

NASHUA HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Monday, August 24, 2026, 6:00 p.m., City Hall, Room 208

HDC Members:

Robert Vorbach
Chris Barrett
Paige Hultman
Aldерwoman Patricia Klee
Larry Hirsch

Also present:

Scott McPhie, Planner 1

MINUTES:

July 27, 2026:

MOTION by Mr. Barrett to approve the minutes with the correction of the heading that reads June 27, 2026, to July 27, 2026.

SECONDED by Mr. Vorbach

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VERBAL ROLL CALL OF THE MEMBERS.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. The Courtland, LLC(Owner) 72 Concord Street (Sheet 65 Lot 91) requesting the following: replacing all windows with new vinyl windows with simulated divided lite, remove and replace siding and replace with wooden clapboard siding, repair and restore third floor porch, replace all diamond pattern lattice with square pattern lattice, repair/replace porch roof and porch ceiling, and install a new porch roof finished with architectural asphalt shingles or standing seam metal roof. RB zone, Ward 3. Tabled from the July 27, 2026 meeting to obtain paint samples.)

The applicant neglected to attend the meeting; therefore, the case was not heard. The Chair indicated they would be attending the next meeting on September 28, 2026.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. The Tousley Fam Rev Trust, Todd & Bette Jean Tousley (Owners), Todd Tousley (Applicant), 8 Canal Street (Sheet 43 Lot 39), requesting approval for existing mini-split HVAC condenser units serving 7 residential units on the roof, and one

condenser at the rear of unit 104; also for metal fencing along the sidewalk. D-1/MU Zone, Ward 3.

Voting on this case:

Robert Vorbach
Chris Barrett
Paige Hultman
Alderman Patricia Klee
Larry Hirsch

Mr. Tousley indicated he was in the process of applying for his building permit, and the building department discovered that additions were made to his plan, resulting in the need for further review. The specific changes were adding unscreened HVAC units on the roof and the need for a safety fence along some of the property, both of which require Historical District Commission review due to changes in the exterior appearance of the property.

Alderman Patricia Klee asked if he needed to go to the Planning Board. He replied no.

A discussion ensued on the aesthetic considerations of using mini-splits HVAC equipment versus placing the equipment on a roof.

Mr. Vorbach cited a recent example of a home on Concord Street that recently added such mini-split devices, which detracted from the exterior character of the building and therefore was not in character with the historic district. He said the rooftop location was preferred.

Mr. Barrett asked if the equipment could be screened. Mr. McPhie added it's generally required to screen all utilities.

Mr. Vorbach explained that there are purposefully made screening materials that would not require you to build the screening from the ground up.

Mr. Tousley then proceeded to express concerns due to financial constraints.

Mr. Hirsch then asked the Commission if they wanted to see samples of the screening, as that could delay the project and add additional costs at the applicant's expense. Can we be more specific tonight and approve a solution to reduce delays for the applicant?

A discussion ensued concerning delays to the ongoing project.

Mr. Vorbach praised the applicant for his efforts thus far, but indicated it would be up to the discretion of the Commission if they wanted to leave the materials and aesthetics up to the discretion of the applicant and staff.

Alderman Klee and Mr. Hirsch indicated at the Planning Board level such a decision is left to staff discretion.

Mr. McPhie added that it may be acceptable to the Planning Board, but one of the major functions of the Historic District Commission is to decide on materials and aesthetics, and that he would feel uncomfortable making that decision for them.

Mr. Tousley then asked whether the Commission could be more specific in describing the screening materials you are requesting.

Mr. Vorbach then reviewed the pictures provided concerning the visibility from the street. The pictures you provided do not show the utilities being very visible from the street.

Mr. McPhie then added that Dawn Michaud from the Building Department witnessed the roof Units from the Library across the river, and I drove down each of the streets, and the roof utilities were clearly visible from the streets in that additional area.

An additional discussion ensued, and a positive option came out of the discussion to request the roof equipment be screened with the same materials as used for the porch balustrades already on the house in a widow's walk formation. Mr. Hirsh then asked the applicant if that was acceptable to him. Mr. Tousley said no, but understands the commission can request the screening.

Speaking in Favor:

No One

Speaking Against:

No One

A discussion of the second part of the application concerning the fencing material occurred.

Mr. Tousley indicated he was not aware he needed fencing until the City told him to add it to meet code. He quickly added the fencing to prevent any City enforcement actions. Mr. Tousley said he was unaware he needed to come back to the HDC for fencing until told by the building department.

Mr. Tousley then requested what material the Commission would be looking for.

Mr. Vorbach said the Commission is not as concerned about the materials used other than vinyl, which would look terrible, but was more concerned about the aesthetics. For instance, chain link would not go with the aesthetic, as that is more industrial-looking. The other option you provided showing the look of cast iron would be fine.

Mr. Tousley agreed the second option provided would be his preferred choice as well.

A discussion ensued concerning the lack of durability and the ugliness of vinyl fencing and screening in general. All present agreed that vinyl was not an appropriate material.

Speaking in Favor:

No One

Speaking Against:

No One

END OF THE PUBLIC HEARING: BEGINNING OF THE PUBLIC MEETING

Ald. Klee made a motion to approve the screening of the utilities matching the design of the existing balustrades located below on the building porch areas in a widow's walk formation. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hirsch.

The motion passed 5-0-0.

Ald. Klee made a motion to approve the fencing style listed under option 2 in the "Rod Iron Style," but not necessarily the need to use actual rod iron materials. The motion was seconded by Mr. Vorbach.

The motion passed 5-0-0.

To clarify the decision made tonight, Mr. McPhie indicated clearly that under the Land Use Code Section 190-22 (A) (2), the HDC has the authority to request such changes as they did tonight and then read the full criteria into the record.

- a. The historical or architectural value of the building or structure and its settings; and
- b. The general compatibility of exterior design, arrangement, texture and materials proposed to be used in relationship to the existing building or structure and its settings or if new construction, to the surrounding area, and
- c. The general size and scale of new construction in relationship to the existing surroundings, including such factors as the building's overall height, width, street frontage, number of stories, types of roofs, façade openings (windows & doors), architectural details; and
- d. Other factors, including yards, off-street parking spaces, location of entrance drives, sidewalks, extent and coverage of pavement, signs and landscaping, which might affect the character of any building or structure within the district, and any other factor which relates to the appropriate settings for such structure or grouping of structures; and
- e. The special character of the area including whether or not it is primarily residential or commercial; and
- f. The economic activity of the building and the needs of that activity, and as it relates to the welfare of the community.

Mr. Tousley then made one request that there be better communication between the HDC and the Building Department, as it would have been better if all these items were addressed at the initial meeting.

Mr. McPhie added that it is always best to show everything on the original drawings. The Commission agreed that communications can always improve.

Mr. McPhie added that he had spoken to the building department just before the meeting and asked if the project had any other issues if approved at tonight's HDC meeting, also indicating he does

have a good working relationship with the building department and will work toward improving that communication with the HDC as well.

Mr. Hirsh suggested creating a checklist similar to the PB mylar sheets for the HDC would be helpful. Ald. Klee concurred with the checklist suggestion

Mr. McPhie said the Planning Department already uses an extensive checklist, and he could look into creating something that was HDC-specific.

Mr. Vorbach thanked the applicant and said to feel free to call him concerning the application of the screening materials.

ADJOURN

MOTION by Mr. Vorbach 6:52 PM

MOTION CARRIED