



## HISTORIC DISTRICTS COMMISSION Meeting Minutes Thursday, July 21, 2016

Pursuant to notice duly filed with the Town Clerk's office, the Town of Concord Historic Districts Commission held a public meeting on Thursday, July 21, 2016 at 7:00 P.M. in the First Floor Conference Room, 141 Keyes Road, Concord, Massachusetts.

### **Present:**

#### Full Members

Mark Giddings, Acting Chair  
Justin King

#### Associate Members

Luis Berrizbeitia  
Satish Dhingra  
Peter Nobile  
Melinda Shumway

Lara Kritzer, Senior Planner

Acting Chair Mark Giddings called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Voting Members for the meeting were Mr. Berrizbeitia, Mr. Dhingra, Mr. Giddings, Mr. King, Mr. Nobile, and Ms. Shumway.

### **CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS**

#### **John and Madeline Kathe, 40 Lowell Road, North Bridge/Monument Square Historic District, for fencing**

Mr. King recused himself from this discussion and Mr. Nobile voted in his place. Owner John Kathe stated that he had found a carpenter to reconstruct the existing wood fence in the same design. The new fence will be an in-kind replacement with the exception of a small change in the design at the front walkway. Mr. Kathe explained that the existing fence curved at the walkway in a way that the new contractor could not replicate. Instead, the fence would be straight in that section. Mr. Kathe also noted that the new carpenter would be able to replace the wood gutters on the house, which he had not included in the initial application because he had not planned to do them yet. He now planned to repair both the fence and the gutters while the carpenter was on site. Members agreed that this was the perfect solution for such an important element of the streetscape. They reviewed the proposed change at the walkway and agreed that it was not inappropriate. Members also agreed that the gutters did not require an application as they would be replaced in kind with wood gutters and painted to match the existing gutters.

The Acting Chair opened the discussion to Public Comment. David Weiner, 20 Bow Street, stated that he was glad to hear that the fence would be replaced. Mr. Nobile moved to approve the replacement in kind of the existing wood gutters and wood fence running along Lowell Road and Bow Street with the exception that the fence railing at the main entrance stairs will be straight and not curved as currently constructed. Mr. Berrizbeitia seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

**John Robblee & Michelle Pflumm, 324 Sudbury Road, Hubbardville Historic District, for new lighting and paint colors**

Owners John Robblee and Michelle Pflumm were present with an additional proposed color for the fish scale style shingles on their Queen Anne style home. They explained that they thought it was important to use color to distinguish between the clapboard and shingled sections but were now proposing a subtler color. Instead of the originally proposed golden yellow color, the Owners proposed to use a gray-green color (Nantucket Gray, BM HC-111). They explained that this color captured the history of the building as it was consistent with the building's period of construction and had frequently been used in with the blue proposed for the clapboards. The doors on the house were Mahogany and would remain unpainted. Commission Members reviewed the new proposed color palette and agreed that it would look very nice on the house.

The Acting Chair opened the discussion to public comment. Anne Hayden, 342 Sudbury Road, stated that the house looked wonderful and that she was very happy with what the Owners had done. She wanted them to be happy with their color choice and thought that the newly proposed color scheme was a great solution.

Commission Member Dennis Fiori had not been able to be present for the discussion but had sent in comments that were read into the record at this time. He urged the Commission to consider the historic accuracy and appropriateness of the color scheme over personal aesthetics. He had appreciated the work that the Owners had put into making this decision and felt that the originally proposed color scheme was appropriate to the period of the house.

The Owners stated that they were comfortable with the newly proposed color scheme because it was also correct for the period of the house.

Ms. Shumway moved to approve the installation of new Northeast Lantern "Down Light - Barn Collection #3446" style light fixtures with raw copper finishes over each of the two garage doors, with the condition that the bulbs have a 60W maximum, and of the new paint color scheme as proposed for the clapboards to be "Van Cortland Blue" (BM HC-145), the fish scale shingles to be "Nantucket Gray" (BM HC-111), the trim to be "Dove White" (BM PM-19) and the garage doors, bulkhead, patio doors and shutters to be painted "Saywood Pine" (CA S-1). Mr. King seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

**Boynton Brennan Builders LLC, 12 Bow Street, Monument Square/North Bridge Historic District, to demolish the existing house and garage and construct a new house and garage**

Applicants Johanna Boynton and Mark Brennan explained that they had revised their initial proposal for the site and asked for the Commission's feedback on the direction which they now wanted to take. They explained that they had worked to reduce the size of the new building and showed what they would prefer to do on the site and why they had chosen that course. The revised sketches proposed a new house which would be 3,300 sf. in size. They explained that they wanted to develop the proposed new design rather than build on the existing design because they thought it was a lighter approach which presented less massing to the street and would fit better on the site. They noted that at the very least, the existing house would need to be rebuilt because of its failing foundation. They felt that the existing house was a poorly designed gambrel building with no overhangs or real style and would like to see the new building move in a different direction. If they did use the existing form, then the Applicants

explained that they would want to create a more detailed gambrel building with a significant rear addition. They felt that the existing house with a new addition would appear chunkier than their alternative design, which they thought was more reflective of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century elements which contributed to the character of the Historic District. They noted that a preservation consultant who had looked at the site in the past had argued that the house was not significant to the Historic District as it did not possess a true style or architectural character.

The Applicants explained that their proposed new design was smaller than the original design and explained that they were here to see if there was a willingness amongst Commission Members to go forward with these designs. The proposed new design would cover 18% of the site, which was lower than the lot coverage at the adjacent 40 Lowell Road. They had shortened the house to address concerns expressed about the length of the building – it was now 6’ - 7’ shorter in length and 8’-10’ shorter in width. The Applicants explained how one of the drawings compared the width of the existing house to the new house and noted how portions of the new house would be set far back from the street and would be less visible than they appeared to be in the elevations.

A Commission Member stated that a site plan was needed to better understand the proposed changes. He noted that there was no indication of a garage in the submitted materials and stated that that additional information would be helpful as well. He noted that the new design had been reduced to 3,300 sf. and asked if this included the garage. The Applicant stated that that number did not include the garage, which would add another 600 sf. to the site. The Applicants noted that there was an existing garage on the left side of the property but did not plan to keep it. The Commission Member thought that the plan was nice but felt that it would be helpful to have the heights and all elevations of the building. A second Member noted that he had missed the previous discussion on this project and questioned where the existing house was in this design. He stated that he was personally open to changes but had understood that the Commission had asked for the house to be preserved or reconstructed. A Third Member felt ambivalent about the new design versus the existing one but wanted to see the character of the neighborhood retained. The Applicants explained how the size and the scale of the building would fit in with the other properties in the area.

A Commission Member asked about the length of the building. It was noted to be 86’ long and 39.5’ at its widest point. The height of the building had been reduced from 28’ to 27’. A second Member asked where the garage would be located. The Applicants stated that the garage would be detached and located in the rear left corner of the property. A third Member stated that it would be very helpful to see how the existing building compares with the proposed building. He did not find the character of the proposed new building objectionable, and noted that the proposed detailing was appropriate to a New England home. A fourth Member suggested that the Commission consider whether the character of the new building was equivalent with the character of the existing one, and if it would be an even replacement for the neighborhood. He thought the proposed new building was nice and could be found anywhere in New England. He questioned question it was appropriate to this specific location, though. A fifth Member agreed that the existing house needed to be replaced. He noted that the existing house was approximately 1,900 sf. and that most of the homes in this area were smaller. He stated that his main concern was with the size of the building proposed here.

The Acting Chair opened the discussion to Public Comment. David Weiner, 20 Bow Street, stated that he would like to see the site plan and the massing of the new house in relation to the surrounding properties. He was encouraged by the reduction in size of the proposed new house and noted that it was similar in size to his own. He expressed concern with the amount of roof on the new building and wanted to better understand what would be visible from his home.

Wendy Rovelli, 42 Bow Street, expressed concern about the appearance of the new building but appreciated that it was smaller in size. She did not find the existing house to be particularly special to the neighborhood.

The Commission had also received a letter from Sarah Weiner, 20 Bow Street, which was read into the minutes at this time. Ms. Weiner expressed concern with the size and design of the proposed new house and hoped to see the proposal become more in line with the existing historic house.

Bruce Blumberg, 36 Lowell Road, had also submitted a letter to the Commission as he was out of town for the meeting. His letter stated that he would like to see a site plan and was concerned with the depth of the new house and its impact on its neighbors. If their plan was to go far back into the site, then he urged the Commission to mitigate the impact with landscaping. He also noted the tall pines on the lot which were important to the area and encouraged their preservation. He expressed concern that the proposed design did not reflect the scale of the neighborhood.

It was noted that several members at the last meeting had expressed a preference to see the existing house replicated, which was not the current proposal. Members were asked if this was still the preferred approach, or if they were open to a possibly different design. A Commission Member stated that he was not concerned that the proposed design did not match the existing house and did not think that the existing house had to be replicated. A second Member agreed that replication had been preferred at the last meeting and felt strongly that the house should be preserved. However, he agreed with a previous Commission Member comment that an addition to the existing house could change it significantly and liked the idea that the new house keep in the spirit of the rest of the streetscape. He thought that the detailing of the house could be altered to replicate the character of the area. He agreed with the Applicants that the existing house was stripped of any detailing and was not well built. A third Member noted that the existing house was not incompatible with the neighborhood and was reflective of its period of construction. He thought that the current structure had a particular appearance that was informative of the 1950s and was important for the Commission to consider. He did not think that the proposed house was right for this location and suggested that they consider something closer to the existing house. He thought that any replacement building should have the essential elements of the original house and should look as if it had evolved from the 1950s but has been built now.

Members agreed that the relationship of the new building to the street was important and felt that it should pick up the characteristics of the neighborhood. A Commission Member stated that he was open to considering variations in the proposed design. A second Member agreed, stating that the new structure needed to be unified and work in this setting, but could be a modern structure if it resonated with the area. A third Member thought that the existing house could be demolished and that another design that was in character with the neighborhood might work here. However, he wanted to see the site plan before he made any comments on the current proposal. A fourth Member agreed that a new design was possible for this site.

Members agreed that they were ready to consider a new design for the property but clarified that this did not necessarily mean the one that was currently being presented. They noted their concern that a site plan, site visit, and garage information was needed before any further comments could be made. They agreed that the existing house did not need to be replicated. Members asked that the Site Plan include dimensions and that the Applicant provide information on the existing house as well so that the existing and proposed structures can be compared. The Applicant agreed and stated that the footprint of the building could be staked out for the site visit. Members tentatively scheduled the site visit for the morning of August 4 pending confirmation that Members would be able to attend on that day. If that

day was not possible, it was agreed that the Commission would meet on an alternate meeting before the September 1 meeting.

## **NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS**

### **Matthew Reed, 385 Main Street, Main Street Historic District, for new fencing**

Owner Matthew Reed was present for his application to replace the fence along his rear property line. He noted that the rear of his property abuts the rail road tracks and proposed to install a new 6' tall stockade fence to match the fencing along the sides of his property. He noted that this fence would match other similar fences on adjacent properties, all of which were 6' to 8' tall. The fence would remain unpainted to match the surrounding fences. It was noted that there was currently a 4' picket fence along the rear property line.

The Chair opened the discussion to Public Comment and there was none at this time. Members reviewed the photos and site plans and agreed that the proposed fence was typical of the area. Mr. Berrizbeitia moved to approve the installation of a new 6' tall wood stockade fence along the rear property line as described. Ms. Shumway seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

### **Bonnie Albright, 307 Main Street, Main Street Historic District, for new fencing**

Owner Bonnie Albright presented her application to install new fencing along the Main Street façade of her property. She explained that the project would replace an existing 6' privacy fence stretching from the front left corner of her house to the left property line with a new 6' wood board privacy fence. She also hoped to take back the Main Street yard by installing a 4' tall wood open board fence the Main Street property line. The fence would wrap around the corner with Cottage Lane and would end just before the driveway. She explained that the proposed fence would have a flat board top with a scalloped edge and that the posts would be flat topped with the exception of the ones framing the Main Street gate, which will have ball tops. The fence was the same one used by her neighbors, but would be lower and have the scalloped edge. The fence would pull back from the sidewalk at the gate and the corner to provide visibility and interest. Photos of the existing site and proposed fence were reviewed and she noted that the posts would be at about 8' intervals.

Members reviewed the materials submitted and asked if the fence would be painted. The Owner stated that it would be left natural. Several Members agreed that they would prefer the fence to be natural rather than painted. A Commission Member stated that he liked the proposed design and thought that it was nicely finished.

The Chair opened the discussion to Public Comment and there was none at this time. Mr. King moved to approve the installation of a new 6' wood board privacy fence in place of the existing privacy fence on the left side of the site and the installation of a new 4' open board fence with a scalloped board top and flat posts on all but the posts surrounding the Main Street gate which will have ball post caps, to be installed along Main Street and Cottage Lane as submitted. Mr. Berrizbeitia seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR. The approved site plan was then signed by Acting Chair Mark Giddings.

**Colonial Inn, 48 Monument Square, Monument Square/North Bridge Historic District, for new paint colors and signage**

Colonial Inn General Manager Sean Smith presented the application for changes to paint colors and signage on the site. The Applicant explained that the Inn is under new ownership and they are beginning the process of considering a change in its appearance. To start with, they are requesting to change the paint colors of their cottage at the rear of the site to a lighter palette. He explained that the body of the building would be “Manchester Tan” (BM HC81), the trim would be a cream shade called “Cocoon” (C2 820) and the door would be “Classic Burgundy” (BM PM17) in a semi-gloss. He explained that they had also picked a shutter color “Cos Cob Stonewall” (BM 1483) but that there were no shutters on the building at present and that they would apply if they decided to install them in the future. The Applicant stated that the new owners wanted to brighten the building, which is currently painted a gray/blue color that matches the Inn. A Commission Member asked if the Applicant was considering changing the color of the Inn. The Applicant stated that they were considering these colors on the Inn itself, but wanted to see them on the other building before they made a decision. Members noted that the proposed colors were in the yellow family and would be much brighter than the existing gray facades. Several Members agreed that they liked the choice of colors.

The second part of the application involved the 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary banner installed over the entrance to the Inn. The Applicant explained that they had originally put the banner up for Patriot’s Day but people had liked it so much that they had decided to leave it up longer. He noted that the banner marked their anniversary year and was only a temporary sign. Members asked if the banner was allowed under the Sign Bylaw and the Applicant stated that he was not sure. A Commission Member felt that the banner was not aesthetic but was also not inappropriate to the property. Other Members agreed that the banner was temporary and could remain in place so long as it was removed at the end of the year.

The Acting Chair opened the discussion for Public Comment and there was none at this time. Mr. King moved to approve the new paint colors for the cottage behind the Colonial Inn to be “Manchester Tan” (BM HC81) for the body, “Cocoon” (C2 820) for the trim, and “Classic Burgundy” (BM PM17) in a semi-gloss for the front door and to allow the temporary banner over the front entrance to the Colonial Inn to remain in place through January 1, 2017. Mr. Berrizbeitia seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

**Walden Crossing LLC on behalf of Alpine Property Management, 45 Walden Street, Main Street Historic District, for new retaining wall**

Engineer Dan Carr, Stamski and McNary, represented the project on behalf of the Owners. He explained that the project would rebuild the retaining wall along the Mill Brook, which runs behind the property, which has begun to collapse. Members viewed photos of the site and noted that the granite blocks at the top of the wall were its most visible elements from the public way. The Representative explained how the wall would be reconstructed and stated that the granite block would remain along the top edge. The wall itself will be interlocking blocks and has been approved by the Natural Resources Commission. He explained that they would be removing a concrete sidewalk that had formerly run along the edge of the Mill Brook. He noted that there would be no change to the light posts in that area. A question was raised about the guard rail on the plans and the Representative explained that this was not part of the project. A Commission Member asked if the granite blocks could be anchored along the top of the wall to keep them from moving again. The Representative stated that it was possible but he thought that the design of the new wall would not require it. He believed that the existing blocks had moved because the wall had failed and thought that they would remain in place once it has been fixed.

It was also noted that the edges of the existing parking area would be repaved once the walls were rebuilt, but not the parking lot as a whole.

The Acting Chair opened the discussion to Public Comment and there was none at this time. Ms. Shumway moved to approve the replacement of the retaining wall along the Mill Brook and paving as per the submitted application. Mr. Berrizbeitia seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR. The Acting Chair then signed and dated the approved plan.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

First Church Banners – A Commission member asked about the two banners in front of First Parish Church and whether they had been applied for and approved. Staff explained that no application had been submitted and that they were working to encourage the Church to apply. Another Member familiar with the banners explained that this was a first amendment issue for the Church and that they had not yet been convinced that an application was necessary. He explained that the existing banners were scheduled to remain in place through January. Staff was asked to draft a letter to encourage First Parish to apply for approval of the banners.

Holy Family Church Signage - The Holy Family Parish had requested that the Commission informally look at some ideas which they were considering to install signage near the sidewalk by installing a stone planter with carved lettering at the corner of the stairs. Members reviewed the submitted plans and one member suggested that it was too heavy in design and should be symmetrical. Members agreed that this was an interesting solution that they would be open to discussing in a formal application.

35 Lowell Road Visibility Determination – Staff explained that an application has been submitted to replace a rear door located in an existing screened porch on the rear façade of this house. She explained that the porch could be seen from Chamberlain Park, but that the door was not visible through the existing screens. Members reviewed the site and photos of the area to be altered and agreed that the existing doors were not visible from any public way. No further review is required.

55 Estabrook Road Visibility Determination - Staff explained that she had received a request for the Commission to review a proposed project to alter windows on the rear façade of 55 Estabrook Road. The house is set well back from the road and Members reviewed the site and the areas to be changed. After confirming that the windows face the adjacent property at the rear of the site, Members agreed that the proposed changes were not visible from any public way. No further review is required.

Rotary Club of Concord Request for Extension – The Rotary Club of Concord has requested an extension of Certificate 16-9 for their work to reconstruct the park area at 12 Main Street. The existing Certificate will expire on August 11 and the Rotary is requesting an additional six month extension. Members noted that this is the first request for an extension for the project. Mr. King moved to extend Certificate 16-9 for an additional six months. Mr. Berrizbeitia seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

Approval of Minutes – No minutes were reviewed at this time.

Mr. King moved to adjourn. Mr. Berrizbeitia seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.  
The Meeting was adjourned at 8:55 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Lara Kritzer  
Senior Planner

Minutes Approved on: August 4, 2016

Nea Glenn, Secretary