

City of Keene
New Hampshire

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, January 15, 2020

4:30 PM

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

Members Present:

Andrew Weglinski, Chair
Hanspeter Weber
Nancy Proctor
Hans Porchitz
Dave Bergeron, Alternate

Staff Present:

Mari Brunner, Planner
Megan Fortson, Planning Technician

Members Not Present:

Erin Benik
Sam Temple
Joslin Kimball Frank, Alternate
Paul Cooper, Alternate

At 4:00 PM, Commission members conducted a site visit of 48 Emerald Street.

1) Call to Order & Roll Call

The meeting began at 4:31 PM and Ms. Brunner conducted roll call.

2) Election of Chair & Vice Chair

Mr. Bergeron nominated Mr. Weglinski as Chair of the Historic District Commission for the 2020 calendar year, which Ms. Proctor seconded and the Commission approved unanimously. Chair Weglinski nominated Mr. Porchitz as Vice Chair but he declined due to other commitments. Because no other Commission members could accept the role, the Commission will move forward without a Vice Chair at this time.

3) Minutes of Previous Meeting – September 18, 2019

Ms. Proctor moved to approve the minutes of September 18, 2019, which Mr. Porchitz seconded and the Historic District Commission carried unanimously.

4) Welcome & Introduction from Mayor Hansel

The Mayor did not attend.

5) **Public Hearings**

- a. **COA-2014-07, Modification #2 – 37 Mechanic Street – Applicant Bob Furlone, on behalf of owner The Community Kitchen Inc., proposes to replace the existing roof and install a rooftop solar PV array on the building located at 37 Mechanic Street (TMP# 554-087-000). The property is ranked as a Primary resource and is located in the Central Business district.**

Chair Weglinski opened the public hearing and Ms. Brunner reported that the applicant requested exemptions from providing existing and proposed condition plans because no changes to the site are proposed.

Chair Weglinski recognized the applicant, Bob Furlone, who spoke on behalf of the Community Kitchen (37 Mechanic Street, Keene), which is applying for a Community Development Block Grant from the NH Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA) in January of 2020 to complete the project that started in 2017/2018. Improvements made at that time were primarily focused on new refrigeration, kitchen renovations, a new food conveyor to move food to the newly constructed second floor, and replacement of all florescent lighting with LEDs. These improvements resulted in lowering the Kitchen's electricity usage by 18-20%, while expanding the footprint of refrigeration. Mr. Furlone said that a large part of the current project plans for the replacement of the aging roofing, adding roof insulation, and reinforcing the existing roof structure to allow for the installation of a rooftop solar array. They looked into installing a solar array through a power purchase agreement (PPA), but it would be 15-20 years before the kitchen sees a benefit. Therefore, they decided to apply for a grant to make the purchase of a solar array possible. They also plan to replace the kitchen hood, including adding make-up air, as well as modest office reconfiguration to meet the current client demand, and restroom improvements. The existing two-story structure will have no visible changes to the exterior but for the addition of the array and related hardware. Existing parapets on the east and west (partial) ends of the building will shield most of the array to vehicular and foot traffic on Mechanic Street.

Although the plans are not final at this time, Mr. Furlone said the plan is to install the largest system possible while staying within the building codes and Keene HDC guidelines. As a part of the planning, they may replace one or two of the existing gas-fired rooftop HVAC units with energy-efficient electrically powered units, thereby giving more space for solar. The tilt of the array and specific equipment choices have not been made at this time as the applicant awaits the grant decision. If successful, the plans will be completed in time for construction in 2020, at which time the applicant agreed to provide the HDC all final equipment information. Since this portion of the work represents much of their project, the CDFFA has requested that the applicant receive conditional approval on this portion of the work prior to submitting the application.

Mr. Bergeron asked what rooftop units might be removed and Mr. Furlone said the plan is to remove the unit in the northwest corner and possibly the unit in the northeast corner as well.

Mr. Weber asked if the applicant planned to reinforce the roof structure but not rebuild it. Mr. Furlone replied in the affirmative and said the front roof and back roof structures are different. The back roof used to be a three-story building and so they are different construction and they are vetting that back roof right now. The front roof indeed only needs reinforcement. Mr. Weber noted that the building was essentially leveled in the 1938 storm and asked how badly the building was actually damaged. Mr. Furlone thought it was not the hurricane but actually a fire that took off the third floor, from which some remnants remain.

He said the structure from the roof down is sound with concrete on the bottom, a solid second floor, and masonry and exterior walls in sound condition. He said the back roof is actually built better than the front roof, which is why he could not say how the racking would be distributed on the roof to handle the load but it will be overseen by an engineer regardless.

Mr. Weber asked what percentage of the building's electricity would be covered by the panels. Mr. Furlone was optimistic that the panels would cover 45-48% of demand. During the last iteration of this building update, they replaced many walk-in coolers and freezers that were donated as used in the 1990s with brand new units and new LED lighting reduced the demand at that time by approximately 20%, which was significant. Doing so through a PPA would have been a 15-year payback before the kitchen saw benefit, which is why they are pursuing a grant to help cover the cost of the system instead.

Mr. Porchitz asked if there would be a battery backup or if the building would be net metered. Mr. Furlone said it would be entirely grid-tied with no batteries.

Mr. Bergeron asked if the panels would be standard PV panels placed on a rack system on the roof. Mr. Furlone said they would be tilted about 10% on the front and back; he said the back roof is symmetrical even though it was an addition. They are working to determine the structure because there is steel in the back to which a racking system can be attached. He said the installation would not be like Adams Hall out at Keene State College that sticks up 20-30', it will still be tiered down the roof.

Ms. Brunner referred to the meeting packet and said the hurricane information might not have been correct. The building was built sometime 1883-1886 and used to be a three-story building. Ms. Brunner said that this property has received two prior approvals from the HDC. In September 2014, the Community Kitchen received approval for the installation of a shed and screening for the existing generator and dumpsters on site (COA-2014-07). In April 2018, the Community Kitchen received approval for minor alterations to the building exterior, including repairs to the masonry and trim (COA-2014-07, Modification #1). The applicant proposes to replace the existing roof structure to allow for the installation of a rooftop solar PV array. As part of this project, the existing rooftop HVAC units may be replaced. At this time, the applicant has not selected a final vendor and does not have information about the solar PV array specifications, size, or precise location; however, the applicant is seeking a conditional approval to demonstrate project viability for a Community Development Block Grant application that is due in late January 2020. Staff determined that the requested exemptions would have no bearing on the merits of the application and as such, Ms. Brunner recommended accepting the application as complete. Mr. Bergeron moved to accept application COA-2014-07, Modification #2 as complete, which Mr. Porchitz seconded and the HDC carried unanimously.

Included below is an analysis of the relevant standards of the HDC Regulations for a Streetscape and Building Site:

7. *Renewable Energy Systems*

b. *Design Standards*

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 reported that the applicant proposes to install a solar photovoltaic system on the flat roof of the primary structure. This location appears to be the preferred location on the site because the rear of the property is visible from Pleasant Street, there are no accessory buildings that would be suitable for a solar PV array of the appropriate size, and there are no new additions to the building; as such, the first standard appeared to be met.

Ms. Brunner continued explaining that the applicant did not yet have details about the specific product or mounting system that will be used; however, the system would be installed on a new roof that is not historic and so the second standard appeared to be met. The applicant did not yet have details about the specific product finishes and colors although the panels will most likely be oriented facing south with an anti-reflective coating. Ms. Brunner said because there is no information about color, size, etc., she recommended that the Commission may wish to include staff approval of the solar PV system finishes and colors as a condition of approval for this project to ensure the finishes are either muted or match nearby materials and colors; doing so should satisfy the third standard. Ms. Brunner said that the applicant proposes to install the solar system on a flat roof, and thus the fourth standard did not apply.

Based on the initial plans, Ms. Brunner said that the applicant intended to install a rooftop solar PV system that is roughly rectangular, with setbacks from the roof and access aisles as required by the Fire Code. The entire system will be on the same roof plane and sometimes there might be equipment to work around on the roof. Ms. Brunner said that the Commission might wish to include staff approval of the solar array grid as a condition of approval for this project to ensure that the grid array is regular in shape and jointed; doing so should satisfy the fifth criteria. The applicant does not yet have details about the exact locations of supplementary equipment and supply lines. Ms. Brunner said that the Commission

might wish to include staff approval of location of supplementary equipment and supply lines as a condition of approval for this project to ensure they are either concealed from view, screened, or camouflaged to match the color of the underlying structure; doing so should satisfy the sixth standard.

Ms. Brunner shared the relevant HDC Regulations for Building Rehabilitation of Primary and Contributing Resources:

4. Roofs and Roof Structures

b. Design Standards

- 1) The original or historic roofline shall not be altered. Raising or lowering the existing roofline shall only be allowed for the purpose of restoring the roof to its original profile.*
- 3) Character-defining chimneys shall not be removed, unless determined a safety hazard by the Code Inspector, and repair constitutes an economic hardship. Details of these chimneys, such as corbelling, stepped bases, terra cotta chimney pots and paneled sides, shall not be altered.*
- 7) Unpainted, mill-finished aluminum shall not be used for replacement flashing, gutters, or downspouts.*

Ms. Brunner said the applicant proposed to replace the existing roof, which is not structurally capable of supporting a roof-mounted solar PV array, with a new roof that is structurally capable of supporting such a structure. The material of the existing roof is single-ply membrane PVC roofing that is not historic to the building (installed in 1996). The applicant does not propose to alter the roofline of the building, and all existing chimney structures will be left intact. The applicant noted in a correspondence with staff that the roof flashing will be replaced with materials that match the new roof, and that unpainted, mill-finished aluminum will not be used for any replacement flashing, gutters, or downspouts.

Mr. Porschitz said the building's current power disconnection boxes are already on the back of the building and he asked if it would be similar with the PV array. Mr. Furlone said there is overhead service at the southwest entrance and while he could not guarantee the shut-off would be in the same location because he cannot work with contractors yet (it could prohibit bidding per CDFR rules). However, he said that all decisions would be made in accordance with City Code.

With no comments in favor or opposition, Chair Weglinski closed the public hearing. All Commission members supported voting in favor of this application because the installation would be largely invisible and it would benefit the City's goal of a lower energy footprint. Because the applicant would submit the final products for review by staff, Chair Weglinski was also in favor.

Mr. Weber made the following motion, which Ms. Proctor seconded.

With a vote of 5-0, the Historic District Commission approved COA-2014-07, Modification #2 for the installation of a new roof and a rooftop solar PV array on the existing building located at 37 Mechanic Street (TMP# 554-087-000) as presented in the application and supporting materials submitted to the Community Development Department on December 26, 2019, with the following conditions:

1. Prior to the issuance of a building permit:
 - a. Staff approval of solar PV system to ensure the finishes and colors are muted or match the color of the underlying roof structure and the grid array is regular in shape and jointed.

b. Staff approval of location of supplementary equipment and supply lines to ensure they are either concealed from view, screened, or camouflaged to match the color of the underlying structure.

- b. COA-2019-09 – 48 Emerald Street – Applicant Murphy’s Café LLC, on behalf of owner Sanel Realty Company Inc., proposes a new dumpster and minor masonry repairs for the former H.W. Hubbard Machine Shop building at 48 Emerald Street (TMP# 584-067-000). The property is ranked as a Contributing Resource and is located in the Central Business Limited District.**

Ms. Brunner recommended accepting this application as complete. Mr. Weber moved to accept application COA-2019-09 as complete, which Mr. Bergeron seconded and the Historic District Commission carried unanimously.

Chair Weglinski recognized Katie Sutherland of KCS Architects, representing the applicants, Jeff and Eliza Murphy, owners of Terra Nova and Brewbakers Café. Ms. Sutherland said the project at 48 Emerald Street is mostly an interior one, changing the use from retail to restaurant. There is some exterior work needed, which is mostly maintenance and adding a dumpster screen, the latter of which triggered the major project application. She referred to before and after site plans, which show similarity and show where the dumpster is proposed covering a parking space. The side of the dumpster screen would be visible from Wilson Street. She showed a diagram of retail versus café use before and after this work, which was submitted to the Planning Board. She said this application is for the dumpster screen. The applicant proposed a 6’ high solid wood fence painted opaque dark grey to match some other exterior paint on the building. There is also proposed masonry repair on the primary façade. She said that there is a large crack around the window jam and header around the front storefront, which is an unoriginal opening. The storefront window will be removed and repointed to repair the jam. The applicants are committed to reusing as many bricks as possible and the masonry will follow Secretary of the Interior guidelines for masonry and mortar mix. Ms. Sutherland showed a brick sample. She continued saying that maintenance work included replacing the middle section of roofing just behind the original volume of the building and original roof, which is failing. The roof frame and roofing will be replaced in kind. There will also be some mechanical equipment located on the flat portion of the roof, which would be screened from public way by the front of the building and side gable adjacent to it.

Ms. Proctor asked how many sides of the dumpster would be screened. Ms. Sutherland said two sides: along Wilson Street and turning the corner into the parking lot for the distance of the dumpster. She said they anticipate a two-yard dumpster and if it were taller than 6’, the screen would be adjusted to the same height as the dumpster.

Mr. Weber referred to the proposed grey color of the screen. He understood why grey was chosen to match the windows on the back of the building, but he wondered if it would be less visible if painted red to match the brick. Ms. Proctor preferred the red. The Commission referred to another part of the building currently painted white, which they did not prefer, and asked if that would be repainted. Ms. Sutherland said those updates were not in the budget at this time and she could not commit to those being repainted in the future. Mr. Porchitz said that there are already three different red color bricks on the building and therefore he preferred painting the screen grey versus introducing another red. Ms. Sutherland thought the applicant would be amenable to changing the color if necessary. She added that the back middle section of the building is a nice grey color and she planned to propose to the applicant that they paint some of the

window panels that same grey color for consistency. That change would not be required for HDC review. Mr. Bergeron asked if the dumpster screen would be a clear finish. Ms. Sutherland said it was shown as such in the application but it would be opaque grey. Ms. Proctor thought that not fixing the white portions mentioned above would be distracting and suggested painting the white as the same grey color. Chair Weglinski said that paint is an existing condition and not a matter for this Commission. Ms. Sutherland said some of the white panels are being removed on the other side of the building. Mr. Weber saw “drive-thru” window listed on the application and Ms. Sutherland said that was from the ITE Manual for the Planning Board but there would not be one at this location.

Ms. Brunner referenced the historic photo of the building included in the meeting packet and explained the HDC criteria relevant in this application, beginning with §XV.A.5.b – Streetscape and Building Site – Utility, Service, and Mechanical Equipment:

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

Ms. Brunner said that the applicant proposes to replace and relocate existing rooftop mechanical equipment on both the middle and rear additions of the building, as well as to replace the roof on the middle section of the building. Currently, there are two exhaust pipes on the middle section of the roof and an air condensing unit and an exhaust pipe on the rear section. The applicant proposes to replace this equipment with new equipment located on the middle section of the roof. In addition, a PVC drain will be removed from the west building façade and an air condensing unit will be removed from the east façade. New equipment to be installed includes a make-up air unit, two exhaust pipes, and a condenser unit. The elevations submitted by the applicant show the new rooftop mechanical equipment on the east side of the middle section of the roof, which sits closest to the parking lot. Placing the equipment in this location will help reduce its visibility from Wilson Street. These standards appeared to be met.

4. *Bulk waste containers and waste storage containers shall be located – and appropriately screened—so as to be as inconspicuous as possible from the public right-of-way and adjacent buildings in residential use. In addition:*
 - a. *Bulk waste and waste storage containers shall be located in rear or side yards and shall be to the rear of the front line of any building;*
 - b. *Screening shall be required if any portion of the bulk waste or waste storage container is visible from the public way;*
 - c. *Screening shall consist of a solid wall or fence and a gate.*
 - d. *Screening shall be a minimum of six (6) feet in height or a height equal to the height of the waste container if the container height is greater than six (6) feet;*
 - e. *Screening shall be of a material, color, size, and pattern compatible with the building(s) or structure(s) on the site;*
 - f. *Chain link fence or chain link fence with interwoven slats shall not be acceptable screening.*
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 the applicant proposes to place a dumpster at the rear of the building. The dumpster will be screened by 6' northern white cedar fencing that will be opaque-stained dark gray to match the existing brick mortar on the building. Due to its location, the dumpster will only be visible to drivers traveling past the property on Wilson Street and so the fourth standard appeared to be met. Ms. Brunner continued that as a part of the replacement of rooftop mechanical equipment, a new 78" by 30" air intake louver would be installed in the rear gable of the original building. While this exceeds the 70 square inches indicated in standard five above, this louver will be located on the rear of the building, not facing any street and so the fifth standard appears to be met.

Ms. Brunner read the next relevant HDC standards in §XV.B.2.b – Building Rehabilitation – Masonry:

2. *Masonry shall be cleaned only when necessary to halt deterioration or remove heavy soiling.*
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.*
6. *Repointing shall be undertaken only to address deteriorated masonry or in areas where moisture infiltration is a problem. The amount of wall area to be repointed shall be limited to the affected area. The new mortar joints shall match the original as closely as possible in terms of profile, width, and mortar composition. The new mortar shall match the color of the mortar used when the building was built; or it shall match aged or weathered mortar color, whichever is more appropriate. The color of all mortar shall come from the aggregate and not the binder. Upon completion of the repointing, all remaining mortar and residual film shall be cleaned from the façade of the building.*
7. *Brick walls that require repair with replacement brick shall be repaired with bricks that match the original as closely as possible in terms of size, color and texture.*

Ms. Brunner said the applicant proposes to replace the existing masonry window jamb on the front façade of the building, which according to an engineer has settled, and is structurally unstable. The masonry would need to be rebuilt from the lintel to the foundation. The applicant proposes to match the existing mortar and reuse existing bricks, if possible. The applicant brought samples of the bricks to be used (the proposed brick replacement product has been identified as “Glen-Gery Brick – Molded Series 53-DD”), if the original bricks cannot be salvaged during repairs. The applicant does not propose to clean the masonry prior to repairs. Because the applicant was unable to bring a mortar sample to the meeting, Ms. Brunner suggested the Commission might wish to include staff approval of the mortar type and a test patch prior to brick repointing as conditions of approval.

Ms. Brunner said there were two items that do not require Certificates of Appropriateness; however, since they are being done at the same time as the rest of the work, they are mentioned in the staff report so the Commission is aware this work would be happening. This includes the replacement of the roof structure located on the middle portion of the building. The roof is currently made of a dark gray roofing membrane. The new roof will be replaced within the same roofline and will be made of a similar material. This work does not require approval by the Historic District Commission. In addition, the applicant proposes to relocate one window on the west façade of the middle addition to the building, swapping it with the boarded window immediately adjacent, resulting in no net change in the number of exposed windows. The applicant also proposes to rehabilitate and repair five windows on the first floor of the oldest section of the building, and to refurbish the top sash of two windows on the middle section of the building by removing the white plywood that is currently covering them and repairing them, where possible. In addition, some of these windows will also have interior storm window panels installed. Per

Section XV.B.5.d of the regulations regarding “Projects that do not require COA,” window repairs and the installation of interior storm windows do not require approval from the Historic District Commission.

Mr. Porchitz said it is almost impossible to match brick and asked the primary motivation for choosing the sample presented, knowing the primary façade already has a variety of bricks. Ms. Sutherland said the sample was the closest she found locally to the original and it is used often for the replacement of brick on historic buildings.

With no comments in favor or opposition, Chair Weglinski closed the public hearing.

Mr. Bergeron said he has driven past the building in question many times hoping that it would be improved. The Commission was happy with the building being rejuvenated and with the possibility of further improvements, which Ms. Sutherland thought they might return for next year. Mr. Bergeron made the following motion, which Mr. Porchitz seconded.

On a vote of 5-0, the Historic District Commission approved COA-2019-09 for placement of a dumpster, relocation and installation of new mechanical roof equipment, and minor masonry repairs to property located at 48 Emerald Street (TMP# 584-067-000) as presented in the site plan identified as “Renovations to 48 Emerald St.,” prepared by KCS Architects and dated December 2, 2019 and last revised December 9, 2019, and on the elevations identified as “48 Emerald Street,” prepared by KCS Architects and dated December 9, 2019 and last revised December 19, 2019 with the following conditions:

1. Staff approval of mortar color, profile, width, and composition.
2. Staff approval of a test patch in an unobtrusive location prior to masonry repointing.

6) HDC Resource Ranking Work Group Update

Ms. Brunner referred to page 35 of the meeting packet where she included a memo to keep the Commission updated on the work group. The group has met four times and the minutes from three of the meetings were included in the meeting packet. Mr. Weber said it has been fun work and Chair Weglinski said it appeared good progress was being made.

7) Committee Membership

Chair Weglinski said that there are vacancies on the Commission for one active member and three alternate members. Mark Froling is one possible recruit. If any members have suggestions, the Chairman encouraged them to have conversations with interested parties and refer them to him or Ms. Brunner. Chair Weglinski urged recruitment because a full Commission reduces potential lack of quorum; he said it is not good to string projects along and the Commission wants to do their best for the community.

8) 2020 HDC Meeting Schedule

Ms. Proctor moved to adopt the 2020 HDC meeting schedule, which Mr. Bergeron seconded and the Commission passed unanimously.

9) Staff Updates

- a. **2019 List of Administrative Approvals**

Ms. Brunner recalled that staff provides periodic updates to the Commission on applications that qualified as minor projects and were therefore approved by staff. All 2019 administrative approvals were listed on pages 45-46 of the meeting packet. In any instance that staff feels an application is borderline for needing Commission review, the Chair is consulted. All project folders are available on the fourth floor of City Hall for review.

b. Building Better Together Project

Ms. Brunner updated the Commission on this project to update the City's land use regulations and zoning streamlined into one document called the Unified Development Ordinance, which is moving closer to City Council review. Part of this project is a shift to form-based zoning downtown, which includes revisions to the HDC regulations. This Commission saw draft revisions one year ago and will continue to receive updates as the draft progresses.

10) Next Meeting – February 19, 2020

11) Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Weglinski adjourned the meeting at 5:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Katryna Kibler, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by Mari Brunner, Planner