

CONCORD HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Public Meeting Minutes
March 24, 2022 7:00 P.M.
Virtual Meeting

Pursuant to notice duly filed with the Town Clerk's office, the Town of Concord Historical Commission held a virtual public meeting on Thursday, March 24, 2022 at 7:00 P.M. using the Zoom meeting platform. Meeting ID: 828 8597 4868 Password: 823760

Commission Members Present: Melissa Saalfield, Nancy Nelson, Robert Gross, Michael Capizzi, Alan Bogosian, Rebecca Lemaitre, Francesca Cataldo

Staff: Heather Gill, Senior Planner

Others: Linda Escobedo, Peter Nobile, Lynne Spencer, Tom Wilson, Craig Beckman, Susan Hamilton, Dan Gainsboro, Hope Beckman, Louis Dutka

Ms. Saalfield called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. by a roll call vote.

Review and Approve – Millrun Sign

Dan Gainsboro presented the proposed sign at Millrun. Mr. Gross has worked with Shelbie at NOW Communities on the wording for the sign. Ms. Saalfield stated that she would prefer if the text was left justified and not centered. Ms. Nelson moved to approve the sign. Mr. Capizzi seconded, Mr. Bogosian abstained. The motion passed by a roll call vote (4-0).

Demolition Review – 653 Main Street

Hope Beckman presented the proposed demolition to the Commission. She explained that the house was originally centered on the lot when it was originally built, but those owners carved off a lot to build a house for their daughter – which is now located 13' from the house. Ms. Beckman stated that the house is in significant disrepair and listed off a number of issues including vermiculite, asbestos tiles, water damage and rot, no insulation in the exterior walls, antiquated utilities, lack of gutters. Ms. Beckman explained the number of renovations they have completed on the house, and what the house looked like before they purchased it. Some of these changes include enhancing the front porch entry, adding dentil moldings, adding louvered shutters, adding lighting, changing the front door, replacing windows, adding gutters, and landscaping. Ms. Beckman stated that they would like to demolish the house and garage and build a new house that is centered on the lot.

Mr. Capizzi stated that this is an architecturally relevant house in town and that many houses can and have been restored. Mr. Bogosian stated that he has worked on the house in the past and that there is a challenge with the electrical and utilities, but nothing that couldn't be fixed. Mr. Bogosian stated that this house really jumps out at you as you drive down the street. Ms. Saalfield stated that the house doesn't appear to be structurally unsound. Ms. Beckman agreed that it is not. Ms. Beckman stated that she knows the house is charming, but it is located too close to the neighbors and it is small. Ms. Nelson stated that imperfections are not indicative of demolition. Mr. Gross stated that he is inclined to allow demolition. Ms. Lemaitre stated that she agrees with Mr. Gross about feeling differently if it was an actual colonial house and because of the hazardous materials she would probably be inclined to allow demolition as well.

Ms. Saalfield opened the meeting for public comment. Bill and Kris Joyce of 646 Main Street stated that they have seen three families live in this house and have witnessed the significant

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disrepair and neglect the house has seen over the years. The indicated that they are not opposed to the demolition. Susan Hamilton of 661 Main Street just stated that she is concerned about the noise of the new construction and timing of the project, and doesn't have an opinion on whether this house should be demolished or not. Ms. Beckman stated that they intend to build as quick as possible – a six month span from start to finish. Louise Dutka of 37 Flora Drive stated that she is in favoring of preserving the house.

Ms. Saalfield stated that this is a difficult decision. Mr. Capizzi stated that historic homes will always require updates, and that this is a relevant structure to the community. Mr. Capizzi moved to preserve the house. There was no second on the motion. Mr. Gross moved to allow the demolition of the structure. Ms. Lemaitre seconded the motion. [Mr. Bogosian did not vote due to his past work on the house, so Ms. Lemaitre was moved to a full voting member for this application]. Mr. Capizzi, Ms. Saalfield, and Ms. Nelson voted against the motion and Ms. Lemaitre and Mr. Gross voted in favor of the motion. The motion failed by a (3-2) vote. Mr. Capizzi moved to find the house preferably preserved. Ms. Nelson seconded the motion. Mr. Capizzi, Ms. Nelson, Ms. Saalfield, and Mr. Gross voted in favor of the motion. Ms. Lemaitre voted against the motion. The motion passed by a (4-1) vote.

Ms. Gill explained the waiver process to the homeowner.

Discussion – Wright Tavern Preservation Restriction

Tom Wilson introduced the team and reviewed the upcoming meeting dates with the CPC and the Historical Commission. The team includes Nadia McGourthy, an attorney that specializes in preservation restrictions; and Lynne Spencer from Spencer Preservation Group, the project lead. Ms. McGourthy walked thru the draft preservation restriction, highlighting sections 2, 3.1, 3.3, 5, and exhibit C. Ms. Spencer reviewed her background and explained how she became involved in the project. Ms. Spencer reviewed exhibit C with attachments in detail with the Commission – which is a catalog of character defining features.

Mr. Gross spoke about the ownership and use of the building over time. Ms. Nelson stated that she is thrilled that professionals are now involved with the documentation of the building. Ms. Nelson suggested lidar imaging of the interior of the structure and suggested a company that may be interested in doing it pro-bono, since it is a National Landmark. Ms. Saalfield asked who will administer the preservation restriction. Ms. McGourthy explained that the Town of Concord is named, so that defaults to the Select Board, but that they would then generally delegate the administration of the restriction to the Historical Commission.

Discussion – Assabet River Bluff Project Notification Form

The Commission had no comments or questions on this matter.

Discussion – Rte. 2A Improvements Section 106 Meeting

The Commission reviewed Ms. Nelson's draft letter and discussed the project. Mr. Gross asked if this is a matter of policy choice or a violation of the laws and standards. Mr. Gross suggested the use of topic sentences re. the safety, design and historical recognition for the letter. Mr. Gross moved to authorize Ms. Nelson, Ms. Saalfield, and planning staff to draft and submit the final letter. Mr. Capizzi seconded the motion and all others voted in favor. The motion passed (5-0).

Other Business

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Ms. Saalfield stated that zoom meetings have been authorized to continue thru August, so she would presume that the Commission will continue to meet virtually until then. Ms. Saalfield explained that she will be attending the Select Board's upcoming meeting to update them on the Rte. 2A project. Ms. Saalfield stated that the Historic Districts Commission will hopefully be voting to support the Scenic Roads warrant article at their upcoming meeting. Mr. Bogosian summarized some of the recent HDC applications that have been reviewed. Mr. Gross asked about the Commission's role in planning for the 250th anniversary.

Minutes

The Commission reviewed the draft minutes and had no comments. Mr. Capizzi moved to approve the draft minutes of the February 10th meeting. Ms. Nelson seconded the motion and all others voted in favor. The motion passed (5-0).

The meeting was adjourned at 8:52 P.M.

Minutes Approved: April 14, 2022

Respectfully submitted by:
Heather Gill
Senior Planner