



HISTORIC DISTRICTS COMMISSION
Public Meeting Minutes
Thursday, August 1, 2019
First Floor Conference Room, 141 Keyes Road

Pursuant to notice duly filed with the Town Clerk's office, the Town of Concord Historic Districts Commission held a public meeting on Thursday, August 1, 2019 at 7:00 P.M. at 141 Keyes Road, Concord, Massachusetts.

Commission Members Present: Luis Berrizbeitia, Mark Giddings, Peter Nobile
Associate Members Present: Kate Chartener, Abigail Flanagan, Melinda Shumway, Paul Ware
Commission Members Absent: Nea Glenn, Justin King, Katherine Mast

Staff: Marcia Rasmussen, Director of Planning and Land Management
Heather Carey, Administrative Assistant

Also Present: Sandy Smith, 25 Academy Lane
Sally Sanford, 25 Academy Lane
Thomas Smith, 25 Academy Lane
Jason Fredette, Poyant Signs
Janet Kaminstein, 25 Black Birch Lane
Ann Berrizbeitia, 410 Lexington Road
Kerry Cronin, CFPL
Mav Pardee, 87 Stow Street
Melissa Saalfield, 7 Concord Greet, #7
Pamela Gannon, 616 Monument Street
Jack and Diana Clymer, 13 River Street
Jeff Adams, 142 Farmers Cliff Road
Cate Oranchak, Landscape Architect
Stew Roberts, CFPL
Michael Bellefeuille, CFPL
Joshua Bath, Nashawtuc Architects
Dennis Fiori, 309 Strawberry Hill Road
Gordon Roberts, 325 Main Street
Sherry Litwach, CFPL
Omario Favorito, 61 Brook Trail Road
Belinda and David Dapice, 169 Main Street
Aiyana Currie, 47 Lowell Road
Terri Ackerman, 89 Heaths Bridge Road
Tom and Betsy Swaim, 28 Central Street
Peter and Cristina Blau, 135 Partridge Lane
Jean Goldsberry, 1832 Main Street
John Battle, Battle Associates
Ed and Bean Nardi, 29 Academy Lane/54 Sudbury Road
Robert Chartener, 888 Sudbury Road

Chairperson, Peter Nobile called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Voting Members for the meeting were Mr. Berrizbeitia, Mr. Giddings, Mr. Nobile, Abigail Flanagan, and Paul Ware

CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

45 Walden Street – Main Street Historic District, to install signage

Chair Nobile opened the hearing and reviewed the application. Jason Fredette of Poyant Signs appeared for the hearing and presented their application to replace the existing Blue Hills Bank sign with one that reads Rockland Trust. The 14” x 84” wall sign will be made of 1-inch thick high density urethane, painted blue with white and yellow letters. Ms. Flanagan asked if the sign would be lighted and Mr. Fredette confirmed that there is not any lighting proposed. Ms. Flanagan also asked if the “Photoshop” rendering had been drawn to scale and thought that the new sign was somewhat less obtrusive than what is there now. Mr. Giddings asked about the vinyl door sign. Mr. Fredette confirmed that the vinyl lettering is on an interior door that that is not very visible.

Chair Nobile opened the hearing for public comment and there was none.

Mr. Giddings moved to approve the application of Rachel Wolfgang to install signage at 45 Walden Street as submitted. Ms. Flanagan seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR. The motion passed (5-0).

Documents used during public hearing: Building Sign Specifications dated 5/29/19, Door Graphics dated 5/29/19, existing conditions photos.

475 Lexington Road – American Mile Historic District, to expand garage door opening and replace garage door.

Chair Nobile opened the hearing and reviewed the application. Ms. Carey presented the application on behalf of the applicant. She explained that the Applicant is looking to increase the size of the garage door an additional 6 inches and to replace the existing wood garage door with a steel door with wrought iron hardware as presented on the specifications submitted with the application. Ms. Chartener commented that she was not in favor of the decorative hardware and in general thought that it should be only added if it was functional. Mr. Giddings agreed that that hardware looks phony. Ms. Flanagan presumed that the hardware was added to match the existing shed that is viewable from the shed. Ms. Shumway did not have a strong feeling one way or another. Mr. Berrizbeitia stated that the door should be replaced to match what is currently in place. Mr. Ware commented that you although you wouldn’t be able to determine that the hardware is fake from the street, that you would be able to infer it. He thought that the applicant should come before the Commission to discuss the options.

Mr. Giddings moved to continue the application of Betty-Marie Arnold to expand garage door opening and replace garage door at 475 Lexington Road to the August 15, 2019 meeting. Mr. Berrizbeitia seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR. The motion passed (5-0).

Documents used during public hearing: Garage door specifications, existing conditions photos.

325 Main Street – Main Street Historic District, to replace gutters.

Chair Nobile opened the hearing and reviewed the application. Gordon Roberts appeared for the hearing presented the application to replace the existing wood gutter along the front façade of the house and to replace it with an aluminum “K” style seamless gutter. Commission Members discussed replacement materials including aluminum, copper, and composite and whether they could approve an interim solution to protect the house from further damage during the process of selling the house. Mr. Roberts opined that the aluminum gutters are undetectable from the ground. Mr. Giddings stated that they could approve the gutters for a one year interim solution.

Chair Nobile opened the hearing for public comment and there was none.

Mr. Giddings moved to approve the application of Gordon Roberts to replace gutters at 325 Main Street as submitted contingent on a replacement with wood, copper, composite material after 1 calendar year. Mr. Berrizbeitia seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR. The motion passed (5-0).

Documents used during public hearing: Existing Photos, ALO Seamless Gutters job estimate #050819R1259

47 Lowell Road – North Bridge/Monument Square Historic District, to repair chimney and install chimney cap

Chair Nobile opened the hearing and reviewed the application. Aiyana Currie appeared for the hearing and explained that they are making repairs to the existing chimneys and that they would like to add chimney caps to keep pests and debris out of the house. The proposed chimney caps, to be painted black, were recently approved by the HDC for their neighbors at 41 Lowell Road. Ms. Flanagan stated that she was in favor of the chimney cap which would help to preserve the existing chimneys.

Chair Nobile opened the hearing for public comment and there was none.

Mr. Giddings moved to approve the application of Aiyana Currie to repair chimney and install chimney cap at 47 Lowell Road as submitted. Mr. Berrizbeitia seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR. The motion passed (5-0).

Documents used during public hearing: Existing and Proposed chimney, Chimney Cap Spec sheet

5-15 Lexington Road – American Mile Historic District, to install A/C condenser

Chair Nobile opened the hearing and reviewed the application. Josh Bath from Nashawtuc Architects appeared for the hearing and explained that the homeowner is looking to install mini-split air conditioners that require a condenser to be installed in the rear of the house. He continued that condenser would be located with existing equipment 66 inches below a retaining wall abutting the Old Hill Burying Ground. Mr. Ware asked if the condenser could be seen from Lexington Road and Mr. Bath confirmed that it could not be seen. Ms. Flanagan asked if screening could be added to hide the condenser and whether the existing ivy could remain on the wall behind it. Mr. Bath stated that the condenser is only visible if someone were to walk to wall on the property and questioned whether additional screening was needed. Commission Members discussed the view.

Chair Nobile opened the hearing for public comment and there was none.

Mr. Giddings moved to approve the application of Nashawtuc Architects to install A/C condenser at 5-15 Lexington Road with the condition that evergreen vegetation be planted for screening and that the existing foliage on the wall remains. Mr. Berrizbeitia seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR. The motion passed (5-0).

Documents used during public hearing: Existing Conditions Photos

NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS

32 Lowell Road – North Bridge/Monument Square Historic District, to relocate fence, repave driveway, and replace retaining wall.

Chair Nobile opened the hearing and reviewed the application. Nancy St. Jean appeared for the hearing and presented the application for various site improvements. Ms. St. Jean explained that they are proposing to move the existing picket fence along the road so that it extends in one straight line behind

the historic marker which will leave approximately 18 inches for a planting bed. She explained that they would also like to repave the driveway and install a cobblestone apron along the street and in front of the garage. Ms. St. Jean also commented that they would like to replace a wood retaining wall along the edge of the driveway with recycled granite blocks that would match the foundation. Mr. Giddings asked a pebble finish had been considered for the driveway. Ms. St. Jean commented that she liked the look and had considered it but had not yet received a quote.

Chair Nobile opened the hearing for public comment and there was none.

Mr. Giddings moved to approve the application of Nancy and Richard St. Jean to relocate fence, repave driveway, and replace retaining wall at 32 Lowell Road as submitted with the condition that a final driveway plan be submitted and that if pebble finish is installed to come back before the Commission for approval. Mr. Berrizbeitia seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR. The motion passed (5-0).

Documents used during public hearing: fence plans, driveway plans, existing conditions photos

CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

129 and 151 Main Street – Main Street Historic District, to demolish portions of the building, construct a single-story addition linking the Heywood-Benjamin House to the Concord Free Public Library, renovate existing buildings, and make numerous site improvements

Chair Nobile opened the hearing and reviewed the application. Jeff Adams and Sherry Litwack President of the Library Corporation spoke regarding the challenging design process and overviewed how the Library has worked to appeal to as many constituencies as possible. Mr. Adams commented that the presentation will give an overview of changes including accessible parking, windows, lighting, paint colors etc. John Boynton of the Library Corporation presented a change to the accessible parking by using a cutout on Main Street in the current driveway spaces for the Library and the Benjamin Heywood House. Michael Bellefeuille presented a landscape plan showing how accessible parking can be created using the two existing curb cuts with space for the driver to safely exit the vehicle. Updated landscape plans were reviewed showing changes to the trees and the addition of bicycle parking along Main Street. Gordon Roberts presented computer renderings of the Benjamin Haywood House showing a new color scheme of gray siding with white trim, black shutters, and black window sashes. He gave an overview of the modifications made to the corridor link including a reduction in the amount of windows, columns with clapboard in between, a lowered the sky light, clapboard siding on the Sudbury Road façade, and the removal of bollard lights from the Main Street façade. Mr. Roberts further explained details relating to windows, gutters and downspouts, trees and landscaping, and exterior lighting.

Mr. Adams addressed a comment letter from an abutter regarding project review from the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Mr. Berrizbeitia commented that making recommendations to the MHC is not under the purview of the HDC and that the Commission should be making a decision based upon our own guidelines. Chair Nobile gave a summary of the letter that was submitted. The Director of Planning and Land Management commented that Town Staff had talked directly with the MHC and explained process by which the applicant would file an application for review with the MHC. Mr. Adams commented that he had also spoken with MHC directly and that both the MHC and HDC reviews can occur simultaneously. He also explained that the review is only required because of the use of grant money that they are still in the process of receiving. At the request of Mr. Berrizbeitia, Chair Nobile read the entire letter submitted by John Althouse.

Mr. Roberts presented a demolition plan showing what portions of the Benjamin Heywood House would be demolished and gave a history of those portions. Mr. Berrizbeitia asked for clarification of what was being proposed. Mr. Roberts gave a detailed presentation as to what portions of the house would be left intact. Mr. Berrizbeitia wanted to state for the record that brick veneer portion of the house is not historic per the opinion of the applicant only.

Chair Nobile asked for comment from each Member. Ms. Chartener felt that the project is moving in the right direction but that the children's alcove was lacking architecturally. To give the public an idea of the decision making process used by the Historic Districts Commission, Ms. Flanagan read the following from Historic Districts Act:

Section 1: The purpose of this Act is to promote the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public through the preservation and protection of buildings, places and districts of historic or literary significance through the development and maintenance of appropriate settings for said buildings, places and districts and through the maintenance of said buildings, places and districts as sites and landmarks compatible with the literary and historic tradition of Concord.

Ms. Flanagan commented that library expansion project is the exact project that the town envisioned when they created the HDC and that there isn't a better example of a building or place of historic and literary significance than the main branch of the public library. She continued that there couldn't be a better opportunity to promote the educational and cultural welfare of the public than through a thoughtfully considered expansion of the library and how that expansion takes shape and what it will look like in the end is at the heart of the decision making process. She commented that we could all agree that a thoughtful and considered expansion of the library is in keeping with our enabling statute but the actual shape it takes is where the rubber meets the road. Ms. Flanagan explained that the language in both the enabling statute and guidelines hinge on the determination of appropriateness and read the following from the Historic District Act which gives detailed guidance on how a determination of appropriateness should be made:

Section 9: In passing upon appropriateness the commission shall consider, among other things, the historical and literary value and significance of the site, building or structure, the general design, arrangement, texture, material and color of the features, sign or billboard involved, and the relation of such factors to similar factors of sites, buildings and structures in the immediate surroundings. The commission shall consider the appropriateness of the size and shape of the building or structure in relation to:

- *the land area upon which the building or structure is situated*
- *the landscaping and planting features proposed by the applicant*
- *the neighboring sites, buildings or structures within the district*

Ms. Flanagan commented that the historical and literary value and significance can't be understated and that is why the Commission has engaged in and continues to engage in such a thorough review of the project. She continued that this project is important and although the process can be slow and frustrating, good progress has been made in response to concerns of both Commission Members and the Public.

Ms. Flanagan explained that beyond the enabling statute the Commission also looks to the guidelines in determination of appropriateness. The guidelines are intended to be vague and open ended and the reason is in the introduction.

The following Design Guidelines are intended to provide direction for property owners and potential applicants before the Commission on the kinds of alterations that the Commission deems appropriate. The Guidelines are also intended to help the Commission make consistent and informed decisions about what is and is not appropriate. But as the title suggests, the Guidelines are intended as guides, not hard and fast rules, and neither applicants nor the Commission are bound to follow them in any given case. Each application before the Commission will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and the Guidelines will be a starting point, but not necessarily an ending point, in this process.

Ms. Flanagan further explained that given the diversity in applications seen by the Commission, the guidelines are provided to give structure but also a great degree of flexibility as each application is unique, this one entirely so. She continued that the guidelines are not entirely without specificity and read the following from the section on additions:

In short, additions should:

- *be subservient to the original structure;*
- *be differentiated from the existing building (for example, set back from the existing wall plane);*
- *be in harmony with the original building in size, scale, style and materials;*
- *be located where least visible to the public view; and*
- *be sited so as to not obstruct the visual integrity of the original structure.*

Ms. Flanagan commented that Members of the Commission and the Public have voiced concerns for these five specific areas of consideration and the Applicant has worked to address them. She continued that it

was her hope that by explaining those two guiding documents it will give a better understanding on how the Commission structures conversation and the way in which the project moves forward.

Ms. Flanagan stated that latest iteration of the plan is a step forward with the removal of the parking lot and increase in green space and the color is an improvement softening the appearance of the overall structure but nicely differentiating from the main library, the connector, and the Benjamin Heywood house. She commented that she was pleased with progress and thought the project was moving in a way in which the Commission would be able make a determination of appropriateness under the enabling statute and our guidelines. Mr. Berrizbeitia commented that he would like to have Ms. Flanagan's comments be entered the minutes verbatim. Chair Nobile reiterated that the HDC's Guidelines are intentionally vague and contradictory in some cases.

Mr. Giddings asked Ms. Flanagan what she would suggest for moving forward. Ms. Flanagan commented that there is consistent concern on the Sudbury Road façade with the height, the massing and appearance but like that there were options given by the Applicant for the exterior façade. Mr. Giddings stated that he had concerns for light spillage from the children's alcove on Sudbury Road but was happy overall with the progress that has been made. He questioned whether another site visit might be necessary. Mr. Ware commented that the architects have done a great job listening to neighbors and Commission Members agreed that another site visit would be beneficial to get a better understanding. Mr. Berrizbeitia stated that his comments are available on the website and added that no substantial changes have been made to the project since the original submission and felt that a drastically different plan should be presented. Ms. Shumway stated that she was very pleased with where they have come. She thought that going back to the drawing board would not be useful and that the applicant had addressed most of Commission's major concerns. Ms. Shumway voiced her concerns for light pollution on Sudbury Road and asked for clarification on any changes that had been made. Mr. Adams commented that all windows facing Sudbury Road and Main Street will have 3% light emission shades on timers to descend each evening at dusk. Chair Nobile stated that he still had reservations about the Main Street facade appearing as an entrance into the library and thought that another site visit would be helpful.

Chair Nobile explained that several comment letters had been received and reviewed and opened the hearing for public comment.

Sally Sanford of 25 Academy Lane discussed accessible parking, windows shades, and proposed paint colors. She presented modified renderings of the building façade for ideas to move forward, and asked that elevations be presented by the Applicant that include the entire library, link, and Benjamin Heywood House.

Janet Kaminstein of 25 Black Birch Lane and a Member of the Friends of the Library spoke regarding the purpose of the building and meeting the needs of the Library programming.

Melissa Saalfield of 7 Concord Green, speaking as a citizen commented that the Commission has not provided enough specific guidance on how the Applicant can move forward.

Dennis Fiori of 309 Strawberry Hill Road stated that the Commission should check in with the Massachusetts Historical Commission and suggested that the new design should be of this time period and not a "greatest hits" pastiche of historical styles.

Anita Berrizbeitia of 410 Lexington Road spoke regarding the lack of attention given to all facades of the building and harmony between the old and the new.

Mav Pardee of the Library Committee spoke regarding the amount of glass and light pollution.

Ed Nardi of 29 Academy Lane spoke regarding the proposed changes, the guiding documents and how all projects should follow the guiding documents, how each façade does not speak in harmony and the need for the Commission to be clear in their expectations of the changes they are looking for.

Chair Nobile stated that he would like to have another site visit and the Commission scheduled it for Thursday, August 15, 2019 at 8:00 am.

Commission Members discussed what they would like to see at the site visit. Chair Nobile stated that he would like the Commission to submit more detailed comments regarding the project for the applicant to address.

Tara Edleman of 357 Nashawtuc Road and Chair of the Library Committee speaking on her own behalf, spoke regarding the project and how it was designed using input from the community.

Sally Sanford of 25 Academy Lane spoke regarding the terminology used to describe all facades of the building.

Mr. Giddings moved to continue the application of Johnson Roberts Associates, Inc., to demolish portions of the building, construct a single-story addition linking the Heywood-Benjamin House to the Concord Free Public Library, renovate existing buildings, and make numerous site improvements at 129 and 151 Main Street to the August 15, 2019 meeting. Ms. Flanagan seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR. The motion passed (5-0).

Documents used during public hearing: Landscape Plan, Proposed Renderings, Landscape Materials, Existing Conditions Photograph, Proposed Colors

OTHER BUSINESS

Other

73 Monument Street – Amendments to Certificate –

John Battle, architect for the project explained that they are proposing to change the approved garage door to a new low profile roll up garage door that will have the same appearance of what was previously approved. He also explained that they had to go before the NRC which required the relocation of the foundation and two air conditioner units from the back of the house to the side of the house, adjacent to the existing. The Commission discussed whether the existing mechanical equipment could be seen from a public way and Mr. Battle explained that it could not be. The Commission asked for photos to be submitted showing their location for administrative review.

Mr. Berrizbeitia moved to approve the modifications to Certificate 19-08 at 73 Monument Street as submitted with the condition that photos showing the existing mechanical equipment from the street be submitted for administrative review. Ms. Flanagan seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR. The motion passed (5-0).

Signs – Concord Drives Electric – The Commission discussed a request by the Concord Municipal Light Plants to allow residents keep “Concord Drives Electric” signs up beyond the 14 days allowed by the Town Sign Bylaws. The Commission agreed that they could keep them up until October 1st and if they wanted to extend beyond that date that they come back before the Commission.

585 Lexington Road – Secondary Outbuilding – The new owner would like to build an outbuilding for a home occupation with the look and feel of a barn. Commission members commented that their original concerns were of the massing and stated that a formal application would be needed.

64 Main Street, Middlesex Bank – Amendment to Certificate – Cate Oranchak the landscape architect for the project appeared to discuss the bollard and chain fencing that was installed. She explained that they included the fencing on the landscape plan that was approved but in an oversight, had not discussed the fence with the Commission. She explained that the fence was proposed to mitigate trampling of the planting beds. Ms. Flanagan stated that she was not in favor of the fence and if given the opportunity would never have approved the fence. Other Members agreed. Mr. Giddings stated that at this point he

would recommend that the fence be removed but would like to conduct a site visit to really get a sense of its presence. A site visit was scheduled for Thursday, August 15, 2019 at 8:45am to view the fence.

Approval of Minutes

Documents:

1. *Minutes from 6/6/2019 Historic District Commission Meeting*

Staff commented that the minutes from June 6, 2019 had not yet been completed.

2. *Minutes from 6/20/2019 Historic District Commission Meeting*

The Commission commented that they had not yet reviewed the minutes from June 20, 2019.

Mr. Giddings moved to adjourn. Mr. Berrizbeitia seconded the motion. The motion passed (5-0).

The meeting was adjourned at 10:17pm.

The next Historic District Commission meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 15, 2019 at 7:00pm.

Documents used during the meeting are on file in the Planning Division Office.

Respectfully submitted by:
Heather Carey
Administrative Assistant

Minutes Approved on: _____

Luis D. Berrizbeitia, Secretary