

Historic District Commission
March 20, 2025
Draft Minutes

Call Meeting to Order: Kevin Kahn, Vice Chair, called meeting to order at 7:00 pm in the Novak Room of the Exeter Town Office Building.

Members Present: Kevin Kahn, Vice Chair, Pam Gjettum, Clerk, Lerity Boyer, new member, Gwen English, Planning Board Rep., Dave Sharples, Town Planner

New Business: A request from Blue Hour Design, LLC, for a conceptual review for a proposal for demolition, new construction, window replacement and miscellaneous restorations to the existing residential structure at 89 Front Street.

Kyle Sheffield spoke and said he is the Principal from Blue Hour Design out of Boston and said he also had with him Beverly Bikowitz, Project Manager along with Judith and Bill Meeney the property owners. We are here tonight to present some initial concepts of what we would like to be able to achieve at 89 Front Street ahead of submitting a formal review package. I also want to thank you for meeting with us.

A little bit of background. Bill and Judith Meeney purchased the property in 2019 and moved to Exeter full time to raise their family.

There is a lot of history with 89 Front Street also known as the Amos Tuck House. It was constructed in 1853. Kyle had slides of the property to show the commission members. The main body of the house was designed in the Italianate style which was becoming very popular. This house represents the first Italianate design in the Town of Exeter. It lasted for a little over ten years. The rear structures, the more functional and support structures are a rear ell that is behind the main Italianate facade. There is also a carriage house and a large barn.

In 2012, some structures were modified mainly to expand the screened porch on the west side of the property. There was also a new chimney added on to the rear of the ell.

Kyle said, what we are proposing is a modification to the ell, as well as bringing back the exterior deck and removing the exterior steps.

The scope is the modifications to the main house. We are proposing to demolish the existing screened porch on the west side and the existing rear ell addition and open porch and steps on the north side. We would then construct a new addition off the rear that conforms to the existing east and north ell facades. This new ell will have a second floor. Materials used would match the existing materials on the main part of the house.

We are also proposing to remove an existing site wall and patio between the house and carriage house and a wood deck replicating the one that was removed in 2012. A pergola would be constructed on top of the deck.

Kyle said the goal of the project is the owners desire to adjust certain elements of the home so that they can stay in the home and have it accessible as they get older.

We are proposing in the ell to replace windows with true divided light insulated glass windows. Also, in the carriage house, removing three existing double hung windows on the west facade and replacing them with four double hung windows.

The previous owners moved the kitchen from the back of the house into what was the dining room and the owners now want to move it back into where the ell is and restore the dining room back.

The space between the carriage house and barn was a shed run in for horses. We are proposing a porte cochere between the two structures.

We are proposing an elevator within the building as well.

Kevin opened it up to the commission members for any questions or comments. Pam said, thank you for all of this work and it is very impressive. I am not really happy about the porte cochere because that is what they wanted to do back in 2012 and we said, no you can't. Other than that, it is lovely and what you do with the back is not up to us anyway.

Kevin said, I have a question about the basement. You said there was not a lot of head space and said you were going to have an elevator down there so how does that work.

Kyle said, our proposal is to build a new foundation.

Lerity said, I have a question about the ell. You don't plan on demolishing the whole thing. Could you walk me through it?

Kyle said, in order to achieve the second floor elevation, as well as being able to deal with the basement elevation, we are proposing to demolish the old ell. We are planning on rebuilding it on the exact location.

Lerity said, I am never a fan of demolition of anything but I will say the package you have proposed here is very in line with the home.

Kyle said, our plan is to come back before you next month.

Kevin then opened it up to the public. There was no one from the public present.

With no further business, Kevin called for a motion to adjourn. Pam said, so moved. Gwen seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Herrick
Recording Secretary