

Historic District Commission

December 17, 2020

Draft Minutes

Call Meeting To Order: Patrick Gordon, Chairman, called meeting to order at 7:00 pm via ZOOM.

Members Present: Patrick Gordon, Chairman, Pam Gjettum, Clerk, Doug McCallum, Julie Gilman, Select Board Rep., Grayson Shephard, Gwen English, Planning Board Rep., Curtis Boivin, Vice Chair

New Business: Public Hearings: Continued public hearing on the application of Robert Lang (on behalf of 154 Water Street Co. LLC) for a change in appearance to the existing structure located at 28 Front Street. Case #20-9. Noone was present for this so Patrick asked for a motion to table until next month's meeting. Pam suggested they wait until later because of the weather. Patrick said they will leave it open until the other two applications have been heard.

Next is the application of East Coast Enterprise LLC for a change to an existing structure, including demolition and restoration to original or appropriate style or period. This property is located at 110 High Street. Case #20-11. Kenn Bevins was present and wanted to share his screen showing his presentation of 110 High Street. He said all the siding and roofing would be replaced in kind. Kenn said he is a Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineer. John Darmody is his partner. He is a Manufacturing Manager at an AeroSpace Company. The formed East Coast LLC in 2017.

Project Outline: Kenn stated that the property has been vacant for the last ten years and built in 1850 and it has some challenging issues with it.

Project Goal: Restore the property as close as possible to the original condition and create an excellent roadside appeal that the local residents will be proud of and satisfied.

Project Timeline: 6 to 8 months per approvals from HDC and Exeter Building Department.

Project Support; Rick Stoklosa is Principal of SB&R Studio LLC. He will be doing the layout inside the building. Kenn then showed a photo of his barn that is being restored. He then said he would like to talk about and look at some of the building itself. When you look at the siding and you look at the trim, they are going to keep all wood siding and all wood trim. They are just going to replace it. The roof is shot and beyond life. They will be replacing it with architectural shingles. Patrick asked if they would be asphalt shingles and Kenn said they would asphalt. The barn will be replaced in kind. The current garage door is not period and they want to put more of a carriage door back on and make it look more like an 1850s barn. They are also looking at Marvin style wood windows if needed and they will be simulated divided windows. They will be repairing the foundation. He then showed a picture of the back addition which he is calling a porch is not original. There is no foundation under it and in their opinion, it needs to

go. It takes away from the originality of the building and for a better term, is stuck on and it is falling off. They want to remove it and put a nice patio in the back so when they walk out of their kitchen, there is a patio where they can sit and enjoy the backyard.

Barn Structure Replacement: Very similar to other sections he showed the commission where they are going to replace the brick. There is nothing there so they are going to put a structure underneath the barn.

House Steps: There is a mix match of three different things. Wood, brick and cement. He said they feel that back in the day they would have had granite steps. They will take the wood, brick and cement out and put granite steps back into the sidewalk.

Chimney: Kenn wants to keep the original chimney in the house. Somewhere along the way, someone added a chimney on the back of the house and it does nothing. It does not go anywhere or provide any function to the house currently and they feel it needs to go.

House Colors: He said they picked a color from a Williamsburg collection of 1850 houses.

They would like to color it slate with red doors. He then said that somebody took the double doors out of this house because there are hinges for double doors. They would like to go back to the original double doors and paint them red. He said he went all around the house and barn and now is asking if the commission has any questions. Patrick thanked him and put it out to the commission members for questions or comments. Pam said that they have no say over color. She thinks it is perfect. She asked if they were going to keep the bay window. Kenn said they were going to keep it. Pam said she thinks it is something that has been added. Pam then asked about them taking down the hay door. Kenn said they were going to take that door out and put a light over the carriage doors so it would be safer at night. Curtis said there is a discrepancy from what they have in their packet on the proposed front elevation south that has a centered garage door as opposed to the one he is showing tonight that has an off center door and will be eliminating the window to the left of the door. He was wondering which one is the current elevation. Kenn said what he is showing, is what they are proposing. He said they got the renderings after they sent the packets. Julie asked if the new barn door was going to be a two car garage as opposed to the current one that would probably only fit one car. Kenn said it is definitely big enough to fit two cars in there side by side.

Julie said she would lose the bay window in the front and match the window to the other side of the door. Kenn asked her if she thought this was something that was not period. Julie said that was correct. Patrick said he thinks if it was original, there would have been a foundation that went all the way down as opposed to being hung the way it is now.

They are proposing to take the window out on the left side of the barn and make a double garage door. Patrick said for practical purposes of living in the modern day and having a two car garage, he completely understands why they would like to do that. He thinks they are losing the character of the barn facade by doing it. Kenn said it is hard to see any character with the door that is there now. Patrick said the door centered where it is now as a carriage door, speaks to it being an architectural barn. Kenn said if they were able to keep the hay door, would it make it better if they moved the light over, added the hay door back and left the double carriage. Julie said that was the picture they have in the packet. Patrick said it is a smaller double door. Patrick said he really liked what was proposed in the December 4th package. Curtis asked Kenn if he knew what the dimensions of the garage door is. It is fourteen feet. Patrick said it is losing the character of a barn. It is looking more like a very large garage.

Patrick said that he is not completely convinced about losing the hay door. It does not need to be functional, but it has an element that speaks to the primary use of that as a barn. Is the idea of losing that as an element specifically and only because you want to light it from above. He is wondering if there can't be a different lighting option that would still allow that to stay as an element. Julie asked Kenn to go back to the original drawing that he started his presentation with. With the wider doors, there will not be room for the window on the left side. Kenn said what if they put on either side of the door two lanterns and put the hay door back. Pam said that sounds good. Patrick said you would lose the symmetry. Kenn said not perfect symmetry no, but you would have the hay door back. Patrick said he does not see this as an unhealthy compromise. If the hay door is put back or remains, speaks to the use of the structure that he really likes. Then have the function of the new larger garage doors as double doors to accommodate modern cars. Kenn said he will change the drawing so he can send it back in. Julie said she really appreciates that they are replacing everything in kind and really working with the nature of the building. Kenn is now back at the bay window. If they were to keep it, they would change the way it is mounted. Julie thinks that would be appropriate because buildings change over time. She said if they keep it, they need to keep it in a structural sound way. Doug said these kinds of windows tend to suck a lot of energy out. He said it is certainly not historical. It messes up the aesthetics for him. Kenn said they will just lose the window. Curtis said the light fixture at the front door does not seem period appropriate. He thinks a lantern style lamp would be much more in keeping with the style of the house. Kenn is ok with this. Julie asked Kenn to go back to the double entry door. She is not clear how that fits into the current elevation. Patrick asked what the proposed width is of the entry door. Kenn thinks it is probably three feet. He does not have a proposed width right now. He would have to measure where they originally had it and match that width. Kenn said they can go with a single door. Patrick said he does not see an issue with the removal of the chimney in the back. The members agreed. Patrick said that the garage doors Kenn is proposing, the commission would ask to stay away from aluminum if he can. The aluminum seems to not last and not hold up well. Grayson said someone on the commission might have a better idea of what was present in the 1850s, but the granite vs a continuation of the brick and this might just be a personal preference vs what is historically accurate to the time period but this is something he would consider continuation of the brick from the walkway up instead of a transition to granite. Kenn said the problem he has with brick is longevity. It comes apart and it gets beat up and broken over time and granite is not going to. Kenn then wanted to recap what he has for notes. They will put the bigger door in the barn and keep the hay loft door and put side lights on it. Get rid of the bay window in the front of the house and match the left side window in the front of the house. Going with a composite door for the barn. They will put a single door in the front of the house instead of the double doors. Lantern style on the front of the house for a light and more of an industrial light on the front of the barn. Patrick called for a motion to accept the application as complete so they can make a decision on it tonight. Pam made a motion to accept the application as complete. Curtis seconded. All were in favor and application accepted. This does not end the public meeting so Patrick asked if there was any attendee that wanted to speak at this time for or against the project. Bill Campbell lives right across the street. He likes very much what Kenn has done and things he agreed to are good. He would like the hay door to be left in there. He asked if the driveway on the side stayed there. Kenn plans on behind the

barn where it is like a big parking lot area to turn that back into some kind of landscaping and take all of that tar up. Maybe seed it and make a yard. Julie said she thinks Bill is asking about the front of the barn. Right now it is a large asphalt area. Bill says it goes over to the neighbors. Kenn said they are planning on getting rid of the pavement there. Bill said they might want to consider a break between your property and the property to the west. Kenn said they are looking at some kind of fence between their business and this house. No other hands raised so Patrick closed the public hearing. He then asked the members if they needed any other discussion before he called for a motion. There was none so he asked Grayson to make the motion. He did not have a full list of the conditions so Curtis made the motion. Curtis made a motion to approve the application conditionally with the preservation of the hay door. A two barn light is symmetrical. A wider off center garage door is acceptable. The front bay window to be replaced with a matching window on the left side. A light fixture that is period appropriate, lantern style. Everything else was acceptable. Julie seconded. All were in favor and application approved.

Next is the application of Christopher Newport for change in appearance to the existing structure located at 90 High Street. The proposed improvement includes the reconstruction of the newel posts, balusters and railings leading up to the front porch with period correct versions of the same. Case #20-12. Christopher said he and his wife want to enhance the appearance of the front of the house a little bit. He then shared his screen to show photos of his home. He pointed to the stoop and said there are two things with it. One, it is falling apart and two, it does not match the character of the house. He said it is not original to the house and was probably installed in the 70s or 80s. They are planning to replace the stoop with something more robust that matches the character of the house. He wants to make it almost identical to the side porch. He thinks it will make it look more period correct. Patrick asked what materials he would be using. Christopher said it is going to be pressure treated wood and then they will prime and paint it. Patrick then opened it up to the commission members and he had no comments. Pam thinks it is a wonderful idea. Doug thinks it is great and makes a lot of sense for that house. Grayson has no problem and thinks it looks good. Julie thinks it will be good. Curtis has no issue with this. Gwen is pleased and has no issues with it. Patrick then asked for a motion of acceptance of the application as complete. Curtis made the motion to accept the application as complete. Julie seconded. All were in favor and application accepted. There were no other questions or concerns so Patrick asked for motion to approve the application. Pam made the motion to approve the application. Julie seconded. All were in favor and application approved. Patrick went back to public hearing #1 to see if anyone on behalf of Robert Lang is available for the application. There was no one available. He then asked for a motion to table the application until January. Pam made the motion. Curtis seconded. All were in favor and application tabled.

Other Business: Approval of October 15th and November 19th. After review of the October minutes and corrections made, Julie made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Curtis seconded. All were in favor and October minutes approved.

After review of the November 19th minutes and corrections made, Julie made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Grayson seconded. All were in favor and minutes approved.

Patrick told the commission that the IOKA marquee may have found a home. Unfortunately, it would not be in Exeter or New England. To accept this in its new location it would be going to a museum of historic neon and signage and be restored and to do so the marquee has to stay intact. As the application currently lies when the ZBA made their decision to remove the condition of keeping it in place, they reverted to taking the letters off of the marquee and mounting them on the building. It would have to stay intact to go to its new home. Patrick does not know if it is a modification or revision to our application or now since it has gone to the ZBA and that was a denovo judgement that it would have to be an appeal or a revision to that decision of the ZBA. He then asked the commission if anyone had any idea. Pam said if it has a home, it should be given to them. Patrick said they will not accept it if the letters are cut off of it. Julie said it has been more than thirty days since the ZBA made their ruling so they are beyond their appeal process. She said it does not affect the commission anymore because it went to the ZBA and they made their decision which overruled ours. What's happening at the building in that location is that they would have to propose to us another sign. This is how she thinks it would go. It is a new application. There is no going back to what we had for conditions or anything like that. Patrick said the ZBA's decision went back to our original decision or an option of our decision to cut the letters off and nail them on the building as signage and to allow the marquee to be removed. That's what currently the decision made is that those letters have to be used on the building as signage. Julie said either way, it will have to be a new application. Patrick said hypothetically they submit a new application to us for new signage that is an effort to replicate the letters exactly as they are on the marquee. In order to preserve those letters in their place on the marquee, they will be making them from new materials. That signage if we agreed to allow that to happen, what is the action from the previous agreement. Does the new application supersede the decision. Pam said it could be a change of signage. We have plenty of those. Julie said she thinks Pam is correct and it would be a new application to us because they want to change the signage. Because of the situation of the marquee and regardless of what the ZBA has ruled, they are going to make a change to what the ZBA ruled. The ruling at the ZBA was that the letters be used on the building and now they are changing their design so it would come to us as a new application. Patrick said if they approve that new signage, then that would be the new signage as desired by the applicant. Julie and Pam said it would be. Julie said the ZBA's decision stands and it stands permanently but they still have the right to change what they want to do. Patrick said he will communicate this to those who are asking and hopefully it will have a very happy result. Julie said it is very exciting news to know that it will be preserved somewhere and maybe have a link to on our website. Patrick said from what he understands, you can go and see it if you want to take a drive.

Julie said there was a presentation by The Office Of Strategic Initiatives of the State. It was a presentation of a database they have of every town or villages or unincorporated places of their zoning. What kind of zoning do they have? Do they do tax credit type of zoning. Do they have a Historic District and what are their guidelines? You put in a key word and things will pop up all over the place. If you want to change something in our Zoning Ordinance that we feel is weak or too stringent, you can quickly find examples from other towns without having to figure out with google or chrome. She will send all the members the link to it because she thinks it is a very important tool.

With no further business, Patrick made the motion to adjourn. Julie said so moved and the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Herrick
Recording Secretary