

**APPROVED  
MAY 5, 2022  
HDC MEETING**

Members      Chair Rodney Rowland, Vice Chair Irene Bush, Tom Maher,  
Present:      Elaine Nollet, Judy Groppa, and Julie Thomas

Absent:      Kate Murray, Ruth Zikaras.

The meeting was held in the Macomber Room. Chair Rowland called the meeting of the New Castle Historic District Commission to order at 7:01 pm. Rowland stated the application had been published, fee paid and abutters notified; he also asked that anyone who wished to speak should sign in. The Chair, Vice Chair, Maher, Nollet & Groppa will be voting.

1.      Public Hearing for Robert Deflorio and Vicki Reed, 42 Piscataqua St., Map 18, Lot 24 for demolition of rear addition, move the house back from the street and add a new addition.

Guest: Brendan McNamara, Architect, Robert Deflorio, Vicki Reed, Thomas and Martha Bates, Rita Fusco

The Chair stated that the applicants have had two work sessions with the commission and commission members also had a site walk just before the April work session.

McNamara stated that the plan before the Commission is the same plan as was presented at the last work session with more detail on the exterior. The existing front gable of the house is to be preserved and restored; the existing rear addition which dates back to when the house was first built, will be demolished, and the primary or main house will be lifted and a new foundation will be poured. There will also be a new foundation for the new addition which will run 90 degrees to the main house. The main house is being moved back 3 feet and across to the left 3 feet. The new addition is coming off the center back side of the main house. The existing chimney and masonry is being demolished and a faux chimney will be installed to look like the one that is there. The house is small with 4 or 5 fireplaces. The Chair stated he understands there is an original kitchen hearth behind the wall and he would like to get a picture of it if possible.

McNamara stated that the general appearance of the house is to be maintained but everything will be new wood materials and Green Mountain all wood windows. They are traditional built windows which have integrated sloped sills, with an integrated casing fastened to the face of the window frame. The only difference from a traditional window is a vinyl mechanism for the windows to move up and down and to seal properly.

There are no actual changes from the last work session, including the fireplace on the North elevation and the roof going over the doors on the side facing the river. There will be copper gutters and a stone veneer will go on the masonry foundation. The veneer is a product which has foam on the outside with a stucco finish and the stone veneer adheres to it. McNamara specified the nature of stone veneer to insure minimum size of 200 square inch stone pieces; there will also be small stones in between just as would appear on a regular foundation but it will not look manufactured.

The Chair asked if anyone had questions. Judy Groppa asked what the dotted line is in front of the door on the North elevation as well as the lines below. McNamara stated he is showing where the foundation is because there's a basement and also showing the footings. The footings on the new addition come down about 6" to give head height.

The shed roof is asphalt and a gutter will run across and come down the wall on the West side of the shed.

Groppa also asked whether the platforms coming off the doors on the North elevation were granite. The landings in front of the doors are one step down to a 5.5' x 3' granite landing and then another step down to what will be a patio. This is shown on page A3, the First Floor Plan. The patio material has not been determined but the patio is flush to the lawn; the apron roof goes over the entirety of the granite landings.

The Chair stated it looks like the new addition steps back from the original house on either side by a couple feet and asked how visible is the Mitsubishi Split going to be. McNamara stated the addition is 7' 8" off the main house on one side and the other side it's as close as possible to allow for the window. However, McNamara stated the Mitsubishi Split will not be seen from the street.

Maher asked if the shed is set back in the corner. It is tucked back in the corner and there is no view of it from the road. Groppa asked if there is a driveway to the shed and was advised there is a ribbon driveway which stops before coming to the end of the house. McNamara stated a vehicle could be stored in the shed for the winter but it will not be used for vehicles on a daily basis.

The Chair opened the hearing to the public at 7:16 p.m.

Thomas Bates of 36 Piscataqua Street stated the plan looks great and asked how far the house was actually being moved back. McNamara stated three and one-half feet. The steps of the existing house are right on the road. The house is being moved back to get the steps off the road. The house is also being moved the same distance to the left, away from Steamboat Lane. Maher stated that from the Town's perspective, as to the right of way and the road, this is a positive move. There are a few historic homes whose stairs are in the roadway and when

homeowners want to move things and there's a safety issue, the town's perspective is that it's safer.

Bates asked about the veneer foundation being a square block. McNamara stated it is cut from real stone, with thin, random sizes and one will not be able to tell they're veneer. In general it's a mosaic, with random shaped fieldstone. The color is Boston blend and is a granite mix of grays and browns. It is the closest representation of what is on the foundation now. Page A6 shows a nice picture of the foundation.

Bates asked about the asphalt shingles and was advised they are architectural shingles, and the color is mid-gray which shifts toward brown. The bulked will be gone as egress from the basement will be through windows on the front which will be 5 square feet; 2.5' x 2.5'. The egress windows are called casement windows because they have a side hinge but they don't use casement hardware. The windows actually open like a door hinge and open out. Bates mentioned that casement windows are great except in an ice storm when they freeze and cannot be opened. Bates recommends double hung windows. McNamara stated other windows are double hung however, Green Mountain also makes a fancy window which is technically a casement window but it has two panels that overlay each other and swings out. However, if they're going to freeze up, they're still going to freeze up.

Bates asked about the final elevations, asking how much higher the house will be than the current foundation in the front. It will be one foot eight and one-half inches but because the house is moved back, it is showing a couple more inches than the stone that is currently showing. There is 2' 1" reveal in front. The rear is different which is the reason for the elevation, because currently the kitchen is underground.

It is unknown if they will need to blast to dig the foundation. They will do everything possible not to blast and the Chair stated that is actually not a matter for the HDC but is something to bring up at the Planning Board meeting. Robert DeFlorio stated they do not want to blast and it's tough to tell how far down any ledge may be and they won't know until they get in there. Most large rock can be pulled out with the teeth of the excavating machines.

Bates asked about the lot coverage with the shed. McNamara stated they are allowed 25% coverage and with the boat house, it is at 24.9%. There is no question variances are needed for setbacks even though the property is existing non-conforming and the non-conforming is being made better because the house is being moved back. So they are not asking for anything that doesn't already exist. Bates asked about the fence. Currently the fence is staying but DeFlorio stated the little picket fence there now is not going to survive, it's on it's last pickets.

Rita Fusco of 33 Piscataqua Street wanted to confirm that if they have to blast, the applicant will have to go before the Planning Board. McNamara stated that blasting is handled by the building inspector, adding that he is not sure what the regulations in New Castle are for blasting as it is a draconian measure to blast.

Bates commented that the plans are great and it looks good.

The Chair closed the public hearing at 7:31 pm and asked the Commission if they needed a conversation or a vote. Elaine Nollet stated it looks good and Rowland commented that the two work sessions and site visit really helped. Judy Groppa also thought they did a great job.

M/S/P Tom Maher moved to approve the demolition of the rear addition, the move of the house back from the street, the new addition and new boat house/shed at 42 Piscataqua Street. The Chair added the Commission is approving all conditions as shown on the plan dated 12/16/2021 and revised 4/12/2022. Elaine Nollet seconded. All in favor, including the Chair.

2. Approve minutes of April 7, 2022

M/S/P Elaine Nollet moved to approve the minutes of April 7, 2022 as amended; Irene Bush seconded. All approved including the Chair.

3. Any New Business (FEMA regulations )

Chair Rowland stated the exemption language in the zoning changes that the town is adopting is the same language the City of Portsmouth has adopted, adding that it allows the HDC to step in and help find a compromise. It basically says that any changes to the house cannot adversely affect the historic district.

Maher said Darcy Horgan, Planning Board Chair, is doing the same thing with her amendments as the Selectboard did with town clerk and tax collector positions. Horgan will circulate a description of the change being voted on, as the wording is confusing on the ballot. Maher stated the Selectboard would like a No vote, as the board doesn't want to continue a joined position of the town clerk and tax collector, it wants to separate them. The Selectboard is also looking to reduce the term from 3 years to 1 term so the Selectboard can hire a non-resident to be tax collector because it's a part time position and it became a bit of a sticking point with those who wanted to serve as town clerk.

Elaine Nollet said she read the survey results and found them very interesting.

M/S/P       Tom Maher moved to adjourn, Nollet seconded. All approved.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Diane L. Cooley, Recording Secretary