

**March 17, 2025**

The regular meeting of the Newton Historic Preservation Commission was held at the Town Hall on March 17, 2025.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman McCabe called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.

**OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT**

Chairman McCabe stated that proper notice had been given for this meeting in accordance with the "Open Public Meetings Act."

**SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

Chairman McCabe led the Salute to the flag.

**ROLL CALL**

Mr. Banner – present

Mr. Ricciardo – present

Mr. Porter – present

Chairman McCabe – present

Secretary Brown stated she received an email late this afternoon from Mr. Atkinson advise due to his work schedule, he would have to resign from the Commission.

Also present: Eric Bernstein, HPC Attorney, Justin Singleton, HPC Planner, and Kerry Brown HPAC Secretary, Councilmember Sandra Diglio, Council Liaison.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. 71 High Street – HPC 2-2025**

**Slate Roof Replacement – work started without approval**

**Application #25-02 - 71 High Street (Block 4.03, Lot 12) Expedited Case - Roof Replacement in Historic District**

**Applicant:** Todd Kijanka, Install Manager, Home Genius Exteriors (Somerset, NJ office)

**Property Owner:** Emily Hernandez Rivas (recent purchaser, November 2024)

**Background:** Home Genius Exteriors began roof replacement work without permits, unaware the property was in a historic district. Upon removing slate roofing, they discovered no decking underneath, requiring full plywood replacement. Construction official Joe Butto issued stop-work order but permitted temporary plywood installation to secure the building.

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**Key Issues:**

- Contractor failed to obtain required building permit for roof replacement
- Neither contractor nor new property owner aware of historic district designation
- Original slate roof had no decking, sitting directly on purlins
- Sealed attic prevented prior inspection of roof structure
- Building has third-floor windows but no attic access hatch

**Materials Discussion:**

- **Original proposal:** Owens Corning architectural shingles, Onyx Black
- **Board preference:** Medium to dark gray to match historical slate colors
- **Synthetic slate option:** EcoStar Majestic slate shingles presented
- **Alternative:** Owens Corning Berkshire shingles with clipped corners

**Cost Analysis:**

- Synthetic slate total project cost: \$41,718
- Cost difference over asphalt: \$16,000-\$17,000
- Berkshire shingle additional cost: \$9,000-\$11,000

**Public Comment:** Brooke Perna (75 High Street) noted Town Code references "economically feasible" projects, questioning absolute prohibition on cost considerations.

**Materials Specifications:**

- Ice shielding on lower portion and valleys
- Deck defense underlayment on remainder of roof
- Copper or oxidized aluminum valley flashing
- Ridge venting system (exterior only, no interior access modifications)

**Mr. Porter made a motion to approve the following, Mr. Ricciardo seconded it:**

1. **Option A:** Synthetic slate in medium to dark gray, straight-cut pattern, with heavy-grade oxidized aluminum valleys in copper/patina color
2. **Option B:** If homeowner rejects cost, contractor meets with Town Planner and Chairman with Owens Corning Berkshire shingle samples in various grays
3. If neither option is acceptable, a special meeting may be called for final decision.

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Ayes:** Banner, Porter, Ricciardo, McCabe

**Nays:**

**B. Newton Historic District Report and Surveys Review  
Document Review and Approval**

- **Document Review:** The board reviewed a comprehensive document, with members expressing strong approval and satisfaction with the quality of work

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- **Reading Progress:** Members reported varying levels of completion, with some having read the full introductory sections and others approximately 25% of the document
- **Feedback Timeline:** Established a three-month maximum timeframe for member comments and feedback
- **Process:** Comments to be submitted to Secretary Brown's office, who will forward them to Jessica and Mr. Bernstein's office for review to maintain project momentum

**Project Timeline and Funding**

- **Target Completion:** Aiming for June submission after board review and revisions
- **Next Steps:**
  1. Board members provide feedback
  2. Revisions incorporated
  3. Draft submitted to historic trust for review
  4. Final submission for funding after trust feedback
- **May Meeting:** Targeted as final wrap-up meeting for the project
- **Funding Consideration:** Emphasized importance of timely processing to expedite funding application and receipt

**MINUTES**

A. February 18, 2025

Motion: Mr. Ricciardo

Second: Mr. Banner

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Ayes:** Banner, Porter, Ricciardo, McCabe

**Nays:**

**CORRESPONDENCE** – None.

**OPEN TO THE PUBLIC** – None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Ricciardo made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Porter seconded the motion. All in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kerry Brown  
Historic Preservation Commission Secretary