



Historic District Commission

AGENDA

Wednesday, April 16, 2025

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

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

2. Minutes:

- a) February 19, 2025 Regular Meeting
- b) March 19, 2025 Joint Historic District & Heritage Commission Meeting

3. Public Hearing

- a) **COA-2009-24, Modification #3 – 24 Vernon St – Monadnock Peer Support Exterior Renovations** - Applicant and owner Monadnock Area Peer Support Agency, proposes exterior renovations to the building at 24 Vernon St (TMP #568-058-000), including removing the exterior siding to repair the brick facade, the creation of a new primary entrance, and the replacement of all existing windows. The property is 0.28 ac and is ranked as a Primary Resource in the Downtown Core District.

4. Discussion – Project and Goalsetting

5. Staff Updates

- a) Report to City Council
- b) Master Plan

6. New Business

7. Upcoming Dates of Interest:

- a) Next HDC Meeting: May 21, 2025 – 4:30 pm, TBD
- b) HDC Site Visit: May 21, 2025 – 3:30 pm (To be confirmed)

8. Adjourn

City of Keene
New Hampshire

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, February 19, 2025

4:30 PM

Council Chambers,
City Hall

Members Present:

Sofia Cunha-Vasconcelos
Hope Benik
Anthony Ferrantello
Louise Zerba
Russ Fleming, Alternate

Staff Present:

Evan Clements, Planner

Members Not Present:

David Bergeron, Alternate
Peter Poanessa, Alternate
Councilor Catherine Workman

1) Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos called the meeting to order at 4:38 PM. Roll call was conducted. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that for today’s meeting, Mr. Fleming is a voting member, filling in for one of the vacant slots.

2) Election – Chair/Vice Chair

Mr. Fleming asked if the current chair and vice chair are willing to serve another term. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos and Vice Chair Benik replied yes.

Mr. Fleming nominated Ms. Cunha-Vasconcelos as chair. Ms. Zerba seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

Mr. Ferrantello nominated Ms. Benik as vice chair. Mr. Fleming seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

3) Minutes of November 20, 2024

Mr. Fleming made a motion to approve the minutes of November 20, 2024. Mr. Ferrantello seconded the motion.

31 Ms. Zerba noted a correction to Lines 12 and 13 of the meeting minutes. She continued that the
32 minutes state, “Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that today...,” but Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos
33 was not present.

34

35 Mr. Ferrantello made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of November 20, 2024, with the
36 corrections. Mr. Fleming seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

37

38 Mr. Fleming noted that the minutes incorrectly spell Sofia Cunha-Vasconcelos’s first name as
39 “Sophia” and should be corrected.

40

41 **4) Discussion – Project and Goalsetting**

42

43 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that there is a brief change to the agenda. She welcomed a
44 guest from the Yankee Bottle Club and asked him to introduce himself.

45

46 Steve Seraichick stated that he is the President of the Yankee Bottle Club, which began in 1968.
47 He continued that the Club’s mission is *“to appreciate, preserve, and promote the history of*
48 *glassmaking and collecting in the state of NH, and to further the understanding and knowledge*
49 *of the glass-making industry.”* He continued that it is the Club’s duty, also, to be well-versed in
50 their own history to advance their mission in the future.

51

52 Mr. Seraichick shared the story of how he became interested in collecting glass when he was
53 eight years old, and how he joined the Yankee Bottle Club about eight years ago. He continued
54 that he walks on the bike path on Eastern Ave. that is parallel to the location where the Keene
55 Glass company was from 1814 to 1842. There are three historical markers on that stretch of
56 trail, and none of them mention Keene Glass. That is a huge oversight. He thinks that Keene
57 Glass was the second most important industry in the city, with the Colony Mill being the first.
58 He wants to know how to get a marker there to indicate that this existed. Many people would not
59 otherwise know about it. He contacted (Councilor) Bobby Williams to ask about how to get
60 markers put up, and he suggested the State. However, the State is involved with highway road
61 markers and road markers on their roads, not on rail trails. The administrative director of the
62 program that authorizes markers in the state, Amy Dickson, said the City is responsible for the
63 markers he is talking about. Thus, he wants to know who to contact. He thought it was logical
64 to come to the HDC.

65

66 Ms. Zerba recommended Mr. Seraichick speak with the Historical Society. Mr. Seraichick
67 replied that Alan Rumrill (Director of the Historical Society) is a member of the Yankee Bottle
68 Club, and he was not aware that there was no sign or marker for the Yankee Bottle Club on that
69 stretch of bike path.

70

71 Ms. Zerba recommended Mr. Seraichick speak with the Heritage Commission, which (she is a
72 member of), and which meets every other month. She continued that the Heritage Commission

73 is involved with research. If Mr. Seraichick speaks with (staff liaison) Evan Clements, maybe he
74 could come speak at a meeting.

75

76 Mr. Fleming asked if Ms. Zerba was on the Heritage Commission when they put up those
77 markers on the section of the rail trail that Mr. Seraichick is referring to. Ms. Zerba replied that
78 the Heritage Commission was not involved in that. Discussion continued. Chair Cunha-
79 Vasconcelos agreed that the Heritage Commission would be a good group for Mr. Seraichick to
80 speak with. Ms. Zerba stated that she will follow up with Mr. Seraichick about this. Mr.
81 Seraichick thanked the HDC and stated that the Yankee Bottle Club welcomes new members, if
82 anyone is interested.

83

84 Mr. Clements stated that he will follow up with Mr. Seraichick as well. He continued that he
85 would be happy to put him in touch with Ms. Zerba and the Public Works Department. The
86 portion of trail in question might be under the City's control, or it might be controlled by the
87 State. It would be helpful to figure out who put those markers up. Staff will try and work on
88 that.

89

90 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that they will now move on to discuss Project and Goalsetting.
91 She asked Mr. Clements for some background. Mr. Clements stated that this is the first official
92 HDC meeting of the year, and the group does not meet often, except to hear cases, so it is up to
93 the HDC to discuss whether there is anything else related to the Historic District that they would
94 be interested in working on this year. He continued that they can generate ideas to be put on
95 future agendas. Alternatively, if the HDC is just interested in its regulatory function, that is
96 perfectly acceptable.

97

98 Mr. Ferrantello stated that he was thinking of an educational effort, such as a flyer, to educate the
99 public about the importance of historic preservation and laws and the guidance the HDC can
100 offer. He asked if there would be funds for this. Mr. Clements replied that they have a line item
101 of about \$250. He continued that he is glad Mr. Ferrantello brought this up. When the Land
102 Development Code (LDC) was adopted, the Historic District regulations were trimmed down to
103 its core necessity, and they attempted to make it easier to understand. The old regulations had a
104 lot of context and rationale for why the regulations were the way they were. All of that was
105 taken out of the Code to streamline it, but all of that information still exists. A good project
106 might be to reimagine all of that as information to add to the website or some kind of guidance
107 documents/educational thing.

108

109 Discussion continued. Mr. Ferrantello stated that perhaps the educational thing could be picked
110 up by or somehow supported or enhanced by the School of Architecture at Keene State College
111 (KSC). He gave ideas for what students could do, such as graphics and information about local
112 historical buildings. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos spoke of how she likes the notion but thinks this
113 work might already be covered by other people and groups, such as the Heritage Commission
114 and the Historical Society. Mr. Ferrantello spoke in favor of young people's energy and fresh
115 perspective.

116
117 Ms. Benik asked who manages the City’s social media. Mr. Clements replied that the City has a
118 communications team, Asah Cramer and Rebecca Landry, Deputy City Manager. Ms. Benik
119 spoke about the possibility of a “Did you know...?” campaign on social media, such as “Did you
120 know Keene has a Historic District Commission?” and other occasional posts with little facts and
121 photos. Ms. Zerba replied that the Heritage Commission created a flyer several years ago as
122 well. Discussion continued, and Mr. Ferrantello spoke of how he would like the public to know
123 that the HDC is here to help, “not to be the arbiters of the straight heavy law and the hammer
124 hitting.” He continued that the HDC is here to help applicants, and they are open to
125 interpretations, and they are friendly. Ms. Benik spoke about how she works for a marketing
126 agency, and her ideas for social media posts to educate and raise awareness about the HDC.

127
128 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that she likes the idea of helping the public understand the value
129 of having a Historic District, and since the information (that Mr. Clements spoke about) was
130 stripped from the regulations, she thinks there is value in finding a way to put that back in the
131 public space. Ms. Zerba asked if the information is on the City’s website. Mr. Clements replied
132 that the current regulations are on the website. He continued that one of the first things he did
133 when he started with the City was to update the HDC’s FAQ. The old regulations still exist as
134 word documents but need to be put in a format that is more easily approachable. He can send the
135 old code to the HDC members so they can see what they are working with, and they can keep
136 coming up with ideas.

137
138 Discussion continued, as HDC members talked about ideas. Mr. Clements spoke about maybe
139 starting with a certain block or street to see how it goes, and then expanding. Mr. Ferrantello
140 spoke about how the (Monadnock) Shopper had a “Can you name this building?” snippet, and
141 how the HDC could do something similar on social media. Mr. Clements stated that the Heritage
142 Commission also has been talking about creating content, similar to what the HDC is talking
143 about, so he can talk with Ms. Cramer and Ms. Landry about content creation and its viable
144 impact in the social media sphere. There might be some good opportunities. Mr. Ferrantello
145 replied that it might have educational value, in the sense that people who have historic properties
146 they are hesitant to renovate might be more likely to do so once they learn about the HDC. Mr.
147 Clements replied yes, there is a general stigma about historic preservation being challenging and
148 expensive and involving arguments with the Historic District, and Keene’s HDC is not like that.
149 It would be good to help people feel more comfortable about working on their buildings and
150 helping preserve these resources. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos agreed. Ms. Zerba spoke about a
151 Keene Sentinel article Phil Faulkner did years ago about the history of a particular home, and the
152 idea of resurrecting that (sort of thing).

153
154 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that they should stay aware of costs. Others agreed. Chair
155 Cunha-Vasconcelos added that some of what they are talking about could be done on a volunteer
156 basis. Discussion continued. Mr. Clements cautioned about the scope. He stated that he can
157 help facilitate, but there would be a fair amount of work for the HDC members to do themselves,
158 if they are choosing to do this work. The regulatory work takes priority, as they know, but

159 having a reason to meet more regularly is a good idea. Mr. Ferrantello spoke about how
160 educating the public about historic preservation might revamp interest in it and thus increase
161 applications to the HDC. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos spoke more about being cognizant of the
162 organizations that are already doing the work to educate the public about historic preservation,
163 such as the Historical Society and the Heritage Commission. She suggested the HDC try to
164 collaborate with them and leverage some cooperative efforts. Mr. Ferrantello replied that he
165 would volunteer to go do some research at the Historical Society.

166
167 Mr. Clements stated that a good place to start would be to look at the old Historic District
168 regulations, which he will send to the HDC. He continued that the joint meeting with the
169 Heritage Commission is in March. Maybe at the April HDC meeting they could further define
170 the scope of the project the HDC wants to do. There is no harm in starting small, having some
171 measured success, and continuing on. He does not want it to be too grandiose from the start and
172 bog people down.

173
174 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos asked if HDC members have other ideas, other thoughts on needs in
175 the Historic District. Ms. Zerba replied that the joint meeting with the Heritage Commission will
176 be good, classifying and reviewing properties in the District. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated
177 that if anyone has more ideas about goals and projects, they can discuss them more at future
178 meetings; this is just the first meeting of the year.

179

180 **5) Staff Updates**

181 **A) Joint Heritage & Historic District Commission Meeting – March 2025**

182

183 Mr. Clements stated that they just talked about the joint meeting. He encouraged attendance at
184 the joint meeting, and encouraged people to come prepared, having done the reading, so they can
185 spend the meeting time getting into it with the actual properties.

186

187 Mr. Clements spoke about the work that continues with the Master Plan Update, including the
188 discussion boards for the strategic pillars. The task forces will meet this week to articulate goals
189 for the Master Plan and strategies to achieve them, then meet again at the end of March to
190 review the draft goals and strategies the consultants come up with. Staff will bring those
191 recommendations to the Steering Committee. Then, they move into the Future Land Use Map,
192 and the final project summit is in the beginning of June to present the entire draft document. The
193 Future Land Use Map will be the vision for what they want for uses, how the land is used in the
194 city, and what changes need to be made.

195

196 **6) New Business**

197

198 Mr. Ferrantello asked if the HDC should get involved in the density debate. He continued that if
199 density has to deal with a historic building, they might get involved. Discussion ensued. Mr.
200 Clements spoke about how if a person applies to add an addition to a historic building, they
201 would be coming before the HDC for that particular matter, but the (ordinances related to)

202 density are not directly in the purview of the HDC. HDC members could weigh in on the matter
203 as individual citizens if they want to. He gave information about density-related ordinances the
204 City Council is looking at. Discussion continued. Mr. Ferrantello asked if it would be okay for
205 the HDC to weigh in on the density issues of a site of a building and the relationship of a new
206 building to a historic building. He continued that he thinks that is something they could discuss
207 if it comes up in an application, but as Mr. Clements said, if it is outside of that, he or other HDC
208 members could (give feedback as) citizens. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that her
209 understanding of the HDC's regulations is that when they evaluate a project, density is not part
210 of their criteria. Mr. Clements replied that is correct; the HDC is more focused on the built form
211 itself. He continued that there is a relationship with that and how that affects density, but not in a
212 literal way. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos replied that density issues would be addressed when an
213 applicant goes through the Planning Board process to get permission to build. Mr. Clements
214 replied yes, density is ruled by the Zoning Ordinance. He briefly gave more information about
215 the Planning Board process.

216

217 **7) Upcoming Dates of Interest**

218 **A) Next HDC Meeting: March 19, 2025 – 4:30 PM, TBD**

219 **B) HDC Site Visit: March 19, 2025 – 3:30 PM (to be confirmed)**

220

221 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that the joint meeting with the Heritage Commission will be
222 March 19 at 4:30 PM, in this same room. She continued that the HDC does not have any
223 applications for March.

224

225 **8) Adjournment**

226

227 There being no further business, Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos adjourned the meeting at 5:28 PM.

228

229 Respectfully submitted by,
230 Britta Reida, Minute Taker

231

232 Reviewed and edited by,
233 Evan J. Clements, AICP
234 Planner

City of Keene
New Hampshire

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

And

HERITAGE COMMISSION
JOINT MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, March 19, 2025

4:30 PM

Council Chambers,
City Hall

HDC Members Present:

Sofia Cunha-Vasconcelos, Chair
Louise Zerba
David Bergeron, Alternate
Russ Fleming, Alternate

Staff Present:

Evan Clements, Planner
Megan Fortson, Planner

HDC Members Not Present:

Hope Benik, Vice Chair
Councilor Catherine Workman
Peter Poanessa, Alternate
Anthony Ferrantello

HC Members Present:

Molly Ellis
Marilyn Huston
Julie Emineth
Rose Carey
Louise Zerba
Cauley Powell, Alternate

HC Members Not Present:

1) Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos called the meeting to order at 4:33 PM. Roll call was conducted. David Bergeron & Russ Flemming were designated as voting members of the HDC.

2) Local Ranking of Unranked Properties in the Downtown Historic District

A) The two commissions will assign local rankings for properties that have reached their period of significance but are currently unranked

21 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos asked how Mr. Clements wanted the HDC and HC to go about this
22 process of ranking the unranked properties in the Downtown Historic District. Mr. Clements
23 replied that members have resource ranking forms, one for each property they are intending to
24 rank today. He continued that they also have the inventory forms that were prepared by the
25 consultant. They can follow the memo that was in the packet. There are seven properties. The
26 memo includes the resource rankings and the methodology behind how the rankings are
27 determined. The resource ranking forms will help guide them. The value of a resource is based
28 on the physical form – the architectural features that make it an example of the time in which it
29 was constructed – as well as the cultural and historical significance of the business or industry
30 that the resource represents. Both of those things together are used to determine the amount of
31 value the property adds to the district.

32
33 Mr. Clements continued that for example, speaking generally, there might be a building that is
34 less architecturally significant but is the last standing example of an industry that no longer
35 exists. It would still be historically significant and is valuable to the identity of the Historic
36 District and the City as a whole, which may lead to a Primary or a Contributing designation, as
37 opposed to a Non-compatible or an Incompatible designation. Something “Non-compatible” or
38 “Non-contributing” would be something that stands out, like a gas station, which there are many
39 of in town. Something that looks like a gas station, and does not look like a 1950s, Route 66,
40 iconic (location).

41
42 Ms. Zerba stated that she has a question. She continued that the HDC and HC have a list of
43 things that are different than what the consultant provided for them. She wonders how to blend
44 the two, knowing that (the consultant) is an expert in the field. Mr. Clements replied that the
45 form he handed out was used when the district was created, and will not be a one to one match.
46 He continued that the HC and HDC might decide that a specific category on the form is not
47 relevant or that they do not have the information they need. If they go through it and feel like
48 they do not have enough information to make a decision, they can choose not to. The form is a
49 guide; they are not beholden to it.

50

51 **1. 122 West Street – People’s United Bank – Built 1978***

52

53 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that 122 West St. was built in 1978, so it has about three more
54 years before it is part of the HDC’s remit. She continued that the form says there are no known
55 major alterations to the exterior of the People’s United Bank other than the replacement of the
56 sign with the current M&T Bank sign. The notes state, “*It retains character-defining features
57 such as long, low building profile, angular exterior with projected massing, flat brick walls,
58 horizontal brick orientation, and slightly indented ribbons of large, flat windows.*”

59

60 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos continued that she (the consultant) recommended it be ranked as a
61 contributing resource. There are more details that can be reviewed as part of this discussion.
62 She asked for HC and HDC members’ thoughts.

63

64 Ms. Zerba stated that when she thinks of the historic district, she does not think of a building that
65 looks like this one, but it is close to 50 years old. She continued that at the time it was
66 constructed, banks were sort of long and without much ornamentation. She would go along with
67 the recommendation of ranking it as a Contributing resource, according to the times.

68
69 Mr. Fleming stated that it says its common name is “People’s United Bank,” but it has been
70 around for a few years now and he wonders if they should change that. Ms. Zerba replied yes, it
71 has had a few names. Mr. Fleming continued that he thinks it is an interesting piece of property,
72 because it was aspirational, the fact that it was going to be the headquarters for Keene Savings
73 Bank. When it was built, they were on the up and coming. Of course, there has been much
74 consolidation in the banking industry since then, but it says so much about the times. Beyond
75 that is the shape of the building and the massive amount of parking from when people used to
76 drive to the bank all the time. He thinks it has a lot of interest. His question is whether they
77 protect it much by calling it a Contributing resource, and whether that is the best they can do.

78
79 Mr. Clements replied that there are four ranking categories. He continued that there are only two
80 categories of regulation. There are the stricter protections granted to Primary and Contributing
81 resources, and less strict protection granted to Non-contributing and Incompatible resources.
82 Currently, all the unranked properties are granted the strictest protection. As they go through
83 this and decide if resources are Contributing or Primary, they will not be making the protections
84 stricter than they currently are required to be. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos replied that to be clear,
85 there is no way to make the protections stricter than they already are. Mr. Clements replied that
86 that is correct, unless they were to change the regulations.

87
88 Mr. Fleming asked if it is correct that for the next three years, this property (owner) could do
89 whatever (she or he) wanted. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos replied that they would still have to
90 follow Planning (regulations), but with respect to the historic character, Mr. Fleming is right that
91 the HDC has no authority over this property until three years from now. She continued that to
92 answer his question, the property would receive the same protections if it is ranked Contributing
93 or Primary, and the most stringent protections they could offer.

94
95 Mr. Bergeron stated that as the report states, this property has been basically untouched in the 47
96 years it has been there. He continued that in comparison to the other buildings they are looking
97 at, he sees that this one is essentially the way it was originally built. His question is why it
98 would not thus be considered a Primary resource, given the fact that it has remained unchanged
99 for almost 50 years in the exterior of the building.

100
101 Mr. Clements stated that he will read, for the record, the difference between Primary and
102 Contributing resources:

103
104 *“Primary resource shall mean any building, structure, or site which contributes to the overall*
105 *historic and architectural significance of the historic district and was present during the period*
106 *of historic significance and possesses historic and architectural integrity with little or no*

107 *diminishment in value reflecting the character of that time or is capable of yielding important*
108 *information about the historically significant period. Qualities of the building, structure, or site*
109 *which contribute to the overall historic and architectural significance of the historic district*
110 *include but are not limited to setback, massing, height, materials, architectural features, and/or*
111 *fenestration.*

112
113 *Contributing resource shall mean any building, structure, or site which contributes to the overall*
114 *historic and architectural significance of the historic district and was present during the period*
115 *of historic significance, but which possesses some diminishment of significance due to*
116 *alterations, disturbances, or other changes to the building, structure, or site. Said diminishment*
117 *of significance to the district is not so substantial as to prevent the building, structure, or site*
118 *from possessing historic and architectural integrity reflecting the character of that time or being*
119 *capable of yielding important information about the historically significant period.”*

120
121 Mr. Clements continued that to answer Mr. Bergeron’s question, if the resource is truly
122 untouched and is an example of the period of its intended use and architectural style of the time,
123 it would be potentially Primary. Whereas Contributing resources have some degradation, but not
124 much.

125
126 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that the consultant’s report says, “*Despite some loss of integrity*
127 *of setting due to modern construction in the area immediately surrounding the building, the*
128 *People’s National Bank retains integrity of location, design, and materials.”* She continued that
129 it sounds like maybe the Contributing resource was due to the setting as opposed to the building
130 itself.

131
132 Mr. Clements replied that the consultant did not specify the four ranking criteria; she ranked by
133 either Contributing or Non-contributing. He continued that it is thus up to the HDC and HC to
134 apply the City’s more nuanced definitions to the local ranking. The consultant was using the
135 criteria for the National Trust and the Park Service.

136
137 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos asked if anyone wanted to make a motion regarding 122 West St., for
138 the property to go in as a Primary resource.

139
140 Ms. Zerba stated that when she spoke earlier about this being a Contributing resource, she had
141 not considered Mr. Bergeron’s comments. She continued that it has not been touched on the
142 outside since it was constructed.

143
144 Ms. Zerba made a motion to rank 122 West St. as a Primary resource. Ms. Carey seconded the
145 motion.

146
147 Mr. Fleming stated that they have to discuss the period of significance a little bit. He continued
148 that both this property and the next one on the list were built in the early 1970s. The significance
149 of that period is that it is when everyone started having cars. Things started spreading out to the

150 suburbs more and these buildings reflect the growing use of the car to get to the building, if
151 nothing else. He agrees with the Primary designation.

152
153 The motion passed by unanimous vote.

154
155 Mr. Fleming stated that he has one more comment about the site. He continued that inside the
156 building, the lobby contains a section of a huge tree that was removed from the property years
157 ago when the road was widened again.

158
159 **2. 166 West Street – Friendly’s Building – Built 1976***

160
161 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that the former Friendly’s Building at 166 West St. is in current
162 use by an eye doctor. She continued that it was heavily renovated in 2021 with roof, siding, and
163 windows replaced and cupola removed. The consultant’s notes say, “*The general form and*
164 *massing of the building, however, have remained largely intact and carry over from the original*
165 *use as a branded Friendly’s restaurant of the mid 1970s.”* There is a lengthy note on integrity
166 and significance. The recommendation is a Non-contributing ranking due to the loss of integrity.

167
168 Mr. Fleming stated that he does not agree with that. He continued that it is not up to the standard
169 of the bank building next door, but it is essentially a damaged integrity. The consultant’s review
170 says that it still has the massing and such that could cause a passer-by to notice that it used to be
171 a Friendly’s. It has a lot of the same features (he spoke of earlier), welcoming the automobile
172 and so forth.

173
174 Mr. Fleming made a motion to make 166 West St. a Contributing resource. He continued that he
175 would hate to see something drastic done to the site to further take it away from what it was.

176
177 Ms. Ellis stated that she disagrees. She continued that she thinks it is definitely Non-
178 contributing. Friendly’s restaurants are a dime a dozen. It just looks like a Friendly’s that used
179 to be an eye doctor. In her opinion, it is nothing special, architecturally, now and when it was a
180 Friendly’s. She would say it is Non-contributing or even Incompatible.

181
182 Ms. Zerba stated that when it was constructed, at the time, this building was built to reflect the
183 building that was going to occupy it. She continued that all the Friendly’s throughout the United
184 States were constructed to be similar in appearance. The City appropriately allowed it to be built
185 the way it was built because it was built specifically for a Friendly’s.

186
187 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that Friendly’s was quite the cultural phenomenon at the time.

188
189 Ms. Powell stated that if more of the integrity of the original Friendly’s building, including the
190 cupola or sign structure had been retained, perhaps it would be easier to imagine it as a
191 Contributing resource. She continued that the renovation to the eye doctor really did strip a lot
192 of the character that had given it the Friendly’s building appearance. She is not sure she would

193 recognize the building today as a former restaurant. Having lived here when it was still
194 Friendly's, it is easy to forget that the appearance has been changed so much. She is unsure if it
195 would fit in the Contributing category.

196

197 Mr. Bergeron stated that the change in windows is striking. He continued that Friendly's had
198 much larger windows on the side space, the entrance, and they had architectural features in the
199 windows. All of that has been removed. Now it just has the standard commercial windows as
200 opposed to what made the building look like a Friendly's.

201

202 Mr. Fleming replied that if you look at the photos side by side, looking at the massing in the
203 basic structure of the building, even though the cupola has been removed, he thinks you could
204 recognize that it is the same building. They will be talking about that with some of the other
205 buildings, too. For example, the roundhouse of the old train station is recognizable as a
206 roundhouse, even though it is now [something else].

207

208 Ms. Emineth stated that she agrees that you can tell (it is the same building) if you are looking at
209 the photos side by side, but that is because you are looking at them side by side. She continued
210 that she thinks if you were to drive into Keene today and did not know that the building used to
211 be a Friendly's, it would not be obvious that it used to be a Friendly's, the way an old Pizza Hut
212 building is obvious. She thinks this (former Friendly's building) has lost a lot of charm. She
213 agrees that it is a Non-contributing resource.

214

215 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that Mr. Fleming made a motion for this to be considered a
216 Contributing resource, and she did not hear a second. Mr. Fleming replied that there was no
217 second. Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos replied that she would entertain a different motion.

218

219 Ms. Ellis made a motion to consider 166 West St. a Non-contributing resource. Ms. Zerba
220 seconded the motion.

221

222 Mr. Fleming stated that he wants to clarify that when this was converted from the Friendly's, the
223 HDC had something to say about it. He continued that maybe Mr. Clements could talk to them
224 about what the HDC would have to say about it as a Non-contributing resource going forward.
225 Mr. Clements replied that the definition for Non-contributing resource acknowledges that this
226 could be a property that had character-defining features that have since been lost, and nothing
227 stops a property from being reevaluated. He continued that if someone wants to restore
228 architectural features that had been removed, there is always potential for a property to become
229 Contributing or Primary. The difference between Contributing or Primary is related to the
230 amount of degradation of the property itself.

231

232 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos asked Mr. Clements to remind the HDC and HC, loosely, of what the
233 differences between "Contributing" and Non-contributing" are. Mr. Clements replied that a part
234 of it is just the level of review, where even minor alterations would require a trip to the HDC for
235 a Contributing or Primary resource, and a Non-contributing resource would likely just be

236 reviewed by staff administratively. He continued that there are pages and pages of very well-
237 articulated standards for Primary and Contributing resources, whereas the set of guidelines for
238 Non-contributing and Incompatible resources is much thinner.

239

240 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that to clarify, it is not that they (property owners of Non-
241 contributing and Incompatible resources) can do anything they want to their property; there is
242 still a level of oversight. Mr. Clements replied that is correct.

243

244 Ms. Zerba stated that she wants to mention again that the cupola was one of the Friendly's
245 features, so (its removal) would be another reason for perhaps calling this a Non-contributing
246 resource. She continued that that was one of (Friendly's) architectural features that was included
247 when it was constructed, which was removed, as well as the windows.

248

249 Ms. Powell asked if the outdoor walk-up window was part of the original design as well. Ms.
250 Zerba replied where the ice cream was sold, yes. Ms. Powell replied that that has been removed
251 or closed in well, based on the photo.

252

253 The motion passed with a vote of 8-1. Mr. Fleming was opposed.

254

255 **3. 194 West Street – TD Bank – Built 1972**

256

257 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that this "TD Bank" building was built in 1972, which means it
258 is in its period of significance. She continued that the alterations include green trim at the roof
259 area, added in 2020. The notes say, "*Like the nearby People's United Bank, the building has a*
260 *long, low form with exterior detail emphasizing horizontal lines. The centralized entrance is*
261 *accessed through a recessed entry porch with large plate glass windows, creating a light and*
262 *open atrium at the building interior.*" There are comments about the integrity and significance,
263 which she will not read now, but invites people to review. The (consultant) recommends this be
264 a Contributing resource. As a reminder, the consultant used the two rankings "Contributing" and
265 "Non-contributing," so if the HDC and HC want to take the recommendation, they still need to
266 decide between "Primary" and "Contributing."

267

268 Ms. Ellis stated that she has a question which she does not think the consultant really got at. She
269 continued that she wonders, when they are deciding how to rank something, whether it matters
270 whether something is simply untouched, or untouched but also has particular architectural
271 significance, charm, or value.

272

273 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that her understanding is that the significance is not related to
274 charm. She continued that it is about whether the resource is a good representation of the era in
275 which it was built and those remaining consistent. As she understands it, there could be
276 renovations, but the characteristics would not be changed in the renovations. For example, she
277 personally is not a fan of 1970s architecture, but it is historic to the era, and buildings that are
278 good representations of what they were from that era are worthy of that classification.

279
280 Mr. Clements stated that Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos's explanation is about 90% complete. He
281 continued that they also have to evaluate the resource's value to the district as a whole. (For
282 example), something might be a shining example of the district at the time in which it was built,
283 but actively conflict with the overall historic character of the surrounding area. (These properties
284 being discussed today) are all within the extension that was done in 2012, so they are not
285 necessarily comparing the property to Main St. That would not be fair or appropriate, because it
286 is in a different context. But within the overall footprint of the extension, they know the history
287 of this part of town and its relationship to the railroad, so it is a little bit more like that. This is
288 not easy. The HC and HDC are doing a good job with these nuanced decisions.

289
290 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that she will try and give an example. She continued that if one
291 of these 1970s banks, say, was hanging out in the middle of the lovely, late 18th century
292 downtown, they could say that would potentially reduce the value because it detracts from the
293 feeling of that era in the downtown. Mr. Clements replied yes, it might be an example in its own
294 right within the context of the surroundings. It detracts from the historical vibe of a late 18th
295 century historic neighborhood, because it sticks out like a sore thumb.

296
297 Mr. Fleming replied that this is why he thought they should discuss the period of significance for
298 the buildings. He continued that they are not talking about the 1800s; they are talking about the
299 1970s. Mr. Clements replied especially considering that this part of West St. and Gilbo St. are
300 still fairly open, so they do not have that strong juxtaposition between, say, 1890s versus today
301 or the 1970s. They do not have a lot of that context, because not many of those old railroad
302 structures are left.

303
304 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos asked if that answered Ms. Ellis's question. Ms. Ellis replied sort of,
305 but she still does not find unattractive 1970s banks significant in any way, so she finds this
306 difficult.

307
308 Ms. Powell stated that the consultant flags this property as being "in the international style." She
309 continued that her (Ms. Powell's) sense is that the international style usually involves a bit more
310 glass and is a bit more modern in feel. She does not know if it is the fact that this particular
311 building is square without a lot of defining elements. It has the bump-out for the open air walk
312 in. Beyond that, she is surprised to see it characterized as "being in the international style."

313
314 Ms. Ellis replied that to that point, she thinks this bank is just old. She continued that it does not
315 seem to be of any architectural interest. It does not seem like a great example of an architectural
316 style. It is just a bank that has been sitting there for about 50 years.

317
318 Ms. Carey stated that when West St. was developed and these buildings were put in, they were
319 all very modern for the time. She continued that they are all grouped into an architectural style
320 that represents the era they were built in. It is unfortunate that Friendly's has been diminished.
321 Otherwise, that would also be Contributing. Hopefully, it could be restored. But they are

322 picking apart an architectural style, not whether (this property) is Contributing. This is an era
323 that West St. was developed. They lost a lot of historic buildings to put these buildings in, and
324 this was a commerce center that shifted the focus of commerce of Main St., and they are
325 significant to the development of Keene, to the way we did business, and to the way that the
326 automobile facilitated that business. Still today, people park in these parking lots and walk
327 downtown, because there is parking there.

328
329 Ms. Carey made a motion to consider 194 West St. as a Primary resource. Mr. Fleming
330 seconded the motion.

331
332 Mr. Fleming stated that he does not see much difference between this and the M&T building,
333 except that M&T is a nicer building. He continued that the movie the Brutalist is playing at
334 Keene State the first weekend in April. Brutalist architecture was not pretty, necessarily, but it is
335 a famous style of architecture that will have its place in history. Ms. Ellis replied that she likes
336 brutalist architecture.

337
338 Ms. Powell stated that she was not alive in the 1970s but will say that this does not strike her as a
339 1970s building. She continued that to her, it looks like a big box store in design, which could
340 just be her own naivete and disconnection from the time period. She thinks the earlier bank that
341 is now the M&T Bank had more of what she would think of as the features from the time period.
342 The HC and HDC do not have any photos that show the exact opposite side of the page 1 image.
343 They just have the view looking south and east and then the view looking north and east.
344 Perhaps there is something she is not seeing. She has not been inside this building.

345
346 Mr. Bergeron stated that he seems to recall that the building did not start as a bank; it started as a
347 grocery store and was then renovated into the bank. He continued that that might be why it is not
348 completely the same or as coordinated as the other bank on West St., but it has been around
349 longer. Ms. Powell thanked Mr. Bergeron and stated that she had not realized that.

350
351 The motion to classify 194 West St. as a Primary resource passed by a vote of 7-2. Ms. Ellis and
352 Ms. Powell were opposed.

353
354 **4. 149 Emerald Street – Cheshire Railroad Repair Shops – Built 1866**

355
356 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that regarding alterations, *“In 1984, the modern shopping mall*
357 *was built to encompass several surviving 1866 Cheshire Railroad Shop buildings. The original*
358 *doors and windows were removed from the historic structures, and their eaves were extended to*
359 *create protected walkways along the north side of the building. A large addition was*
360 *constructed, adding a single-story addition to the south side of the structure and extending it to*
361 *the west.”* She continued that the notes include, *“In 1984, the surviving Cheshire Railroad*
362 *Locomotive Repair Shop, Black Smith & Mechanical Shop, Wood Work, and Car Repairs Shops*
363 *were incorporated into the east end of a large connected mini mall.”* Again, there are notes on

364 integrity and significance which she will not read aloud, in the interest of time. The
365 (consultant's) recommendation was Contributing resource.

366
367 Ms. Powell stated that she has a question regarding the notes in the significance and integrity
368 section discussing the renovations. She asked if they are meant to only be referencing the
369 elements that fit within what would make it a historic district property now and not the 1984
370 elements at all, or if they take the 1984 elements into consideration at this stage. Chair Cunha-
371 Vasconcelos replied that she thinks they have to take the 1984 elements into consideration and
372 how they might have degraded the historic value of the property.

373
374 Mr. Clements stated that it is also worth taking into account the consideration that those
375 additions did in an attempt to preserve the historic integrity as well, but they are sort of
376 evaluating the building as it is now. He continued that it is also worth noting that today the
377 City's own historic district regulations, as well as the guidelines under the National Historic
378 Trust, say that additions to historic resources should be complementary, not mimicry.

379
380 Ms. Powell stated that it was the note saying that the 1984 changes could be reevaluated in 2034
381 that threw her. Mr. Clements replied that that is just what the consultant said. The City needs to
382 take the whole property as one building because it is one building now. Ms. Carey stated that
383 they are including the roundhouse aspect of this as well.

384
385 Ms. Zerba stated that if this were more intact, it would be considered Primary. She continued
386 that she wonders if it should be considered Primary even with the degradation that has occurred,
387 in part because it was such a center for commerce and for the railroad in Keene at the time, and it
388 is a beautiful example of railroad architecture that probably would not have survived had it not
389 been repurposed in some way. She agrees that alterations remain that are compatible with the
390 historic nature of the building. It was not degraded in such a way that it is commercially more
391 useful. It is historically more useful than it is perhaps commercially, in her view.

392
393 Ms. Carey made a motion to consider 149 Emerald St. as a Primary resource. Ms. Zerba
394 seconded the motion.

395
396 Ms. Ellis stated that she loves this building, and she is happy they have what they have of it
397 because of how it has been repurposed, and she is not opposed to making it a Primary resource.
398 She continued that she thinks they need to talk about it more first, to make sure it absolutely fits,
399 because of what has been done to it. She is not sure. Ms. Carey asked what Ms. Ellis's
400 reservations are. Ms. Ellis replied that the building on either side of the roundhouse area is really
401 modern, such as the windows and eaves. She continued that she is not certain about the
402 technicalities of the regulations and defers to others.

403
404 Mr. Clements stated that a Contributing designation acknowledges that a resource has been
405 altered from its original architectural form. He continued that in the same way that a Non-
406 contributing resource can be elevated to a Contributing resource, a Contributing resource can be

407 re-evaluated and made Primary. Practically speaking, it is granted the same level of protection
408 with either a Primary or Contributing ranking. The Primary designation really acknowledges a
409 form in its current form is a shining example of the City of Keene’s historic district. That
410 designation should be reserved for buildings and sites that truly are that. He is grateful to not
411 personally be making this decision to parse out that distinction, because he could easily go either
412 way.

413
414 Mr. Fleming stated that based on that, and the fact that the property has not maintained its
415 original integrity as much as they would like to have, he agrees with Ms. Ellis that as long as
416 they can protect what is still there, he thinks it is a Contributing resource.

417
418 Ms. Powell stated that she thinks the 1984/2034 indicator might be a good moment to switch to a
419 Primary resource at that time. She continued that perhaps they could rank it as Contributing at
420 this stage, before that secondary element that is seemingly what they are all flagging as being
421 potentially at odds with the Primary designation, based on the overview Mr. Clements gave.

422
423 Ms. Zerba stated that the reason she supports it as a Primary resource is because she thinks a
424 great deal of effort went into making sure the renovations retained as much as possible of the
425 original rail yard. She continued that for example, when it was redone, the building could have
426 gone straight through without making sure the roundhouse was retained. Maybe what was done
427 is not the ideal, but it was moving with the times, and it is a good example of the best that they
428 could do with what existed and with what they wanted to have it become.

429
430 The motion failed with a vote of 2-9. Ms. Zerba and Ms. Carey voted in favor.

431
432 Ms. Powell made a motion to consider 149 Emerald St. as a Contributing resource. Mr.
433 Bergeron seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

434
435 **5. 104 Emerald Street – Dunn & Salisbury Lumber Building – Built Ca. 1900**

436
437 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that this property’s current use is a retail store. She continued
438 that it was built circa 1900. Regarding alterations, *“The fenestration of the former lumber
439 storage building at 104 Emerald St. has been heavily altered with all second-floor windows
440 removed, primary entrance removed, and additional first floor window openings added. A
441 ramped entrance porch was added in the 20th century to the new entry door. All windows have
442 been replaced, and the original wooden clapboard siding covered with vinyl.”* She continued
443 that the notes say, *“The historic Dunn & Salisbury lumber storage and office building was
444 constructed around the turn of the 20th century and was home to Keene Industrial Paper
445 Company in the early 21st century.”* She will not read the notes on integrity and significance
446 aloud but encourages others to review them. The recommendation was for this to be considered
447 a Contributing resource. Again, she reminds everyone that this classification is one out of two,
448 Contributing or Non-contributing, so even if the HC and HDC follow that recommendation, they
449 have to further classify it.

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Mr. Clements stated that he wants to mention that this property is an example of what he was talking about earlier, where in some cases the form may have been significantly altered but it is a “last of its kind” sort of representation of the turn of the century railroad adjacent industries that are now few and far between in the city.

Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that she has a clarifying question. She continued that Mr. Clements spoke about how a property should be pristine to qualify as Primary. She asked if that stands alone, or if that is impacted by the historical significance of the property as “last of its kind,” or if that is for the HC and HDC to decide. Mr. Clements replied that he thinks it is for them to decide. He continued that he thinks for something to really be Primary it has to kind of be both, or strongly one and even more strongly the other. There is more wiggle room with Contributing, where they can acknowledge that the resource has degraded but is of such cultural significance that it is worth protecting.

Ms. Zerba made a motion to designate 104 Emerald St. as Contributing. She continued that even though they have made many changes, such as the vinyl siding there now instead of the wood, the removal of the windows, and so on and so forth, when you look at it you know that this was the Dunn & Salisbury building at one time.

Mr. Fleming seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

6. 80-100 Emerald Street – Rawson Turning Factory – Built 1912

Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that the current use for this building from 1912 is mixed commercial and multiple dwelling. She continued that with respect to alterations, the notes include that *“When it was constructed in 1912, the building at what is now 80-100 Emerald St. consisted of just the 15x4 bay brick main block, and by 1924, a large single-story brick addition had been constructed off the back of the building. As the use of the building changed, so did some of the exterior features. Original windows and doors have been lost and there have been changes to the rear addition, particularly at the site of the present laundromat. Solar panels have recently been added to the roof but are not visible from the ground level. Over time, sections of this early 20th century addition were removed, creating the building footprint that we see today.”*

Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos continued that there are several images, including ones of the laundromat. Again, she invites everyone to review the notes on integrity and significance. The consultant recommendation that this be considered a Contributing resource.

Ms. Zerba made a motion to consider this a Contributing resource. Ms. Powell seconded the motion.

492 Ms. Powell stated that to her this feels a lot like the roundhouse property because of the addition
493 on the back and the more modern element, the front building, does not quite seem to fit as
494 Primary. The full property feels more like a Contributing resource.

495

496 The motion passed unanimously.

497

498 **7. 43 Wilson Street – Gates House- Built 1890**

499

500 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos stated that this property, built in 1890, is in current use as multiple
501 dwelling. She continued that regarding alterations, *“Single-family dwelling subdivided to create*
502 *duplex, porch railings and windows replaced in the late 20th century.”* This is a very common
503 phenomenon for the Keene area. The notes state, *“The former Gates House retains character-*
504 *defining historic features such as general form and massing, historic slate roof, historic wooden*
505 *clapboard siding, fenestration locations, historic brick chimney, turned porch columns, and*
506 *plug-split granite posts at the corners of the lot. All of these features are fairly typical of the*
507 *middle class suburban home of the late 19th century.”* Again, she invites people to review the
508 notes on significance and integrity. The consultant recommends this be a Contributing resource.

509

510 Ms. Zerba stated that she will support the recommendation for it to be a Contributing resource.
511 She continued that it does not look very good now, but with a little work it could be restored
512 beautifully to reflect a home that housed the people who worked in the manufacturing plants
513 around the corner.

514

515 Ms. Zerba made a motion to consider 43 Wilson St. a Contributing resource. Ms. Powell
516 seconded the motion.

517

518 Mr. Fleming asked if the reason this was not in a previous categorization is because it is part of
519 the area that was added to the historic district. Mr. Clements replied yes, that is correct.

520

521 The motion passed unanimously.

522

523 Mr. Clements stated that he would like to acknowledge that in exercises like this, it can be
524 difficult in the beginning to get your mind around the exercise, and then by the end of it, you
525 have a greater understanding of the exercise and what you are talking about. He continued that
526 he wants to check and ask if everyone is comfortable with all the decisions they made today, or if
527 anyone wants to go back and re-evaluate any previous decision now that they have a fuller
528 understanding of the process.

529

530 Ms. Carey stated that regarding the Wilson St. property, she wanted to note that through her
531 research, she has found that this house has a lot of history. She continued that particular people
532 have lived here that were historically significant, and it is a cultural landmark for the time and
533 throughout the history of Keene. If this house were in better condition, perhaps it would be
534 Primary. She would want that to be the case.

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Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos asked, regarding Mr. Clements’s point, if everyone was comfortable with the decisions they made today. Hearing no objection, she moved to the next agenda item.

3) Annual Report to City Council
A) A brief discussion on the City Council’s request that Boards and Commissions provide annual reports of their activities

Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos asked if everyone has a copy of the January 16 meeting notes. Mr. Clements replied that everyone should have received a copy of this memorandum, which was a City Council agenda item. He continued that Councilor Ed Haas requested that each City board, commission, or committee provide some sort of annual report for the City Council. It is voluntary process; the decision is up to each board whether they want to present to the full City Council or a Council subcommittee, in person or in writing. They do not need to decide tonight, as this is a joint committee of two groups and each group needs to decide individually. He just wanted to put it on their radar.

Brief discussion ensued. Mr. Fleming questioned why the memo says the Council wants the reports all on July 1 but also wants them staggered throughout the year. Mr. Clements clarified that Councilor Haas was envisioning staggered presentations so it was not just one Council meeting swamped with all the presentations at once.

Per Ms. Powell’s request, Ms. Zerba spoke a bit about what the system was like when committee/board chairs gave annual updates to the Council several years ago. Discussion continued about how this used to be a common practice that went by the wayside during COVID times and is now being revived. Mr. Clements stated that this will be an agenda item at the next HC meeting and the next HDC meeting for the groups to talk about.

4) Staff Updates
A) Master Plan Update

Mr. Clements stated that the City is undergoing a Comprehensive Master Plan update, and the process continues. He continued that they are now in the final stretch. Another survey is coming out soon and he encourages everyone to participate, probably in mid-April. He encourages everyone to keep an eye on keenemasterplan.com and the City’s website and social media. This (survey) will be looking at the goals and strategies coming out of the Master Plan Steering Committee and the task force groups they have been working with. They hope to see a draft of the actual document in early June. Also in early June, there will be another future summit, another opportunity for engagement. That will be an unveiling of the draft document.

Ms. Fortson added that the future summit is June 3, 5:00 to 7:00 PM at Heberton Hall. She continued that the future land use map is coming up as well, and the discussion boards are still active on keenemasterplan.com. She encourages people to participate in those discussion boards

578 and the survey, and to spread the word about the survey. Mr. Clements added that even people
579 who are not Keene residents but use the city are invited to give feedback. The discussion boards
580 will be up probably through April. He gave more information about the future land use map as
581 required by statute, and what they are looking for feedback on.

582

583 **5) New Business**

584

585 Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos asked if anyone had any new business. (No).

586

587 **6) Adjourn**

588

589 There being no further business, Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos adjourned the meeting at 5:51 PM.

590

591 Respectfully submitted by,
592 Britta Reida, Minute Taker

593

594 Reviewed and edited by,
595 Evan J. Clements, AICP
596 Planner

STAFF REPORT

COA-2009-24, Mod. 3 – 24 Vernon Street – Exterior Renovations

Request:

Applicant and owner Monadnock Area Peer Support Agency, proposes exterior renovations to the building at 24 Vernon St (TMP #568-058-000), including removing the exterior siding to repair the brick facade, the creation of a new primary entrance, and the replacement of all existing windows. The property is 0.28 ac and is ranked as a Primary Resource in the Downtown Core District.

Background:

The building located at 24 Vernon Street is a two-story building with vinyl siding and a flat roof that is connected to and behind 32-34 Washington Street. Since 32-34 Washington Street is ranked as a Primary Resource, the subject property is also considered a Primary Resource. The building was constructed in 1920 and served mainly as a space for offices. The building has multiple entrances, including a ground floor and second floor entrance off Vernon Street and a second-floor entrance accessed from an alley off Washington Street.

The applicant proposes to renovate the exterior of the building by removing the vinyl siding and repairing the brick façade located underneath. The second-floor entrance on the Vernon Street side is to be removed. A window will be installed where the door used to be located. A new ground floor entrance will be created with the current ground floor entrance being removed and replaced by a window. The existing windows on the building will be replaced with energy-efficient options that match the existing style.



Fig 1: 24 Vernon Street - Indicated by Red Arrow

The applicant came before the Commission on April 20, 2023 for approval for exterior façade renovations and received approval for application COA-2009-23, Modification #2. This approval has since expired and the applicant is coming back before the Commission for approval of the project with slight adjustment in scope.

Per Sections 21.4.2 of the Land Development Code in Table 21-3 “Changes to exterior materials, replacement of more than 2 windows or doors...,” this work is classified as a “Major Project” for review by the HDC.

Completeness:

The applicant has submitted a complete application and staff recommends that the Historic District Commission accept the application as “complete.”

STAFF REPORT

Application Analysis:

Included below is an analysis of the relevant standards of the HDC Regulations.

21.6.3.A.3 – “All architectural changes shall be appropriate either to the original style or appearance of the building or structure (if it has not been significantly altered) or to its altered style or appearance (if it has been altered within the Period of Significance and those alterations have attained significance).”

At some point in the building’s history the façade was replaced with vinyl siding. The surrounding buildings are of brick construction. The façade of 32-34 Washington Street, which 24 Vernon Street is attached, is also brick. The applicant’s proposal to remove the existing vinyl siding and repair the brick facade to restore the building and bring it more in line with the visual aesthetic of the surrounding buildings in the district. It appears that this standard has been met.

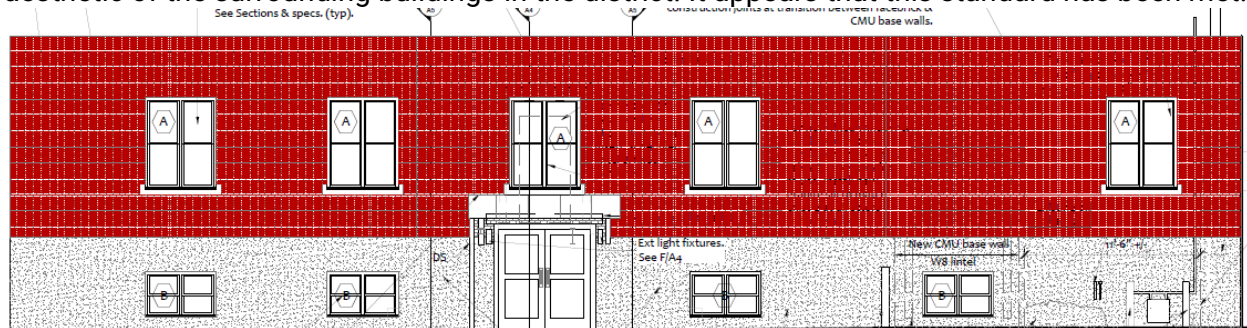


Fig 2: Vernon Street Elevation

21.6.3.D.1 – “Removing character-defining historic window sash shall be discouraged, unless repair is not economically feasible.”

The applicant has stated that the windows are not historic in character or material. The proposal includes the replacement of the existing windows with energy efficient options that match the existing window stock. A new window is to be introduced where the existing first floor and second-floor entrances are to be removed. It appears that this standard has been met.

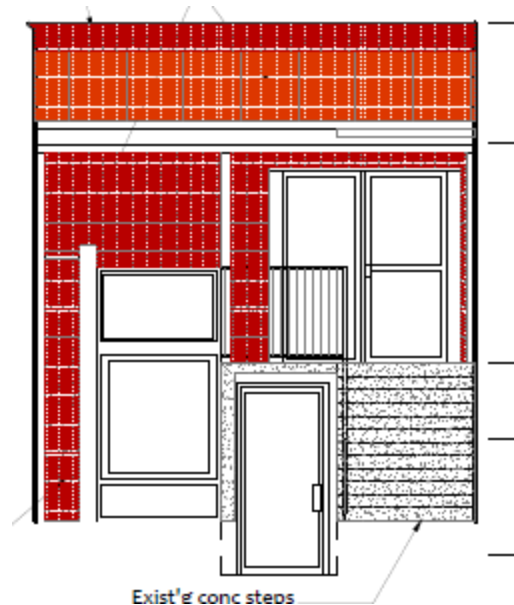


Fig 3: Alleyway Elevation

STAFF REPORT

21.6.3.E.1 – “Historic doors, entrances and porches, including their associated features, shall be retained or replaced in-kind. If repair is necessary, only the deteriorated element shall be repaired, through patching, splicing, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing the deteriorated section. If replacement is necessary, the new feature shall match the original in size, design, texture, color, and, where possible, materials. The new feature shall maintain the same visual appearance as the historic feature.”

The proposal includes the removal of the second-floor entrance on the Vernon Street façade. The dual staircase also provides an entrance to the basement. The applicant has stated that the staircases do not meet accessibility standards, are challenging to keep clear in winter weather, and need significant maintenance. The covered entryway is vinyl siding with faux-Greek style columns that does not match the visual aesthetic of the surrounding buildings in the district. The Commission determined that this entry way was not of historic significance at the April 20, 2023 meeting. The Commission will need to re-determine if this entrance is historic in nature, provides value to the district, and is worth preserving.



Fig 4: Existing Covered Entryway (To Be Removed)

Recommendation:

If the Board is inclined to approve this request, the following motion is recommended:

Approve COA-2009-24, Mod. 3, exterior renovations including changes to the exterior facade, the creation of a new primary entrance, and the replacement of all existing windows on the property located at 24 Vernon Street, as presented in the plan set titled “Facility Improvements” prepared by Sampson Architects, with a scale of $\frac{1}{4}'' = 1'$, dated March 25, 2025 and application and supporting materials received March 27, 2025 with no conditions.



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



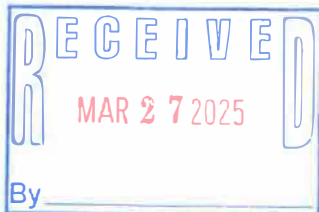

PROJECT NAME:

Facility Improvements

PROJECT ADDRESS(ES):

32-34 Washington Street (24Vernon St)

SECTION 2: CONTACT INFORMATION

PROPERTY OWNER		APPLICANT	
NAME/COMPANY: Monadnock Area Peer Support Agency		NAME/COMPANY: Monadnock Area Peer Support Agency	
MAILING ADDRESS: 24 Vernon St Keene NH 03431		MAILING ADDRESS: 24 Vernon St Keene NH 03431	
PHONE: 603 352 5094		PHONE: 603 352 5094	
EMAIL: stephen@monadnockpsa.org		EMAIL: stephen@monadnockpsa.org	
SIGNATURE: 		SIGNATURE: 	
PRINTED NAME: Stephen Tavella		PRINTED NAME: Stephen Tavella	
AUTHORIZED AGENT (if different than Owner/Applicant)		FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:	
NAME/COMPANY: Timothy Sampson		TAX MAP PARCEL #(s): 568 - 058 - 000 - _____	
MAILING ADDRESS: 11 King Ct Suite 1E Keene, NH 03431		_____	
PHONE: 603 769 7736		PARCEL SIZE: 0.28ac	DATE STAMP: 
EMAIL: itm@sampsonarchitects.com		ZONING DISTRICT: Downtown Core	
SIGNATURE: 		RESOURCE RANKING: Primary	
PRINTED NAME: Timothy Sampson		PROJECT #: COA-2009-24, mod 3	

SECTION 3: APPLICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

A COMPLETE APPLICATION MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS AND MUST BE SUBMITTED BY ONE OF THE OPTIONS BELOW:

- **Email:** communitydevelopment@keenenh.gov, with "Historic District Commission" in the subject line
- **Mail / Hand Deliver:** Community Development (4th Floor), Keene City Hall, 3 Washington St, Keene, NH 03431

The submittal requirements for Historic District Commission applications are outlined further in **Article 22** and **Article 26.15** of the [Land Development Code \(LDC\)](#). You may request an exemption from providing any of the items below, except the application fee and narrative. The Community Development Director may grant an exemption, if it is determined that the scope of the project does not warrant the submittal.

Note: Additional information may be requested by the respective decision-making authority during the review process.

GENERAL SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

CERTIFIED NOTICE LIST (See **Attachment A** for more information.)

2 SETS OF MAILING LABELS (See **Attachment A** for more information.)

PROJECT NARRATIVE (See **Section 1 of Attachment B** for more information.)

FEES: Fill in the information below to calculate the total fee.

- \$50 base fee
 \$62 legal ad fee
 _____ current USPS certificate of mailing rate x _____ abutters
 = _____ **(TOTAL FEE)**

NOTE: Please call the Community Development Department for the current certificate of mailing rate. Checks should be made payable to the *City of Keene*. Credit card payments are accepted in-person or by calling 603-352-5440.

WAIVERS (See **Section 2 of Attachment B** for additional information.)

- WAIVER(S) REQUESTED**
 NO WAIVER(S) REQUESTED

ADDITIONAL SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS (See **Attachment C** for additional information.)

	SUBMITTED	EXEMPTION REQUESTED
PRODUCT SPECIFICATION SHEETS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SAMPLES OF MORTAR AND/OR BRICK	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
COLOR REPRESENTATIONS, SIMULATIONS, OR RENDERINGS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PHOTOGRAPHS, RENDERINGS, AND/OR LINE SKETCHES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
EXISTING CONDITIONS PLAN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PROPOSED CONDITIONS PLAN:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ELEVATIONS:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Descriptive Narrative

Existing / Proposed Uses:

The building is classified as an Institutional Use (I4). There is no proposed change in use as part of this application.

The building is a combination of CMU block and red brick. There are two entries to the building. One located on Washington Street and one located on Vernon Street. Neither of these entries provide interior access to the two floors.

Project Type, Sale and Scope:

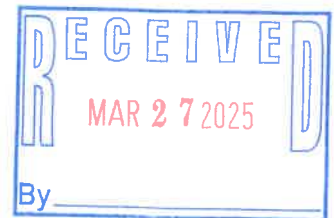
The proposed projects is aimed at increasing energy efficiency and providing improved accessibility. Interior work consists of rearranging interior spaces and providing interior access between the two floors consisting of a new egress stair and an elevator.

Exterior work along Washington street consists of brick and mortar repair.

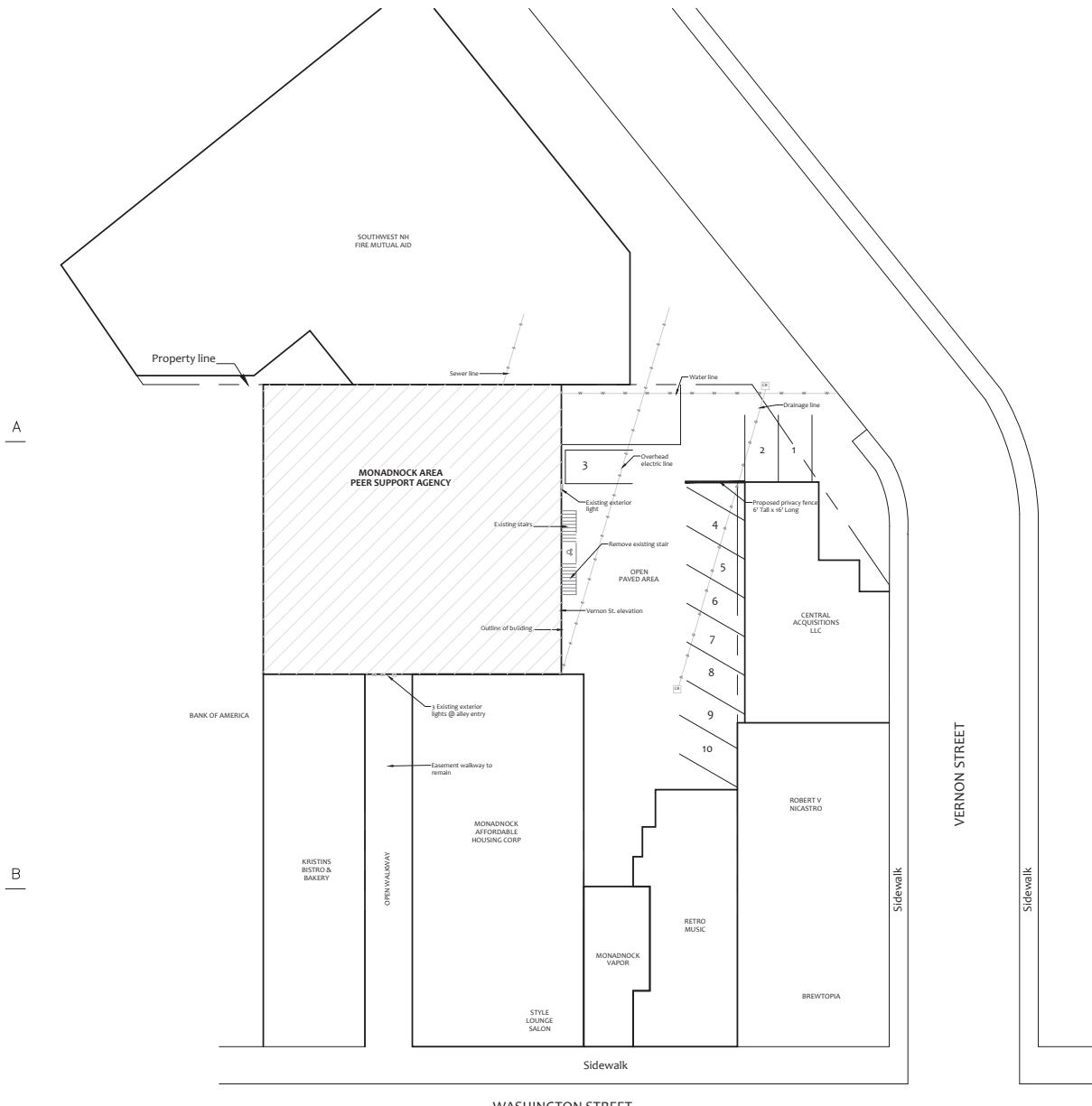
The main focus of exterior work is located on the Vernon Street elevation. Existing clapboard siding will be removed to expose the original brick siding on the upper half of the building. The main entry to the building is being relocated to this façade. The lower CMU portion of the building will be repaired as necessary.

The existing second story entry will be relocated to grade level pair of glass doors. Above the entry doors a new window is being proposed. The existing entry to the lower level is proposed to be removed with a new window in the existing opening. There is also a new window being proposed in what is believed to be an original opening that has been infilled. This wood infill will be removed and new brick cladding provided to match the existing brick.

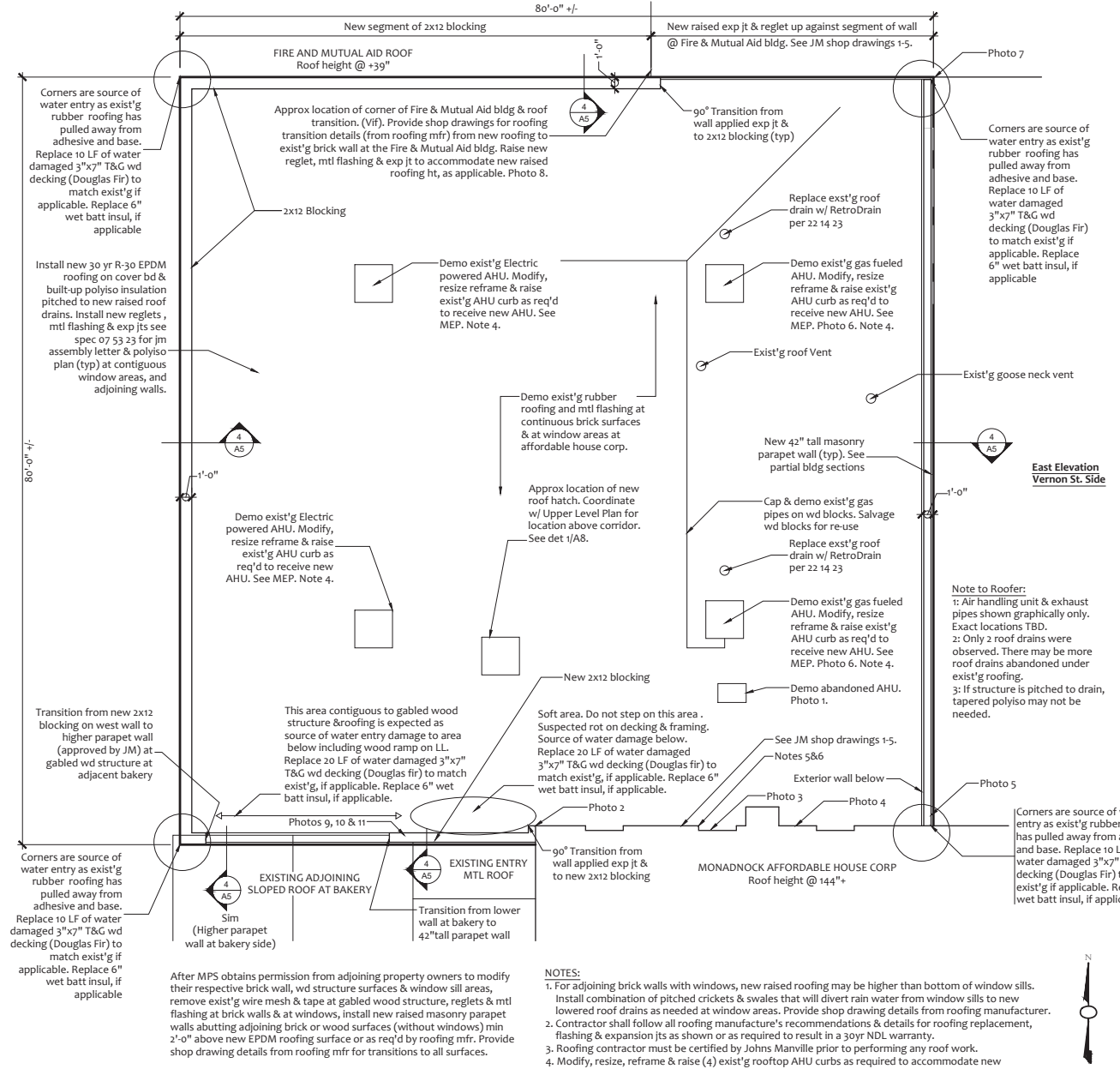
There is also a new membrane roof system being proposed as well as replacement of the existing rooftop units.



COA-2009-24, mod. 3



Plot Plan
Scale: 3/16" = 1'-0"



Roof Plan
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"

- NOTES:**
1. For adjoining brick walls with windows, new raised roofing may be higher than bottom of window sills. Install combination of pitched crickets & swales that will divert rain water from window sills to new lowered roof drains as needed at window areas. Provide shop drawing details from roofing manufacturer.
 2. Contractor shall follow all roofing manufacturer's recommendations & details for roofing replacement, flashing & expansion jts as shown or as required to result in a 30yr NDL warranty.
 3. Roofing contractor must be certified by Johns Manville prior to performing any roof work.
 4. Modify, resize, reframe & raise (4) exist'g rooftop AHU curbs as required to accommodate new higher roofing system. See det 3/A10.
 5. VIF locations of exterior windows & wall protrusions at the Affordable House bldg. Remove all exist'g mtl reglets & flashing at base of windows & returns throughout the southeast ext wall of Affordable House bldg. Replace w/ new reglets & exp jt as detailed or req'd by roofing mfr. See JM shop drawings 1-5.
 6. All new reglets & exp jts at corners, sills, & brick returns shall have matching pre-fabricated units.

These drawings are LIMITED SCOPE and are intended only to describe general design intent, scale, overall spatial relationships and material where indicated. These drawings shall be considered preliminary for purposes of design review, comment, or budget pricing only, unless expressly released for other purposes as indicated in the issue log. The architect assumes responsibility for errors in the information provided, and not for omissions.

Architect:
Timothy Sampson
NCARB, LEED AP
11 King Court
Suite 1 East
Keene, NH
603 769 7736

Engineer:
SAMPSON ARCHITECTS
2024 WOF# 24-011

Prepared For
Monadnock Area Peer Support Agency
PO Box 258
Keene, NH 03431

PROJECT
Facility Improvements
32-34 Washington Street
Keene, NH 03431

TITLE
**Site Plan
Roof Plan
Details/Notes**

Date:	Revisions:
2.27.23	Grant Submission
3.25.25	HDC Submission
-	-

SCALE as noted

DATE 3.25.25

SHEET NUMBER

HDC1

C



Adjacent Entry Door
Scale:



Adjacent Window
Scale:



Adjacent Window
Scale:



Adjacent Sill Detail
Scale:

D

1

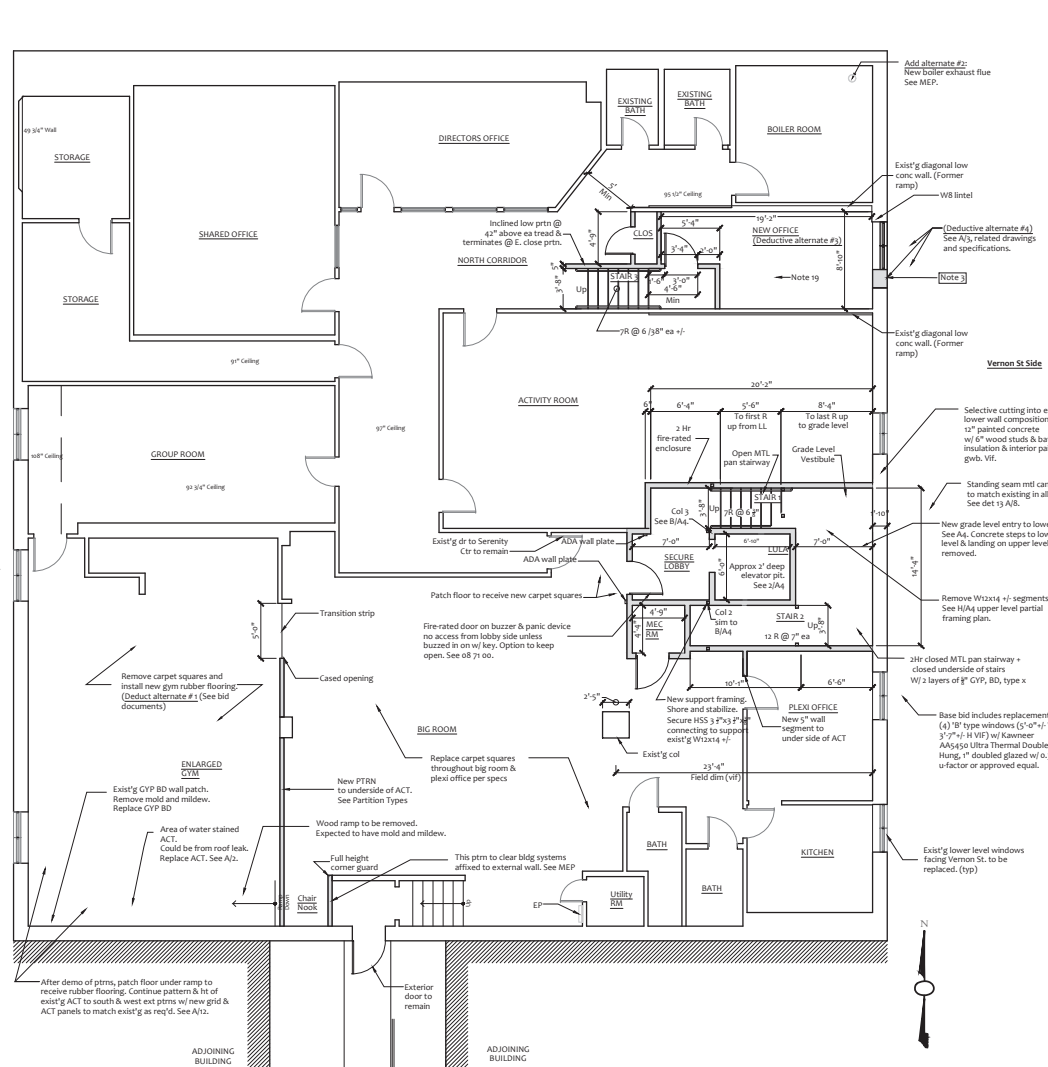
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| 3

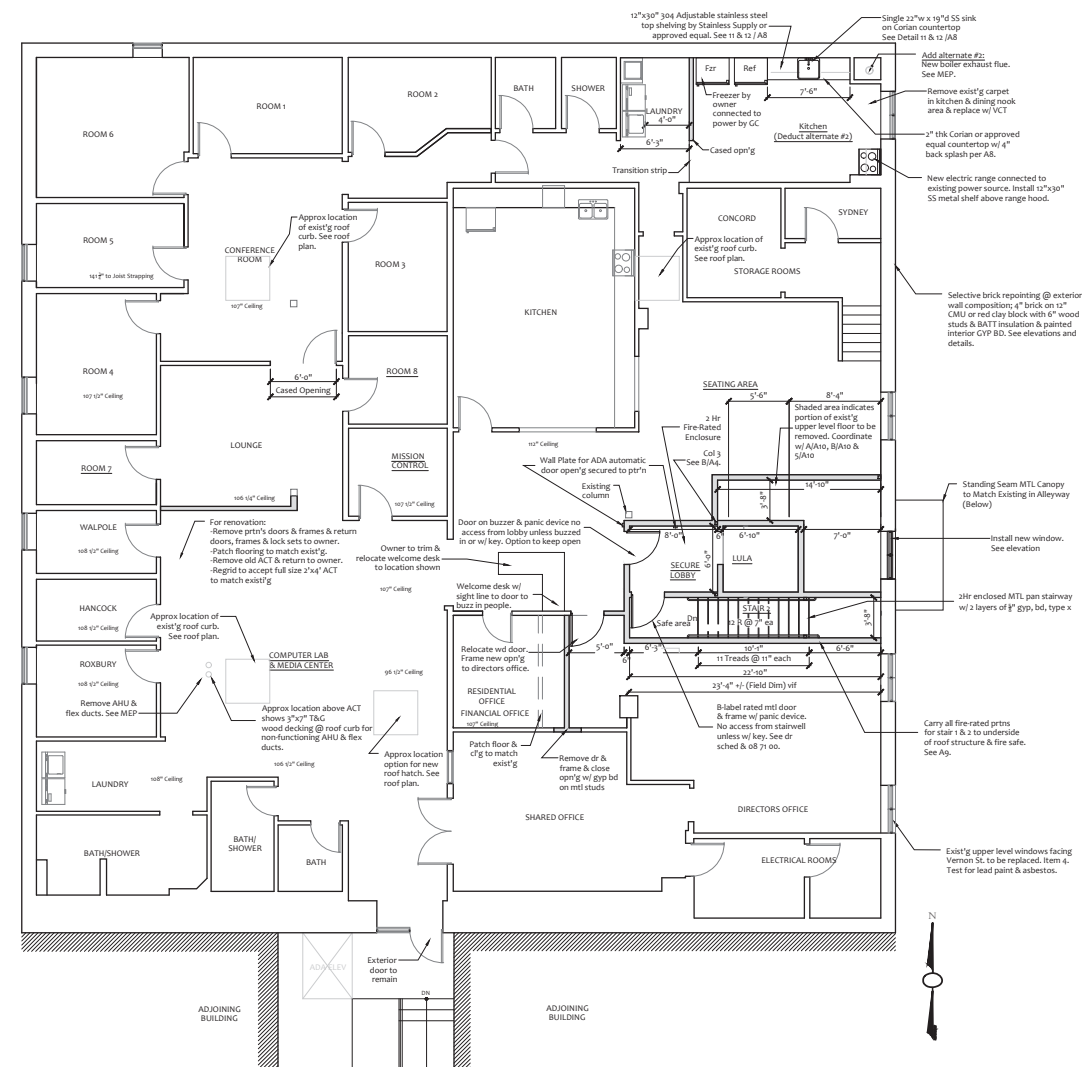
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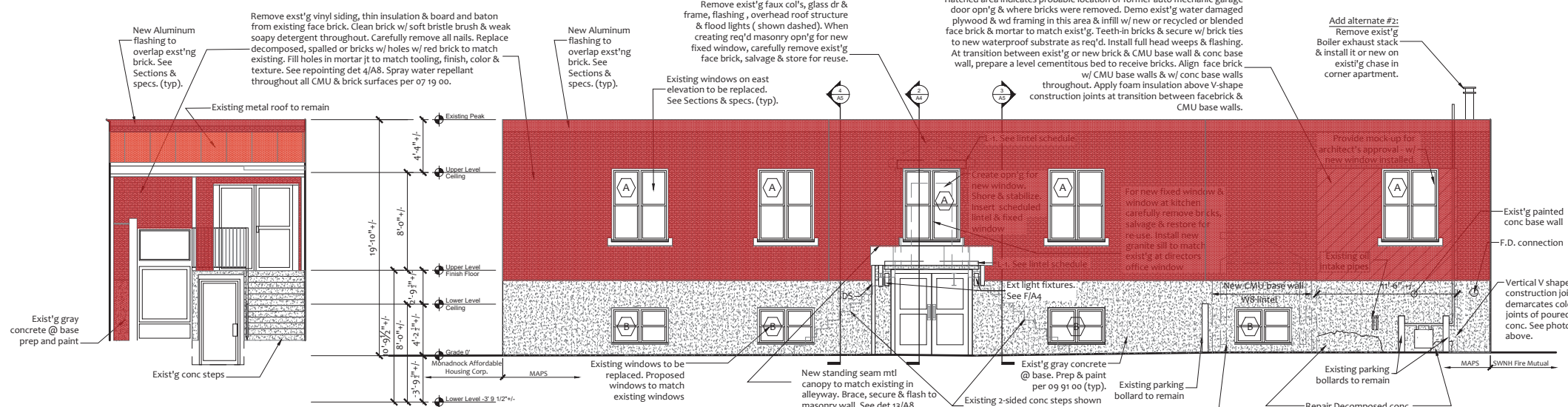
| 6



Lower Level Plan
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"



Upper Level Plan
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"



Alleyway Elevation
Scale: 3/16" = 1'-0"

Vernon Street Elevation
Scale: 3/16" = 1'-0"

NOTES:
 1. See window schedule and specs. Reference testing reports (in spec sections 02 07 50 & 02 50 00) before removal of existing windows. Existing wd lintels above upper level windows & yellow paint on the interior of existing CMU above upper level windows contain lead paint. Abate areas impacted by new construction per specs & regulations:
 A. Green paint on the upper level on the underside of existing 3"x7" T&G wood decking (above ACT).
 B. Yellow paint on the upper level wood walls & on CMU walls (Above ACT).
 C. Green Paint on upper level wood joists and wood lintels supporting masonry above windows located above ACT at the exterior wall facing the parking lot (East Elevation).
 D. Should other building materials be found have green & yellow paint that may be impacted by new construction, they are assumed to contain lead paint.

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 2024 WOF 24-011

Prepared For
Monadnock Area Peer Support Agency
 PO Box 258
 Keene, NH 03431

PROJECT
Facility Improvements
 32-34 Washington Street
 Keene, NH 03431

TITLE
Floor Plan Elevations Notes

Date:	Revisions:
2.27.23	Grant Submission
3.25.25	HDC Submission
-	-

SCALE as noted

DATE 3.25.25

SHEET NUMBER

HDC2

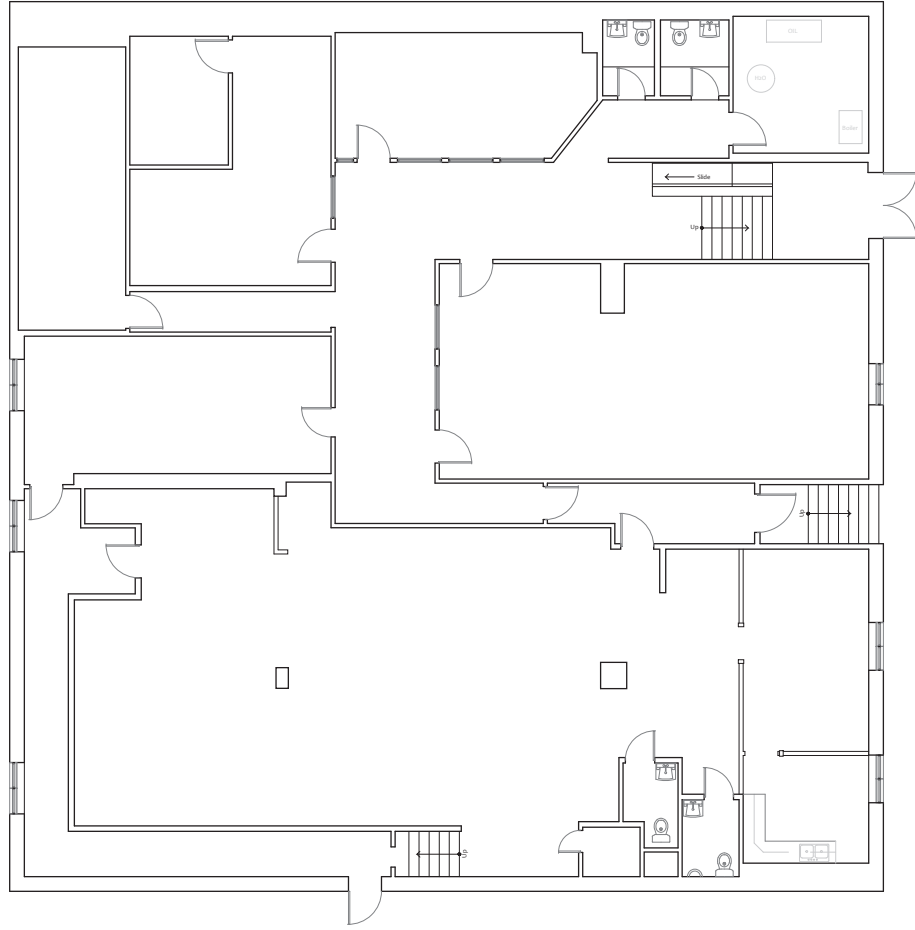
A

B

C

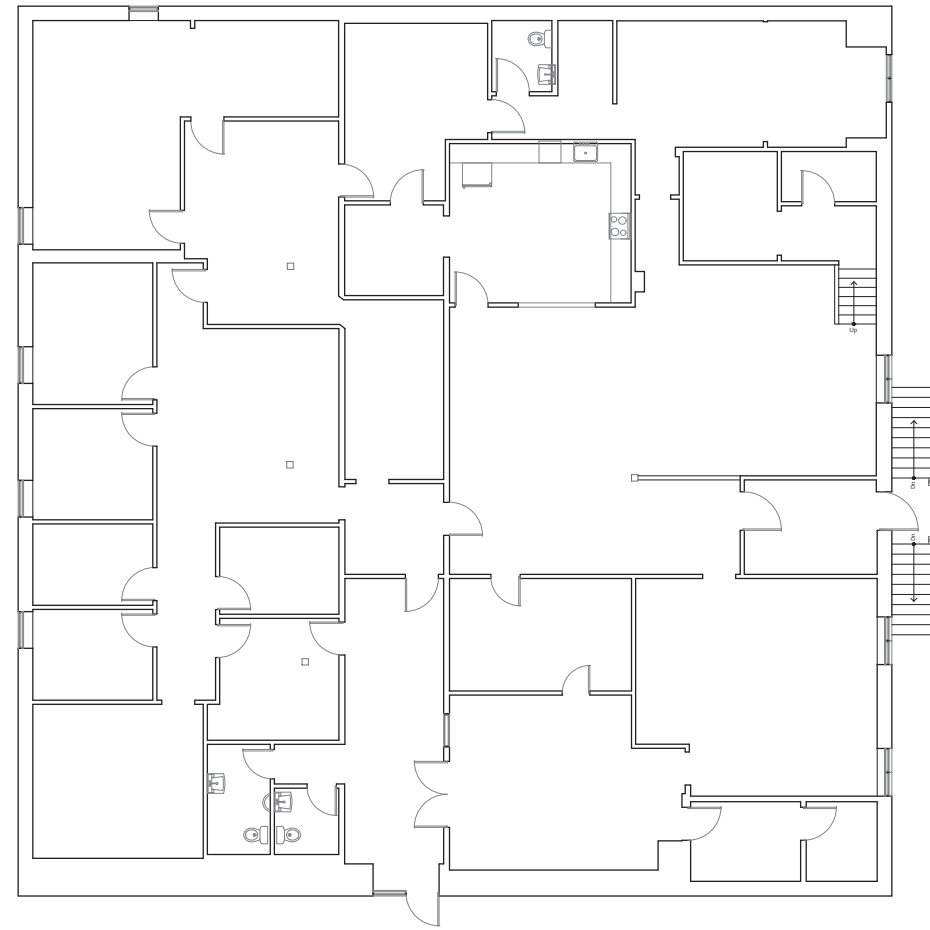
D

A



Existing Lower Level Plan
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"

B



Existing Upper Level Plan
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"

C



Washington St. Alley
Scale: Not to Scale



Washington St. Alley
Scale: Not to Scale



Vernon St. Parking
Scale: Not to Scale



Vernon St. Parking
Scale: Not to Scale

D

1

2

3

4

5

6

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Engineer:
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SAMPSON ARCHITECTS
2024 WOF# 24-011

Prepared For
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PO Box 258
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PROJECT
Facility Improvements
32-34 Washington Street
Keene, NH 03431

TITLE
Existing Plans

Date:	Revisions:
2.27.23	Grant Submission
3.25.25	HDC Submission
-	-

SCALE as noted

DATE 3.25.25

SHEET NUMBER

HDC0