

Somersworth Historic District Commission Meeting
Wednesday May 22nd, 2019

In attendance:

Laura Barry, Chair
Richard Brooks, Vice-Chair
George Poulin, Commissioner
Lindsey Gagnon, Commissioner
Matthew Gerding, Commissioner
Tim Metivier, Building Inspector

Absent:

Edward Levasseur, City Councilor
Plus Charles Murray, Secretary

Petitioners Present:

Bill Bernsdston

Called to Order: 7:00 pm

1. Meeting Minutes
 - a. Motion to approve by Mr. Brooks. Seconded by Mr. Poulin
2. Projects of Minimal Impact
 - a. Norman Menard of 7 Maple Street was approved to remove broken shingles and re-roof a 20x20 foot section.
 - b. Fredrick R. And Susan M. Love of 47 Maple Street were approved to remove existing roof, repair roof, install ice and water shield, demolish and reconstruct the rear chimney to the roof line, fix pointing and repair stack inside attic, repair front chimney, and add new flashing to both chimneys and caps.
3. Public Comments by Visitors
 - a. None
4. Old Business
 - a. None
5. New Business
 - a. **HDC#21-2019**

- i. Bill Bernsdston of The Hall at Great Falls spoke about the application for approval of a freestanding copy sign at the property located at 49 Market Street. Mr. Bernsdston explained that the business had been given two variances in order to erect the sign, and was hoping to get approval from the commission. The sign is intended to help draw patrons to the events hosted by The Hall at Great Falls, and to better inform the public in a way that their current sign, nor a A-frame sign would be able to. Mr. Brooks asked about the materials in the sign, to which Mr. Bernsdston explained that the sign would be wooden with a glass front and metal brackets. Mr. Metivier explained that the sign portion would contain grooves in which letters could be added or removed. Ms. Gagnon asked whether the glass portion would be locking or free floating, to which Mr. Bernsdston said that it would be a door with a lifting facade. Ms. Gagnon then asked how many rows there would be for letters, to which Mr. Bernsdston said that there would be 3-4.

Motion to approve made by Mr. Gerding.

Motion seconded by Mr. Poulin.

Motion Passed.

b. HDC#016-2019

- i. No applicant was present to discuss the application by Shiva Realty Trust to install a new metal fire escape on the property located at 82-86 High Street. Mr. Metivier explained that the applicants had previously begun removing the old fire escape and installing the new one without approval from the commission. Commissioners questioned Mr. Metivier about the circumstances of the removal of the old fire escape, and about the installation of the new one. Mr. Metivier explained that fire escape would require two different ladder portions, as well as improvements/reconstruction of the landings outside the windows and areas of egress. Ms. Barry asked whether the installation would impact the facade and brickwork of the building, to which Mr. Metivier said that the pointing of the bricks do bring this as worthy of questioning.

A motion was made by Ms. Barry to approve the application for the metal fire escape as is suggested, however that the applicant must come back before the board if the installation exceeds or brings about further repairs.

Mr. Brooks seconded this motion.

Motion passed with amendments made by Ms. Barry.

6. Workshop Business

- a. Mr. Brooks brought up ordinance changes worked on by the ordinance subcommittee. He explained that the subcommittee had been working on changes to the language regarding signage. The board then discussed the specific language of this ordinance change and edited language to fit needs. Language was edited to include specifics about open signs, and the board discussed how to incorporate the city's sign committee in this process. Ms. Gagnon made a motion to approve the suggested edits, and Mr. Brooks seconded this motion. The motion passed.

7. Communications and Miscellaneous

- a. Mr. Poulin mentioned that the railing on property located at 149 High Street were of concern, to which Mr. Metivier said that they had been cited by the city.
- b. Mr. Poulin asked about the property located at 15-17 Grove Street, to which Mr. Metivier said that they failed to appear in court.
- c. Mr. Brooks asked about the signage on the. Property located at 156 High Street, to which Mr. Metivier said that the city has communicated with the property owner regarding the signs
- d. Mr. Gerding wanted to thank the members of the community that attended Law Enforcement Day at Somersworth Middle School.
- e. Ms. Gagnon wanted to remind the community of the upcoming District Showcase
- f. Mr. Poulin wanted to thank Vice President Joe Biden for visiting the Somersworth Historical Museum.
- g. Ms. Barry wanted to thank all those who served in the military and wished the community a happy and safe Memorial Day.
- h. Mr. Metivier wished Commissioner Pius Charles Murray well in his recovery.

Adjournment:

Motion made by Mr. Poulin

Seconded by Mr. Brooks

Meeting adjourned at 7:48pm

Submitted by: Matthew Gerding