



Somersworth Historic District Commission

One Government Way, Somersworth, NH 03878

Regular Meeting of the HDC held on Wednesday, 25 April 2018: 1st draft

<u><i>Present</i></u>	<u><i>In absentia</i></u>
Laura Barry, Chair	
Richard Brooks, Vice-Chair	
Edward Levasseur, City Councilor	
David McNicholas, Alternate	
George Poulin, Commissioner	
Tim Metivier, Building Inspector	
Pius Charles Murray, Secretary	

Petitioners Present:

Michael Shane, on behalf of HDC #03-2018	Ken Dalzell, on behalf of HDC #02-2018
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Agenda & Minutes

I. Call to Order: At 7:00 pm by the Chair

The Chair stated that with Mr. Gerding absent, Mr. McNicholas was invited to vote on any motions made during the meeting.

II. Approval of Minutes:

1. Motion to approve the minutes of the full HDC meeting of 28 March 2018 as submitted was made by Mr. Murray and seconded by Mr. Brooks. Motion passed unanimously.

III. Projects of Minimal Impact: Mr. Metivier reported that no projects of minimal support had been submitted in either March or April 2018.

IV. Public Comments by Visitors: Motion to suspend the HDC rules to allow Mr. David Baker to address the HDC concerning a consultative review of his project was made by Councilor Levasseur and seconded by Mr. Books; motion passed by majority vote 5-1 with Mr. Murray voting no. The Chair said that while the HDC could certainly hold a discussion of the project, it could not take any votes nor offer any direction; Mr. Baker agreed to these stipulations.

Mr. Baker stated that the issue he wished HDC advice on was that of a stonewall which has partially failed on his property. The property at 11-13 Highland Street has a stonewall extending from the edge of the street to the house and then behind the house, which section is not visible to the public; Mr. Baker showed photographs to the HDC. About 20' of the stonewall in the back is not viable; when Mr. Baker mentioned prices of various alternatives, the Chair stated that rules prevent the HDC from taking the price of any project into consideration. Since the wall was not visible to the public, he wondered if he could use cement.

There was considerable discussion about alternates (pressed cement, re-using part of the stonewall, cement rock). Councilor Levasseur said that cement with rock would be acceptable to him. Mr. Brooks said that cement using as much of the remaining non-viable stonewall rocks would be acceptable to him. Mr. Poulin following Mr. Brooks's suggestion recommended using some of the remaining stone from the original wall.

Mr. Baker thanked the HDC for its input. He then asked what the procedure he should follow is. Mr. Metivier explained the process as follows: a building permit available online is required to be submitted two weeks before the next HDC meeting (4th Wednesday of May).

V. Old Business:

A. Any Old Business that comes before the HDC.

VI. New Business:

A. Michael Clough is seeking a certificate of appropriateness to construct a new singled family residence on property located at 26 Linden Street, in the Residential Single Family-A, with a Historic Overlay (R1AH) District, Assessor's Map 11, Lot 100A, HDC #05-2018.

Ms. Denise Madden was present to discuss HDC #05-2018. Mr. Metivier explained that in 2005 the HDC approved a single family residence for this property. When Mr. Murray inquired if any petition approved today would supercede the 2005 approval, Mr. Metivier stated that the previous approval had no expiration date so there would be two options from which to choose.

Mr. Brooks recused himself from the HDC because he is an abutter.

Ms. Madden informed the HDC that the garage would not be flipped. The siding would be more colonial looking using mill wide boards. The roofing will be asphalt. The windows will be typical 6/1 grid. The shutters could be anything the HDC wishes, including vinyl.

Two abutters spoke. Mr. Dan Vincent, the first abutter, wanted to know what the dimensions of the overhand would be. He would also like to know if it would be a 1 or 2 car garage; he prefers a 2 car garage. Mr. Vincent also wanted to know if the landscaping would come under the HDC. Mr. Vincent commented that it was a nice looking lot.

Mr. Richard Brooks was the second abutter to speak. Mr. Brooks was concerned that there were no elevation measurements. In addition there were very wide cover boards not in use on the house. Furthermore, the house was decorated only on one side. Dominant features in single family homes (20' wide and 10' tall) are missing. The roof is steep. Mr. Brooks wanted the new construction to blend into the neighborhood.

After Mr. Brooks was finished, the Chair intervened. The Chair explained that the HDC had a protocol that it followed in evaluating new construction in the historic district and it would follow that protocol now. The first item to consider is landscaping. Councilor Levasseur stated that several changes had been made from the original plan. The changing of the garage's mirror; 1 or 2 car garage, if 2 car garage would there be a side entrance; front facing building; need to see plans on what driveway would look like, if a retaining wall was necessary. The Chair intervened next. She was concerned about the plot of the land. Ms. Madden said the set back would be 25'-30'. The Chair asked if there would be a walk through for elevation, to which Mr. Madden responded in the affirmative. The Chair would like the street to match the neighborhood's. There is a potential problem with the tree. Mr. Metivier reported that code would dictate setback. New home must be at least one home away. The Chair would like the lighting to be comparable to the neighborhood by the door.

The next protocol was footprint and foundation. The Chair mentioned potentially needing driveway, elevators, retaining wall, and if a retaining wall was necessary. The third protocol was roof shape; since the roof is gable shape if fits with the historic district. The fourth protocol was Envelope. The HDC believed that the siding looked the neighborhood style. Mr. Poulin wanted to insure that the windows would be 6/6 grid, and that if the stairs were wood they would have to be painted. Mr. Poulin also asked if j-channel would be used. Ms. Madden replied only if the stairs were 5-6 steps. Mr. Poulin wanted to be assured that the garage doors had hinges. The Chair said that the stairs could be wooden, granite,

cement. It should be similar to but not mimic the historic district. The fifth protocol is Opening. Councilor Levasseur wanted to ensure the window grid would be 6/6. Mr. Metivier asked if the j-channel was integral-j channel to which Ms. Madden replied yes.

Mr. McNicholas expressed reservation that HDC approvals had no expiration date. The Chair explained that the revised historic district ordinances address that issue by recommending a one year expiration date for HDC approvals in line with building permits.

Before the HDC moved to a vote, the Chair invited both abutters to make closing remarks; both accepted. Mr. Books highlighted that the plans as submitted contained a lot of what-ifs? Mr. Brooks mentioned 2 windows by the door, the wide corner boards, retaining wall, as well no photographs or pictures of the plans. Mr. Vincent was satisfied that the planned new construction did not encroach within 10' of the road as per the neighborhood's practice.

Motion to approve HDC #05-2018 as submitted with the following conditions of an updated site plan to include Linden tree, a rendering of the portico/pediment, a rendering of 6/6 window grid, with updated plans to be resubmitted to the HDC at its next regular meeting in May was made by Councilor Levasseur and seconded by Mr. Poulin. Motion passed by majority vote 5-0-1 as Mr. Brooks recused himself due to his being an abutter to HDC #05-2018.

B. Any New Business that comes before the Commission

VII. Public Comments by Visitors: Mr. Vincent complimented the HDC on its professionalism dealing with such a complex issue as new construction in the historic district.

VIII. Workshop Business:

A. The Cemetery Subcommittee

Councilor Levasseur announced the tentative meeting of the next Cemetery Subcommittee on Monday, 30 April 2018 at 5:50pm at City Hall. He would confirm the meeting later.

B. Report on HDC 2018 Goals Subcommittee at Teatotalers on Sunday, 22 April 2017 from 1:00pm-2:45pm.

The Chair re-iterated the HDC goals for 2018 as discussed at the HDC Workshop on 22 March 2018 as follows:

1. Maintenance of Horn Cemetery
2. Education (eg, better use of city website and channels 22/95, Facebook page, attendance at workshops, etc.)
3. Better post-HDC appearance follow through on approved projects
4. More precise rulings by Chair, motions formulated by Chair
5. More and better outreach (eg work with other city land use boards, work with S Berwick ME,

etc.)

Mr. Brooks unveiled a slide set he had prepared for broadcast on Channel 22. He reported that he had been working with Shanna Saunders on formatting the slide for broadcast. In addition, he has also prepared a report to be read to the City Council updating the Councilors on what the HDC is doing.

C. HDC Subcommittee on City Ordinances

The Chair brought the HDC up to date on the recent non-activity of the HDC Subcommittee on City Ordinances. In response to Mr. McNicholas's concern about the permanent nature of HDC approvals, the Chair explained that the Subcommittee is recommending a one year maximum approval for HDC approvals in line with Building Permits.

D. HDC Education and Outreach Subcommittees

Motion to create an Education and Outreach Subcommittee which would be involved in part in HDC Board recruitment was made by Councilor Levasseur and seconded by Mr. Brooks. Motion passed unanimously. Motion to name Mr. Brooks as Chair of the Subcommittee was made by Councilor Levasseur and seconded by Mr. Poulin. The motion was enthusiastically adopted unanimously. Mr. Brooks immediately sought other volunteers.

E. Cemetery Trustees Talk with Peter Michaud on Memorial Day 2018

The Chair reported that the Cemetery Trustees were sponsoring a talk by Peter Michaud on Memorial Day and she encouraged HDC members to attend. Mr. Murray asked if that event could be considered a training workshop for purposes of accrediting the HDC. The Chair said she would look into it and let the HDC know.

F. Somersworth Clean up Day on 5 May 2018 from 7:30am-noontime with light lunch at 12:30pm

Councilor Levasseur reported that the annual Somersworth Clean-Up day will be held on Saturday, 5 May 2018 beginning with sign-ups at 7:30am at Idelhurst School. Councilor Levasseur recommended the HDC volunteer to clean up at Horne Cemetery

G. Any additional Workshop Business

IX. Communications and Miscellaneous:

A. Councilor Levasseur announced that there are Somersworth Walking Tours at the Historical Museum. Mr. Poulin would investigate further.

B. The Chair announced the possibility of holding its next workshop outside of City Hall. The HDC was amenable. The Chair will announce the day, date, time, and location.

C. Any additional Communications and Miscellaneous Business

X. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn at 8:26pm was made by Councilor Levasseur and seconded by Mr. Brooks. Motion enthusiastically passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Pius Charles Murray

(Mr.) Pius Charles Murray, MLS, MPA
Secretary