

Historic District Commission  
March 17, 2022  
Final Minutes

Call Meeting to Order: Patrick Gordon, Chairman, called meeting to order at 7:00 pm in the Nowak Room of the Exeter Town Office Building,

Members Present: Patrick Gordon, Chairman, Pam Gjettum, Gwen English, Planning Board Rep, Doug McCallum

New Business: Public Hearing: The continued public hearing on the application of Kris Weeks for new construction of a proposed garage addition to the existing residence at 82 High Street. Case #22-4.

Kris Weeks from Penn Lane Architects, Exeter spoke and had slides to show to the commission members. Kris said that he is here on behalf of the owners, Emily Zuzano and Jason Murray and Jason is here this evening. Kris said the last time they were here, their presentation came together rather quickly and as a result of our discussions, he would like to show a fuller review of the project so everyone is informed and hopefully moving forward and on the same page. Kris said 82 High Street is a stately Victorian home that has two stories and it is a beautiful home. Kris then started the slide show for the members and showed several different slides of the whole house, front and back. Kris said he is going to show the commission two different options for the garage. The first option is a single dormer and this is preferred. The other is to have double dormers. The preferred option would be to have a central single dormer over the two garage doors. Using the single dormer would allow there to be more space in the room. The second option is the double dormers that are aligned over the garage doors and Kris showed all of this on the slides. After showing the slides, Kris ended his discussion and opened it up for discussion.

Patrick asked Doug to start. Doug said Kris did a good job and thinks it is a nice addition. Doug then said that he does not have a strong feeling one way or the other about the dormers. He said he does feel that double dormers are a little bit more balanced and more in keeping with the regional tradition.

Gwen spoke next and said she does not have anything to add to Doug's comments. She said she appreciates the work Kris put into this because it helps her visualize things. Gwen said that initially she liked the two windows over the garage door, the two dormers and then when it was shown with one dormer, Gwen said it appealed to her more than she expected and she is not leaning strongly in one direction.

Pam said that she is not leaning towards one or the other. Pam said there are so many things going on with that house, that almost anything that was done would fit. Kris said it is a complex piece for sure and it is a beautiful home.

Patrick then spoke and said that he is still very much in favor of the two dormers. Patrick then asked if Kris could sell him on the one vs the two.

Kris again showed slides of the dormers over the garage. He feels that the one dormer would work because it is very well balanced and stacked. Patrick said that he still does not agree. He said the elements are not stacked, Kris said in the pure structural sense, they are not stacked. Patrick said in the previous three slides that Kris showed, they were all stacked. Much conversation went back and forth among the members and applicants about the single dormer. Kris said that one of the things he likes about the single dormer is that the trim can be accentuated and he likes the way the single dormer presents in terms of getting the trim work, he thinks it really celebrates the house.

Patrick asked if there was a functional requirement for a single dormer vs a double dormer. Kris said it does contribute to being able to use more of the space in a more effective way for sure on the interior.

Patrick then stated again that he is just not in favor of the single dormer at all. He said he is one voice out of four and it sounds like the other three are fine either way.

Pam asked how you would lose space in the activity room by having two dormers. Kris said the dormers would be chopped up and would be smaller individually than the single dormer.

Patrick then said that the commission certainly has enough information to accept the application and asked for a motion. Pam made a motion to accept the application. Gwen seconded. All were in favor and the application was accepted.

Gwen said now she feels a little uncomfortable saying she is not ready to vote on this and she knows Kris and the house owner are ready to get this thing going. Gwen said it was really hard for her to visualize the option of having two windows centered over the door and the dormers being bigger than shown.

Patrick then called for a motion. Doug said that he does not see any resolution here so he made a motion to accept the two dormer concept and encourage larger windows..

Kris then asked Jason the home owner if he had any thoughts on the two dormers. Jason said he did not think he was going to like it as much when Kris showed it and he does not think it would ruin the functionality of that space. Kris then said that it seems like they could be open and accepting to the two dormer concept. Pam asked what Doug's motion was again. Doug said, accepting the two dormers and encouraging larger windows. Gwen seconded the motion.

Kris then asked the contractor, Bob Scally from Scally LLC in Amesbury, Mass.; if he would like to speak. Bob said he had a few things to mention and he has also done a lot of historical work. He went back to some of the slides to explain some things to the members. One particular slide he was showing some trim work and he called it a pigeon roost and that is exactly what it is because pigeons like to sit on it.

Bob then said that the last time he was here, somebody commented that a new product attaching to an old house does not have to exactly match 100%. It is supposed to show it is a newer age but mimic some of the old house.

Patrick said that is incorrect and that is something we never try to do. Bob said that maybe he misunderstood.

Bob said he is not opposed to the single or the double dormers. He said you have to be careful on the size of all of this going together because he is going up there putting trim work on it and he does not want this trim work to be so confusing and so detailed that it actually becomes lost on the face of the building.

Patrick asked Doug to restate his motion and Pam read it. We would like the applicant to go with the option of the two dormers and encourage them to study the proportions and optimize the space and have larger windows. Pam seconded. All were in favor and the application approved.

Next on the agenda is a request by Edson Barbosa (on behalf of Exeter Realty Trust) for a preliminary consultation regarding a change to an existing structure for a proposed ADA accessible entrance conversion at 154 Water Street. Tax Map Parcel #72-224-1.

Edson spoke and said this is his first time learning how to apply for an application. He said he is excited to be here with his experience. Edson has been working for this company for over ten years. Edson said he is here to find out how to split the space for a tenant at 154 Water Street. The space is 4500 square feet and the tenant wants to only have half. Edson said looking at the space, there is change in elevation in some parts. Paperwork was passed out to the commission members showing the space. Edson said this is a challenge. He needs to comply with this tenant to give them the space they think they could be handling to keep the business rolling in town.

Edson said he found on Center Street on the very far end of the building, five windows on that side. The last window is leveling with the sidewalk which would make it possible to make that window an access for wheelchairs. This could not happen on the back of the building because there is an elevation of 16 or 17 inches.

Patrick asked Edson if he received the HDC Guidelines and Edson said he had. Patrick told him this would answer every single question he has asked the commission. Patrick told him this is the best place to start and it is also available online.

Edson said he just wanted to get a feeling of what this meeting is and understand what is expected so the project can get started. Patrick told Edson that this is a preliminary meeting. It is just a work session. Edson said the next time he will have more information for sure.

Other Business: Approval of January 20th and February 17, 2022. After review and corrections of the January 20th minutes, Patrick asked for a motion to accept. Doug made a motion to accept as amended. Pam seconded. All were in favor and minutes approved. Next are the February minutes. After review and corrections, Pam made a motion to accept minutes as amended. Doug seconded. All were in favor and minutes approved.

Patrick made an announcement that this is his last meeting because he is moving back to Arizona. He said he has very much enjoyed his time as Chairman of this commission. Patrick said that as Vice Chair, it is Curtis's duty to take over as Chairman.

With no further business, Patrick adjourned the at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Herrick