

City of Keene  
New Hampshire

**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, February 20, 2019**

**4:30 PM**

**2nd Floor Committee Room,  
City Hall**

**Members Present:**

Hanspeter Weber, Chair  
Andrew Weglinski, Vice Chair  
Erin Benik  
Hans Porchitz  
Nancy Proctor  
Councilor Thomas Powers (Left Early)  
Joslin Kimball Frank, Alternate

**Staff Present:**

Mari Brunner, Acting Planner

**Members Not Present:**

**SITE VISIT: At 3:30 PM in advance of the meeting, Commission members conducted site visits at the following properties: 42-46 Main Street, 17-19 Federal Street, 19-25 West Street, and 34 Court Street.**

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

Chair Weber called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM and Ms. Brunner conducted roll call.

**2) Minutes of Previous Meeting – January 16, 2019**

Mr. Weglinski moved to approve the minutes of January 16, 2019, which Councilor Powers seconded and the Historic District Commission carried unanimously.

**3) Continued Public Hearing**

- a. COA- 2018-03 – 34 West Street – Late Application for Window Replacement – Applicant Greg Johnson, on behalf of owner West Street Keene LLC, requests retroactive approval for replacement of all exterior windows. A waiver is requested from Section XV.B.5.b.2 of the HDC Regulations regarding window appearance and Section XV.B.5.b.3. of the HDC Regulations regarding design materials. The property is ranked as a Primary Resource and is located at 34 West Street (TMP# 575-033-000-000) in the Central Business District.**

Chair Weber opened the public hearing and welcomed Mr. Johnson, who said the owner is unwilling to comply with this Commission's request to install exterior muntin grids on the windows. The owner believes they followed all necessary procedures when requesting building permits and they were not notified that HDC input was necessary. The owner believes the windows have resulted in significant energy savings and that adding muntins is cost prohibitive and would require excessive maintenance (for example, he said nothing could adhere in the cold weather for demonstration purposes).

Mr. Porchitz said he supports the window replacement for energy efficiency but is not content because rules were not followed to comply with HDC standards. He thinks there is a way to compromise by installing muntins only on the façade facing West Street to mitigate costs and provide the aesthetic this Commission is trying to preserve. After the site visit and seeing the different angles, he recommended requiring the muntins on the West Street façade and granting a waiver for the rest of the building.

Ms. Benik asked if Mr. Johnson or the owner attempted to adhere anything to the windows since the January meeting (and in the cold weather). Mr. Johnson replied that they did not try; the general contractor visited the site and said the problem is the cold weather and it was futile to try adhering something before spring or summer.

Chair Weber requested staff comments. Ms. Brunner recalled that the owner requests retroactive approval for the replacement of all exterior windows and requests waivers from Section XV.B.5.b.2 of the HDC Regulations regarding window appearance and Section XV.B.5.b.3. of the HDC Regulations regarding design materials.

Chair Weber recognized Wesley Paige, Senior Warden at St. James Church (direct abutter), who expressed the Church's support for the building's appearance as is. They understand the historic considerations but have no problems with the work that was done as a neighbor.

With no further comments, Chair Weber closed the public hearing. He believes the HDC regulations can be found easily and for such a prominent building in particular, the owner should have researched the relevant City regulations. He recommended that at the very least the applicant should rectify the mistake partially by installing exterior muntins on the West Street façade. He would prefer to see the six windows on the front façade *and* the three windows on the west façade with exterior muntins, but he would be content with just the fix to the windows on the front façade.

Councilor Powers agreed with Chair Weber's idea but recalled that Mr. Johnson reported the owner is unwilling to do anything. He asked what will happen if the Commission denies the waiver and the owner does not comply. He recalled this matter has been continued for months already and the applicant should be proposing solutions to the mistake, not the Commission. Ms. Brunner noted she confirmed with the City Attorney that the Commission does have the ability to grant a partial waiver.

Mr. Porchitz said, in his professional experience, he believes there should be technology available to apply exterior muntins in the field as it has been demonstrated in factory settings.

Ms. Benik asked the cost of muntin installation per window. Mr. Weglinski replied approximately \$614 per window.

Mr. Weglinski made the following motion, which Mr. Porchitz seconded: Move for the HDC to approve a partial waiver from Section XV.B.5.b.2 for change in window appearance for the windows on the south, west, and east facades of the building, a full waiver from Section XV.B.5.b.3 for change in window material, and COA-2018-03 for replacement of all exterior windows as described in the application and supporting materials submitted to the Community Development Department by Greg Johnson on behalf of owner, West Street Keene, LLC on August 23, 2018 with the following conditions:

1. Installation of exterior muntin grids on the six windows on the north façade of the building facing West Street.

Councilor Powers moved to amend the conditions of the previous motion authorizing staff to approve the product used for the exterior muntin grids and to stipulate that the muntin grids shall be installed by June 1, 2019. Ms. Benik seconded the motion, which the Historic District carried unanimously.

On a vote of 7-0, the Historic District Commission approved a partial waiver from Section XV.B.5.b.2 for change in window appearance for the windows on the south, west, and east facades of the building, a full waiver from Section XV.B.5.b.3 for change in window material, and COA-2018-03 for replacement of all exterior windows as described in the application and supporting materials submitted to the Community Development Department by Greg Johnson on behalf of owner, West Street Keene, LLC on August 23, 2018 with the following conditions:

1. Installation of exterior muntin grids on the six windows on the north façade of the building facing West Street. Staff shall approve the product used for the exterior muntin grids. The muntin grids shall be installed by June 1, 2019.

#### 4) Public Hearings

- a. **COA-2019-05 – 34 Court Street – Grace Methodist Church Renovations – Applicant and owner Zach Luse proposes to replace 15 windows and install a 37.4 kW solar system on the roof of the building historically known as the Grace Methodist Church. This property is a Primary Resource and is located at 34 Court Street (TMP# 568-022-000- 000-000) in the Central Business District.**

Mr. Porchitz recused himself from this application hearing. Ms. Brunner recommended accepting the application as complete. Councilor Powers moved to accept application COA-2019-05 as complete, which Mr. Weglinski seconded and the Historic District Commission carried unanimously.

Chair Weber opened the public hearing and welcomed Zach Luse (property owner) and Dan Weeks (ReVision Energy, Nashua). Mr. Luse is a small business owner and also owns what is known as the Grace Methodist Church, the last remaining of the three Court Street churches, which is on the National Historic Register. Very little has changed since it was built 150 years ago; stained glass was added in the early 1900s and the slate roof was replaced with asphalt after the hurricane of 1938. He is excited to save this historic landmark and adapt it for future use. He hopes having a business at this location will add to the economic vitality of downtown. He intends to preserve the historic character as much as possible (interior and exterior). The greatest problem currently is heating costs (tens of thousands annually) that are making it an inviable space for most uses. Most of the improvements involve switching to renewable energy (which aligns with the City's goals) and improving the aesthetics of the building and surrounding area. He highlighted the aspects of the plan:

- Replace the first floor windows with those of similar character – replace the muntin grids almost exactly; one casement window will be restored to its original size
  - The new windows will have a simulated divided light, which Mr. Luse demonstrated on a photo that was provided at the meeting. He brought a sample window to the meeting as well to show what it would look like, but noted the sample does not have the grid pattern that the replacement windows would have.
- Infill a window between the two buildings.
- Replace two second floor windows at the rear of the building.
- Replace the south facing roof surface with asphalt and cover it with a 37.4 kW solar array, which will power the air source heat pumps that will heat and cool the first floor of the building resulting in nearly net zero energy costs for the space.

Mr. Weglinski asked if the Historic Register was consulted for these designs. Mr. Luse replied that it is just a registry and that it does not place restrictions on what can be done to a building unless the owner seeks the Historic Register tax credits; he considered pursuing those tax credits but it was inconvenient timing with the government shut-down. Mr. Weglinski asked then, if these renovations occur, if the building will still be eligible for the Historic Register. Mr. Luse replied yes, once a building is on the register there are no standards or processes to remove them.

Regarding the solar panels, the application said there would be no glare from the solar panels onto neighboring properties and that panels will not be visible from the public right-of-way. Mr. Weglinski asked how the owner can make those guarantees. Mr. Weeks said, in his 15-year professional history, the glare issue has been raised as a question in pre-installation but he has not heard of glare problems post-installation, with the exception of airport properties. Solar panels are designed to absorb sunlight; reflected

sunlight is wasted energy. By coating the thick, tempered glass (low iron content to reduce sun reflection; dimpled to reduce reflection) new technologies have achieved a reflection rate of only 2-8%; snow, for example, has an 80-90% reflection rate. The only other potential issue is the angle of the sun and panels; at this high elevation though, that might only pose a glare issue at sunrise and sunset but it would be a very dull reflection. Mr. Weglinski asked, with the dimpled surface, if the finish is gloss or matte. Mr. Weeks said it is difficult to detect just by looking. He is unsure if the terms apply correctly in this case, but he would call it more of a matte than a gloss. The dark blue or black color of solar cells under the glass is geared toward maximum absorption. The combinations of all of these materials result in the low reflection rate.

Councilor Powers asked if the entire roof is currently asphalt. Mr. Luse replied yes, with the exception of the slate steeple.

Chair Weber asked if the solar panels will have the same lifespan as the asphalt roof. Mr. Luse replied that a typical asphalt roof lasts 20-30 years, while the solar panels could have a lifespan of 40-50 years. However, in this case with virtually the entire south roof covered with solar panels, the lifespan of the roof should be longer because the greatest threat to it is solar radiation and weather.

Chair Weber asked how the edges of the roof and solar panels will align; in some cases there is a visual discrepancy between the two. Mr. Weeks said this situation is straight forward because it is a rectangular roof segment. While the edges will not be perfectly flush, they do not anticipate any visible impacts at that elevation, despite the panels rising 2-3" above the roof. Chair Weber asked if there are exterior muntins on the windows. Mr. Luse replied yes, there will be muntins on the interior and exterior.

Ms. Kimball Frank asked when the building was added to the Historic Register. Mr. Luse believed it was added in the 1980s. Ms. Kimball Frank said she owns a building on the Historic Register and it was her understanding she could not renovate the exterior; she questioned if that does not apply here because the only changes are to windows. Mr. Luse replied that he thinks that is a common misconception about the Historic Register; the National Park Service maintains the list and once a building is on that is there are no restrictions unless claiming the tax credits. He called the state preservation department to confirm there are no restrictions on these renovations.

Chair Weber asked for staff comments. Ms. Brunner reported that this property was originally the site of a wood-frame building, which was used as a Methodist Church from 1852 (its construction date) to 1867 or 1868, when it was sold and moved. The brick structure that stands there today was built in its place in 1868 - 1869 and has remained relatively unaltered. The building was designed by Shepard S. Woodcock, a Boston-based architect known as one of New England's leading exponents of the High Victorian Gothic style, and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (added in 1985).

Ms. Brunner listed the first HDC regulation that applies to this application:

- Section XV.A.7.b. – Streetscape and Building Site – Renewable Energy Systems

1. *The renewable energy system (hereafter "system") shall be installed in a location and manner on the building or lot that is least visible and obtrusive and in such a way that causes the least impact to the historic integrity and character of the historic building, structure, site or district while maintaining efficient operation of the system. The order of preference for the system location is as follows:*
  - a. *The rear or side of the property not facing a public right-of-way;*
  - b. *On accessory buildings or structures (such as sheds and garages) in a location that is least visible from the public right-of-way;*
  - c. *On newer additions to the primary structure in a location that is least visible from the public right-of-way;*
  - d. *On the flat roof of the primary structure, set back so as to be in the least visible location;*
  - e. *On secondary façades or roofs (i.e. not facing the public way) of the primary structure; and*
  - f. *On facades or roofs facing the public way. An applicant is required to prove the higher priority locations are not feasible in order for the HDC to approve system installations on more significant parts of the site.*
2. *The system must be installed in such a manner that it can be removed and not damage the historic building, structure, or site it is associated with.*
3. *In order to minimize visual impacts, colors of equipment and assemblies shall either be muted or shall match nearby materials and colors. The solar panels should be positioned to minimize glare onto neighboring properties.*
4. *Roof mounted solar photovoltaic systems on pitched roofs shall be on the same plane as the roof and positioned so as to be in the least visible location.*
5. *Solar array grids should be regular in shape and jointed. Multi-roof solutions should be avoided.*
6. *All supplementary equipment and supply lines shall be placed in inconspicuous locations and/or concealed from view with architectural elements (e.g. downspouts) or other screening.*

Ms. Brunner explained how the application addresses these regulations. The applicant proposes a 37.4 kW solar photovoltaic system that would be installed in two rectangular sections on the south-facing pitched roof. Due to the site configuration, this is the only feasible location for a solar array on the site. From the street level directly in front of the building or to the north of the building, the array will not be visible. However, it will be visible to someone standing south of the building looking north. The applicant proposes to use muted colors that will match the surrounding materials as closely as possible. A new asphalt roof with dark gray shingles will be installed, replacing the existing asphalt roof that was installed in 1938 and which the applicant notes is in bad repair. The solar arrays will be a uniform shape and the contractor, ReVision Energy, has stated that they will not be a source of glare for neighboring properties. They are only expected to reflect 2% of the light that hits them due to the following:

- The solar panels are made of "high-transmission, low-iron" glass to absorb as much light as possible;

- The solar panel surface is dimpled to diffuse light, increase light absorption, and decrease light reflection; and
- The solar panels have an anti-reflective surface treatment to maximize absorption.

In addition, the solar contractor has stated that any light reflected off the panel will bounce back at a higher angle than the surrounding buildings, and notes that the lowest portion of the lower roof of the church is still above any of the highest windows in the closest apartment building on the south side. Based on this information, there should be minimal or no impacts from glare on neighboring properties. Ms. Brunner also conducted her own analysis of the site; on the summer equinox at noon, the roof would have to be at a 54 degree angle for a horizontal glare. She was unsure of the roof pitch exactly, but it appears approximately 50 degrees. She said she is not an expert but based on her attempts glare did not seem likely at any other time of year.

Regarding supplementary equipment and supply lines, the applicant has noted that the only visible piece of equipment will be an electrical disconnect box that will be placed next to the existing power meter box on the eastern side of the bell tower, approximately 3'-4' above the ground. The applicant proposes to match the color and appearance of the new equipment to that of the existing in this area.

Ms. Brunner listed the next HDC regulation relevant to this application:

- Section XV.B.5.b.1-4 – Building Rehabilitation – Windows
  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:*
    - a. *clear-paned, non-tinted glass (except to replace historic stained or other types of translucent or opaque glass); and*
    - b. *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.*
  3. *If the historic window to be replaced is wood, the replacement window shall also be wood, or wood clad with aluminum or a material of equal quality and approved by the Historic District Commission.*
  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.*

Ms. Brunner explained how the application addresses these regulations. The applicant proposes to replace 13 first floor windows on the sides and rear of the building and two second floor windows on the rear of the building. The existing wood windows are double hung with a six over six grid arrangement and true divided lights. The proposed replacement windows would be “Wood-Ultrex® Insert Double Hung” windows from Marvin Windows and Doors. They would be wood windows with a Fiberglass coating on the exterior and simulated divided lights with a spacer bar between the glass. The

applicant has noted that the existing exterior wood trim would be stripped and repainted, but would otherwise remain intact. The existing wood window sill will be overlaid with a thin tapered piece of wood and painted to match the existing in order to provide better drainage and prevent water damage. The existing granite sills will not be altered or removed.

There is one window on the north side of the building toward the rear, which was replaced with a smaller casement window; the applicant proposes to restore this window to its original size to match the other windows on the north façade of the building. In addition, there is one window on the south side of the building that is blocked from view by the building next door; the applicant proposes to infill this window. The applicant has provided floor plans for the building that show the locations of the windows proposed for replacement, along with the window to be restored to its original size and the window to be infilled. These floor plans are included in the meeting packet. The applicant has noted that the proposed replacement windows would match the existing as closely as possible in terms of size, dimensions, and grid arrangement. They would be painted a dark bronze color, which the applicant notes is closer to their original color based on historic photographs. The window details provided by the applicant and photos of the existing windows as they appear today are included in the meeting packet.

Chair Weber recognized Peter Poanessa (36 Dickinson Road), who spoke in support of the renovations.

Chair Weber asked if the window color can be customized before installation. Mr. Luse replied yes, he is looking at a bronze color window frame that seems similar to the original; the trims will have to be painted to match.

Chair Weber recognized Hans Porchitz (46 Probate Street) who spoke in favor of these renovations as they align with the City's 100% renewable energy goals. He thinks this is a good use of the building, which is in an ideal location/position for a solar array that can make the building self-sustaining.

Chair Weber asked what Mr. Luse's business is. Mr. Luse said he owns Paragon Digital Marketing, which has a staff of 13 currently and is growing.

With no further comments, Chair Weber closed the public hearing.

Mr. Weglinski said he had no problems with the windows or the solar panels on the lower portion of the roof. However, he was concerned about solar panels on the upper portion of the roof because they will be very visible on such a prominent historic building; however, he is conflicted because he supports renewable energy and the great reuse of this historic building.

Councilor Powers made the following motion, which Ms. Benik seconded. On a vote of 5-1, the Historic District Commission approved COA-2019-05 for replacement of 15 windows and installation of a 37.4 kW solar array on the property located at 34 Court



Street (TMP# 568-022-000-000-000) as presented in the application and supporting materials submitted to the Community Development Department on January 30, 2019 with no conditions. Mr. Weglinski opposed.

- b. COA-2019-02 – 42-46 Main Street – Walldogs Mural – Applicant Magical History Tour, on behalf of owner Tridee Associates Inc., proposes to paint a mural not to exceed 270 sf in size on the north façade of the building historically known as the Woolworth Building. The property is ranked as a Contributing Resource and is located at 42-46 Main Street (TMP# 575-055-000-000-000) in the Central Business District**

Mr. Porchitz returned to the Commission.

The next three applications are part of a larger project called Walldogs in Keene: Magical History Tour. Since all of these applications are part of the same project, Chair Weber asked the applicant to first provide background information about the overall project before the Commission would consider and vote on each application separately.

Mr. Poanessa and Judy Rogers (Woodbury Street) provided an overview of the Walldogs festival. The festival will produce permanent outdoor artwork depicting local historical content, bringing in artists from outside the area and local artists together for three days in June 2019. These will be the last applications for the festival before the HDC.

The following three applications all refer to the same relevant HDC regulations the applicant must meet for approval, as follows:

- Section XV.B.2.b.3 – Masonry
  - *3) Masonry shall not be sandblasted or abrasively cleaned, but cleaned with the gentlest method possible, such as low-pressure cleaning at garden hose pressure, using water or detergents.*
- Section XV.B.2.b.5 – Masonry
  - *5) If currently unpainted, masonry other than concrete masonry shall not be painted, unless there is physical, pictorial or documentary evidence that the building was historically intended to be painted or unless a painted mural is proposed which meets all of the following conditions:*
    - *i. The mural will enhance or complement the historic or architectural features of the structure or site, and*
    - *ii. The mural will enhance or complement the historic character or context of the surrounding area, and*
    - *iii. The mural will showcase images of local places, people, and/or products that have historic significance to Keene and/or the surrounding region, and*
    - *iv. The mural will be designed by a professional mural artist or sign painter, and*
    - *v. The mural is not located on the primary elevation of a Primary or Contributing Resource, and*

- *vi. The mural will not cover more than 40% of the surface area of a building or structure façade, and*
- *vii. The applicant has demonstrated that the proposed surface treatment is appropriate for historic brick or stone masonry materials. Waterproof coatings shall be prohibited.*

Additionally, the applicants agree that the murals proposed in the three following applications will incorporate images of local people, places, or products that have historic significance to Keene and/or the surrounding region. The mural will be designed by a professional mural artist or sign painter, and will be painted with help from volunteers. Also, as noted in the project backgrounds, the brick surfaces of all proposed murals will be cleaned using a mild soap and scrub brush, and rinsed with water at garden hose pressure.

Chair Weber introduced application COA-2019-02 and Ms. Brunner recommended accepting the application as complete. Mr. Weglinski moved to accept application COA-2019-02 as complete, which Councilor Powers seconded and the Historic District Commission carried unanimously.

Mr. Poanessa said this was a wall they hoped for but it was in the process of changing ownership. The new owner was amenable to a mural and this wall is preferred to the other wall approved previously by the HDC. It is a ground level, north-facing wall that fits nicely along the footprint of the walking tour.

Chair Weber requested staff comments. Ms. Brunner recalled the relevant HDC regulations (above) and discussed how this application addresses those standards. The applicant proposes to paint a mural in the style of a classic painted building advertisement on the north side of the building. The proposed mural would be approximately 9' tall and 30' long (270 sf, or about 4% of the surface area of the 7,000 sf façade). This location is visible from Church Street and Main Street, but is not on the primary elevation of the building. The applicant proposes to use 100% acrylic paint; no waterproof coatings are proposed. Mr. Poanessa said this mural is being designed by one of the best mural artists in the country.

With no further comments, Chair Weber closed the public hearing.

Mr. Weglinski made the following motion, which Councilor Powers seconded. On a vote of 7-0, the Historic District Commission approved COA-2019-02 for installation of a painted mural on the north façade of the building located at 42-46 Main Street (TMP# 575-055-000-000-000) as presented in the application submitted to the Community Development Department on January 28, 2019 by Magical History Tour on behalf of owner, Tridee Associates Inc. with the following conditions: 1. Staff review of mural design prior to painting to confirm conformance with Section XV.B.2.b.5 of the HDC Regulations.

- c. **COA-2019-03 – 17-19 Federal Street – Walldogs Mural – Applicant Magical History Tour, on behalf of owner Parish of Saint James Church, proposes to paint a mural not to exceed 152 sf in size on the south façade of the building known as the Jonathan Daniels Building. The property is ranked as a Contributing Resource and is located at 17-19 Federal Street (TMP# 575-028-000-000-000) in the Central Business District.**

Ms. Brunner recommended accepting this application as complete. Councilor Powers moved to accept application COA-2019-03 as complete, which Mr. Weglinski seconded and the Historic District Commission carried unanimously.

Mr. Poanessa said this is a south-facing wall so it will have muted tones to age well with sun exposure. This mural will replace the one currently on the back of the Comic Boom building. It makes sense to have the Jonathan Daniels mural on his namesake building. This wall will replace another the HDC already approved because this is a better wall that is visible widely though the center of the City.

Chair Weber requested staff comments. Ms. Brunner recalled the relevant regulations (above) and discussed how the application addresses those standards. The applicant proposes to paint a mural in the style of a classic painted building advertisement on the south side, or rear, of the building. The proposed mural would be in either a landscape or portrait orientation, depending on the preference of the mural designer, and would be no more than 152 sf, or about 4% of the surface area of the 3,600 sf façade. This location is visible from Federal Street and the Gilbo Avenue parking lot. The applicant proposes to use 100% acrylic paint; no waterproof coatings are proposed. The chosen theme for the mural is Jonathan Daniels; however the mural design has yet to be finalized.

Chair Weber recognized Elsa Worth, Director of St. James Church, who spoke in favor of the mural. The location is visible and relevant for the church.

With no further comments, Chair Weber closed the public hearing.

Ms. Proctor made the following motion, which Councilor Powers seconded. On a vote of 7-0, the Historic District Commission approved COA-2019-03 for installation of a painted mural on the south façade of the building located at 17-19 Federal Street (TMP# 575-028-000-000-000) as presented in the application submitted to the Community Development Department on January 28, 2019 by Magical History Tour on behalf of owner, Parish of Saint James Church with the following conditions: 1. Staff review of mural design prior to painting to confirm conformance with Section XV.B.2.b.5 of the HDC Regulations.

- d. **COA-2019-04 – 19-25 West Street – Walldogs Mural – Applicant Magical History Tour, on behalf of owner Whetstone Ltd., proposes to paint a mural not to exceed 330 sf in size on the west façade of the building known as the Howe Block. The property is ranked as a**

**Contributing Resource and is located at 19-25 West Street (TMP# 575-050-000-000-000) in the Central Business District.**

Ms. Brunner recommended accepting this application as complete. Councilor Powers moved to accept application COA-2019-04 as complete, which Mr. Porchitz seconded and the Historic District Commission carried unanimously.

Mr. Poanessa said this wall was a preferred location initially but they had difficulty contacting the building owner. The owner finally agreed to a mural, so this west-facing wall is visible location that is also protected well from the sun by the building adjacent. Ms. Rogers added there is mismatched brick on this wall that the mural will mask. This will replace the mural on the Court House approved already by the HDC.

Ms. Kimball Frank asked which three applications were withdrawn. Mr. Poanessa replied the approved mural locations on the Miller Brothers Building (in the alley facing The Colonial Theatre), the Comic Boom building at 22 West Street, and the Court House at 12 Court Street are all being withdrawn. There will still be a mural on the apothecary building (in the alley facing Lamson Street).

Chair Weber asked if there used to be window openings on the wall. Ms. Kimball Frank said the building used to connect to an adjacent grocery store.

Chair Weber asked for staff comments. Ms. Brunner recalled the relevant regulations (above) and discussed how the application meets those standards. The applicant proposes to paint a mural in the style of a classic painted building advertisement on the west side of the building. The proposed mural would be approximately 10' tall and 33' wide (330 sf, or about 19% of the surface area of the 1,750 sf façade). This location is visible from West Street looking east, but is not on the primary elevation of the building. The applicant proposes to use 100% acrylic paint; no waterproof coatings are proposed. The theme for this mural is land conservation.

With no comments, Chair Weber closed the public hearing. He said he hopes the building owner will do something about the flashing so it does not distract from the mural. Mr. Poanessa agreed.

Mr. Weglinski made the following motion, which Councilor Powers seconded. On a vote of 7-0, the Historic District Commission approved COA-2019-04 for installation of a painted mural on the west façade of the building located at 19-25 West Street (TMP# 575-050-000-000-000) as presented in the application submitted to the Community Development Department on January 28, 2019 by Magical History Tour on behalf of owner, Whetstone Ltd. with the following conditions: 1. Staff review of mural design prior to painting to confirm conformance with Section XV.B.2.b.5 of the HDC Regulations.

**5) Advice and Comment**

Ms. Brunner explained that Mr. Poanessa and Ms. Rogers were present to seek advice and comment on how to handle proposed minor modifications to murals approved already by the HDC – by the Commission or administratively. There is not clear direction in the regulations. Mr. Poanessa said there could be further minor modifications to other murals as the artists submit their designs and they hope to know what Commission approval they will need for that. Ms. Rogers explained the two proposed modifications for discussion.

**a. Walldogs Mural at 16 Church Street – Peter Poanessa and Judy Rogers of Magical History Tour seek input from the HDC on proposed modifications to COA-2018-10 for the previously approved mural on the building historically known as the Cracker Factory.**

Ms. Rogers said the designer working on this mural suggested that it should be larger, which Ms. Benik also suggested. This would change the shape and extend below the original footprint. It is still a small mural in the context of the wall but is better balanced on the wall.

**b. Walldogs Mural at 3 Washington Street - Peter Poanessa and Judy Rogers of Magical History Tour seek input from the HDC on proposed modifications to COA-2018-06 for the previously approved mural on City Hall.**

Ms. Rogers said they seek to increase the original footprint slightly to best balance the windows, extending the mural toward Main Street. Ms. Rogers echoed the question if these minor modifications can be approved administratively.

Ms. Brunner noted the various fees applicants are subject to and staff time for every major project application that comes before the Commission. If these proposed changes are treated as a minor project and approved administratively, the opportunity for Commission and public comment is eliminated. There are threshold criteria developed by the HDC that typically delineate what projects go to the Commission or staff; however, with new regulations for murals, it is not yet clear what the process is for modifications to murals approved already.

Commission members agreed that these minor modifications can be approved administratively. Ms. Brunner recalled that in any case staff feels the mural does not meet criteria, they would advise the applicants to go before the Commission.

**6) Staff Updates**

**a. Resource Ranking Update**

The Historic District properties and their rankings are listed in the meeting packet as well as a list of all buildings in the Historic District not yet ranked. The meeting packet also included definitions for the different rankings. Ms. Brunner spoke with the Chair of the Heritage Commission and they will see if someone from their Commission is interested

in helping with a Resource Ranking Subcommittee. She asked HDC members to consider who might want to serve on the subcommittee. This discussion will continue at the March meeting.

**b. Grace Methodist Church 79-E Application – Letter from HDC**

Mr. Luse is also applying for the City's NH RSA 79-E tax credits. Chair Weber signed a letter in support of that application stating that this is a historic building; the letter is included in the meeting packet.

**c. 2018 List of Administrative Approvals**

Ms. Brunner said staff is supposed to provide regular updates to the Commission on minor projects that have been approved administratively. She provided a list of the six projects approved by staff in 2018 in the meeting packet, all of which met the threshold criteria for minor projects. Non-contributing and incompatible resources can be designated as minor projects by the Community Development Director, which happened once in 2018.

**7) Next Meeting – March 20, 2019**

Ms. Brunner noted that Sam Temple, the owner of Firedog Breads in the Historic District, is interested in serving on the Commission and will submit a letter of interest to the Mayor.

**8) Adjournment**

Hearing no further business, Chair Weber adjourned the meeting at 6:17 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Katryna Kibler, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by Mari Brunner, Acting Planner