

Historical District Commission

Oct. 30, 2024

Meeting House

Members present:

Kevin Bragg – Chair

Harry Kinter

Alex Young – Alternate

Kent Ruesswick – Selectmen's Representative

Meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. and a scheduled public hearing was held on an application for 3-5 Center Road, the Canterbury Community Market, LLC for the addition of a 20-foot shed roof over the back walkway.

Present at the public hearing were Adrienne Hutchinson of the Canterbury Whole Child Center and Bob Drew of the Board of Trustees for the Canterbury Community Church.

Kevin Bragg recused himself from public hearing as he was presenting on behalf of the applicant. By a unanimous vote, Alex Young was seated as a full voting member. (Subsequent to the meeting it was found that Alex had not yet been appointed by the Selectboard.) Kinter took over as Chair after noting that he was concerned the project had already started without prior approval from the HDC.

Bragg explained that during the repair of the building's septic line the applicant learned the exit ramp was not compliant with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) because the pitch was too steep. Because of the pitch of the metal roof, the applicant has had ongoing issues with snow falling off the roof and blocking the emergency (back exit) and seeks to remedy that. He said the contractor was looking into snow breaks for the roof in the hopes that it would break up the falling snow into smaller, more manageable pieces and prevent the exit way from being blocked.

Ruesswick asked him about setbacks and boundary lines and Bragg said the lot had always been non-conforming and that technically a portion of the existing sewer line ran through the neighboring church property as do existing septic tanks.

Bragg added that the entire project was being designed to minimize runoff from Hackleboro Road. Also the new walkway was sloped away so water would runoff away from the building and the landscaping between the walk and the building would use larger riprap.

Kinter reiterated his concerns about the process and lack of prior approval and Kevin explained that the public hearing had to be pushed out from the original date because of abutter notices. He added the only thing that has happened is the framing of the roof.

Bob Drew said he was very much in favor of the project and it is the church's intention to continue to support the store and the Historic District Center. His one concern was with shoveling in the winter because there are limited staff at the day care which opens very early.

Adrienne Hutchinson, who also submitted her comments in writing, said she was concerned that the abutters notices were not dated. Staff said they are dated and stamped at the post office.

Her concerns were that there were adequate snow guards to prevent snow falling on to the walkway, liability in case anyone is injured around the new projects as it is built over the church property line, and she wanted some type in insurance notification from the store assuring it would assume all liability. Hutchinson said she had had some issues with the daycare insurer.

She also asked if she could have contact information for the board controlling the store property so the project is maintained and managed.

Bragg reiterated that there would be roof snow bars to mitigate snow from the roof, that she will have all the contact information including that of the snow removal contactor.

There was further discussion about lighting.

There was discussion with staff about the equitable waiver process through the zoning board after Drew said he had no problem with the easement encroachment.

Ruesswich made a motion to approve the project as presented which was seconded by Young. All voted in favor after Kinter said he was for the projects but wanted to abstain because he was unhappy with the process. Kinter later changed his vote to "yes."

Kevin took back over a chair and opened the floor to general public comment.

Bob Drew said he felt it was important for the members of the Historic District to follow proper land use procedures when anything happens in the district. He would like to see some explanation of the process in the town newsletter.

Bragg said there are regulations, but the HDC needs to work on its internal processes.

The next topic was the Canterbury Shaker Village Brethren Shop portico repairs. Bragg said that he just got a copy of the application from the new Executive Director although the repairs have already been completed. He said they got approval from the NH Division of Historic Resources but didn't send a copy of the application to the town. Staff said she would reach out to the new director and ask if she would attend a future meeting, hopefully in November to discuss the application process. Kinter said he would like to see concurrent applications with the state and the town.

In other business the board discussed a free lending library outside the Ames House on Tilton Road. Bragg said it was a bad curve. Ruesswick said the police had asked people to stop parking in the road.

Additional board discussion was had about some complaints about the no-parking signs at the library and their appropriateness within the Center Historic District.

No date has been set for the November meeting as the Historical Society annual meeting is scheduled for the regular Nov. 20 date. Staff will check for availability for the Meeting house on other dates close to Nov. 20.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m. by a unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Ober
Land Use Administrator