

City of Hallowell
Planning Board Meeting
October 16, 2019
6:30 pm

1. Call to Order

Ms. Obery called the meeting to order.

2. Roll Call / Quorum

Ms. Obery took the roll call and established a quorum.

Present: Danielle Obery (Chair), Darryl Brown, Andrew Landry, Jane Orbeton, Matthew Rolnick (2nd alt.)
Rick Seymour Jr., Deputy Code Enforcement Officer

Absent: Richard Bostwick, Judith Feinstein, Melvin Morrison (1st alt.), Lisa Rigoulot

Mr. Rolnick will be voting.

3. Public Comments (The Board has agreed to limit the time allotted to Public Comment to fifteen minutes.)

None.

4. Approval of Minutes of the September 18, 2019 Planning Board Meeting

Motion to approve the minutes of the September 18, 2019 meeting as presented.

Moved: Orbeton

Seconded: Rolnick

Unanimously approved

5. Certificate of Appropriateness for New Construction in the Historic District for Mad Brew, LLC, and Alley Cat, LLC, 113 and 117 Water St., Map 5 Lots 143 and 144

Geoff Houghton presented an after-the-fact revision to the Certificate of Appropriateness the Board approved on June 19, 2019. The revision is to add changes made to 117 Water Street, Map 5 Lot 143 (The Maine House). He explained that he had not realized that Planning Board approval was needed for changes to the backs of buildings. Mr. Seymour noted that there was some confusion about what was approved by the Board in June. He said that the plans submitted to the Board for the meeting of June 19 do not include changes that were made on the morning of June 19 by Coffin Engineering, and there is no documentation of those changes being part of the Board's approval. He explained that on June 19 Coffin Engineering made a change to Plan A-1 showing changes to the Maine House, and Jim Coffin says he put that plan on the easel at the Planning Board meeting. However, the plan the Board members had on their desks did not show any changes to the Maine House. Mr. Seymour said that there was no discussion of those changes, adding that both he and Mr. Ide listened to the recording of the meeting to verify that that was the case. Mr. Houghton agreed that the focus at the June meeting was on the changes to the kitchen.

Mr. Rolnick asked for clarification of the changes to the Maine House, and Mr. Houghton pointed out the changes on the revised plan. Mr. Houghton explained that they also swapped out one existing door. He pointed out that one window on the south side of the existing door had previously been bricked up, and the newly bricked up window on the north side of the existing door was divided by the new roof. He noted that it made the building more symmetrical. The doors that were replaced were junky and the replacement door for the apartment entrance was chosen from Hammond's Colonial Collection. The previous door had no windows and had a storm door; the new door has two small windows at the top. The panel to the right of the door was rotted and they replaced it with a side piece with raised panels. The lower door was also in poor shape, and he replaced it with a door similar to the one that the Planning Board approved for the front of the Liberal Cup.

There was discussion of whether the patio was a structure and required approval.

Mr. Brown noted the nine-light panel to the right of the apartment door in the pre-construction photograph and asked if it was a door. Mr. Houghton said it might have been a door at one time, but it had been covered with sheetrock on the interior and was not functional as a door. He said he did not know anything about its history. Mr. Brown asked how the new panel would be finished; Mr. Houghton said it, and all the trim, will be painted green.

Mr. Houghton told the Board that the additional material includes a light pole that will be installed at the southwest corner of the patio. The lamp will have frosted glass instead of clear glass to reduce glare and is Dark Sky compatible. There is also a photograph of a goose-light sconce that will be mounted on the wall of the Liberal Cup to provide a soft amber light on the alley and the parking lot.

Ms. Orbeton asked Mr. Seymour what parts of the application needed the Board's approval. Mr. Seymour enumerated them: 1) constructing the concrete patio, 2) constructing the roof supported by columns, 3) removal of the window and associated shutters and bricking up the opening, 4) installing a door in the area of the removed window, 5) replacing the apartment door and changing the associated side light, 6) installing a bracket to hold a proposed street light, and 7) installing a railing along the perimeter of the patio.

There was discussion of the proposed changes and the guidelines for approval. Mr. Landry pointed out that he looks at the back of a building differently than the front of a building; he observed that in this case it is highly visible from the parking lot, but it is still the rear of the building. He also observed that there are many changes made for modernization that wouldn't violate the idea of being in harmony with the historic character. Ms. Obery speculated that if the changes had come to the Board initially they may have referred Mr. Houghton to the Historic District consultant. Mr. Seymour pointed out that that was still an option, but if the Board wished to do so, it must instruct the Code Office whether to issue a stop-work order or allow work to continue pending approval in November.

Ms. Orbeton cited §9-151 sub-§103, which defines structures and specifically excludes patios, fences, boundary walls, walks and driveways, but railings are not excluded. She asked if there was sufficient information regarding the railing to approve it or whether the Board could approve the rest of the project and have Mr. Houghton come back at a later date for the railing. Mr. Houghton said he had not made any decisions about the railing for the patio and agreed to come back to the Board when he had decided what kind of railing to install.

The Board discussed whether the changes to the Maine House were considered at the June meeting. Mr. Brown said he remembered mention that the roof would allow staff to move between the two buildings, but he did not realize that there was no existing door on alley side of the Maine House. Mr. Houghton conceded that they had shown a sloped roof on the kitchen, but because it became larger, the roof was changed to a flat roof. Mr. Rolnick pointed out that a major change like changing from a sloped roof to a flat roof should have been brought to the Board.

Ms. Orbeton clarified that the Board was considering only the first six items in the application with the addition of the goose-neck lamps to be mounted on the wall of the Liberal Cup building.

Motion to find the after-the-fact application for the changes on 117 Water Street complete with the omission of the railing, the addition of the three goose-neck lamps to be mounted on the wall of the Liberal Cup building at the third floor level, and with the additional information received at the meeting.

Moved: Brown

Seconded: Landry

Mr. Rolnick noted that mounting the lights that high will cast light into the building across the alley and asked if there were restrictions in the ordinance. He said he would feel better if the lights were low enough not to shine into the second floor windows. The Board consulted §9-616 dealing with performance standards for exterior lighting. There was discussion of the lighting levels and position of the fixtures. There was also discussion of the ownership of the two properties: while Mr. Houghton owns both properties, he does so as two separate companies. Mr. Houghton agreed to remove the lighting fixtures from this application and to return to the Board when he has more information. Mr. Seymour suggested approving the lights conditioned on the applicant working with the Code Enforcement Officer to assure compliance with the standards in §9-616.

Ms. Orbeton clarified that completeness includes the condition that the applicant will work with the Code Enforcement Officer to assure compliance with the standards in §9-616.

Vote:

Unanimously approved

Motion to find the project in harmony with Historic District standards and grant a certificate of appropriateness with the amendment that the three goose-neck lamps be in compliance with the restrictions in the ordinances and excluding the perimeter railing of the patio.

Moved: Landry

Seconded: Brown

Mr. Rolnick said that if the Board's approval in June included the flat roof for connecting the buildings, he had no concerns, but if there was no flat roof concept under consideration, he asked whether the Board members feel that the flat roof would have been approved. Ms. Orbeton pointed out that the horizontal lines of the flat roof tie in well with the horizontal architectural feature between the first and second floors of the Liberal Cup building; she felt the Board would find it in harmony. Other Board members confirmed that the flat roof was discussed in June. There was additional discussion of the changes made to the apartment door.

Vote:

Yea: Brown, Landry, Orbeton,
Rolnick

Nay: Obery

Motion carries.

There was general discussion of the Central Street parking lot.

Mr. Landry left the meeting.

6. Other Business

Ms. Obery told the Board that she was approached by Dawn Gallagher and Councilor Frett about the signage on outer Winthrop Street for Asset Management. Mr. Seymour told the Board that Mr. Ide has contacted Asset Management to say that the signs were permissible during construction, but now that construction is done they must be removed. There was discussion about the proposed sign ordinance.

7. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn.

Moved: Brown

Seconded: Rolnick

Unanimously approved

Accepted as Presented on November 20, 2019, by a vote of 4 Yea to 0 Nay with 3 abstaining.

Attested:

 S/

Danielle Obery, Chair