

APPROVED  
HDC MEETING  
JUNE 6, 2019

Members Present: Chair Rodney Rowland, Vice Chair Jeff Hughes, Tom Maher, Kate Murray, Elaine Nollet, Irene Bush and Judy Groppa.

Absent: Peter Reed

Chair Rowland called the meeting of the New Castle HDC to order at 7:00 pm

The Chair asked that anyone wishing to speak, must please sign in. All applications had been published, fees paid and abutters notified. Rowland, Hughes, Maher, Murray, and Nollet will be voting. There was some discussion as to whether board members were available to meet on July 11<sup>th</sup>; Chair Rowland is not available and Jeff Hughes would have to chair the meeting. The Chair announced the meeting would be moved to July 11<sup>th</sup>.

1. Hearing for Randy and Ellen Bryan, 34 Wentworth Road, Map 18, Lot 64 for a new fence.

Guests: Randy Bryan and Ellen Bryan  
Attorney Martha Keiser

Chair Rowland reminded everyone that the home had been approved a couple of months ago and the issue of the fence had been continued, and it is just the fence that is before the board tonight. Rowland also advised that there were objections received via email from neighbors and he had printed and provided them to the board. Mr. Bryan asked for a few minutes to read the objections.

Mr. Bryan stated that some board members had a walk through several weeks ago and at that time, the Bryans had expressed a desire for a fence from the corner of the Mason house to the street at the Feder line, that would include a gate in the fence for emergency access purposes. He pointed out that currently is a fence along the west/southwest corner of the Mason property. On the west side, there is a short fence of 12' -15' from the back corner of their house to the Sweet line. Along that fence, there is a gate from their property to the Bryans' property and the Bryans feel that gate suffices for maintenance access. He stated that the Masons had closed off any discussions, so the Bryans did not hear any comments until getting to the hearing. He presented a plan showing where they propose to put the fence with the location of the gate marked. The proposed fence is outlined in blue on the map along the Mason boundary, is approximately 50' and the gate is 3 ½'. It is a Federal style fence with a trellis top that is similar to what is on the north edge of their property and which is very common in town. Mr. Bryan spoke with the fire chief and asked what is the optimal amount of space to allow the Masons access to their south wall, and the Chief said there are no rules or

specifications and whatever they need to knock down (in the event of emergency) they will, adding that they would like to see a door and need space to be able to access the south wall. Mr. Bryan offered eight feet as a number for the access and the Chief thought that was very generous. The Fire Chief walked the property and said the optimum location for the gate would be the east side of the cedar tree, so about 2/3 of the way down from the Feder border; this location would be best because of the location of the fire hydrant and where the fire department would park the fire truck in the driveway. Bryan proposed to move the gate to the east side of the cedar tree (the only tree on this boundary line), placing a fence panel without the trellis top by the tree, with posts a few feet out from the tree. The fire chief commented that the next panel then should be a gate and then continue with the fence.

The Bryans feel it is well within their property rights to be proposing a fence; the Federal style fence with a trellis top is not unusual and it mimics the fence on the north side of their property.

Chair Rowland asked about the post closest to the Mason house, which Mr. Bryan had indicated needed to come toward the Bryans' house to avoid the Masons' bulkhead. Rowland wanted to confirm the Masons will have complete access to the front of their house, also confirming that the Masons would be able to get a paintbrush between their house and the fence. Mr. Bryan confirmed this.

The Chair asked about the other end where it goes 90° and heads back along the Feder line, inquiring as to how long that section was. Mr. Bryan stated it is 6', a panel in length. The Chair asked if it was completely behind the shed but no it is not, as the shed is not completely on their boundary line, it's set back a bit.

Chair Rowland asked if the board had any questions. Kate Murray stated that it seems very heavy for an enclosed area and asked Mr. Bryan what is the intent with a fence so high and so solid. Mr. Bryan stated the intent is privacy from their neighbors and for their neighbors as the parties have had rather poor relations and they wish to avoid both physical and mental interference. The Bryans feel a 6' fence is appropriate, particularly a 5' solid fence with 1' trellis.

Elaine Nollet asked if Bobby Sweet's fence in back was similar to what the Bryans proposed, but it is not, as the Sweets' fence is open and has spindles. The Sweets have a continuous fence across the whole back, which is behind the Bryans, and it goes all around the Sweets' property.

Chair Rowland asked if there were questions from the public. Attorney Martha Keiser stated the board had received the email from her clients. She also wanted to clarify that they had reached out to the Bryans and made proposals in April and the response was generic, there was no counter proposal although there was a request to sit down which the parties have not had a chance to do. She stated the intention was that the Garretsons would come from New York to review things

with the Bryans prior to tonight's hearing. She reached out to the Bryans' attorney but he did not have a good idea of what was being proposed and she just found out what the Bryans were proposing today, which is essentially unchanged. Her clients could come to meet with the Bryans but it would be after July 4<sup>th</sup>.

Mrs. Bryan countered that they had reached out back in April to the Garretsons to talk about this and never heard anything until they walked into the hearing and were informed that the Chair received emails from the neighbors. Mrs. Bryan stated they would like the board to make a decision based on the ordinances and what types of fence is being proposed, which is not unseen in the historic district, and there are also some in town that abut historic buildings.

There being no more public opinion, the Chair closed the public discussion at 7:20 pm.

Tom Maher asked the Chair if the board had enough information to make a decision as to the historic appropriateness of the fence and the Chair replied, yes, we have materials, design and dimensions and this fence is not alien to the district as there are at least three other examples of this fence in the district.

Maher said maybe he didn't quite understand the scope of the board's authority but thought the board should render a decision as to whether it is historically appropriate. Irene Bush asked whether the board felt the existing fences are historically appropriate or do they set a precedent. The Chair advised that the board has approved two of them in the past however he also would like to see something lighter based on how dense it is. Murray stated to that point, it's not just whether the fence is historically appropriate but there is the historic quality of the neighborhood, and if there is openness to work together to find something that is not so heavy handed in such a small community, she thought that would help in maintaining the historic character.

Chair Rowland stated the board will vote on this fence tonight and asked for a motion.

M/S/P Vice Chair Hughes moved to approve the application as presented. Elaine Nollet seconded. Maher, Hughes and Nollet voted yes. Kate Murray and the Chair voted No. The Chair advised the Bryans that they have their approval with a 3-2 vote.

2. Public hearing for Shippee, 152 Portsmouth Ave., Map 16 Lot 9 for a new house.

Guests: Chick Mecke; Mr. Shippee.

Mr. Mecke referred to the plans submitted and said the cross section elaborates on the roofing, siding and all other materials that would be going on the outside of the home. The board had asked about windows at the work session and he

indicated he had a sample window in the truck. They are not using a manufactured brand window, they are making their own windows.

Jeff Hughes stated he had not had a chance to go over the notes on the schematic and asked if anything had changed from the work session. Mr. Mecke stated nothing had changed but there was a dimension missing on the last plan which is why there is a revised date.

Chair Rowland was enthused, stating this is going to be one of the most authentic historic restorations. There was a query on the town web site asking if this proposal affects the remains of the Tarbell fence on the street, as at the work session, Mr. Mecke had stated the garage was being demolished. Mr. Shippee stated the fence may be affected on the side along the driveway because the planning board asked for more space for a fire truck to get through if need be.

Kate Murray asked about the front door that, on the plans, appears to be on the second floor. Mr. Mecke stated they are putting in a basement, so the door is actually on the first floor and there is also a side view on the plans along with a list of materials being used. He added that they have all the stone from the original foundation that will be used for the façade and the original steps which are all natural.

Kate Murray asked what happens if they run into a gap where they cannot find what they need and asked whether they would have to come back before the board. The Chair stated they are going to need some new materials because they don't have every piece of the house, however, if they ran out of stone, as long as they are using stone, then they are all set. If they were going to use stone veneer, then they would have to come back to the board. But Murray was concerned as it is a complex project and wanted to have reassurance that they were complying with what is approved. The Chair advised the building inspector will be checking on the project and the Chair would be happy to visit the site. Murray stated there have been times the board approved a project with certain materials yet other products were used. Mr. Mecke assured her that will not be the case on this project and stated the board is welcome to come to the property any time and that he was on the job every day.

Chair Rowland opened the hearing to the public but there were no questions or comments; the public hearing was closed at 7:32 p.m.

M/S

Vice Chair Hughes motioned to approve the project as presented with an additional proposal to demolish the garage and make minimal adjustments to the fence to comply with the zoning board's request for room for the fire department; Maher seconded.

The Chair asked if the board had any questions and Murray asked if it could be stipulated that if there are any major changes, the board must be advised, to which the Chair responded they are obligated to do this anyway.

M/S/P Hughes motioned to add that if any changes become necessary during the construction process, they must notify the Chair. Maher seconded. All in favor including the Chair. Chair Rowland advised Mecke to complete a Certificate of Approval from the town website as he had nothing to sign.

3. Public hearing for Llewellyn, 12 Main Street, Map 18 Lot 64-1 for a new fence.

Guests: Philip Llewellyn

The applicant had submitted an informational packet but had one additional page to submit which was a picture of the style of fence they had decided on. The Llewellyns would like to erect two fence sections on the front of their property on Main Street. The application says vinyl but they believe cedar is a better option and provides more flexibility as to height. Mr. Llewellyn was told if wood is prepped properly it's not a huge maintenance issue. He outlined exactly where the fence will be located which would be adjacent to the edge of the curb closest to the street. There will be a break where the front walkway comes into Main Street. Each end of the two fence sections will have granite posts so there will be a total of 4 granite posts, one on each end of each section. They would like to install a 42" decorative picket fence with granite posts slightly higher than the fence. The granite posts are 6" x 6", with two rough sides and two finished sides which is where the fence is affixed to the post.

Tom Maher asked if they had contacted NH DOT as to the right of way as he didn't want them to invest time and money to construct something which could be disrupted by NH DOT. Mr. Llewellyn stated the state ROW is 25' from the yellow line and if the state followed that mandate, you would have to take numerous houses down in town. He acknowledged the fence is within 25' of the center line, adding that it is 7' from the edge of the asphalt. The posts will go on the other side of the curb toward the street.

Mr. Llewellyn was asked if they had any concern about plows in the winter, and if there is snow like 2015, there could potentially be a problem, adding that it's another good reason to have it made of wood because it is easier to repair. Cold vinyl can shatter and the wood will look better and the pickets can be adjusted so snow can go through it easily.

Judy Groppa asked if they were planning to paint it. Yes, they will whitewash it but you have to let it dry for a year for maintenance reasons. Kate Murray asked if there was any advantage to putting the fence on the lawn but Mr. Llewellyn stated that when mowing the lawn, trying to weed whack under and around the fence and posts would be troublesome.

Chair Rowland opened the hearing to the public. There were no questions or comments and the public hearing was closed at 7:43 pm.

M/S/P Jeff Hughes motioned to approve the fence project as submitted with the following changes – the fence material will be cedar and there will be four granite posts, one on each end of the two fence sections. The height of the wood fence will not exceed 42”; the granite posts will be slightly higher, but are not to exceed 48”. Maher seconded. All in favor, including the Chair.

4. Work session for Eldred, 180 Portsmouth Avenue, Map 15, Lot 5 for boathouse

Guests: Alex Ross, engineer and surveyor, and Charlie Hoyt, architectural designer.

Mr. Ross prepared the site plans, stating most of the board members are familiar with the site at the entrance to New Castle and across the street from the cemetery. The project started a couple years ago as it’s an old dilapidated boathouse and the owner wanted to re-side it, put on new windows, and fix the roof. However, after a few meetings with the Building Inspector they learned that because of its proximity to the water and the flood zone, there is a regulation that if you make improvements over 50% of value, you must bring the premises flood zone compliant, and that meant they had to raise it up 3 ½’. The foundation is in poor condition as you can almost kick it over. In fact, the framing and foundation are not worth saving. They have gone before the ZBA and received the necessary variances to build the boathouse in the same location but it has to come up higher. The ZBA also provided good comments on positioning and sizing and they actually made the building a bit smaller than the current boathouse.

Charlie Hoyt, was put in charge of design of the boathouse in the fall of 2017 and one of his first tasks was to get inspiration on the design. He grew up in Rye and is very familiar with New Castle and not a stranger to building in town. He loves historic buildings, in fact he is Vice Chair of the HDC in Rye where he lives.

The first inspiration was the existing boathouse, although they made the foot print 2’ smaller; it is 22’ instead of 24’, but the length is the same as the existing. Hoyt looked at the existing building for proportion and details and, because they had to raise the building 3 ½’, he used the old Piscataqua House as inspiration as it is raised. The ladies at the town’s historic society showed him pictures of the old pier house on the river, which he also used for inspiration.

The packets submitted contain cut sheets; Sheet A2 contains detail of some of the materials. The roof system will be cedar shingle, the façade will be cedar shakes, and moldings will be either Azek or another product called Boral. Boral is very easy to work with, has a long life span and Hoyt has been using it a lot in historic districts. He was asked if it is similar to Azek but it is not and stated he will bring

in a sample to the public hearing. The majority of the project will be cedar and the drip edges will be copper. The piers holding up the first floor will either be concrete or steel framed in cedar to emulate the old Piscataqua House. The proposed moldings and brackets take reference from the existing house.

Maher asked if Hoyt had designed the main house but he did not. Hoyt and Alex Ross have worked on a lot of historic projects together in Portsmouth. Hoyt stated he renovated the house at the corner of Washington and Lang Roads in Rye.

Maher asked if it was boulders, rocks or a stone façade that leads up to the stairs, as he was trying to visualize what it would look like and how it would fit. Hoyt stated it will be part of the landscaping as they are going to have boulders and natural fieldstone walls lead up to the front door which actually faces the Eldred residence. Hoyt referred to Sheet A-2, indicating that the west elevation is where they will be storing boats. They cannot have stone all the way around due to FEMA regulations, as they need to have a knock away wall system. Judy Groppa questioned exactly where the boats will be stored and Hoyt indicated the doors to the boat house which are on the water side under the deck as shown on Sheet A-1 on the plan.

Chair Rowland asked if the board had other questions. Vice Chair Hughes stated he was pleased because he had heard rumors this was going to be a massive boat house adding that he liked that the massing is similar to what is there and the style is similar to the house. He thought it looked quite good as it is a focal point coming on to the island.

Chair Rowland stated that, just as he had made the comment when the Eldreds were building their home, there a lot of soffits and brackets to this building as well as panels below the windows on the road side, and he wouldn't be against toning this down a little bit so it's not so ornate to be more of a nod to the simplicity of the town of New Castle.

Groppa agreed that the side on the roadway is elaborate with the peak, and asked if the windows were double windows. Hoyt stated they are double hungs, 6 over 2, and underneath the windows is a raised panel detailed wainscoting,. The window on the water side over the deck is an eyebrow window. Hoyt stated he tried to strike a balance as the boathouse is high profile and next to the Eldred residence which has some ornateness to it, but agreed it would not be a bad idea to downplay it. As you come into New Castle you actually see the water side first which has the primitive look of cedar, especially on the front, but on the south side he can eliminate the wainscoting. The windows are simple except for the eyebrow window, which he would like to keep, believing it proportionate and plays off the curve of the brackets. Hughes stated it also plays off the windows from the house. Kate Murray stated she doesn't like the peak on the street side and thought they were odd looking windows as at first she couldn't tell if they were doors or windows.

Alex Ross had pictures of a structure just down the road which is right on the Portsmouth line. The old toll house which has some ornate features and is an authentic restoration of what was there.

Chair Rowland was trying to rationalize the jump from a boat house to a guest house but stated it is a lot better than what he expected but he would like to tone it down a bit. The water side seems simple and he likes that side, but the road side has a more formal approach.

Hoyt said he took a very slow ride over to the island to view the boathouse as it is the first building you see when coming on to the island and the gateway to the community. The first view you see is the west elevation and it is easy on the eye, the colors meld with the taupes, greys, and the cedar. The cedar siding with white trim and white posts will meld with the trees. Hoyt is trying to strike a balance between all the natural wood, and would like the deck to be white Boral or Azek. He is all for taking it back a notch but he wants to keep the eyebrow window. The Chair stated he would like to see the panels below the windows on the road side removed.

Judy Groppa asked if the windows themselves are flat or flush, and Hoyt responded that they are flush. It is a hip roof design with a gable. Kate Murray asked if they had been before the Conservation Commission and Hoyt replied the Conservation Commission was the first board they spoke to, adding that it was an uphill battle with zoning. They slowly introduced the project and have been working on it since 2017. They have had a work session with Conservation Commission but still have to go before them for hearing, and they also had a site walk with the wetlands bureau this week.

Alex Ross stated they are working within the wetland buffer and will provide better protection than what is there now, as they want to put in buffer plantings. Chair Rowland asked if it is the intent to come for a public hearing next month. Yes they plan to appear next month or hearing.

5. Approve minutes from May 2, 2019

M/S/P Kate Murray motioned to approve the minutes for May 2, 2019 as amended. Hughes seconded. All in favor

6. Any New Business

Chair Rowland stated he had to ask Pam Cullen as to whose appointments have actually expired so that election of new members and officers can take place. Tom Maher said he had the paperwork in the office. Peter Reed has asked to resign as an alternate. Irene Bush advised the Chair that he can ask members if they are willing to re-up. Maher stated that Pam Cullen was filling out forms and



Rowland added that members shouldn't leave unless your term is up. There was some discussion as to how long board member's terms were.

As to the CLG, the Certified Local Government, the grant was awarded but only \$15,000 of the \$35,000 asked for. The State asked the board do a phased approach and if everyone is agreement, we will ask the Select board to accept those funds and to address the most vulnerable section of town from the coast guard section up Main Street to Walbach Street first. We will have to apply again for the remaining money.

Irene Bush advised that she cannot attend if the HDC meeting is held on July 11<sup>th</sup> and asked if there will be a quorum. There was some discussion on holding the July meeting and it was decided not to hold a July meeting, the Chair adding that Eldred has to go before the Conservation Commission first. It was decided to cancel the July meeting. The next meeting of the HDC will be August 1<sup>st</sup>.

M/S/P

Maher motioned to adjourn. Hughes seconded. All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 8:21 pm  
Respectfully submitted,  
Diane L. Cooley, Recording Secretary