

City of Hallowell
Planning Board Meeting
May 18, 2016
7:00 pm

1. Call to Order

Ms. Obery called the meeting to order.

2. Roll Call / Quorum

Ms. Obery took the roll call and established a quorum.

Present: Danielle Obery (Chair), Richard Bostwick, Darryl Brown, Daniel Davis (2nd alt.), Sandra Johnson, Amy Mills (1st alt.), Jane Orbeton, Rosemary Presnar
Maureen AuCoin, Code Enforcement Officer

Excused: Judith Feinstein

Ms. Mills will be voting; Mr. Davis will not be voting.

3. Public Comments (The Board has agreed to limit the time allotted to Public Comment to fifteen minutes.)

None.

4. Approval of Minutes of the April 20, 2016 Planning Board Meeting

Motion to approve the minutes of the April 20, 2016 meeting as presented.

Moved: Presnar

Seconded: Bostwick

Unanimously approved,
Johnson abstaining

5. Approval of Minutes of the May 4, 2016 Special Planning Board Meeting

Ms. Presnar pointed out that the word "precedence" in the seventh paragraph on page six should be "precedent."

Motion to approve the minutes of the May 4, 2016 special meeting as amended.

Moved: Orbeton

Seconded: Bostwick

Unanimously approved,
Johnson and Mills abstaining

6. Historic District Certificate of Appropriateness Application for Kathryn & Till Hoffmann, 14 Middle Street, Map 5 Lot 9

Till and Kathryn Hoffman presented additional information for their application, which was tabled from the April meeting. Mr. Hoffman outlined the changes he had made to the submitted plans and the additional information. He reiterated that the installation of the doors is necessary for access to the back yard and the basement; he said he felt the Board had not given that enough consideration. He told the Board that they contacted Earle Shettleworth, who said he is no longer available since he retired and referred them to Amy Cole Ives. Ms. Ives referred them to a company specializing in historic remodeling, which was not helpful in this case, and to a local company, which is already involved in the project. Ms. Hoffman contacted Maine Historic Preservation Commission and talked to Christopher Closs. Mr. Closs looked at the house and ultimately agreed that the proposed location is the best option because of interior constraints. Mr. Closs also suggested that rather than reworking the historic trim to fit the new doors, it would be more acceptable to remove the trim and store it to insure potential reversibility. The design of the doors has been changed from full-length glass to partial glass with a solid panel below, which will be more compatible with the historic front doors. They will also replace the other exterior doors with this style; Mr. Closs told them that this would be advisable. Mr. Closs also agreed that the proposed colors for the doors are acceptable, but he suggested more recessive colors for the railing and the deck. They have chosen a brown color for the deck. Ms. Hoffman added that Mr. Closs said that even though there are white railings in the front, the railings on the proposed

deck would be more appropriate if they were not made to look historic, so they have changed the railing system to make it lower profile without caps on the posts.

Ms. Hoffman told the Board that Mr. Closs recommended replacing the historic trim with modern straight trim that is slightly bulkier than the existing trim; reworking the historic trim to fit the doors would make it look like an effort to have the door imitate a window, which it is not, and would be inappropriate.

Ms. Orbeton asked if the Hoffmans had considered putting a lattice under the deck. Mr. Hoffman said they would not. Ms. Hoffman added that Mr. Closs recommended over-building the posts under the deck and staining them to match the color of the deck. Mr. Hoffman noted that part of the deck is above the entrance to the basement and cannot be enclosed. Ms. Orbeton noted that the spec sheet for the doors shows a taller version and asked if that would eliminate the need for the transom. Mr. Hoffman said they had thought that eight-foot doors were too grand. Ms. Hoffman pointed out that the standard sizes are insufficient and taller doors would have to be custom ordered.

The Board decided to treat the altered application as a new application regarding completeness.

Motion to find the application complete.

Moved: Brown

Seconded: Presnar

Unanimously approved

Ms. AuCoin emphasized that in view of the fact that the Hoffmans do not have an interior access to the basement or access from the house to the backyard, having a door to the backyard is a plus from the Code Enforcement side of things. It is a safety issue.

Ms. Orbeton expressed her opinion that the four windows across the back of the house are a distinguishing architectural feature and it would be less damaging to install the door in the place of the window that is tucked behind the corner. Ms. Hoffman explained that Mr. Closs had suggested that, but when he saw the house and the interior arrangement he agreed that in the end it made sense to locate the door where they have proposed. She added that Mr. Closs referred to it as a minor alteration and he felt that as long as the original trim was preserved on the property in a way that the alteration could be reversed at any time, he did not feel that it had a significant impact to the historical character of the house. Mr. Hoffman added that there are three of the fifteen windows on the front of the house that do not have trim. One of the thirteen windows on the back does not have trim. The windows have all been replaced with vinyl windows.

Ms. Obery agreed that access to the back yard is necessary, but she felt that the deck changes the look of the house substantially. Ms. Presnar observed that the fence makes a significant change, but the Board does not have jurisdiction over that. Ms. Hoffman admitted that they have learned what recessive colors are; when they put up the fence they had no idea that white would be considered as an "offensive" color and thought it would blend well with the trim, and were they to do it again they would choose a recessive color. She admitted that the proposed deck alters the historic house, but it is not irreversible, and it is comparable to decks that have been built in the neighborhood, some of which are less attractive. She called attention to the three-level deck on the back of the Carriage House [Map 5 Lot 12].

Mr. Davis observed that there are a lot of existing inconsistencies. He said he agreed that the door would need to be bolder than shown in the mock-ups. Mr. Bostwick said he felt the altered plan is an improvement over the original plan.

Motion to find the application in harmony with Historic District standards and approve the application as presented.

Moved: Brown

Seconded: Mills

Ms. Orbeton observed that the illustration shows a door with a panel that is $\frac{1}{3}$ of the height of the door; she said it would look better if it were $\frac{1}{2}$ the height. Mr. Hoffman said the illustration is his work with Photoshop; their intent is that the top of the panels would be the same height as the bottoms of the windows. There was discussion of the door styles. Mr. Bostwick asked if the door in the garage would match the replacement for the door on the front side; Mr. Hoffman said it would. Mr. Bostwick clarified that the Board is voting on the doors without a transom.

Vote:

Yea: Bostwick, Brown,
Johnson, Mills, Presnar

Nay: Obery, Orbeton

Motion carries.

7. Historic District Certificate of Appropriateness Application for Violette Properties LLC, 81 Water Street, Map 5 Lot 151

Mr. Violette represented his father, Gary Violette, in presenting an application for construction of a metal roof over an existing deck.

Ms. AuCoin explained that the building has a second floor deck which was fitted with a cloth awning. Over time the cloth has deteriorated, and Mr. Violette would like to install a metal roof in place of the awning. There would be no change to the footprint. The existing metal frame would be replaced by a 4x4 wood frame to support the metal roof.

Mr. Bostwick asked how the new supports would be incorporated into the existing railing. Mr. Violette said his father would dismantle the railing and rebuild it. Mr. Bostwick asked if it would look better to install a standing seam roof. Mr. Violette said he didn't think his father would install a standing seam roof. Ms. Orbeton asked if the deck would be rebuilt. Ms. AuCoin and Mr. Violette said the deck would not be rebuilt, only the railing. Only the aluminum pipe structure would be replaced. Ms. Orbeton asked if the deck would be enclosed later on. Mr. Violette said there was no intention to enclose the deck; it would remain open. Ms. AuCoin pointed out that this scenario creates a problem only in the Shoreland Zoning District, and this building is not in the Shoreland district. Ms. Johnson asked if extending the shingle roof had been considered. Mr. Violette said it had not.

Mr. Davis noted that the first page of the application says that the size and height will be the same as the existing, but Section 2(H) of the Draft Findings says the standard is met because the shape of the proposed metal roof will not be similar in shape to the cloth awning. Mr. Violette said that the support structure will be different but the overall size and height will be roughly the same. Mr. Davis asked if the snow load has been considered; he pointed out that the snow load will probably be greater and the deck support would have to hold it. There was discussion of the structure of the deck. Ms. Orbeton asked if the new roof would tuck under the house roof. Ms. AuCoin said that was her understanding. There was further discussion of snow load. Mr. Bostwick asked if the project would require a building permit; Ms. AuCoin said it would and that the City could have Mr. Violette provide an engineered plan that addresses snow load and materials.

Mr. Violette said the plan was similar to the awning at Mulligan's in Manchester. Ms. Orbeton asked to what extent the new construction would fit the rest of the building. Ms. Obery said she felt this was a significant change to the building and did not think it would be compatible. Mr. Brown said the new structure would look better than the existing framework; he observed that it would not be highly visible. Mr. Bostwick agreed that it is not visible from very many places. Mr. Davis asked if the applicant had picked a color; Ms. AuCoin said that Mr. Violette had mentioned green as a first choice but had not seemed set on any particular color. There was discussion of headroom.

Mr. Bostwick observed that he had no good feel of what the roof would look like and he would feel better with drawings of the proposed structure. Ms. Obery requested specifics on the roof color. Mr. Davis requested specific measurements, the roof pitch, and how it will tie in to the building since these will be needed for the building permit application anyway.

Motion to table the application to the next meeting.

Moved: Bostwick

Seconded: Orbeton

Unanimously approved

8. Historic District Certificate of Appropriateness Application for Michelle Browne, 3 Middle Street, Map 5 Lot 75

Michelle Browne, 3 Middle Street, presented an application for construction of a shed and replacement of basement windows.

Ms. AuCoin informed the Board that the shed was approved just over a year ago but was never built. Ms. Browne is applying for re-approval. The replacement of two basement windows has been added to this application. The replacement windows would be vinyl slider windows. The existing windows are 4-light fixed windows.

There was discussion of basement windows in the surrounding neighborhood. Mr. Davis asked if there were vinyl windows upstairs; Ms. AuCoin said there were not, but some of the windows in the back of the house are vinyl. Ms. Orbeton asked if the replacement windows would be the same size as the existing windows; Ms. AuCoin said the replacement windows will be slightly narrower and they will fill in about 2" with wood.

Motion to find the application complete.

Moved: Bostwick

Seconded: Johnson

Unanimously approved

Motion to find the application in harmony with Historic District standards and approve the application as presented.

Moved: Brown

Seconded: Orbeton

Unanimously approved

9. Other Business

Training

Ms. AuCoin told the Board that she has registered several Board members for MMA's June 2 training class. There was discussion about the class.

Historic Consultant

Ms. Obery told the Board that she is drafting a letter to the Mayor regarding possible options for obtaining assistance to the Board for historic matters. She invited input. The Board discussed possibilities.

Stevens School Complex

Ms. AuCoin informed the Board that there is a meeting with Matt Morrill scheduled for Friday and Mr. Morrill will be providing a brief presentation of some of his ideas at the special meeting of the City Council on Monday. There was discussion of possible problems facing the developer and what part the Planning Board will play in approving redevelopment of the complex. There was discussion of the ordinance amendment process and how amendments to the Stevens School Planned Development District (SSPDD) might be proposed and approved. Ms. Presnar suggested having Mark Eyerman explain the provisions for approval of projects in the SSPDD to the Planning Board at the next meeting.

Code Enforcement Officer

Ms. AuCoin announced that she has resigned effective June 3.

There was further discussion of having a historic consultant available to the Board.

Ms. Orbeton asked for an update on Robert Dale's buildings. Ms. AuCoin explained that Mr. Dale's mother redeemed the buildings from the Town of Fairfield two days before the deadline on May 11. She said that Mr. Dale has cleaned up the solid waste violations, but there are still issues to be dealt with.

Ms. Orbeton asked for an update on Brews N Views. Ms. AuCoin reported that she has spoken to Krystal Lavalley, the business owner, and Gary Violette, the building owner. The windows are still in place. Mr. Violette would like to execute a consent agreement in which he acknowledges that he is in violation but is allowed to keep the windows by paying a fine. Ms. Obery pointed out that this would require the City Council's approval. Ms. AuCoin observed that the intent of the Shoreland District is to protect the river, but whether these windows are in or out would have no impact on the river; DEP acknowledges that. Ms. Mills pointed out that this involves intensity of use.

Ms. Obery noted that when 226 Water Street was demolished they also cut several trees, which is a Shoreland violation.

Ms. AuCoin informed the Board that she has been in contact with James Bass, an attorney who may be representing John Merrill in an appeal of the Board's approval of Waterside Properties' application.

