

# NASHUA HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Monday, September 25, 2023, 6:30 p.m.

**NOTE: City Hall is now open to the public after the Governors Order has expired. Therefore, the Historic District Commission is meeting in Room 208 at City Hall. The public as well as applicants may still access the meeting via Zoom.**

## *HDC Members:*

Ald. Patricia Klee (left at 7:00 p.m.)  
Mariellen MacKay  
Robert Vorbach  
Chris Barrett  
Bill Slivinski  
Maggie Harper

## *Also present:*

Carter Falk, Deputy Planning Manager/Zoning  
Kate Poirier, Zoning Coordinator

Mr. Falk called the Roll Call; the attending members indicated their presence by verbal confirmation.

## **MINUTES:**

June 26, 2023

**MOTION** by Mr. Barrett to approve the minutes as presented, waive the reading, and place the minutes in the file.

**SECONDED** by Mr. Vorbach.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VERBAL ROLL CALL OF THE MEMBERS.**

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

None.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

- 1. City of Nashua & Nashua River Company Holding Co, LLC (Owners) Deb Chisholm, Sustainability Manager, City of Nashua (Applicant) 1 Nashua Drive (Sheet 43 Lot 99) requesting approval for Jackson Mills Hydroelectric facility equipment upgrade, including removing and replacing the switchgear and storage buildings. GI Zone, Ward 3.**

Voting on this case:

Ald. Patricia Klee  
Mariellen MacKay  
Chris Barrett  
Robert Vorbach  
Maggie Harper  
Bill Slivinski

Matt Sullivan, Community Development Division Director, City of Nashua, Nashua, NH. Mr. Sullivan said that he is sitting in for Deb Chisholm tonight, who is unable to make it. Mr. Sullivan said that this project has come before the Commission on two separate occasions, one as part of a formal presentation, and once as part as an advisory presentation, about a year and a half ago.

Mr. Sullivan said that there are two specific elements before the Commission tonight, one is the turbine replacement project at the Jackson Mills area, adjacent to Margarita's, down off of Canal Street. He said that the turbine itself will be replaced, and a lot of the control equipment is in it. He said that the request really is the replacement of two buildings, one being the switchgear building, which houses electrical equipment needed for the interconnection of this facility to the electrical grid, and the second is a smaller storage shed, which is used for a variety of supplies and materials related to the hydroelectric facility.

Mr. Sullivan said that they are looking to replace both these buildings in kind, just as they are. He said that they will be improving the aesthetic, the switchgear building does have to be metallic in material, based upon what is housed within it. He said it will have a metallic finish to it. He said that the storage shed, which is an 8'x10' shed, will be a typical Reeds Ferry-esq design, wood siding, a one-for-one replacement of that shed. He said that the height of the switchgear building will be increasing by a few feet to house the new equipment that will go in it, so it'll be about 13 feet tall. He said that the fencing that exists there now really blocks the view from the Margarita's parking lot will remain in place at this time. He said that a chain-link fence is proposed on the rear side, with plastic black slats, that will be obstructed from view if someone is looking across the river. He said that the switchgear building will be 14'x9' in size, and an approximate 8'x10' storage shed.

Mr. Sullivan said that they haven't decided on the final dimension of the storage shed, it's possible to be just a Reeds Ferry shed, and put on the property, and it may actually be a little less than 8'x10'. He said that the one building will not be blue in color like what is shown in the package.

Mrs. Harper asked if the buildings were ever looked at to look a little more historical looking, and attractive.

Mr. Sullivan said that it's really a cost issue. He said that for the switchgear building, modifying it to be a brick structure is not something that is permitted to do by Eversource regulations. He said that the storage shed is such a basic structure, and the budget is not allocated to do anything such as a brick enclosure, it would double or triple the cost of it. He said that the fence is needed for security purposes.

Mr. Vorbach said that he doesn't think that the buildings need to call attention to themselves, it's sort of an industrial site, they're not standing out, due to their function.

Mrs. MacKay asked if Reeds Ferry is to be considered, if it would be wood.

Mr. Sullivan said yes.

Mrs. MacKay asked if wood would be more in keeping with the historical look, as opposed to some kind of metal.

Mr. Sullivan agreed, and said that the only challenge is that one of the buildings really has to remain metal, while the storage shed can be wood sided building.

Mr. Barrett asked if there will be any plantings on the other side of the fence, river-side of the fence.

Mr. Sullivan said that there is a little bit of space there, and no plantings are proposed as part of this effort. He said it's much more green than it appears in the photo. He said that the photos were taken in April, so it was more of a barren time, but no specific plantings are proposed with the project. He said he'd have to look into the project budget.

Ald. Klee asked if this falls within the TIF area.

Mr. Sullivan said it does not.

**SPEAKING IN FAVOR:**

No one.

**SPEAKING WITH QUESTIONS, CONCERNS OR OPPOSITION:**

No one.

**END OF PUBLIC HEARING, BEGINNING OF PUBLIC MEETING:**

Mr. Slivinski asked why this cannot be built out of brick, and said that he believes that the City of Manchester would have this done in brick.

Mr. Sullivan said he doesn't have a better answer other than cost, as it's coming from the taxpayers. He said that this project was supposed to be done three years ago, and there were a variety of permitting issues with the federal government, and the project was delayed by two years, and then there was an issue finding contractor labor, someone to actually do the work, and then, with all the intense amount of rain this summer, and high water levels, it's just been hard to get the work done. He said that they've had to bond twice what the project was initially going to cost. He said that he's had to go back before the Board several times to ask for more money.

Mrs. Harper asked about a brick foundation for the storage shed.

Mr. Sullivan said that he's not sure at this time, but will look into it and provide feedback to see what the cost differential might be. He said that he could provide info at the next meeting, but doesn't want to delay a decision on a possible brick foundation.

**MOTION** by Ald. Klee to approve this request as submitted and written, knowing that Mr. Sullivan will come forward with that information about a brick foundation.

**SECONDED** by Mr. Vorbach.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY PER VERBAL ROLL CALL OF THE COMMISSIONERS.**

(Ald. Klee left meeting to go to Board of Alderman meeting)

- 2. Parent Realty, LLC (Owner) Eric Parent (Applicant) 23-27 Main Street (Sheet 68 Lot 5) requesting approval to replace windows on second floor for proposed new residential units. D-1/MU Zone, Ward 3.**

Voting on this case:

Mariellen MacKay  
Chris Barrett  
Robert Vorbach  
Maggie Harper  
Bill Slivinski

Eric Parent, 23-27 Main Street, Nashua, NH. Mr. Parent said that he's looking to put in four apartment units on the second floor, it is roughly 6,000 square feet in size. He said that the windows in there now are single-pane glass, with a metal frame, and there is no heat retention in them at all, and they don't open up.

Mr. Parent said that the proposed windows have some bigger bars in them, they're there for structural purposes. He said that they'll have bars for support, with crank-out windows. He said that they'll have grids. He said the windows will be in the same locations. He said that the front of the building doesn't look good, and the plan is to restore it to its original brick front eventually, but wants to get the back done first.

Mr. Falk said that the residential use is permitted, and there is no Zoning Board or Planning Board action required.

Mr. Parent said that the cost is \$130,000 alone for the second floor. He said that the openings where the windows are will remain the same locations. He said that he couldn't put apartments here with the drafts from the windows. He said that they don't have screens, but the new windows will improve the look of the building, it will look nice.

Mrs. Harper asked if the color of the frames would be bronze, or black.

Mr. Parent said that he prefers black, as the Mill down the street has all black, but the front half of the building is the nickel finish, the aluminum look to it. He said that having black on top and the nickel on the bottom might be a cool look to it.

Mr. Vorbach said that the focus is on the second floor first, and that will set the tone.

Mr. Parent said that the front of the building already has the aluminum finish on it, and that has cost thousands of dollars already, and doesn't want to start changing all that. He said that he could keep the aluminum look on the top, it won't make that much of a difference, but the black would look nice.

Mr. Vorbach said that anything that begins to improve the building is a positive, especially hearing about the Main Street elevation, and bringing that back to life as it was. He said that there are a lot of finishes going on on Main Street, such as EIFS, and its not attractive. He said that improving this building as he's heard tonight is a big positive. He pointed out the new Hidden Pig look, it now looks more unified from an architectural look, it's far better than what it was. He said that to just make sure that there is proper egress from the bedrooms.

Mr. Parent said that the building is sprinklered, plus, there's three means of egress out of the building already.

Mrs. Harper asked if the glass would be tinted.

Mr. Parent said it will be Energy Star efficient, with a shield, it's not tinted, but there's a sheen on it that reflects the sun, these are big windows, with a lot of heat coming in from the sun.

Mr. Slivinski asked how many bedrooms will be up there.

Mr. Parent said five, three one-bedroom units and one two-bedroom units. He said that they're all pretty good sized units. He said that he has parking available across the street.

**SPEAKING IN FAVOR:**

No one.

**SPEAKING WITH QUESTIONS, CONCERNS OR OPPOSITION:**

No one.

**END OF PUBLIC HEARING, BEGINNING OF PUBLIC MEETING:**

**MOTION** by Mr. Slivinski to approve the request as submitted and presented.

**SECONDED** by Mr. Barrett.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY PER VERBAL ROLL CALL OF THE COMMISSIONERS.**

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

Mr. Falk said that the 2024 Meeting Dates are passed out.

**MOTION** by Mrs. MacKay to approve the 2024 Meeting Dates as presented.

**SECONDED** by Mr. Barrett.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY PER VERBAL ROLL CALL OF THE COMMISSIONERS.**

Mr. Vorbach said that he drove by the Historical Society the other day, and what is being built was not what was approved, at all, he said that it is significantly different. He said that it is aesthetically nothing like what was approved.

Mrs. MacKay asked what recourse is available.

Mr. Falk said that staff will go by, take some pictures, get some evidence of what is going on, and compare it to what was approved. He said if necessary, a stop work order can be issued and they may be required to come back before the Commission.

Mr. Vorbach said that they fixed the porch over the ramp, but they did not do it according to the design. He said its not at all what was approved, a major change.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN** by Mr. Barrett at 7:25 p.m.

CF/cf