



MANCHESTER-BY-THE-SEA
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
Town Hall, 10 Central Street
Manchester-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts 01944-1399

MINUTES
MANCHESTER-BY-THE-SEA
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
Virtual/Online Meeting March 25, 2021

Commissioners Present: Chairperson Rosemary Costello, Donald Halgren, Tracy Gothie, Richard Smith, and Joseph Sabella.

Commissioners Not Present: Mr. Coppola.

Ms. Costello called the Historic District Commission (“HDC”) to Order at 7:05 p.m. Ms. Costello then introduced the Board Commissioners to those in attendance and explained the HDC meeting procedures. It is noted that this meeting is a virtual/online meeting and is also being digitally recorded by Ms. Ardolino, the HDC clerk, and the typed minutes represent the permanent record of the Board. The format of the hearing was explained to those in attendance by the Chairman.

NEW APPLICATIONS

Ms. Costello introduced the application of **Harbor House, LLC**, for a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic District Commission, or other such relief as may be necessary, to add windows on the 2nd and 3rd floors rear harbor side, enlarging the 2nd floor deck, replace the railings on the 1st and 2nd floor decks with wood pots, wood handrail, and cable infill between the posts, replace the existing 3rd floor double casement window with a triple casement window, 2nd floor kitchen window will be replaced by a triple awning unit, and existing 2nd floor door will be replaced by an all glass door of the same size, all to provide more open harbor views, at **38 Central Street**, Assessors Map No. 44, Lot No. 22 in District G, filed with the Town Clerk on March 10, 2021.

Brian Stein, architect from BDS Design Inc., South Hamilton, Massachusetts, introduced himself as representing the applicants on this application. Ms. Costello stated that Mr. Halgren is an abutter and asked him if he feels that he is able to impartially review the application or if he would prefer to recuse himself. Mr. Halgren opted to participate and Mr. Stein stated that he is comfortable having Mr. Halgren participate in the review of this application.

Mr. Stein explained the proposed project as follows: This property is a two unit building and located next to Peele House Square and owned by Harbor House, LLC, who

recently purchased this property. The lower level and first floor were renovated a number of years ago. The new owners are planning to renovate the top unit (2nd and third floors). A previous owner added a shed dormer that extended to the rear elevation. The lower and first floor unit extends out from the rear façade of the main structure. There are rear decks on both units.

The proposed project involves renovations to allow better views from the top two floors of the second unit, which will include a larger deck on the second unit (2nd and 3rd floor by approximately five (5) feet) towards the water, redo the railings with white posts (similar to existing), but with cable in between to provide a better view. A window will be added to the rear elevation on the top floor, add a window and three (3) awnings to the kitchen's existing window. The lower level and first floor will remain in their existing condition. Currently, there are no muntins in the rear windows and that will not change. Add one more window on each level, keeping the door where it is, but replacing it with a mostly windowed door.

Mr. Halgren asked Mr. Round if the HDC had previously required neighboring applications to include muntins on the harbor-facing windows. Mr. Round replied yes, but the issue here is that the existing windows of the lower unit presently do not have muntins and would like to keep the look of the rear façade uniform in appearance. Mr. Round asked Mr. Stein if there are any plans for the lower unit (lower and first floors) in the next five (5) years. Mr. Stein replied that the lower unit had been renovated very nicely a number of years ago and there are not presently any major plans for renovation, including changing the windows, to this unit. The sun shade for the lower deck of the second floor will be removed.

Mr. Smith asked the other HDC Commissioners how do we treat situations in which the original historic windows have been removed, changed, or altered substantially, and now there is another proposed change to those windows? Do we take the attitude that once a home/structure in the Historic District has had significant, non-historic changes continue to go into conformance with wasn't good to begin with? Or, is the HDC's objective to maintain as much of the historic character of the original building/structure as possible? Mr. Halgren recalled an HDC application that was requesting a small roof over the front entry way, the HDC didn't approve that because that proposal would not conform to the period of the house. If the HDC mistakenly approved a proposed change that wasn't characteristic of the period of the house/structure, the HDC should not continue that mistake.

Mr. Halgren suggested that the muntin-laden windows would be more appropriate. Mr. Stein replied that if the HDC doesn't mind different windows on the rear façade, in the hope that maybe at some point the lower level unit windows will be changed with muntins, then I do not think there is an issue with adding muntins. Mr. Round stated that was what was behind my earlier question about the future plans for the lower windows. Mr. Round read from the HDC Guidelines: "Window replacement on a single façade should replicate the remaining windows on that façade. The Commission may consider phasing when the property owner is substantially upgrading." Mr. Smith added by reading the next paragraph of the HDC Guidelines: "All parts of the

replacement windows should match the original historic windows, unless the windows being replaced are inappropriate to begin with." Ms. Costello explained that this proposed project does not include the primary façade. If this were the front or sides of this house, which is more visual, we would definitely feel very differently. This project in question is in the rear of the building and sort of visible to from the harbor. Mr. Smith stated that we are losing the historic look from the harbor piece by piece, and if the HDC's reaction every time we approve a change is to allow a bad change to go on, we will continue to lose the historic look of the houses/structures facing the harbor. Mr. Round stated that there is no question that the top windows that will be changed from two (2) to three (3) is a pretty big statement. The house next door has 6 over 6 windows.

Ms. Costello stated that there is no consensus among the HDC Commissioners at this point and asked the Commissioners what they would like to do. Mr. Halgren replied that the rear windows of the top unit should be 6 over 6, and do we want to require the lower unit to renovate those windows in kind? Ms. Costello and Mr. Round replied that the rear windows on the rear of the lower unit is not part of this application and therefore not on the table at this time. Mr. Round asked Mr. Stein if all the other windows on the house have muntins of some sort, and Mr. Stein replied yes, except for a couple of windows on the side of the basement level, below grade.

Mr. Round stated that he is in favor of installing the muntins and explained that Mr. Smith is right—it could become a slope that keeps sliding down on. The windows in question are located in the rear of the top floors, which are the most obvious. Mr. Stein explained that ideally we would like to keep the windows as casements with muntins, because from a distance, if it is done right, it will kind of look like double-hung windows on the top floors. Ms. Costello asked if the awning windows are over a counter, and Mr. Stein replied yes and if you add muntins to those windows they will like the top sash of double-hung windows. Mr. Smith stated that the windows look and are modern. Mr. Round asked Mr. Smith if he is referring to the geometry/shape of the windows, and Mr. Smith replied yes, the shape. Mr. Smith suggested to Mr. Stein that if he could find some way to make a double or triple awning on the second floor of the top unit. Mr. Stein asked explained that a thicker muntin can be installed to replicate a meeting rail, and Mr. Smith replied that would seem to be an appropriate thing to do and you would still have the ability to open those windows. The other HDC Commissioners agreed, and Mr. Stein added that from a distance you would never know the difference. Mr. Round stated that the windows on the second floor of the second unit are more problematic—I do not see how you could fit 6 over 6, and Mr. Stein suggested 6 lights on the second floor and the first floor of the second unit instead, so that they would be awnings. The third floor windows with a thicker meeting rail with the fourth (top) floor being 6 over 6. Mr. Stein stated that down the road if the rear façade of the first unit (lower level and 1st floor), it would be easier to replace "in kind" with units with muntins rather than redo the whole window opening. Mr. Round stated that the existing door on the 3rd floor already has muntins in it. Mr. Stein replied that he doesn't have an issue with making the door have muntins as well.

Mr. Halgren pointed out that the rail on the seconded floor deck (18 feet wide, corner to corner) will impede some of his view of the harbor at 35 Central Street and

requested that the dimension on the eastern side of that deck (the rail, not the cantilever) be reduced approximately 3 feet. Mr. Stein replied that it is 1 foot at most.

Mr. Smith questioned the approval of cable rails versus wooden rails and the loss of historical value. Ms. Costello replied that we are not saying that it is uniformly okay, we are just going to evaluate case by case. We do not have an historic façade anymore, so we are essentially allowing the cable rail in this case. Mr. Smith suggested that the HDC Commissioners should require that any of the changes made respect the historic nature of the building, so that historic changes improve rather than deviate from the original historic value of the building. Ms. Costello replied that in this case, this façade has no remnant of its historic pattern. Mr. Round stated that the HDC has approved other cable rails on other homes on at least two occasions—maybe this was due to a deference to 21st Century living. Mr. Smith replied that looking from the harbor at these homes lining the harbor, as you strip off historic detail—and the old railings do represent detail—it changes the historic look of these homes. Ms. Costello replied that acknowledging that there is historic structure and element and the HDC wants to preserve that in the context where it exists. Mr. Stein stated that the existing deck rails are made of plastic. Ms. Gothie stated that the HDC has to look at every house differently in the Historic District, because they all do not have all the historical elements. Ms. Costello agreed that the proposed deck rails are not an historic treatment, but Mr. Stein is not removing any existing historic material.

Mr. Stein offered a more historic suggestion: Presently, the proposed cap rail will be constructed flat across the top, but it would be a little more historic if the wooden posts constructed above the railing and the railing went in between each post. Mr. Round stated that he is looking through various photos of homes along the entire harbor, and explained that there is a various collection of all kinds of railings with different designs. When you have a cable railing on a house, you can see the house's façade. In this case, it is the windows that we have been discussing and these windows can be seen through the cable, which is all the more important that these windows harken back to the original style. Mr. Round added that he is okay with the railing Mr. Stein suggested.

Mr. Sabella stated that he agrees with the HDC Commissioners' comments and also agrees with the most recently proposed railing by Mr. Stein. Ms. Gothie stated that she agrees with Mr. Smith and the point that it is important that the proposed windows are in line with a more original style, since they will be clearly seen through the cable rails. Mr. Round asked Mr. Stein about the awnings, and Mr. Stein replied that the awnings will be removed. Mr. Smith stated that he is not comfortable with cable rails and feels that it is not a good direction to go—not just this house, but in general.

Mr. Smith explained that he doesn't go along with the case by case method of evaluation of proposed projects in the Historic District. If we are allowing out of style additions to historic buildings once, we will do it again. Just because a building has had out of style treatments before that the HDC should then approve more out of style treatments because of this. Ms. Costello replied that she doesn't know how the HDC can allow for progress in design if we don't allow something that is sympathetic. We are not allowing the proposed changes on this application based on precedent, we are allowing it

because it is okay in this case. Mr. Sabella stated that the HDC needs to maintain consistency and keep in mind what an historic structure is and should be.

Mr. Halgren made a motion to waive the public hearing on the application of **Harbor House, LLC**, for a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic District Commission, or other such relief as may be necessary, to add windows on the 2nd and 3rd floors rear harbor side, enlarging the 2nd floor deck, replace the railings on the 1st and 2nd floor decks with wood pots, wood handrail, and cable infill between the posts, replace the existing 3rd floor double casement window with a triple casement window, 2nd floor kitchen window will be replaced by a triple awning unit, and existing 2nd floor door will be replaced by an all glass door of the same size, all to provide more open harbor views, at **38 Central Street**, Assessors Map No. 44, Lot No. 22 in District G, filed with the Town Clerk on March 10, 2021.

Mr. Round seconded the motion. Vote: Ms. Costello, Mr. Round, Mr. Halgren, Ms. Gothie, Mr. Smith, Mr. Sabella voted unanimously in favor of waiving the public hearing on this application.

Mr. Halgren made a motion to approve the application of **Harbor House, LLC**, for a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic District Commission, or other such relief as may be necessary, to add windows on the 2nd and 3rd floors rear harbor side, enlarging the 2nd floor deck, replace the railings on the 1st and 2nd floor decks with wood pots, wood handrail, and cable infill between the posts, replace the existing 3rd floor double casement window with a triple casement window, 2nd floor kitchen window will be replaced by a triple awning unit, and existing 2nd floor door will be replaced by an all glass door of the same size, all to provide more open harbor views, at **38 Central Street**, Assessors Map No. 44, Lot No. 22 in District G, filed with the Town Clerk on March 10, 2021. **Conditions:** Provided that Mr. Stein submit additional documentation of the changes suggested by the HDC, which includes adding muntins to the proposed windows, designing the rails with wooden caps on the corner posts, rather than a rail across the top, 15 light door, 6 light on the windows to give the appearance of 6 over 6, and reducing the size of the deck 1 foot to the west.

Mr. Round seconded the motion. Vote: Ms. Costello, Mr. Round, Mr. Halgren, Ms. Gothie, and Mr. Sabella voted in favor of approving this application. Opposed: Mr. Smith. The motion carries.

24 Bridge Street: Ms. Costello announced that the 24 Bridge Street application has been continued to the April 22nd HDC meeting, contingent upon feedback from the Building Inspector.

Ms. Costello introduced the application of **Alison & Daniel Moerland**, for a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic District Commission, or other such relief as may be necessary, to (1) replace rotting picket fence with a 6 foot lattice fence and move the fence to the property line (the stretch is 30 feet), and (2) repair stone retaining wall and replace the 10 foot hedge and picket fence with a 72 foot in length lattice fence,

at **9 Bridge Street**, Assessors Map No. 28, Lot No. 49B in District G, filed with the Town Clerk on March 1, 2021.

Ms. Costello stated that she is an abutter to 9 Bridge Street and offered to recuse herself from comment and voting on this application.

Ms. Alison Moerland introduced herself as the co-owner and applicant and explained the proposed project as follows: We have lived in this house for seven (7) years, but purchased it from our landlord this past year. Three years ago we noticed that the retaining wall along Bridge Street had started to move and more significant filling of the loam within the wall in the spring of 2020, so we had three different parties come out to inspect the wall and advise, including Carpenter & MacNeille, Norman Field, and Tom Melanson. They explained that when this wall was installed twenty (20) years ago it wasn't installed with appropriate drainage and that the wall was filled with loam instead of gravel in order for the hedge above the wall to grow. Now the hedge roots coupled with the contraction and expansion of the loam, it is causing the wall to bulge. The recommendation was to remove the hedge completely, remove the loam and back-fill it with gravel and install a Story Fence lattice fence in place of the hedge to provide adequate privacy so we can enjoy our yard. The fence will start at six (6) feet on two sides and then dip down to four (4) feet to the stairs of the alcove, install arbor above the four (4) foot fence gate (in the middle) of the entire fence. The second part of the proposed project is to extend our small garden three (3) feet and replace the existing rotting fence in this area with a fence that would mirror the latticed fence in the front. This fence will start at six (6) feet to match the Bridge Street fence height, sloping to four (4) feet to meet the sloping of the yard in that area. Ms. Moerland provide photos of other homes in the Historic District that have made similar choices.

Mr. Smith asked about the height of the hedge, and Ms. Moerland replied that it is about 10 feet from the top of the stone wall. Mr. Smith asked about the fence material, and Ms. Moerland replied that it will be cedar (stained).

Ms. Helen Kamens, an abutter at 13 Bridge Street asked what color will the fence be stained, and Ms. Moerland replied that it will be a cedar red to match the red wood stain that we have on our deck and ultimately it will fade with weather and our preference is to not have a graying cedar, but something that will stay crisp looking. Ms. Kamens was concerned that the stain color will be too strong and asked to see a sample of it, and Ms. Moerland agreed.

Mr. Round asked if the wall will be replaced because a couple of the stones are working their way out, and Ms. Moerland replied yes. Mr. Round asked if this due to the hedge, but other than that the basic concept for the construction of the wall is fine. Ms. Moerland replied, yes and added that the estimate for the project was contingent upon not finding anything else wrong with the wall. The issue is solely regarding drainage, so once the hedge is removed and replace the loam with gravel the drainage issue will be resolved—the wall will not be modified at all. The existing hedge is approximately 3.5 feet wide. There is currently a white picket fence that lines the inside of the hedge in our garden area, and they will install the fence in the exact same place.

We are removing the hedge and not filling it with vegetation—we will only be planting within our existing garden. We will plant a reclining row over the arbor. The fence will be set back from the wall by a couple of feet.

Mr. Round made a motion to waive the public hearing on the application of **Alison & Daniel Moerland**, for a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic District Commission, or other such relief as may be necessary, to (1) replace rotting picket fence with a 6 foot lattice fence and move the fence to the property line (the stretch is 30 feet), and (2) repair stone retaining wall and replace the 10 foot hedge and picket fence with a 72 foot in length lattice fence, at **9 Bridge Street**, Assessors Map No. 28, Lot No. 49B in District G, filed with the Town Clerk on March 1, 2021.

Mr. Sabella seconded the motion. Vote: Mr. Round, Mr. Halgren, Ms. Gothie, Mr. Smith, and Mr. Sabella voted in favor of waiving the public hearing on this application.

Mr. Halgren made a motion to approve the application of **Alison & Daniel Moerland**, for a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic District Commission, or other such relief as may be necessary, to (1) replace rotting picket fence with a 6 foot lattice fence and move the fence to the property line (the stretch is 30 feet), and (2) repair stone retaining wall and replace the 10 foot hedge and picket fence with a 72 foot in length lattice fence, at **9 Bridge Street**, Assessors Map No. 28, Lot No. 49B in District G, filed with the Town Clerk on March 1, 2021.

Mr. Sabella seconded the motion. Vote: Mr. Round, Mr. Halgren, Ms. Gothie, Mr. Smith, and Mr. Sabella voted in favor of approving this application. Ms. Costello abstained, due to the fact that she is an abutter.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

HDC Minutes: Review and approval of the February 25, 2021, HDC minutes. Tabled to the April 25, 2021 HDC meeting.

24 Bridge Street-Kitfield-Holt House Sign Application: Ms. Costello stated that she had made some inquiries with Mr. Orlando, the Building Inspector as well as Ms. Mellish, the Chairperson of the Zoning Board of Appeals ("ZBA") to weigh in regarding an abutters concerns about the sign that will show eight (8) business units in a building that was primarily residential. The Building Inspector will be doing some inquiries because the application the owners filed stated that this building was primarily commercial, but it has not been primarily commercial—it was a single office and two (2) residential units in the recent past. The Building Inspector and the ZBA to determine whether this proposed project requires a change of use.

Sotheby's Real Estate Office, 21 Central Street: Ms. Costello stated that she has spoken to someone at Sotheby's and it turns out that the window lighting around the perimeter of the windows was for the holidays, so those lights have been removed. Ms. Costello stated that she went by there the other night and it was only those ipads (approximately 9 ipads) showing the real estate listings that are in the window that are lit

up that are already on a timer, but Sotheby's is open to having the timer set at whatever time the HDC suggests. Ms. Costello suggested that the timer be the same time as when the restaurants close, and they were open to that suggestion also. Ms. Costello explained that she also suggested that the blue lighting and the intensity of the light from the ipads is too much.

Ms. Costello stated that she will revisit this issue, once the restaurants' hours of operation have been decided upon.

Antique Table: Ms. Ardolino sent my letter to the Antique Table, and we haven't had any response from them. This issue will be followed up in May, according to the letter.

HDC In-Person Meetings: Ms. Ardolino, the HDC clerk had asked Ms. Costello about the plan for holding meetings again in Room 5. Mr. Round said that the Board of Selectmen have to make this decision and it will probably not be decided until the Town Meeting or afterwards.

Changing the HDC Meeting Start Time to 6:30 PM Instead of 7:00 PM: Ms. Gothie asked the other HDC Commissioners to consider changing the meeting start time to 6:30 p.m., instead of 7:00 p.m. The HDC members agreed.

Adjournment: Mr. Halgren made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Gothie seconded the motion. Vote: Ms. Costello, Mr. Round, Mr. Halgren, Ms. Gothie, Mr. Smith, and Mr. Sabella voted in favor of adjourning this meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Adele Ardolino, Clerk
Historic District Commission
Manchester-by-the-Sea, MA