

APPROVED
HDC MEETING
DECEMBER 3, 2020

Members Chair Rodney Rowland, Tom Maher, Kate Murray, Irene Bush
Present: Elaine Nollet

Absent: Vice Chair Jeff Hughes and Judy Groppa

Due to Covid 19, the meeting was held via Zoom.

Chair Rowland called the meeting of the New Castle HDC to order at 7:01 pm. Rowland stated there was one public hearing on the agenda.

1. Introduction of Ruth Zikaras, candidate for HDC alternate.

The Chair introduced Ruth Zikaras and asked her to explain why she is interested in joining New Castle's Historic District Commission. Ms. Zikaras stated she loves the town, its history and ambiance, adding that they have lived in New Castle since 2005 but only recently began living here full time due to the pandemic and their house is finally completed. She is familiar with the process of the HDC, having come before the commission for two separate houses, one on Atkinson Street and the other on Piscataqua Street. She added that she finally has some time to devote to something like this.

2. Public Hearing for Peggy Lamb and Steve Joselow, 12 Canfield Street for window shutters and new entry stair railing.

Guests: Peggy Lamb and Steve Joselow, Applicants

Chair Rowland advised that the application was published, fees paid and abutters notified. Rowland also stated that he, Maher, Murray, and Bush would be voting.

Rowland stated that the applicants had been before the board for other matters in the past and come before the HDC tonight with regard to additional items that need attention. The Chair shared the screen showing board members the applicants' documents which had been submitted.

Steve Joselow stated that the original house had shutters and they want to replace the louvered shutters the house currently has. For both aesthetic and historic reasons, the applicants want to go back to flat panel shutters without any design. They request to replace them with a regular flat panel shutter with no hearts or cutout. Joselow stated he has been researching the history of shutters and finds that flat panel shutters came first and then came louvered shutters. Unfortunately, the louvers always go on upside down because no one ever closes the shutters and during storms, the shutters are open and the louvers are upside down.

Kate Murray asked if the shutters will have vertical lines. Joselow stated they will have horizontal lines but no cut outs. The shutters with the heart cutouts are located at 61 Walbach Street, which is the Smyzer Borden house but Irene Bush stated it was originally owned by Hart.

Joselow stated they also need to put railings up and had pictures of the Curtis Hotel which was in New Castle from 1895 to 1916. The applicants want to copy the design of the railing from the Curtis Hotel, which will be installed by the mudroom door. Peggy Lamb stated that local blacksmith, Peter Hapney, designed and sketched the railing which mimics the design of the Curtis Hotel. The railing will go down the stairs as required by code.

Kate Murray stated that her first thought was that it looked busy but the sketch looks fine. Lamb stated that Peter Hapney doesn't do computers, he's a true craftsman, so the sketch may not be to scale. Hapney was the first blacksmith at Strawberry Banke Museum back in the 1970's. Rowland stated he watched Hapney for many hours as a child. Irene Bush thought the railing looked handsome.

The Chair asked the board if they had any questions, adding that the shutters are appropriate and he was thankful they were not doing the heart cutout. Solid shutters are appropriate.

Irene Bush asked if the railing would go on the front steps also. Lamb pointed out the picture of the front steps showing the front railing which is currently not very sound. He stated they would also put railings at the front which match the railing at the mudroom entrance.

Kate Murray asked if the shutters will have the curlicues which are under the shutters on the pictures presented. Lamb stated they are historically accurate and she would like to keep them. She stated that if you were going to close the shutters, you would twist and release the curlicues adding that she believes it is more historic to have them. The Chair asked her whether the house still has the hardware and she indicated it does not but she would like to replace them. Rowland agreed they could put the curlicue hardware back.

The Chair asked if the Board had any other questions. There being none, Rowland asked if anyone from the public wanted to speak to, for or against. Andy Schulte and Jeanne Stern were online however neither of them had any questions and the Chair closed the public hearing.

Kate Murray moved to approve the application as submitted; Irene Bush seconded. All in favor including the Chair.

Elaine Nollet joined the meeting at 7:12 pm as she was having trouble logging in to Zoom.

3. Approve minutes from November 5, 2020

Diane Cooley, secretary, noted a change as she had not included the Chair's opening of the November meeting in the minutes.

Kate Murray moved to approve the minutes as amended; Irene Bush seconded. All in favor, including the Chair.

4. Old or New Business

Chair Rowland stated that he pressed the building inspector to get the owner of 1 Steamboat Lane to come before the Board even though the work has been completed, so hopefully he will be at next month's meeting.

Irene Bush stated they have a very funky looking door. The Chair stated it will be awkward but the Board has the right to ask them to change the door or any other changes, back to what it was. He doesn't know how they fell through the cracks without coming before the HDC.

Murray asked if a site visit was in order, however, Rowland stated that whatever was there is long gone, unless you have a picture of what the building had looked like. The building inspector stated the owner has saved items from the building that were there. Irene Bush suggested asking Jim Cerny if any pictures are available. She also stated that they made enormous changes inside, which the HDC has no purview over.

The Chair thought they had renovated the inside as living space, however Kate Murray stated if they change the function of the building, they have to go before the Planning Board. Rowland stated that its so fancy, he assumed it was living quarters.

The Chair asked if anyone had anything else to discuss but there was no additional discussion.

Tom Maher motioned to adjourn at 7:18 pm; Irene Bush seconded. All approved.

Meeting adjourned at 7:19 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Diane L. Cooley, Recording Secretary