

Historic District Commission
Final Minutes
June 15, 2023

Call Meeting to Order: Grayson Shephard, Acting Chair, called meeting to order at 7:00pm in the Novak Room of the Exeter Town Office Building.

Members Present: Grayson Shephard, Acting Chair, Pam Gjettum, Clerk, Gwen English, Planning Board Rep., Julie Gilman, Select Board Rep., Kevin Kahn, new member

New Business: A request by DAV IV, LLC for an amendment to a previous Certificate of Appropriateness for changes in appearance to the existing structure located at 45 Water Street. The proposed changes include additional windows on the sides and rear of the building and modifications to the storefront facade. Case #21-6.

Robert Whitermyer from Winterhaven out of Kittery is the representative for this project. Robert stated that this application had gone through and been approved by this commission on May 21, 2021. Robert had slides to show the commission on what the changes would be. They want to show the differences of what was approved and what they would like to do. The commission members also had a packet of this project.

On the street level, they want to do a different canopy than the one that is there. In addition, the storefront windows and the entry doors into the space are looking to get reworked from what is currently there. Part of that front facade modification is the creation of a small side door over the proposed canopy.

On the rear elevation up at the very upper level, they are looking to add a Juliet balcony. This will help the living unit get some air up into that higher level and get a nice view of the river.

Robert then showed slides of the front facade. The left showed what was approved two years ago and on the right is what they are proposing to do. The upper two levels will basically be kept the same, double hung windows with shutters. From the sill level on the second floor down is a rework. For the storefront, try and give a thinner canopy that is a little bit more in tune with a storefront canopy,

Robert said the door to the upper units has been switched from the left hand side to the right hand side because it is more of a circulation item internally. The design intent and the look are not compromised whether the door is on the left or the right.

Grayson then asked if anyone had any questions so far with what has been provided for the front elevation changes.

Kenneth said he just had a question on the materials on the windows and the doors. It says aluminum clad. Where is the aluminum? Robert said the aluminum is on the exterior and it is for the durability portion of it. Kenneth then said, so the front of the door is aluminum and Robert said yes and the interior will be wood that can be stained.

Grayson asked if there were any questions or clarification on the storefront on Water Street or the rear of the building.

Gwen asked if there were any signs proposed for the building and if so, where would they go. Robert said it is a product of when the tenant gets in there. Above the canopy there are two sign boards and are there for signage.

Robert then moved to slides of the river. On the left side is what was approved and on the right is what is being proposed. Robert started from the top down. In lieu of the double hung that was proposed, a five foot french door is being proposed.

Grayson then asked if there were any further questions on this application. Julie said that she does not have any questions but said she appreciates the comparable storefront photos that were given to the commission.

Julie made a motion to accept the second application as complete. Pam seconded. All were in favor and application was accepted.

Julie said the first time she looked at the rear elevation, she thought that's a lot of glass. That's a lot of holes in the building. Julie said she really does not have reservations about it. The back of the building is only seen from across the river and from inside the units.

Pam said she thinks it looks lovely.

Amanda Kelly from the public spoke. She lives on 24 Prospect Street. She thinks the project is beautiful and they are doing a great job. She said she came tonight to say thank you for including the sloped entry. It is really huge that you are changing that from a step up to a sloped entry. She also hopes more buildings continue to do that and she is glad there were no negative comments about it and is glad that everyone is on board with it.

After more conversation and questions, Julie made a motion to approve as presented. Pam seconded. All were in favor and the application was approved.

Other Business: Election of Officers. Julie made a motion to appoint Grayson Shephard as the Heritage Commission Chairman. Ken seconded. All were in favor. Next is the position of Vice Chair. Kenneth Kahn offered and Julie made a motion to nominate Kenneth as Vice Chair. Pam seconded. All were in favor. The nomination of Clerk will be tabled for now.

Next is the approval of the March 16, 2023 Minutes. Grayson stated that there were not enough members present who were at that meeting to approve them and it has been three months, so the minutes will be approved as is.

Julie wanted to talk about the Office of Planning and Development Spring series of workshops. Julie said she participated in one and it was the first time they had an Historic Preservation that she participated in. There were a lot of good suggestions. One of the things they recommended annually was to go over materials, guidelines, rules and procedures and also to set goals.

Julie said that one thing people were asking about was, do you have anything in the Zoning Ordinance or Guidelines about solar installations. Pam said, yes we do.

Grayson said he thinks it is something that is useful too. Julie said what was recommended first was to have a work session instead of having a meeting. It would be just tossing around ideas and then having a formal meeting when something is adopted.

Ken said that as a new homeowner in the Historic District, I have a recollection of a piece of paper at the closing that tells you the home is in the Historic District, but I am not sure that is the case. Is there a procedure?

Pam stated that it is supposed to go to all the realtors so that people know when they are buying it, that there are strings attached.

Ken said that he would just say, if the first time people are notified at the closing, we might want to do something to trigger it earlier. Usually on the realtor side, it will tell you if there is an HOA involved and if we can do something similar on the listing. That way the first time they see it, it is not at their closing. This would be beneficial for new buyers.

Julie said this is one of the things she would want to put on as a goal is a gathering of realtors. I would also like to do something with builders.

Grayson said at our next meeting, everyone can come up with ideas of how to approach realtors and builders and also talk about setting up a working session.

With no further business, Ken made a motion to adjourn. Julie seconded. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Herrick
Recording Secretary

