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## City of Newton, Massachusetts

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### Department of Planning and Development

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Director

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**Date:** January 29, 2024

**Place/Time:** Zoom, at 7:00 PM

**Attending:** Doug Cornelius, Chair                      John Rice, Vice Chair  
Harvey Schorr, Member                      Anne Marie Stein, Member  
Scott Friedman, Alternate                      David Lewis, Staff

The meeting was called to order via Zoom at 7:00 p.m. with Doug Cornelius serving as Chair. Voting permanent members were John Rice, Harvey Schorr, and Anne Marie Stein. Alternate member Scott Friedman was designated to vote as not all voting members were present. David Lewis acted as Zoom host and the meeting was digitally recorded on the Zoom device.

#### 1. 16 Summit Street – Request for Demolition

Request for partial demolition of house

Staff Reported that this ca. 1865 home is a unique example of Victorian era architecture. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved but recommends an alternative material for the proposed replacement siding.

Sophie Zhang, the property owner, was present to represent the application. Mr. Cornelius explains the process of partial demolition votes. The applicant explains their proposed project, that they are not looking to do any structural work and are just looking to replace siding. Mr. Cornelius asks staff to confirm that the application is being brought forth as cedar siding is proposed to be replaced with vinyl. Staff confirms. Mr. Cornelius clarifies the process, that the commission needs to vote on whether the cedar siding is historically significant. Mr. Cornelius suggests that applicant meet with staff to discuss material options. Applicants ask if any vinyl would be accepted. Mr. Schorr comments that the house is wonderful, and would not be so wonderful if clad in vinyl siding. Applicant asks if a rendering of the vinyl siding would help. Mr. Cornelius says that it would help, but that vinyl siding

would be the least appropriate option for this house. Mr. Cornelius suggests voting to allow for staff approval, or a return to meeting for further discussion of the materials if necessary.

Mr. Rice made a motion to find the property preferably preserved, and allow for administrative review of potential alternative materials. Mr. Friedman seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 29, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 5-0:

RESOLVED to preferably preserve the property, and allow for administrative review by NHC staff or a return to meeting for further discussion of materials.

Voting in the Affirmative	Voting in the Negative	Recusal/Abstain
Harvey Schorr		
John Rice		
Anne Marie Stein		
Scott Friedman		
Doug Cornelius		

## **2. 77 Halcyon Road – Request for Demolition**

Request for partial demolition of house

Staff Reported that this 1926 vernacular home is located in an inventoried subdivision. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved and welcomes discussion of the proposed addition.

No one was present to represent the application. Mr. Cornelius shared application materials using the share screen function. Mr. Cornelius showed photos of the house and stated facts listed on the application. Staff clarified that a stop work order was previously placed on the property by the Inspectional Services Department.

Mr. Cornelius opened the meeting for public comment. Jeffrey Freudberg, an abutter, commented to confirm that a stop work order was placed on the house, and mentioned that a house across the street was previously demolished in violation of the demolition delay ordinance.

Mr. Friedman makes a motion to find the property preferably preserved. Mr. Rice seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 29, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 5-0:

RESOLVED to preferably preserve the house.

Voting in the Affirmative	Voting in the Negative	Recusal/Abstain
Harvey Schorr		

<b>John Rice</b>		
<b>Anne Marie Stein</b>		
<b>Scott Friedman</b>		
<b>Doug Cornelius</b>		

As the applicants were not present, the plans for partial demolition were not reviewed or voted on at this time.

The applicants for 77 Halcyon did arrive later to the meeting. Mr. Cornelius explained to them that a vote could not be taken on the proposed plans, as abutters who were present to comment had already left. The commission did discuss the proposed plans, but a vote was not taken. The applicants were instructed to return to the February 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

### **3. 48 Fessenden Street – Request for Demolition**

Request for partial demolition of house

Staff Reported that this 1947 Colonial Revival home is in an inventoried neighborhood of similar houses. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved and welcomes discussion of the proposed addition.

John Arone, the applicant, is present to represent the application. Mr. Cornelius explains the process of partial demolition votes. Mr. Arone opted to allow for a preferably preserved vote immediately so that plans can be reviewed.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 29, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 5-0:

RESOLVED to preferably preserve the house at 48 Fessenden Street.

<b>Voting in the Affirmative</b>	<b>Voting in the Negative</b>	<b>Recusal/Abstain</b>
<b>John Rice</b>		
<b>Anne Marie Stein</b>		
<b>Scott Friedman</b>		
<b>Harvey Schorr</b>		
<b>Doug Cornelius</b>		

Mr. Arone presents the plans for partial demolition and additions to the home using the share screen function. Mr. Arone began by listing prior projects that have been approved by NHC, then describes existing house and outlines plans for the property. Mr. Arone continues by describing the materials to be used for the addition.

Mr. Schorr comments that he generally likes the design, but suggests that the dormers on the front roof are out of scale with the house and neighborhood. Mr. Arone comments that the dormer allows for more sunlight and headroom. Mr. Rice comments that he likes the houses on Fessenden Street and knows them well, and that he likes the proposed addition. Ms. Stein comments that she doesn't mind the dormers, and thinks that the proposed design improves the house. Mr. Friedman agrees with Ms. Stein.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Friedman made a motion to approve the plans, allowing for applicant to revise dormers if necessary. Mr. Rice seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 29, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 4-0:

RESOLVED to approve the partial demolition plans, allowing for applicant to revise dormers if necessary.

Voting in the Affirmative	Voting in the Negative	Recusal/Abstain
John Rice		Harvey Schorr
Anne Marie Stein		
Scott Friedman		
Doug Cornelius		

#### 4. 235 California Street – Request for Demolition

Request for partial demolition of house and total demolition of garage

Staff Reported that this is a well-preserved ca. 1880 Queen Anne style home. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved and welcomes discussion of the proposed addition.

Mariana Dagatti, an architect with MGD+, is present to represent the application. Mr. Cornelius explains the process of partial demolition votes. Ms. Gagatti opts to allow for a preferably preserved vote immediately for the house, but clarifies that there is also a second application for a detached garage. Ms. Dagatti uses the share screen function to show a picture of the garage. Mr. Cornelius suggests that the commission vote to preferably preserve the house and find the garage not preferably preserved.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 29, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 5-0:

RESOLVED to preferably preserve the house and not preferably preserve the garage.

Voting in the Affirmative	Voting in the Negative	Recusal/Abstain
Harvey Schorr		
John Rice		
Anne Marie Stein		
Scott Friedman		
Doug Cornelius		

Ms. Dagatti presents the partial demolition plans for the house using the share screen function. She begins by showing photos of the existing house, describing the location, and explaining the plan. Ms. Dagatti then displayed renderings and plans of the proposed addition. She described proposed materials and clarified locations of primary entrances.

Mr. Schorr commented on the roof line, pointing out an asymmetrical gable on the original roof, and suggested that the gable be evened out. Ms. Dagatti commented that the design could be updated to make the roof eaves more symmetrical. Ms. Stein commented that she agreed with Mr. Schorr, that the asymmetrical roof line makes the house seem off balance. Mr. Friedman also agreed about the roof. Ms. Stein and Mr. Friedman both comment that the design is beautiful and good for the neighborhood.

Mr. Cornelius opened the meeting for public comment. MaryLee Belleville comments that she agrees with Mr. Schorr's comments about the roof, that she does not see much of the Queen Anne style retained, and also that it looks as if the garage is set forward from the rest of the house.

Mr. Cornelius suggested that it seems that the commission was in favor of approving the plans, subject to revisions to the eaves suggested by Mr. Schorr.

Mr. Schorr made a motion to approve the plans subject to revision of the eaves on the front of the home. Mr. Friedman seconds.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 29, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 5-0:

RESOLVED to approve the plans subject to revision of the eaves on the front of the home.

Voting in the Affirmative	Voting in the Negative	Recusal/Abstain
Harvey Schorr		
John Rice		
Anne Marie Stein		
Scott Friedman		
Doug Cornelius		

## 5. 125 Derby Street – Request for Demolition

Request for total demolition of school

Staff Reported that this is a well-preserved 1938 school building. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved.

Josh Morse, of the Public Buildings Commission, is present to represent the application. Mr. Morse describes the history of the project, including the level of public outreach, feasibility of an addition, and constraints of the existing structure. Mr. Morse suggests that the Commission will seek opportunities to preserve important architectural details from the existing building and incorporate them into the new structure.

Mr. Rice comments that the Public Buildings Commission has done well preserving the history of demolished school buildings in the past. Ms. Stein comments that if the commission is at least a year out from construction anyway, the decision of the commission will not have an impact. Ms. Stein also questions if the main entrance could be preserved. Mr. Morse explains that building code requirements make saving any portion of this building difficult.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Rice made a motion to preferably preserve. Mr. Friedman seconded.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 29, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 5-0:

RESOLVED to find the property preferably preserved.

Voting in the Affirmative	Voting in the Negative	Recusal/Abstain
Harvey Schorr		
John Rice		
Anne Marie Stein		
Scott Friedman		
Doug Cornelius		

## 6. 225 Nevada Street – Request for Demolition

Request for partial demolition of school

Staff Reported that this is a well-preserved Georgian Revival school building. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved and generally approves of the proposed addition.

Josh Morse, of the Public Buildings Commission, is present to represent the application. Mr. Morse describes the history of the project and outlines the proposed plans. Mr. Cornelius suggests that, as the project is expected to be more than 12 months from beginning anyway, the commission can just vote on the demolition delay, and give feedback on the design. Steven Watchorn, an architect with RDA, is also present to give a presentation and display plans for the proposed addition. Mr. Watchorn gives a presentation using share screen. He begins by showing photos of the existing building and describing the site, before showing several options for the design of the proposed addition.

Mr. Cornelius comments that all the options have interesting elements and look thoughtfully done. Mr. Schorr commented that Option D was his preference and asks if it could be done at a larger scale. Mr. Watchorn comments that the commission did not want to take away from the main entrance of the school. Mr. Friedman comments that he also prefers option D. Ms. Stein comments that she prefers option A. Mr. Rice comments that he likes many of the options, but also prefers option D.

Mr. Cornelius opened the meeting for public comment. The applicant for 77 Halcyon commented that they were present for the hearing and were unable to unmute themselves to represent their application earlier. Mr. Cornelius said the commission would return to this item later in the meeting.

Mr. Rice made a motion to find the property preferably preserved. Mr. Friedman seconds.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 29, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 5-0:

RESOLVED to find the property preferably preserved.

Voting in the Affirmative	Voting in the Negative	Recusal/Abstain
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<b>Harvey Schorr</b>		
<b>John Rice</b>		
<b>Anne Marie Stein</b>		
<b>Doug Cornelius</b>		
<b>Scott Friedman</b>		

## 7. 11 Sheffield Road – Request for Demolition

Request for total demolition of garage

Staff Reported that staff welcomes discussion of the significance of this architecturally unique garage.

Renata Zaniratto was present to represent the application. Ms. Zaniratto described the condition of the garage. Mr. Cornelius asked staff to expand upon the decision to bring the garage to meeting. Staff reported that the garage was specifically mentioned for its unique architectural style on a MACRIS inventory form for the neighborhood, which was unusual. Tarley Yamamoto, the contractor for the project, was also present to represent the application. Mr. Yamamoto used the share screen function to show photos of the garage, and detailed structural issues.

Mr. Schorr asked for clarification on the purpose of this agenda item. Mr. Cornelius confirmed that the commission was only determining if the property would be preferably preserved.

Edward O'Donnell, a neighbor, was present to comment. He commented that Ms. Zaniratto has done very tasteful work on the house, and he believed if she built a new garage, it would retain the style of the house and neighborhood.

Ms. Stein made a motion to preferably preserve the garage. Mr. Friedman seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 29, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 0-5:

RESOLVED to find the garage preferably preserved.

<b>Voting in the Affirmative</b>	<b>Voting in the Negative</b>	<b>Recusal/Abstain</b>
	<b>Harvey Schorr</b>	
	<b>John Rice</b>	
	<b>Anne Marie Stein</b>	
	<b>Scott Friedman</b>	
	<b>Doug Cornelius</b>	

## 8. 129 Jewett Street – Request for Demolition

Request for partial demolition of house

Staff Reported that this ca. 1869 Second Empire style house is a well-preserved example of the style. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved and welcomes discussion of the proposed addition.

Keith Gizzi was present to represent the application. Mr. Cornelius explains the process of partial demolition votes. Mr. Gizzi opts to allow for a preferably preserved vote immediately so that plans can be reviewed.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 29, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 5-0:

RESOLVED to find the property preferably preserved.

<b>Voting in the Affirmative</b>	<b>Voting in the Negative</b>	<b>Recusal/Abstain</b>
<b>Harvey Schorr</b>		
<b>John Rice</b>		
<b>Anne Marie Stein</b>		
<b>Scott Friedman</b>		
<b>Doug Cornelius</b>		

Mr. Gizzi presented plans for the proposed addition using the share screen function. He outlined the project and clarified which portions of the existing structure would be preserved and which would be altered.

Mr. Friedman commented that he liked the design. Ms. Stein agreed that the design was good. Mr. Schorr commented that he likes the design, and asked for clarification on the height of the eaves on the proposed addition. Mr. Gizzi confirmed the height of the eaves on the existing home and the addition.

The applicants for 77 Halcyon commented that they had to leave the meeting due to a technical issue, and had returned. Mr. Cornelius said that they would discuss the application after the current agenda item.

Mr. Friedman made a motion to waive the demolition delay and approve the plans as proposed. Ms. Stein seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 29, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 5-0:

RESOLVED to approve the plans as proposed and waive the demolition delay.

<b>Voting in the Affirmative</b>	<b>Voting in the Negative</b>	<b>Recusal/Abstain</b>
<b>Harvey Schorr</b>		
<b>John Rice</b>		
<b>Anne Marie Stein</b>		
<b>Scott Friedman</b>		
<b>Doug Cornelius</b>		

The commission discussed 77 Halcyon. Mr. Cornelius explains what has happened, and clarifies that the applicants will need to return to the February 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting for a vote on the addition plans as interested members of the public have left the meeting. Mr. Cornelius allows the applicants to display their plans



for feedback from the commission, but clarifies that the commission will not vote on the application. Nick Landry, the project architect, uses the share screen function to present the plans. He shows plans and renderings for the proposed partial demolition, and details the proposed materials.

Mr. Schorr asks for clarification if one side has no fenestration. Mr. Landry confirms that the elevation currently has no windows but that they could be added. Mr. Schorr comments that would be an improvement. Ms. Stein comments that she agrees with Mr. Schorr. Mr. Cornelius agrees as well. Mr. Cornelius clarifies that the commission cannot vote on the item, and confirms with staff that the applicants can return to the February 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote.

Respectfully,

, NHC