



Historic District Commission **AGENDA**

Wednesday, October 19, 2022

4:30 PM City Hall, 2nd Floor Council Chambers

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

2. Minutes of April 20, 2022 & September 21, 2022

3. Public Hearing:

COA-2016-06, Modification #7 – 31 Washington St – Washington Park Elevations

- Applicant and owner Washington Park of Keene LLC, requests the removal of a condition of approval from COA-2016-06, Modification #6 related to the submittal of color architectural elevations stamped by an architect registered in the State of NH for the former Middle School building on the Washington Park property at 31 Washington St (TMP #569-056-000). The former Middle School building is ranked as a Primary Resource and the property is located in the Downtown Core District.

4. Staff Updates

5. New Business

6. Upcoming Dates of Interest:

- a) Next HDC Meeting: November 16, 2022 – 4:30 pm, **City Hall 2nd Floor Council Chambers**
- b) HDC Site Visit: November 16, 2022 – 3:30 pm (To be confirmed)

7. Adjourn

1 City of Keene
2 New Hampshire

3
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5 HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
6 MEETING MINUTES
7

Wednesday, April 20, 2022

4:30 PM

Council Chambers,
City Hall

Members Present:

Russ Fleming, Vice Chair
Councilor Catherine Workman
Hans Porschitz
Sam Temple
Sophia Cunha-Vasconcelos

Staff Present:

Mari Brunner, Senior Planner
Evan Clements, Planner

Members Not Present:

Andrew Weglinski, Chair
Hope Benik
Gregg Kleiner, Alternate
David Bergeron, Alternate
Tia Hockett, Alternate
Peter Poanessa, Alternate

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10 **1) Call to Order and Roll Call**

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12 Vice Chair Fleming called the meeting to order at 4:42 PM.

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14 **2) Minutes of March 16, 2022**

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16 Councilor Workman made a motion to accept the minutes of March 16, 2022 as presented. Ms.
17 Cunha-Vasconcelos seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

18
19 **3) Advice & Comment:**

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21 **Modifications to Saint Bernard's Rectory, 161-185 Main Street** – Rick Cavallero, Lynne
22 Cavallero, & Dan Bartlett, representing St. Bernard Church, seek input from the HDC regarding
23 paint colors for the St. Bernard's Rectory building (historically known as the Appleton House),
24 located at 161-185 Main Street (TMP# 584-006-000). The property is ranked as a Primary
25 Resource and is located in the Downtown Growth District.
26

27 Vice Chair Fleming read the above description and invited representatives from Saint Bernard's
28 to present. He reminded the commission that it is an informal and non-binding discussion and
29 any recommendations coming from the HDC are not enforceable.

30

31 Ms. Cavallero stated the building is in need of painting, some repairs to the soffits, and they
32 would like to refurbish the currently decaying parapet. She noted that when they first began the
33 project Pinnacle Windows removed and restored all of the windows. She picked colors to paint
34 the windows without realizing there would need to be input from the HDC. Once she was aware
35 the building was historic she then did her research and showed the commission her inspiration in
36 some pictures, noting that the brick of the building is currently painted red and she feels it should
37 be lighter, like the color shown in the photo. She described it as a greenish/gray color and
38 showed a color swatch of what the windows are painted currently and then what the exact color
39 would be for the windows and doors (ten gallon hat). Ms. Cavallero added that the sash window
40 and columns will be painted the linen white color.

41

42 Vice Chair Fleming asked if the inspiration was from a similar architectural period. Ms.
43 Cavallero stated yes and showed another photo to the group.

44

45 Mr. Porschitz joined at 4:47pm.

46

47 Vice Chair Fleming asked if they knew why the brick was painted in the first place. The
48 Cavallero's were not sure but stated it has been painted for about 50 years. Vice Chair Fleming
49 stated sandblasting is prohibited but asked if they considered removing the paint. Mr. Cavallero
50 stated the brick underneath is chipping away so it wouldn't look good if the paint was taken off.

51

52 Ms. Brunner mentioned that there are some historic photos of the building that she found online
53 through the Keene Public Library and Historical Society of Cheshire County.

54

55 Vice Chair Fleming asked if there was a working balcony on the front of the building. Mr.
56 Cavallero stated yes it is a secure balcony and has been checked for structural soundness. There
57 was mention that it is wrought iron.

58

59 There was no public comment or further comment from the commission. Vice Chair Fleming
60 gave the Cavallero's the commission's informal blessing.

61

62 Ms. Brunner mentioned that there is other proposed work, such as exterior lights and exterior
63 HVAC units that will need to be screened, that may have to come back to the commission;
64 however, it seems like some of it may be minor work that staff can approve. Mr. Cavallero stated
65 they are converting 3-4 of the wood fire places to gas. The front one used to have a chimney,
66 which must have been closed off years ago, where they will likely have to put a vent in;
67 however, they are not yet sure how high the external vent will need to be. He added that it will be
68 inside the parapet area if it can stay that low and won't be visible from the street. If it does need
69 to go above the parapet and become visible from street, they are aware they will need to discuss

70 with the commission. Ms. Cavallero stated the other item that would potentially need to be
71 discussed is the roof. She explained that the parapet has paint falling off and instead of replacing
72 with boards they thought it might be best to put synthetic tiles/slate, which would be a neater and
73 cleaner look. She mentioned that her original thought was to put wrought iron around it but
74 there's a bump that you'd be able to see. She stated they would like to paint the shingles a
75 charcoal gray to match the synthetic slate roofing. Mr. Cavallero explained that the mansard roof
76 on the 3rd floor is in excellent condition, so they are looking to paint that to match with the
77 second floor parapet.

78

79 Vice Chair Fleming thanked them for putting so much thought into the work and stated he feels
80 it will come out nicely. He asked Ms. Brunner if there is anything from the property inventory
81 form that would be of interest to the commission.

82

83 Ms. Brunner read the brief description from the property inventory form. Vice Chair Fleming
84 asked if the building was built as a rectory or a private home. The Cavallero's stated it was built
85 as a private home. He asked, if it was built in 1855, when the church was built. Ms. Brunner
86 stated 1885.

87

88 There were no further comments from the HDC.

89

90 **4) Staff Updates**

91 **A) Update to the HDC "Frequently Asked Questions" page** – Ms. Brunner stated
92 the FAQ page has been updated online, which was long overdue, and now reflects the
93 Land Development Code changes. Mr. Clements stated he went through and did some
94 changes and section references, as well as some editorial changes to the discussion and
95 broader concepts of the HDC, and historic preservation in general. One in particular had
96 to do with the question of will the HDC negatively affect economic development in the
97 City. He took some time to explain why it doesn't, cited some sources and referenced the
98 research that demonstrates it stabilizes property values and makes it easier for developers
99 because they know the land value is going to stay and not go down. He also added a new
100 section about green buildings and historic preservation, noting that the greenest building
101 is a building that already exists so we should be saving our historic properties. Ms.
102 Brunner stated if the commission reviews the FAQ page and wants to add anything they
103 can let her know.

104

105 **B) Future Education & Outreach Efforts** – Ms. Brunner stated now that they have
106 Mr. Clements on board as the new planner, and more staff support, they are ready to start
107 working on some of the projects with regards to education and outreach that the HDC
108 identified a few years ago. One of them was to create a guidelines document for the
109 public to use as a companion to the regulations. The idea came out of concern for what
110 would happen to all of the background information in the HDC's old regulations. She
111 explained that they had guidelines/background information for each section that were

112 removed in an attempt to streamline the new regulations and make them more user-
113 friendly.
114

115 Ms. Brunner stated another idea is to do an annual mailing, or a mailing when there's an
116 ownership change with properties in the historic district. This came out of a discussion
117 around a few instances where folks had gone off and done work on their properties in the
118 historic district and said they didn't realize they had to get approval for it. She explained
119 that it will be a way to prevent the aforementioned from happening and make property
120 owners aware of the correct process and where to find more information.
121

122 Ms. Brunner stated they currently have the capacity to do one of the two projects and
123 asked for feedback on which one the commission would prefer.
124

125 Ms. Brunner also made note that they need to hire a historic preservationist to do an
126 inventory of the area of the historic district that got expanded in 2011 because the area
127 was never inventoried. She recommended that they try to find a grant to help support that.
128 Vice Chair Fleming asked for clarification. Ms. Brunner explained that the initial district
129 was focused on Main Street and along the railroad corridor, but it did not extend along
130 Gilbo Avenue and up towards Emerald Street. She went on to state that it's a block of
131 land that was added onto the historic district right around the same time that the City
132 created the Gilbo Avenue Design Overlay District. The intent was to have future
133 development in the section immediately adjacent to the downtown be similar to what is
134 seen along Main Street. Thus, the historic district was extended to match the boundaries
135 of the Gilbo Avenue Design Overlay District, which is now referred to as the Downtown
136 Growth District.
137

138 Mr. Porschitz stated he is in favor of the mailing project, especially after having been
139 involved with property owners seeking retroactive approval and the difficulties
140 surrounding that process. He felt it's a very important piece, especially for out of town
141 owners who may not be familiar with the historic district.
142

143 There was short discussion on Planning Department changes. Ms. Brunner stated, moving
144 forward, Mr. Clements will be taking over as staff liaison for the HDC and she will be
145 here for support if needed. Mr. Clements stated he previously worked for Glen Ellyn
146 Illinois, very similar to the City of Keene, while obtaining his Master's Degree, and did
147 his thesis on historic preservation and climate change. He most recently worked for the
148 Town of Hollis, New Hampshire before coming to work for the City. He ended by stating
149 that he's excited to work with the HDC and help them achieve their goals.
150

151 Ms. Cunha-Vasconcelos agreed with Mr. Porschitz about prioritizing the mailing project.
152 Councilor Workman agreed as well. Vice Chair Fleming asked if staff would develop a

153 draft of the mailing letter and then run it by the HDC before sending it out. Ms. Brunner
154 stated they can do that but the first step is identifying funding and then creating the draft.
155 Vice Chair Fleming suggested it be a positive letter and not one solely focused on telling
156 property owners what to do. Mr. Clements stated when he worked for the town of Hollis
157 they had a system where as soon as a property changed hands in the historic district, a
158 letter was generated and sent to the new property owner. The letter welcomed the new
159 owner to the historic district, explained the benefits of owning a property within the
160 district, and added in that if there's a desire to change anything with the property they
161 have to go through the HDC.

162
163 Mr. Porschitz asked if there is a sense of how many yearly transactions take place within
164 the historic district, to help them with a request for funding. Ms. Brunner stated the
165 budget will depend on how they decide to do it. For example, if they want to do an initial
166 mailer to everyone in the historic district, that would cost more than sending out a new
167 letter only when a property changes hands. She did not have cost estimates at the time.

168
169 Ms. Cunha-Vasconcelos asked if the HDC needs to participate in the budget process in
170 terms of finding funding. Ms. Brunner stated she's hoping they can use funding from the
171 Heritage Commission but they'd have to ask them for permission. Moving forward, they
172 can build the funding into the HDC's budget but they missed the timeline to make that
173 request this year.

174
175 Ms. Cunha-Vasconcelos asked about property inventory and if the HDC needs to do
176 anything to support obtaining a grant. Ms. Brunner stated the City of Keene participates
177 in the Certified Local Government (CLG) program. She noted that they are not large
178 grants but do prioritize inventories. If they submit a grant next year it would be
179 competitive and would depend on how many properties would need to be inventoried and
180 what research is already out there. The grant provides 100% match. Ms. Brunner
181 explained that the HDC would need to authorize staff to apply for the grant, so they will
182 come back to that discussion in November or December for the grant round in January.

183
184 Vice Chair Fleming asked about the breakdown of the historic district properties with
185 regards to residential versus nonresidential. Ms. Brunner stated there are not a lot of
186 residential properties and briefly reviewed the map for everyone. Vice Chair Fleming
187 asked if there was any potential for expanding the district in future years. Ms. Brunner
188 stated the HDC could recommend for that to take place and bring in more residential
189 properties to the historic district. She stated there was an effort to do so in the past but
190 there was push back from the property owners, so staff ended up focusing on education
191 and outreach instead.

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193 **5) New Business**

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195 There was no new business.

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- 6) **Upcoming Dates of Interest**
 - A) **Next HDC Meeting: May 18, 2022 – 4:30pm, Parks and Recreation Building, Room 22, 312 Washington Street**
 - B) **HDC Site Visit: May 18, 2022 – 3:30pm (To be confirmed)**
- 7) **Adjourn**

There being no further business, Vice Chair Fleming adjourned the meeting at 5:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Nicole Cullinane, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,
Evan J. Clements, Planner

1 City of Keene
2 New Hampshire

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5 HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
6 MEETING MINUTES
7

Wednesday, September 21, 2022

4:30 PM

2nd Floor Conference Room
City Hall

Members Present:

Sophia Cunha-Vasconcelos
Hope Benik
Gregg Kleiner, Alternate
David Bergeron, Alternate

Staff Present:

Evan J. Clements, Planner

Members Not Present:

Andrew Weglinski, Chair
Russ Fleming, Vice Chair
Councilor Catherine Workman
Hans Porschitz
Sam Temple
Tia Hockett, Alternate
Peter Poanessa, Alternate

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10 **1) Call to Order and Roll Call**
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12 Mr. Clements, acting as “clerk” for the Historic District Commission called the meeting to order
13 at 4:30 PM. He conducted the roll call and certified that four members of the Commission were
14 present and constituted a quorum.
15

16 Ms. Benik made a motion to elect a Chair Pro-Tem and nominated Mr. Bergeron to act as Chair
17 Pro-Tem. Ms. Cunha-Vasconcelos seconded, Mr. Bergeron abstained, and a majority of the
18 members present voted to elect Mr. Bergeron as Chair Pro-Tem for the duration of the meeting.
19

20 Chair Pro-Tem Bergeron designated Mr. Kleiner to vote on behalf Mr. Temple and designated
21 himself to vote on behalf of Mr. Porschitz.
22

23 **2) Minutes of April 20, 2022**
24

25 Chair Pro-Tem Bergeron made a motion to table the minutes of April 20, 2022 to the October 19,
26 2022 meeting as only two members present were at the April meeting. Ms. Cunha-Vasconcelos
27 seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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3) Public Hearing:

COA-2008-03, Modification #1 – 85 Washington Street – Window & Door Replacements –
Applicant Millwork Masters, on behalf of owner John Poisson, proposes to replace all existing windows and doors with new clad windows and doors on the historic Batchelder House. The property is ranked as a Primary Resource and is located at 85 Washington St (TMP# 569-001-000-000-000) in the Downtown Transition District.

Chair Pro-Tem Bergeron read the above public hearing summary and asked staff for a recommendation on completeness for the application.

Mr. Clements stated the applicant requests an exemption from submitting a site plan and architectural elevations. Staff recommends that the Commission grant the requested exemptions and accept the application as complete.

Ms. Cunha-Vasconcelos made a motion to accept the application as complete. Ms. Benik seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Chair Pro-Tem Bergeron opened the public hearing and invited the applicant forward to explain the project.

David Wright of Millwork Masters introduced himself as the applicant of this project and explained the proposed work of replacing the existing wooden, single pane windows and two porch doors at 85 Washington Street.

Mr. Wright explained that the intent of replacing the windows was for energy efficiency and maintenance ease for the property owner. The property owner had recently purchased the property and intended to use it as his primary residence. He stated that the replacement windows would be aluminum and fiberglass clad wooden windows with permanently attached simulated window lites in the same pattern and white color as the existing windows. The chosen windows would also include an aluminum separator bar between the simulated lights and the window panes. He noted that this was the best option to simulate a divided lite available on the market. All the windows would be aluminum clad, however, the requested interior finish on some of the windows was only available with a fiberglass cladding. That is why the proposal includes both fiberglass and aluminum clad windows. He noted that the proposed windows were the same as what was used on the Colonial Theater.

Mr. Wright then explained that the two porch doors would be replaced in an insert replacement style. This was due to the unusually deep door jamb due to the stone façade of the building. The replacement doors would be fiberglass clad with the same simulated divided lites as the windows. The lites would be the same white color and pattern as the existing doors.

71 Chair Pro-Tem Bergeron invited staff comments.

72

73 Mr. Clements noted that the Commission had conducted a Site Visit of the property prior to the
74 meeting. He provided some background on the property and stated that the 85 Washington Street
75 property was constructed 1833 and served as a primary residence to several notable members of
76 the community, including Asa Smith, a mayor of Keene who owned the property at the time of
77 his election in 1887. He noted that the property inventory form stated, *“It is the most outstanding*
78 *of a small group of Federal-style dwellings in the Keene area. A dominant feature of an old-time*
79 *Keene.”*

80

81 Mr. Clements reviewed HDC standards relevant to the application. He stated that the first
82 relevant standard was section 21.6.3.D Windows - “Any historic or architecturally significant
83 window that is proposed for replacement shall be replaced with a window that conveys the same
84 visual appearance in terms of overall dimensions and shape, size of glazed areas, muntin
85 arrangement, and other design details as the windows to be replaced...If the historic or
86 architecturally significant window to be replaced is wood, the replacement window shall also be
87 wood, or wood-clad with aluminum or a material of equal quality...”

88

89 Mr. Clements next reviewed the second standard, Section 21.6.3.E Doors - “Historic doors,
90 entrances and porches, including their associated features, shall be retained or replaced in-kind.
91 If repair is necessary, only the deteriorated element shall be repaired, through patching, splicing,
92 consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing the deteriorated section. If replacement is necessary, the
93 new feature shall match the original in size, design, texture, color, and, where possible, materials.
94 The new feature shall maintain the same visual appearance as the historic feature.”

95

96 Mr. Clements explained that the Commission would need to decide if the proposed windows and
97 doors met the above mentioned standards. He noted that it was particularly important for the
98 Board to find that the proposed fiberglass cladding was a material of equal quality as the
99 aluminum cladding required by their regulations.

100

101 Chair Pro-Tem Bergeron invited public comments. There were none.

102

103 Chair Pro-Tem Bergeron closed the public hearing and began deliberations. Ms. Benik noted that
104 this application was a good example of maintaining the function of historic properties in the
105 community while upgrading them for energy efficiency.

106

107 Chair Pro-Tem Bergeron stated that he believed that fiberglass cladding was a sufficient
108 alternative to aluminum. He noted that the most important window, the half-moon above the
109 front door was getting essential rebuilt and appreciated the attention to detail that the applicant
110 was taking. He felt that the proposed colors and dividing lites patterns on the windows and doors
111 matched the existing windows and doors. There was general agreement from other members of
112 the Commission.

113

114 Ms. Cunha-Vasconcelos made a motion to approve COA-2022-03, Modification #1 for the
115 replacement of the existing windows and two (2) porch doors on the property located at 85
116 Washington Street, as presented in the application and supporting materials dated August 19,
117 2022 and August 29, 2022 with no conditions. Mr. Kleiner seconded the motion, which passed
118 unanimously.

119

120 **4) Staff Updates**

121 **A) Outreach Efforts** – Mr. Clements presented a draft of the tri-fold brochure mailer
122 that is intended to be sent to property owners within the district. This is part of an effort
123 by the Commission to remind property owners of the regulations within the district. He
124 noted that the quotes from notable preservationists looks muddy when photocopied and
125 he would be making a change so that came out clearer.

126

127 Ms. Benik stated that she thought the brochure looked good and was particularly happy
128 with how the Certificate of Appropriateness was mentioned prominently.

129

130 Mr. Kleiner also liked the document and asked if it would be possible to do the brochure
131 in color instead of black and white as he thought it would look better and reflect better on
132 the City.

133

134 Mr. Clements stated that the intent was to send the brochure to every property owner in
135 the district so cost was a factor and that is why he presented it to the Commission in black
136 and white. He noted that the Commission would be asking for a budget from City
137 Council for the brochure mailer and they can look at costs. He agreed that doing the
138 brochure in color would reflect better on the City.

139

140 Ms. Cunha-Vasconcelos also thought it was good and asked if a motion to adopt it was
141 necessary.

142

143 Mr. Clements stated that it would be appropriate to wait for more Commission members
144 to discuss it but wanted to bring it up since it was an opportunity to get some feedback on
145 the draft.

146

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148 **5) New Business**

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150 There was no new business.

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152 **6) Upcoming Dates of Interest**

153 **A) Next HDC Meeting: October 19, 2022 – 4:30pm, Council Chambers, 3**
154 **Washington Street**

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B) HDC Site Visit: October 19, 2022 – 3:30pm (To be confirmed)

7) Adjourn

There being no further business, Chair Pro-Tem Bergeron adjourned the meeting at 4:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Evan J. Clements, AICP - Planner

STAFF REPORT

COA-2016-06, Mod. 7 – 31 Washington Street– Amended Condition of Approval

Request:

Applicant and owner Washington Park of Keene LLC, requests the removal of a condition of approval from COA-2016-06, Modification #6 related to the submittal of color architectural elevations stamped by an architect registered in the State of NH for the former Middle School building on the Washington Park property at 31 Washington St (TMP #569-056-000). The former Middle School building is ranked as a Primary Resource and the property is located in the Downtown Core District.

Background:

The former Keene Middle School building has undergone a multitude of changes since its construction was completed in 1912. Throughout the years, the building has served as Keene High School, Keene Junior High School, Keene Middle School, and is now utilized as a mixed-use building that is part of the Washington Park of Keene Apartments. In 1912, the original building was constructed on the southern portion of the site. Additional changes were made to the building in 1939 when the auditorium was built on the northwestern portion of the site, in 1972 when the kitchen was added between the north and south wings, and in 1986 when the science renovations and auditorium were completed on the eastern portion of the site. The building was used until 2010, when a new middle school was constructed on Maple Ave.

Since its purchase by Washington Park of Keene LLC, in 2011, the property has gone before both the Historic District Commission and Planning Board for a number of reviews.

Planning Board:

- SPR-08-16 – September 2016 for the initial development of the apartment building and parking area behind the existing Middle School building.
- SPR-08-16, Mod.1 – January 2019 for site modification including alterations to landscaping, grading, sidewalk, concrete generator pad, relocation of a dumpster pad, and the installation of an outdoor patio.

Historic District Commission:

- COA-2016-06 – August 2016 for the proposed renovations to the existing Middle School building and the construction of a new apartment building.
- COA-2016-06, Mod.1 – October 2016 for the administrative approval to cover the openings at the tops of nine (9) chimneys with brown PVC exterior grade planking.
- COA-2016-06, Mod.2 – September 2017 to install cement board siding on the northern façade of the existing Middle School building.
- COA-2016-06, Mod.3 – August 2018 for parking lot alterations, including the installation of a low retaining wall and removal of a concrete island.
- COA-2016-06, Mod.4 – August 2019 for retroactive approval of one vent penetration and the installation of seven vent penetrations on the south and west facades, the replacement of an exterior stairway, and modifications to three entrances on the south side of the former Middle School building.
- COA-2016-06, Mod.5 – October 2019 for the administrative approval to increase the height of the fence used to screen the trash compactor from 6 feet to 8.5 feet.

STAFF REPORT

- COA-2016-06, Mod.6 – July 2020 for renovation of the northeast section of the former Middle School into eight apartments, retroactive approval for one vent penetration and 17 new vent penetrations, retroactive approval for the replacement of 45 French windows with Juliette balconies with double windows, retroactive approval for the installation of a sliding glass door on the first floor of the new apartment building, where double windows were previously proposed, and the retroactive approval for the relocation and installation of additional landscaping on the southern portion of the site.

The applicant is requesting that the Historic District Commission reconsider a Condition of Approval that was set on the project as part of COA-2016-06, Mod.6 that required the applicant to submit, "...color architectural elevations stamped by an architect registered in the State of NH for the former Middle School building." The applicant states in their narrative that the architect that prepared the construction plans has retired and is no longer able to regenerate exterior elevations on either building and to comply with the condition would put an undue cost burden on the owner.

Completeness:

The applicant requests exemptions from submitting product specification sheets, material samples, existing conditions plan, and proposed conditions plan. After reviewing each request, staff has determined that exempting the applicant from submitting this information would have no bearing on the merits of the application and recommends that the Historic District Commission grant these exemptions and accept the application as "complete."

Application Analysis:

This application is a request to reconsider a Condition of Approval that the Historic District Commission set on the previous application for this project and not a normal Major Protect application that is reviewed using the Commission's regulations. The minutes from the July 15, 2020 HDC meeting (included in the packet) indicate that the condition to require color architectural elevations stamped by an architect registered in the State of NH for the former Middle School building was set, in part, due to the fact that the applicant made changes to their approved plans that required several retroactive approvals from HDC. To quote Chairman Weglinski from the minutes of that meeting, "The Chairman saw many inconsistencies in the information provided by the applicant and was unclear on what the HDC would actually be approving moving forward. He and Mr. Porschitz were concerned by the degree of retroactive approvals on this application." The Commission will need to decide if color renderings stamped by an architect registered in the State of NH are still required to document the changes made by the applicant during the construction process or if the three color photos supplied by the applicant are sufficient.

Recommendation:

Staff will provide a recommended motion at the HDC meeting on October 19, 2022.



City of Keene, NH

Historic District Commission (HDC) Major Project Application

If you have questions about how to complete this form, please call: (603) 352-5440 or email: communitydevelopment@keeneh.gov

SECTION 1: PROJECT INFORMATION

PROJECT NAME:

Washington Park of Keene

PROJECT ADDRESS(ES):

31 Washington street

SECTION 2: CONTACT INFORMATION

OWNER

APPLICANT

NAME/COMPANY:

Washington Park of Keene, LLC

NAME/COMPANY:

Same

MAILING ADDRESS:

900 Derry Road Hudson, NH 03051

MAILING ADDRESS:

PHONE:

603-886-5021

PHONE:

EMAIL:

Densy@saveonwall.com

EMAIL:

SIGNATURE:

(Handwritten signature: Denise Blante)

SIGNATURE:

PRINTED NAME:

DENISE BLANTE MANAGER

PRINTED NAME:

AUTHORIZED AGENT
(if different than Owner/Applicant)

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

NAME/COMPANY:

Washington Park of Keene, LLC

TAX MAP PARCEL #(s):

569-056-000-000-000

MAILING ADDRESS:

900 Derry Road Hudson

PHONE:

603-234-5891

PARCEL SIZE:

4.95 acres

DATE STAMP:

EMAIL:

Tony@mdpdevelopment.com

ZONING DISTRICT:

Downtown Core

SIGNATURE:

(Handwritten signature: Tony Marcotte)

RESOURCE RANKING:

Primary

PRINTED NAME:

Tony Marcotte

PROJECT #:

COA-2016-06, Mod. 7



Descriptive Narrative

Washington Park of Keene had presented a plan for 31 Washington Street for the installation of exterior electric meters and rooftop mechanical equipment on a two story building in the North East corner of the building complex at the July 2020 Historic District Commission meeting held via Zoom. The Board requested that the meters be installed on the interior of the building and it was agreed that the rooftop equipment would not be visible. Because of the format of the meeting once discussion had ended and the Board closed Zoom access to the public and the Applicant. A condition of issuance of the final certificate of occupancy on the eight units in that portion of the building was to submit architectural elevation plans for the new and the entire existing buildings. Because of the Zoom format, I was unable to discuss the conditions placed on the approval.

Architectural plans for the newly constructed apartment building had already been submitted prior to construction of the building. Pictures of every portion of the building can be submitted if requested.

While we were renovating the existing building, we installed a few mock up options for the new windows that replaced the very small windows that had been installed in the 1970s. A site walk was performed and we ordered and installed windows per the Commission's requested style and trim finishes, including exterior muttons.

During construction, pictures were submitted to the Commission in areas for proposed changes or penetrations. Architectural renderings were never prepared for any portion of the existing building since no material changes to the structure has been proposed. Preparation of a plan for the entire exterior, which has been modified and added on to multiple times since the original 1912 structure creates an undue burden and very significant cost on the owner.

The large brick openings that had been filled in on the two story building with a tan exterior grade material and small windows was improved significantly with the same style and size of windows that had been used on the rest of the structure. Hardy-plank siding, the same material and one of the colors installed on the new apartment building had been used in the remainder of the opening not covered by windows. At the meeting, an offer was made to charge the color of the siding if the Commission wished and it was determined to leave it as is (see attached before and after pictures).

The architect that prepared the construction plans for the project semi-retired in 2021 and is transferring the company to a different owner and is no longer available to regenerate exterior elevations on either building.

We would like the Commission to reconsider the need for architectural renderings on the entire building at this point in time due to the burden of cost it places on the owner, who has worked with the Commission from the start of the project on the renovation of the existing structure without removal of any portion of the building. Considerable cost and care have gone into the project to save the entire existing structure for reuse.



COA 2016-06, Mod. 7

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CCA-2016-06, Mod. 7

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Councilor Workman made the following motion, which Mr. Porschitz seconded.

With a roll call vote of 5-0, the Historic District Commission approved COA-2016-01, Modification #1 for the installation of a rooftop solar PV system on the western-facing portion of the roof of the building located at 85 Emerald Street (TMP# 584-072- 000) as presented in the application and supporting materials submitted to the Community Development Department on June 24, 2020 with no conditions.

- b. COA-2016-06, Modification #6 – 31 Washington St – Applicant Tony Marcotte, on behalf of owner, Washington Park of Keene LLC, proposes modifications to the buildings and site located at 31 Washington St (TMP# 569-056-000). Proposed building modifications include penetrations for exterior ventilation, the installation of rooftop condensers, and the addition of 8 new electric meters on the former Middle School building and the removal of “Juliette” balconies on the upper stories and installation of glass sliding doors on the first story of the new apartment building. Proposed site alterations include modifications to the landscaping layout and the addition of new landscaping. The former Keene Middle School building is ranked as a Primary Resource. The site is located in the Central Business District.**

Ms. Brunner recommended accepting this application as complete. Mr. Porschitz moved to accept application COA-2016-06, Modification #6 as complete, which Councilor Workman seconded and the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

The Chairman welcomed the applicant, Tony Marcotte (calling alone from 172 Deer Meadow Road in Pittsfield), who works for MDP Development and is representing the owner, Washington Park of Keene, LLC. He said that this application combined a minor application submitted long ago and a major application submitted recently, which is why it is so lengthy.

Mr. Marcotte explained that the five-acre property contains the existing historic Middle School building and the new apartment building, both of which were modified during construction, along with the landscaping. Mr. Marcotte showed photos of the former Middle School building that is used as an apartment building today and where two additional brick penetrations were proposed for external ventilation to those units. He showed the former Middle School building overview and where eight electrical meters are required by Eversource and eight HVAC condensers that service heat pumps would be installed on the north façade facing School Street and the rooftop, respectively. The northeastern section of the former Middle School building was to be leased originally as a whole to one commercial tenant and now it would be leased to eight residential tenants, and therefore those units need to meet electric and HVAC requirements. The electrical meters could be installed on the building interior and out of view as they are elsewhere on the property, but Eversource requested that the applicant seek permission from the HDC for exterior installation, which allows easier access in case of emergencies or maintenance. Mr. Marcotte showed the proposed meter location, which due to a Fire Department (FD) connections there, would

require moving an existing window 3' to the left on the north façade of the former Middle School building. He said he tried to minimize that necessity but it is the only feasible way to install the meters on the building exterior per Eversource's request. The proposed condensers would be in two groups of four, located near the center roof of the 20' tall building, and therefore not be visible from the ground. Mr. Marcotte showed the condenser setup that was previously approved by Code Enforcement Staff to comply in the case of a hurricane. Two additional vent penetrations were proposed that he said the HVAC installer did not request initially, one facing MoCo Arts and the other facing Washington Street, which must be installed in this location due to a Code requirement, which he tried to avoid. One of the proposed penetrations is already drilled because the HVAC engineer did not know they were not approved. The exterior vent coverings would be the same aluminum painted brick color as approved by the HDC elsewhere on the property.

Mr. Marcotte continued explaining that there was a dumpster placed on the property during construction, where landscaping was proposed; however, they decided to install the landscaping throughout the site, which he said was better than clustering it all in one place. That landscaping included six holly shrubs and many perennial flowering plants. Mr. Marcotte showed the new locations where those plants were placed ultimately, including some holly bushes that would help to screen two existing Eversource transformers, which he thought was better than the location proposed originally.

Mr. Marcotte continued describing proposed changes to the newly constructed apartment building on site, many of which have already occurred. These changes included choosing not to install the 45 French windows & Juliette balconies on the upper floors that were previously approved by the HDC and to instead install double windows, which Mr. Marcotte said was a decision to reduce noise in the surrounding residential neighborhood and to eliminate fall-risk. Sliding glass doors were installed on the first floor, which he thought was consistent with the aesthetic the HDC sought originally for a commercial-appearing first floor and residential-appearing upper floors. Mr. Marcotte showed the plans and architectural elevations approved originally and made comparisons to the changes that were ultimately made. He explained that the first floor sliders are required to have an adjacent exterior outlet and light by Code. He specified that these lights are positioned to be entirely downcast. He said the north elevation facing Spring Street was built according to plan but later in the meeting said the contrary was true.

Regarding moving the window on the north façade on the former Middle School building, Mr. Porschitz asked whether the FD connection in question could be relocated instead to avoid disrupting the uniformity of the windows on that façade. Mr. Marcotte said no, due to the location of adjacent handicapped parking there is little flexibility to move the FD connection to another location. Mr. Porschitz asked whether the handicapped parking could be relocated. Mr. Marcotte said the handicapped parking is located there next to the auditorium entrance for potential future auditorium use; the apartment's handicapped spaces are typically used to capacity and he thought it a disservice to future event visitors to eliminate that parking. Mr. Porschitz shared his perspective that moving one window on the whole northern façade would have a major impact on the exterior appearance, let alone with the addition of eight meters.

Chair Weglinski asked whether Eversource grants special approval for indoor meter banks. Mr. Marcotte said that Eversource would allow the meters to be installed inside but prefer them outside and requested that the applicant seek that permission from the HDC; if the HDC denied the request, the meters would be placed inside. Mr. Marcotte said there is a sprinkler room just inside the window in question and the meters can be placed there with some minor adjustments to the unit. Chair Weglinski referred to a photo on page 40 of 44 in the meeting packet that depicted two existing vent penetrations on the southwest corner of the former Middle School building and asked when those occurred. Mr. Marcotte replied that one penetration was approved and the other was not, the lower of which is what he sought retroactive approval for at this meeting. The Chairman recalled earlier modifications to this application and a history of this project altering HDC-approved plans, constructing without HDC approval, and seeking forgiveness retroactively.

Mr. Temple asked whether the Juliette balconies were installed and subsequently removed; the application language was unclear. Mr. Marcotte said no, they were not installed due to the aforementioned noise and safety concerns. Mr. Temple asked the original impetus for the balconies and Mr. Marcotte said it was a misunderstanding between what the owner wanted and what the architect thought the owner wanted.

The Chairman requested Staff comments. Ms. Brunner explained that the former Keene High School building was constructed in 1912 and was later used as Keene Middle School. She explained that the building was purchased and renovated relatively recently by the present owner, who also constructed the new apartment building. The design of the former Middle School building includes many architecturally significant features that contribute to its ranking as a Primary Resource, including arched third-floor windows; monitor and large single light sashes; full entablature with projecting cornice, triglyph, and metopes; projecting brick pilasters; a belt course; cement keystones centered above all windows; and rhythm of fenestration.

Ms. Brunner said that the HDC also reviewed the property on many occasions, starting in August 2016, when the owner proposed renovations to the former Middle School building and the construction of a new apartment building (COA-2016-06). The property was first reviewed by the Planning Board in September 2016 for the initial apartment building development and parking area behind the former Middle School building (SPR-08-16). She explained that the property has been back to the Planning Board and HDC since these initial approvals. Subsequent approvals included administrative approval to cover the openings at the tops of 9 chimneys with brown PVC exterior grade planking in October 2016 (COA-2016-06, Mod. 1); HDC approval to install cement board siding on the northern façade of the former Middle School building in September 2017 (COA-2016-06, Mod. 2); HDC approval for parking lot alterations, including the installation of a low retaining wall and removal of a concrete island in August 2018 (COA-2016-06, Mod. 3); HDC approval for the installation of seven vent penetrations (6 on the south façade and 1 on the west facade), the replacement of an exterior stairway, and modifications to three entrances on the south side of the former Middle School building in August 2019 (COA-2016-06, Mod. 4); and administrative approval to increase the height of the fence used to screen the trash compactor from 6' to 8.5' in October 2019 (COA-2016-06, Mod. 5).

Ms. Brunner said that the applicant requested approval for modifications to both the former Keene Middle School building and the new apartment building, as well as the site. The proposed modifications include the following:

- Renovation of the northeast section of the former Middle School building into eight apartments;
- Installation of eight rooftop condensers on the northeast section of the former Middle School building;
- Installation of 17 new vent penetrations and 1 existing vent penetration on the former Middle School building: 16 that would be drilled through the existing HardiePlank siding on the north and south façades of the northeast section of the building, one along the west façade facing Washington Street, and one that was already drilled along the south façade facing the MoCo Arts building (*retroactive approval);
- Installation of eight electric meters on the north façade of the former Middle School building facing Spring Street;
- Installation of double windows on the upper floors of the new apartment building, where 45 French windows with Juliette balconies (a.k.a. “balconettes”) were approved previously (*retroactive approval);
- Installation of sliding glass doors on the first floor of the new apartment building, where double windows were previously proposed (*retroactive approval);
- Relocation and installation of additional landscaping on the southern portion of the site, near the former Middle School building (*retroactive approval).

Ms. Brunner explained that the sliding glass doors had already been installed on the first floor of the new apartment building and the double windows had already been installed on the upper floors of the building. In addition to this, the landscaping has already been relocated.

Per Section III.D.3, “Renovation, rehabilitation or restoration of a building or structure,” this work is classified as a “Major Project” for review by the HDC. Ms. Brunner reviewed the HDC regulations relevant to this application, beginning with proposed modifications to the former Middle School building and site.

A. Streetscape and Building Site

1. Trees, Landscaping and Site Work

b) Design Standards

- 1) Trees that contribute to the character of the historic district and that exceed 15” in diameter at a height of 4’ above grade shall be retained, unless removal of such tree(s) is necessary for safety reasons as determined by a professional arborist or other qualified professional.*
- 2) Grading or changes to the site’s existing topography shall not be allowed if existing mature trees might be negatively impacted by altered drainage and soil conditions.*

3) During construction, paving and any site work, existing mature trees must be protected.

Ms. Brunner said that the applicant sought approval to relocate plants near the southeastern corner of the former Middle School building. Mr. Brunner stated that she thought the applicant had adequately explained this request. The applicant also proposed to install three Dwarf Alberta Spruce trees to screen the eight new electric meters proposed along the north façade of the former Middle School building.

5. Utility, Service and Mechanical Equipment

b) Design Standards

1) On commercial and industrial buildings, mechanical equipment, such as compressor units, shall be set back on the roof of the building, so as to be minimally visible, or ground-mounted toward the rear of the building, with appropriate screening or landscaping to minimize visibility.

2) Every effort shall be made to position heating and air-conditioning equipment, fire alarm panels, telecommunications equipment, satellite dishes, and freestanding antennas and other equipment as low to the ground as possible, and where they are not readily visible from the public right-of-way.

3) New mechanical supply lines, pipes and ductwork shall be placed in inconspicuous locations and/or concealed with architectural elements, such as downspouts.

5) Walls on front or street-facing facades shall not be penetrated for vent openings larger than seventy (70) square inches. Vent caps shall not be larger than two hundred (200) square inches.

Ms. Brunner said that as a part of renovations to the northeast section of the former Middle School building into eight new apartments, the applicant proposed to install eight condensers, 16 new vent penetrations in the existing HardiePlank siding, and eight new electric meters in this area of the building. The 16 proposed 4" diameter vent penetrations are required for bathroom and kitchen exhaust in the eight apartments. Eight of the penetrations would be drilled through the HardiePlank siding on the northern façade of the northeastern section of the former Middle School building and the other eight vent penetrations would be drilled similarly on the southern façade of this section of the building, facing MoCo Arts. The vents would be covered with the same 25 square inch metal vent caps metal painted dark brown as the HDC approved before. The applicant also sought approval to install an additional vent penetration in the brick wall 3' above grade in front of the existing accessible parking space along the northern portion of the western building façade facing Washington Street, as well as a vent penetration that was drilled in the southern façade of the former Middle School building facing MoCo Arts.

Ms. Brunner said the applicant also proposed to install eight condensers measuring about 90" wide by 44" tall on 6"x6" wooden blocking in two clusters on the center of the roof on the northeastern section of the former Middle School building. Each cluster would include four condensers and

would be set back a minimum of 15' from the edge of the roof. The applicant stated that no screening is proposed due to the equipment setback from the edge of the roof and the height of the building. Finally, the applicant proposed to install eight new residential electric meters along the northern façade of the former Middle School building facing Spring Street. These meters would be installed in an area measuring 71" wide by 42.4" tall and would be mounted 59" above finished grade. A 2"-3" galvanized conduit would run from the top of the meters to the roof of the building and would be painted to match the existing brick. To accommodate installing these meters, the applicant also proposed to move the existing window 3' to the east as opposed to filling in the window opening.

B. Building Rehabilitation: Primary and Contributing Resources

5. Windows

b) Design Standards

- 1) Removing character-defining historic window sash shall be discouraged, unless repair is not economically feasible.*
- 2) Any windows which are approved for replacement shall convey the same visual appearance in terms of overall dimensions and shape, size of glazed areas, muntin arrangement, and other design details as the historic windows. In addition, they shall have:*
 - Clear-paned, non-tinted glass (except to replace historic stained or other types of translucent or opaque glass); and*
 - True divided lights or a permanently affixed muntin grid on the exterior of the window. In either instance, the muntin shall have a raised trapezoidal profile. Snap-in or between-glass muntin grids are not allowed.*
- 4) If the size or location of the original window opening has been altered, owners shall be encouraged to restore those openings if replacing windows.*
- 6) Enlarging or reducing the window rough opening to fit new stock windows shall generally be prohibited.*

Ms. Brunner said the applicant proposed to relocate an existing window 36" to the east on the north façade of the northeastern section of the former Middle School building facing Spring Street in order to meet Fire and Building Code requirements. The applicant is also seeking retroactive approval for installing double windows on upper floors of the new apartment building instead of the French windows with Juliette balconies approved by the HDC.

Next, Ms. Brunner reviewed the remaining HDC standards relevant to construction of the new apartment building.

D. New Construction

2. Construction of new buildings or structures

b) Design Standards (See also design standards for Streetscape & Building Site)

- 1) New buildings or structures shall be sited so that the existing pattern of the historic streetscape —setbacks, spacing, lot coverage, scale, massing, height, orientation—in which they are located is not disrupted.*
- 2) The shape, scale and fenestration of new buildings or structures shall respect the established historic architectural character of the surrounding area.*
- 3) New buildings or structures shall take into account the historic relationships of existing buildings and site features on the site.*
- 4) Exterior cladding shall be of materials that are common in the district. Acceptable materials include brick, stone, terra cotta, wood and metal. Wood shingles, wooden clapboards, concrete clapboards and brick are also acceptable types of siding.*
- 5) Materials commonly referred to as “vinyl siding” are inappropriate contemporary materials and are therefore prohibited for use on new construction in the Historic District.*

Ms. Brunner said that as part of the original approval for this construction, the applicant proposed a four-story apartment building with the primary entrance oriented toward the parking area on the west-facing façade of the structure. The building design featured a variety of materials and colors, including the installation of tan-colored panels beneath some of the windows and the utilization of a faux brick panel along the length of the first level of the building on Spring Street and Roxbury Street that would wrap around to the east- and west-facing façades.

Ms. Brunner explained that following the initial HDC review of the proposal in July of 2016, the board requested a revised proposal from the applicant showing changes to the Roxbury Street façade of the new apartment building to create more of an orientation to the street, in order for it to fit in with the design of the other buildings in this area of the Historic District. The applicant returned to the August 2016 HDC meeting with a revised proposal for the design of the new apartment building, which included a brick section along Roxbury Street (all four stories) and the addition of double windows instead of the approved French windows with Juliette balconies on the upper stories of the building. As part of the current application, the applicant sought retroactive approval for installing double windows on the upper floors. In the project narrative, the applicant stated that the French windows with Juliette balconies posed safety concerns. In addition, the applicant sought retroactive approval for installing 14 sliding glass doors on the north, south, and east façades of the new apartment building’s first floor instead of the approved double windows.

A. Streetscape and Building Site

3. Lighting

b) Design Standards

- 1) Lighting fixtures and poles shall be compatible in scale, design and materials with both the individual and surrounding properties.*
- 2) Only full cut-off fixtures shall be used.*

3) The location, level and direction of lighting shall be appropriate for the character of the area in which it is situated

In the project narrative, the applicant noted that the unapproved installation of sliding glass doors in place of double windows on the first floor of the new apartment building necessitated the installation of light fixtures, as dictated by the Electrical Code. The applicant installed 14 full cutoff Acclaim Lighting Wall Mount Exterior Fixtures with a white finish and facing down.

Mr. Porschitz referred to photos of the proposed window relocation on the former Middle School building, said he could see vent penetrations at that location, and asked what the vents were for. Ms. Brunner referred to the photos and identified where the eight vent penetrations were proposed on that façade to service the eight new apartments as a part of this application.

Chair Weglinski asked whether the Planning Board would vote on information similar to what the HDC reviewed at this meeting. Ms. Brunner explained that Planning Board Standard #19 addresses architectural and visual appearance, but when a property is located in the Historic District, architectural and visual changes are reviewed through the HDC.. The Chairman asked whether the tree removal at the south former Middle School building elevation was approved previously; he felt he received much conflicting information from the applicant as to what was approved originally and what they constructed without HDC oversight and sought retroactive approval for. He questioned why the HDC was only now reviewing the change from Juliette balconies to double windows that occurred without approval more than one year ago.

Regarding trees, Ms. Brunner said that the Planning Board approved a landscaping plan for the number of trees on the property, not where they were to be placed, and so removal of these trees in question did not need approval. Regarding buildings, Ms. Brunner said that the applicant did not consult City Staff before making changes to the HDC-approved plans. When Staff performed the initial inspection before full site completion one year ago, these changes came to light. In November 2019, Mr. Marcotte submitted a modification to the application. Ms. Brunner said that application fell through the cracks during a busy time for Staff, for which she apologized. Mr. Marcotte returned in spring 2020 with this major application and so the minor application items from November 2019 were combined into this one major application. The Chairman asked when the City's Building Inspector last visited the site; he was concerned that this Commission only had HDC purview and he wanted to ensure safety compliance with so many unapproved changes occurring. Ms. Brunner said that Code Enforcement Staff assigned to this project are at the site frequently but are focused on safety related to Building and Fire Codes and not always on adherence to approved plans, which is perhaps why some things were missed.

Mr. Porschitz referred to the façade where spruce trees were proposed to screen the electrical meters and asked for more details on where exactly the trees would be planted with respect to the handicapped parking. Mr. Marcotte said that the handicapped parking striping at that location was painted extra wide because there was sufficient pavement. As such, the pavement would be cut out

from where the meters are to create a landscaped island from the building to the street where the trees and other flowering plants would be located.

Mr. Marcotte continued replying to some of the Chairman's points about the buildings. He said that during construction, the openings for sliding doors on the upper floors were built with structural beams able to support a slider or window. He said that above his commitment as contracted by the property owner, his role during construction was to work closely with Code Enforcement Inspectors to ensure that all safety/life issues were in-line, and so he too might have missed some things. Mr. Marcotte said that the owner chose to change the Juliette balconies for fear of possible falls and thought it unnecessary to return to the HDC for approval because the change enhanced safety. Mr. Marcotte concluded that the vent openings on the former Middle School building would be the same 5" square vents painted the same as those on the new apartment building.

With no comments, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

Ms. Benik expressed concern with moving the window on the former Middle School building. She and Mr. Porschitz agreed that it would have a negative impact on the uniformity of the façade. Councilor Workman agreed and assumed that Eversource's only preference for the meters outside was for easier access. The Chairman saw many inconsistencies in the information provided by the applicant and was unclear on what the HDC would actually be approving moving forward. He and Mr. Porschitz were concerned by the degree of retroactive approvals on this application.

The Chairman reopened the public hearing and Mr. Marcotte confirmed that Eversource feels it easier to read/shut-off meters with exterior placement, but he added that there are multiple interior meter rooms throughout the property. Eversource would allow the meters inside but it was not their preference. With no further public comments, the Chairman again closed the public hearing.

Mr. Porschitz made the following motion, which Councilor Workman seconded.

With a vote of 3-1, the Historic District Commission approved COA-2016-06 Modification #6 for modifications to the buildings and site located at 31 Washington Street (TMP# 569-056-000), as presented on the architectural elevations identified as "Washington Park At Keene Apartments, Roxbury Street, Keene, New Hampshire" prepared by Amoskeag Architectural Group on November 24, 2016 at a scale of 1/16" = 1'-0" and last revised on November 11, 2019, and the site plan identified as "Developed Planting Plan, Washington Park Multifamily Housing" prepared by Bedford Design Consultants on April 6, 2016 at a scale of 1"=30' and last revised on November 12, 2019 with the following conditions:

1. Submittal of color architectural elevations stamped by an architect registered in the State of NH for the recently constructed Washington Park Apartment Building.
2. Submittal of color architectural elevations stamped by an architect registered in the State of NH for the former Middle School building.
3. The residential electric meters for the apartments in the northeast section of the former Middle School Building shall be located inside the building.

Chair Weglinski opposed the motion and Mr. Temple was absent for the vote.

4) **Commission Membership**

There are still vacancies on the Commission and a Vice Chair is needed. Send recommendations to the Chairman and/or Ms. Brunner.

5) **Staff Updates**

- a. **Building Better Together – Senior Planner Tara Kessler will provide an update on the draft Land Development Code, including public engagement opportunities and the schedule for review / submission of a draft for adoption.**

The Community Development Director, Rhett Lamb, was present in place of Senior Planner, Tara Kessler. Mr. Lamb provided an update on the draft Land Development Code, which Staff has been working on as a long-term goal from the City's 2010 Comprehensive Master Plan. This project streamlined and simplified the City's various development standards (i.e., Zoning, Historic District, Planning, street standards, etc.) that occupied multiple locations throughout the City, making the regulations challenging to navigate for developers, residents, and Staff. This effort was with the guiding principles of simplicity, efficiency (graphics vs. text), and consideration of long-term City goals. The HDC has heard updates on this project throughout its duration.

Mr. Lamb explained that this project was an effort to not rewrite the City's existing development standards, but rather to reorganize them, joining standards for all regulations from Zoning to the Historic District. The new consolidated document is intended to be easier to navigate, reduce confusion, streamline the review process for all parties, and remove outdated/conflicting provisions. Mr. Lamb explained the objective of the project is to update/modernize the downtown Zoning districts to a form-based approach that will replace the familiar downtown Central Business and Central Business Limited Districts, amongst others; this objective aligns with community goals, creates tools for the future, and encourages new development. The new document creates a consistent, more user-friendly process for (re)development for residents and developers, while also allowing Staff to provide better service.

Mr. Lamb discussed key features of the new document, such as the HDC regulations comprising their own chapter. Now, definitions from all previous documents have been combined and streamlined into one comprehensive definitions chapter. A key component of the document is less text and more graphical representations, which provide a cleaner layout. This process will also provide the Zoning Administrator greater flexibility. Regarding the Historic District specifically, Mr. Lamb said that updated standards for screening, landscaping, more objective architectural standards, and noise could relate to HDC interests. Currently, any new building in the downtown is reviewed by the HDC but in the new process, new buildings will always be approved either through an administrative process in the form-based zone or otherwise by the Planning Board with clearer and more objective architectural standards for height, openings, transparency, massing, and location

of structures on properties to create interest in the building/streetscape. The HDC retains jurisdiction over existing historic structures in the downtown. The form-based process pursues the same rough form of the current downtown, without predicting what buildings must look like architecturally.

The document is under preliminary review by the Joint Planning Board-Planning, Licenses & Development Committee before the draft will be submitted as an Ordinance to City Council in September, with several remote public forums between now and then to seek feedback and to make the relevant refinements to a final document. For more information visit www.keenebuildingbetter.com or email communitydevelopment@ci.keene.nh.us with questions/feedback. Mr. Lamb will share the document and answer Commission questions and future meetings.

- 6) **New Business**
- 7) **Next Meeting – August 19, 2020**
- 8) **Adjourn**

There being no further business, Chair Weglinski adjourned the meeting at 6:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Katrnya Kibler, Minute Taker
July 21, 2020

Reviewed and edited by Megan Fortson, Planning Technician