STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
NEWPORT, Sc.

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF NEWPORT

APPLICATION OF MR, WILLIAM RUH and MRS. LISA RUH, owners; for conceptual plan approval to restore the existing contributing structure, including minor alterations to the fenestration at the west foundation wall, a new retaining wall to the north, new materials on the rear deck and the construction of a new two (2) story 4,380 square foot home, applying to the premises located at 88 Washington Street, Plat 12, Lot 46

DECISION

The above matter was heard by the Commission on May 18, 2021.The applicants were represented by Jeremiah C. Lynch, III, of Moore, Virgadamo & Lynch, LTD. Mr. Lynch first summarized the travel of this application. He briefly described the changes in the various designs occasioned by prior comments from the Commission.

The applicants presented two (2) expert witnesses, Pieter Roos, a historic planning professional and Madeline Melchert of Hull Cove Design, architect of record. Ms. Melchert is a registered architect and was recognized by the Commission as an expert in historic design. Pieter Roos, a historic preservationist was recognized by the Commission as an expert in historic design and preservation. Mr. Roos first testified about the historic character of Washington Street from the colonial period to present. He explained that the Washington Street area is a mix of homes of several styles, size, scaling and massing. Mr. Roos noted that the area contained many large and significant home that represented Newport's prosperity in the eighteenth century.

Mr. Roos testified about the history of the John Tripp House. He explained that the house, building in the early eighteenth century was move from Providence and rebuild on the site in 1960s Mr. Roos explained the historic characteristic of the Tripp House.

Mr. Roos offered his expert opinion, as a historic planning professional, with extensive experience in Newport. He stated the design of the new dwelling was appropriate and satisfied the standards in the ordinance for conceptual approval and also satisfied the Newport Design

Standards for Historic Structures.

Madeline Melchert, the architect for the project first summarized the modifications to the project since it was first presented to the Commission. Ms. Melchert noted that the first design consisted of an 8,700 square foot gambrel style singled structure with a retaining wall to the rear and a garage on Washington Street. Based upon comments from the Commission and abutters, Ms. Melchert modified the design. She reduced the size of the new dwelling to a 6,000 square foot Georgian style colonial home. The new structure was connected to the modified Tripp House. The Commission expressed concerns about the second design. Ms. Melchert submitted the present design. The current plan provides that the Tripp House will remain in its present location, excepting minor modifications to the west foundation. The Tripp House will be treated as a guest house for the new dwelling. Ms. Melchert pointed out the new dwelling was reduced to 4,380 square feet. She explained that the length of the house was shortened to preserve views form Washington Street to the Harbor. She also pointed out that the connector was removed to permit views between the two building. The new structure is located twenty-one (21) feet ff the east property line, two (2) feet greater than the Tripp House setback. The new home will be nineteen (19) feet from the north line, to create a greater view corridor and shield the garage from street view. The street facing design was intended to be compatible with the neighborhood and reduce the scale of the structure. Ms. Melchert also summarized the massing of other comparable houses. Her analysis indicated that the scale, massing and location of the new dwelling was appropriate for the site and neighborhood.

Turner Scott, Esq. appeared on behalf of several neighbors and objected to the application. Mr. Scott cross examined Mr. Roos and Ms. Melchert, but did not offer any witnesses in opposition to the application.

One person spoke against the application.

The Commission members expressed their approval for the treatment of the Tripp House and the reduced size of the new structure. The Commission members were satisfied that the proposed dwelling fit in the neighborhood, but requested additional details on the harbor side of the new dwelling.

At the close of the hearing a motion was made, and duly seconded, to approve the

application for conceptual approval as presented, with the condition that the applicant provide additional detail to the harbor side of the house and connecting point at the Tripp House at the final plan approval stage. The motion received the concurring affirmative votes of six members, Michael Ryan, Dave Adams, Donald Ross, Rosemary O'Brien, Howard Elliot and Andy Bork. Nancy Stafford voted "nay". The Motion, with conditions, was approved on a vote of 6-1.

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Karl Andy Bork, Chairman

Dated: