

Bristol HDC Staff Report

1/6/2026

Application Reviews

25-139 - 79 Constitution St
Report
This application was continued from the 11/7/2025 Meeting, where all but one item was voted on. The commission wished to see additional information on the removal of a bay window. There was some question as to if this window, a later addition to the property, had achieved its own historical significance.
The applicant is also bringing a change to their previous approval - an approves removal door and replacement with a window would be changed to only the removal of the door, with siding materials to be matching the rest of the house. The applicant has provided the specific change marking the window to be removed.
Relevant Standards
#2, #9

25-151 – 76 State Street
Report
Sign in question for County Cleansers has already been removed from property without a permit. As such, the applicant has been assessed a \$100 work without a permit fee. Staff spoke with owner during initial application to see if the sign could be replaced, but per owner, sign has already been disposed of and cannot be replaced.
Per Zoning Ordinance (Sec. 28-375): Any sign advertising or identifying a business or organization which is either defunct or no longer located on the premises are not permitted. In such instances, the signs must be physically removed, not just covered over, within 30 days of the business or organization closing or moving. Exceptions are granted to landmark signs which may be preserved and maintained even if they no longer pertain to the present use of the premises.
The commission should consider if this was designated a "landmark" sign. An example of this would be the Hotpoint sign located at 39 State Street, repairs to which were approved in 2017. Otherwise, by code, this sign was out of compliance once the dry cleaning business was closed.
Building owner submitted original application, but cannot appear. As such, tenant business owner at the site will be appearing, however the tenant was less involved and may not have all answers the commission seeks to ask.
Relevant Standards
#4

25-162 – 35 Burton St
Report
The application requests to add another story to an existing outbuilding. The proposed work does not appear to affect anything of any particular historic value, and has been reduced due to feedback from the Zoning Officer. Most materials appear to be in keeping with the HDC's requirements, though the commission may wish to inquire about the material being proposed for porch columns - applicant proposes painted steel, unclear if this material choice is structural.
Relevant Standards
#4, #9, #10

25-163 – 30 Union St
Report
Previously approved as application 25-80, owner is requesting changes due to feedback from neighbors. Application covers the size, massing, and all materials, and is complete.
Relevant Standards

#9

25-12 – 125 Hope St
Report
Applicants are returning with the goal of obtaining approval for the demolition of the current structure at 125 Hope Street.
The applicants, throughout the process, have had concerns about the flood zone impact of this property, which has been determined to be within a ‘VE’ Zone. Due to this zone, the buildings currently on the property will need to be raised several feet, or any new buildings will need to be raised.
Due to these concerns, the building owners seek to demolish the existing structures and replace with new buildings.
HPHC has reviewed the project, and in a letter dated September 25, 2025, stated that it was “RIHPHC’s opinion that there are no prudent and feasible alternatives to the demolition”. Reasoning given was due to the significant amount that the property would need to be raised to accommodate the VE Flood Zone and the difficulty in recreating the building envelope. Per RIHPHC, “The reconstruction would still result in an adverse effect to the historic district”.
Applicants have been advised in the past the strongest argument in favor of demolition is demonstration of severe structural deficiency. Exterior features are severely degraded, but the commission should ask the applicant if any further study of the structural integrity of the building has been made, independent of flood zone concerns.
In addition to requests for demolition, the applicant has proposed several potential replacement options, with designs made to pay homage to the existing structure.
Relevant Standards

#6, #9

Concept Reviews

25-12 – 125 Hope St
Report
The applicant has provided two potential designs should demolition be approved by the commission. Both options involve the demolition of the current building and construction of two new houses on the property.
Option A is a design that is strongly influenced by the existing buildings, using similar architecture and massing. This design is still full new construction, but maintains some of the style of the original building.
Option B is 2 structures more inspired by “design characteristics that blend with the historic district”.
Relevant Standards

#6, #9