Evergreen hedge. We haven't made final decisions on hedging. Simple plant material. Front lawn: replace street trees.

Back of house: Short stone wall proposed, with retaining wall to provide privacy for the family. Fence/stone wall with a gate along property line. The fence will be constructed on top of a wall to keep it from being stepped. Top of fence 6'. Made of wood, stained in a color to match the house.

Planting in the front: simple. Japanese maples, and street trees, and hedging. Judith: design of the front retains that formal feel. It calls for that, and we are trying to keep with the house. Julie: question for HDC, terrace along side of house.

Amy: it's more historically accurate to not have a retaining wall. A well-maintained healthy sod would hold that together. There has been some runoff and issues of erosion, but landscaping can probably correct that. We would much rather prefer to see grass than a retaining wall.

We are trying to create a planting plateau at the same time. Only way to do that is to create a level plateau. Originally they wanted to change the entrance and bring it up that way, and we convinced them not to do that. Julie: it can be planted to retain the land. The board discussed the landscape plan. The front is more natural to the land. Julie: that ones tough, retaining wall is extended out quite far. Judith: is it you want a planting bed there particularly? No its for easier maintenance. This section here, between main house and garage, we are adding a similar fence detail. The wall works nicely with that detail. Judith: it is a more modern concept.

We came prepared with an alternate plan. Wall comes off the porch and levels it but creates a planting bed. Not as high as the porch. Height of this walkway, existing grade. Fred: 70 front street where I own, retaining walls were approved. Client would not prefer it, but it would be an alternative. Screening by the barn, the most affective screen is layering. Planting bed allows that. Judith: without proposed wall, this would become a planting wall. Groundcover will hang over the wall. Final detail planting plan has yet to be completed. Judith: I move we accept the proposal for the shorter retaining wall on the alternative plan from January 25, without the east retaining wall, and on the original plan: the walkway, the hedges, screening hedges, and paving as presented.

To accept revision sheet three of the design, dated Jan 25,2011 which has no retaining wall on the east side, but to accept all of the elements as presented on sheet \_\_\_\_\_, except for the retaining wall on the east side but all of the elements as presented, Fred Kollmorgen seconded, Vote unanimous.

To approve, more information. Judith: not knowing the planting materials? Should they come back out? This hedge is going to be privit, a low height, visual barrier. Revision sheet 3 of design with no retaining wall on the east side but as the par.... Jan 25, to accept hedges, walkway, screening, and fences as presented, Fred Kollmorgen moved to approve, Judith Rowan seconded: vote unanimous. Amy Bailey, this is the first project that the DRC reviewed that was not a full demolition and it worked out quite nicely. The owner and the contractor were great to work with. Julie: next year we should work on the Zoning ordinance to revise that demolition schedule.

The board discussed how the DRC should act in response to the HDC. John: we would like to keep a site plan at the historical society. Judith: I will be leaving the Commission at the end of the April.

## **Other Business**

### **1. Approval of Minutes: December 16, 2010 and February 3, 2011.**

The approval of meeting minutes for December 16 and February 3 were moved to the following HDC meeting in March.

Julie Gilman moved to adjourn, Wendy Bergeron Seconded: Vote unanimous.

Chairwoman Pam Gjettum adjourned the meeting at 8:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gillian R. Baresich

## Recording Secretary

\*\*\*\*\*5:38 – 6:30\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*1:15 - 1:45\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*4:47 – 6:00\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*3:30 – 4:30\*\*\*\*\*