

NASHUA HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Monday, August 25, 2025, 6:30 p.m., City Hall, Room 208

HDC Members:

Ald. Derek Thibault
Robert Vorbach
Lisa Law
Chris Barrett
Maggie Harper

Also present:

Carter Falk, Deputy Planning Manager/Zoning

MINUTES:

June 23, 2025:

MOTION by Mr. Vorbach to approve the minutes as presented, waive the reading, and place the minutes in the file.

SECONDED by Mr. Barrett.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 5-0 BY VERBAL ROLL CALL OF THE MEMBERS.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Belans, Inc., c/o L Sweeney (Owner) Jilian Arsenault, Marshall Signs (Applicant) 14-B Railroad Square (Sheet 43 Lot 95) requesting the following: 1) to erect a 48 sq.ft backlit wall sign on western elevation above existing pergola; 2) to erect two 7 sq.ft projecting signs on either end of the building facing Canal Street; and, 3) to replace existing gooseneck lighting with different lighting fixtures along Canal Street. D-1/MU zone, Ward 3. [CONTINUED FROM 7-28-2025 MEETING, NO QUORUM].**

Voting on this case:

Ald. Derek Thibault
Robert Vorbach
Lisa Law
Chris Barrett
Maggie Harper

Jilian Arsenault, Marshall Signs, Lowell Street, Nashua, NH. Ms. Arsenault said that the customer wants some simple looking wall sign, that was just metal with a reflective halo lit, and saw one in Manchester for the Maker Space, and showed the Commission a picture of it. She said that it would fit with the mill-style building for the vape shop. She said that it would go right where Portland Pie had their sign, and the customer wants to replace the existing blade signs with his logo. She said that the main reason why he wants to change out the goosenecks is that the wiring is all bad, and they're falling apart, and wants to do more of an LED style, sort of like a wall sconce that goes up the side of the building, they'd last longer, be more up to date, and they wouldn't be hanging out, they'd be flush against the wall.

Ald. Thibeault asked about the sign that's replacing the Portland Pie sign, if it is the same size.

Ms. Arsenault said that the Portland Pie sign was narrower, but the same length.

Ald. Thibeault asked if the blade signs, if they need to go to the Zoning Board.

Mr. Falk said that the ordinance allows one projecting sign per premise, so they'd need a variance for more than one. He said that the wall sign otherwise meets the ordinance as far as the size and height.

Mr. Barrett asked how they would be lit.

Ms. Arsenault said that they wouldn't be lit, the new ones, the blade signs, would be 17" x 32" and were going to be using the existing lighting that was there, but because the lights were bad, the lighting that would be put up will be on the wall, nothing coming down.

Mr. Barrett asked what the clearance would be for the projecting signs.

Ms. Arsenault said it is about 12 feet.

Mr. Falk said that they have to be a minimum of 10 feet.

Mrs. Law asked why they need two projecting signs, instead of one.

Ms. Arsenault said that they'd have parking at both ends of the building, and wants to have customers know where to park. She said that they share the parking lot with Dunkin Donuts, and has already begun to prepare some combined parking signs for both of them.

Mr. Vorbach said that he doesn't have an issue with replacing the goosenecks, they are in pretty sad shape. He suggested that the wall sconces have a little more of a historic look, versus a modern look.

Ms. Arsenault said that she's already talked to them to make sure that any kind of screws on it are put on so that no one can mess around with it.

Mr. Vorbach said that Just Lights in Nashua can be consulted with a more contextual fixture versus a modern fixture. He said that the character of this building is nice, the brickwork, the curve in context, and asked them to respect the historic aspect of it with regards to lighting.

Mr. Barrett said a carriage house light or something like that would be nice.

Mr. Vorbach said that he likes the look of the wall sconce versus the gooseneck, they're in bad shape.

Ms. Arsenault said that they are bad.

Mr. Vorbach said that as far as the signs go, he said that he doesn't have any architectural issue with the design, it's a change of use to a different business, so it will aesthetically share that.

Mrs. Law said that she'd rather see instead of having a back-lit sign, to have goosenecks on the side of the building onto the sign, it would look more historical.

Ms. Arsenault said ok.

Ms. Harper said that she'd rather see it externally lit, rather than internal.

Mrs. Law said that it's not as keeping with the historic building.

Mr. Vorbach said that architecturally, if it's a single, well-designed sign, backlit, it wouldn't bother him. He said that the goosenecks lighting the sign have been done on Main Street, but on this elevation, it would be cleaner without that.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR:

No one.

SPEAKING IN OPPOSITION OR WITH QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS:

No one.

END OF PUBLIC HEARING, BEGINNING OF PUBLIC MEETING:

Mr. Barrett said that one thing the Commission should stipulate is that a nicer set of lights on the outside, like discussed, more historic.

Mr. Vorbach agreed, that contextual lighting versus the modern wall sconce, that is an important detail.

Ms. Harper asked how everyone feels about three signs.

Mr. Vorbach said that in his view, it's the building length and curve, and doesn't see a problem with that, one at one end and one at the other end, and then the main wall sign.

Mr. Barrett concurred, and doesn't have a problem with it, because it is a curved building, and it makes sense to see the sign from both sides, either end.

Mr. Falk said that as you walk up and down Main Street, there are numerous projecting signs that are closer than what is proposed.

Ms. Arsenault said that they are pretty far apart from one another. She said that the tenant is taking the whole space.

Mr. Vorbach said that architecturally, he appreciates the attempt to make the signs interesting, not just boring signs. He said that it's a one-story, brick building, and it matters that these are done well.

MOTION by Mr. Barrett to accept this with the stipulations of the historic lights on the outside, on the curved elevation.

SECONDED by Mr. Vorbach.

MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY 5-0.

2. **Christopher & Jennifer Wheeler (Owners) Robert LeBlanc, Renewal by Andersen, LLC (Applicant) 2 Abbott Street (Sheet 67 Lot 47) requesting approval to replace front door and rear door. RB Zone, Ward 3.**

Voting on this case:

Ald. Derek Thibault
Robert Vorbach
Lisa Law
Chris Barrett
Maggie Harper

Jose, Renewal by Andersen, representing 2 Abbott Street, Nashua, NH. Jose said that they would be replacing both doors, they would match exactly the same thing as they have, the only difference in the structure is that they don't do wooden doors, the doors would be a composite material, the composite they use matches wood, and aesthetically, will look the same. He showed the Commissioners a rendering of what the doors would look like.

Mr. Barrett asked if it will have the lights.

Jose said that it will have lights. He said that once he realized this home was in the Historic District, he told the customer that they have to do the same thing. He said that they'll have the lights, and the grills between the glass, and everything will look the same, the only difference that the customer requested was to put a peep hole in the door.

Ms. Harper asked if the glass will be the same, if it will be clear.

Jose said that the glass would be frosted, because of their dog.

Mrs. Law asked if the frosting can be removed, or is it permanent.

Jose said it is permanent, and has a sample in his car.

Ms. Harper said she'd like to see it.

Jose showed the Commissioners the frosted glass that the customer chose. He said that it is translucent, the idea is for light to come in, but for them to have privacy.

Mr. Barrett asked if there will be a storm door, as per the pictures.

Jose said there will be no storm doors, it will be black on black, and the frame will be white inside.

Mr. Vorbach said that he doesn't have a problem with the composite, it's used a lot these days, and is used in historic context, it holds up and architecturally, it fits.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR:

No one.

SPEAKING IN OPPOSITION OR WITH QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS:

No one.

END OF PUBLIC HEARING, BEGINNING OF PUBLIC MEETING:

MOTION by Mrs. Law to approve the application as submitted and presented, with the frosted glass.

SECONDED by Ms. Harper.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 5-0 TO APPROVE.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Discussion: Meeting time change.

MOTION by Mr. Vorbach to have the Historic District Commission meetings to begin at 6:00 p.m.

SECONDED by Ald. Thibeault.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 5-0 TO APPROVE.

Mr. Falk said that staff will change the By-Laws, and the website, and to let all future applicants know.

Mrs. Law asked how we can get more people to serve on the Commission.

Mr. Falk said that Mrs. MacKay has resigned.

Mrs. Law said that she has a neighbor that may be interested.

Mr. Falk said that she should submit a cover letter and a resume to the Mayor's Office, and then they will contact them for an interview with the Personnel Committee.

MOTION TO ADJOURN by Mr. Vorbach at 7:00 p.m.

CF/cf