

Exeter Heritage Commission Demolition Review Committee

Draft Minutes

Nowak Room, Exeter Town Offices

February 16, 2011

Demolition Review Committee Members present: Amy Bailey, Peter Michaud, and
Don Clement

Heritage Commission Members present: Peter Smith and John Merkle

The DRC meeting was called to order at 6:18 p.m in the Nowak Room of the
Exeter Town Offices.

89 Front Street

John Taylor, contractor and representative to the owner, began a presentation of the proposed work, providing the Board photos of the existing and proposed design. Members of the DRC explained that the purpose of this Committee is entirely advisory to the Historic District Commission and does not prevent demolition. The application was presented with demolition items separate from proposed work. Demolition items include removal of a pressure-treated deck, roof of the connector, steps and door, privacy wall, a portion of the elongated porch, and the connector between the two barns. Proposed work includes the addition of a second story connector bridge between the two barns to replace the existing connector, expansion of the back porch, addition of a chimney and fireplace, landscape retaining wall, quoining, and balustrades to the roof porch.

Demolition items

Long porch

The applicant wishes to remove a portion of the long porch in order to allow easier access for vehicles. Peter Michaud explained that the long porch is character-defining of the building's original architecture and should retain its elongated feel in order to maintain that character. The building stands as an important piece of Italianate architecture in New Hampshire and has undergone a colonial revival overlay at one time, along with several other renovations. There is a portion of the porch that extends beyond the house which appears to be more recent in construction. A discussion ensued concerning what advice the DRC can provide without including design review which is the responsibility of the Historic District Commission. After several suggestions, the Board agreed to advise the removal of up to two bays, allowing the porch to remain symmetrically intact and still long enough to retain its character.

Connector (demolition only, not including the proposed addition)

John Taylor stated that the connector was constructed at a later date, explaining that the evidence of construction proved the roof structure to have replaced the original roof structure. The original date of construction has yet to be determined. The Board began a discussion concerning the functionality of the

connector as it stands and the need to retain the character of the building. Amy Bailey stated that it would be advised by the DRC that the character-defining of the building in its present form and should be retained.

Pressure-treated deck, steps and door

Peter Michaud stated that the pressure-treated deck is a modern intrusion and not historic or appropriate for the building as it stands. The Board recommended removing this piece as well as the steps and door.

Peter Michaud moved to close the Demolition Review hearing, Peter Smith seconded: Vote unanimous.

Proposed Work

Amy Bailey discussed how the Heritage Commission can serve as a resource to help guide the HDC in the applications for proposed additions to the building.

Proposed second story connector

John Taylor presented the design for the second story connector, suggesting a variation to the design. If the HDC votes to keep the existing connector, Mr. Taylor proposed to construct a walkthrough connector above the existing piece. Advising against this, Peter Michaud explaining that adding another story to the connector would disrupt the independent rooflines of the two barns and appear obtrusive. The Board advised that currently proposed design is also too large and not in character of the existing construction, but encouraged additional solutions which would solve the functional need of a connector.

Expansion of porch and addition of chimney and fireplace

Peter Michaud stated that the Committee did not have any objection to expanding the porch along the side of the building and adding a chimney and fireplace. The members agreed that the addition of the proposed chimney and fireplace would be compatible with the history of the building, allowing for a blending between the unadorned chimney and the simplified Italianate architecture.

Retaining wall and landscaping

John Taylor explained that the landscape architect will be presenting the landscape plan in full at the following HDC meeting. It was advised by the DRC that the removal of the terracing and addition of the retaining wall would not keep in character with the property.

Quoining and balustrades

Peter Michaud explained that the addition of quoining and balustrades would not be appropriate for the style of architecture. Mr. Taylor agreed with the Committee and plans to remove the item from the application.

Peter Michaud stated that he drafted a letter discussing the demolition concerns and agreed to send this to the HDC for their review. The members of the DRC thanked the applicant for being cooperative throughout the review and

continued a discussion on additional parts of the building. Mr. Taylor invited members of the Board to visit the building if they are interested.

Peter Michaud motioned to adjourn, Peter Smith seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gillian R. Baresich
Recording Secretary