

SALEM HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MINUTES
October 19, 2016, 2016

A meeting of the Salem Historical Commission was held on Wednesday, October 5, 2016 at 7:00 pm at 120 Washington Street, Salem, MA. Present were Jessica Herbert (Chair), Kathryn Harper, Laurie Bellin, David Hart, Susan Keenan, Joanne McCrea, Larry Spang and Jane Turiel.

380 Essex Street

Jay Famico submitted an application for Certificates of Appropriateness to remove an existing oil fill pipe and install new vents and to replace existing copper and wood gutters with new copper gutters and downspouts.

Documents & Exhibits

- Application: September 26 and October 3, 2016
- Photographs

Jay Famico and Colleen Bowdren were present.

Mr. Famico presented his application for copper gutters with photographs of 35 Chestnut Street where copper gutters were recently approved by the Historical Commission.

Ms. Herbert asked if proposed downspouts were smaller than current downspouts.

Mr. Famico replied that the contractor stated they were appropriately sized.

Mr. Hart concurred, measuring the sample and confirming the size at 3½” circumference.

There was no public comment.

VOTE: Ms. Bellin made a motion to close the public comment. Mr. Hart seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion so carried.

VOTE: Ms. McCrea made a motion to approve gutters and downspouts as presented. Ms. Bellin seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion so carried.

The Commission discussed the proposed vent pipes to be inserted into a basement window.

Ms. Herbert questioned whether it would be possible to screen the pipes.

Ms. Bellin asked if the property’s gates would be typically closed and would screen the pipes.

Mr. Famico agreed, stating that once gate is repaired, it will stay in closed position.

Mr. Spang asked for clarification on the proposal regarding the oil fill pipe.

Mr. Famico responded that the oil fill pipe will be removed.

Ms. Herbert asked for confirmation that the two proposed pipes would project above the foundation onto brick wall.

Mr. Famico replied in the affirmative, stating that pipes are required to be above snow height. He stated that he considered venting through a chimney but it would prohibit him from restoring the chimney to active use in the future.

Mr. Spang asked for clarification that PVC pipe could be used for venting.

Mr. Famico replied in the affirmative.

Mr. Hart asked if applicant would consider installing a screen

Mr. Famico replied in affirmative as long as allowed by code. He suggested a possible screen similar to a radiator box.

Ms. Herbert suggested that Commission consider approving the pipes with the requirement that they are painted and a screen be added if allowed by code.

Mr. Spang expressed concern that the installation of a lattice screen may be more visually intrusive than simply painting pipes.

Ms. Herbert asked for public comment.

Mary Beth Bainbridge suggested that it may be better to leave vent pipe open.

VOTE: Ms. Bellin made a motion to close the public comment. Mr. Hart seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion so carried.

VOTE: Ms. Bellin made a motion to approve as submitted with condition that vent pipes be painted to match background colors of gray foundation and yellow brick. Ms. McCrea seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion so carried.

VOTE: Ms. Bellin made a motion to approve in-kind repairs to step cracking, removal of oil pipe and infill with granite. Mr. Hart seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion so carried.

The Commission discussed the request for copper flashing to be installed at base of chimney. Ms. Kelleher reported that she mistakenly omitted it from the public hearing notice.

Mr. Spang commented that the Commission had never discussed flashing with any roofing proposal.

Ms. Bellin concurred, stating that by approving roofing, the Commission was thereby approving flashing.

The Commission agreed that the request for new flashing did not require Commission review.

94-96 Derby Street/33 Carlton Street

Townsend House Condominiums submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter basement windows.

Documents & Exhibits

- Applications: September 28, 2016
- Photographs

The Applicant Wendy Walsh was present.

Ms. Walsh presented photos of a sample louver with 3” slats. She stated that the vents would allow venting for 2 utility rooms that have a number of hot water heaters and furnaces. They would extend the fresh air vents to allow more fresh air into the rooms.

Ms. Herbert asked for clarification on the proposed Plexiglas storms.

Ms. Walsh replied that Plexiglas storms were already in place and she is proposing to install new Plexiglas and repair trim. She stated that she would like to insert the Plexiglas closer to the basement windows to protect them from dirt of sidewalk and street and eliminate animals from entering basement.

Ms. Herbert asked if it was possible to install Plexiglas on the interior.

Ms. Walsh replied that it may be difficult due to lack of interior space but she would ask contractor.

Ms. Herbert asked if considered modern storm windows.

Mr. Spang asked if louver would be inset into the basement window arched opening.

Ms. Walsh replied that wood frame would stay and vent would be placed below.

Ms. Kelleher reported that she could not find any similar case reviewed by the Commission in the past. She presented an example from a National Park Service brief for venting buildings.

Ms. Herbert asked what color the vents were to be painted.

Ms. Walsh replied that she was considering painting vents to match foundation but she was open to recommendations.

There was no public comment.

VOTE: Ms. Bellin made a motion to close the public comment. Ms. McCrea seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion so carried.

Ms. McCrea asked if frames were to be replaced.

Ms. Walsh replied in the affirmative

VOTE: Ms. Harper made a motion to accept the proposal as presented with the condition that vents be painted gray to match foundation and the removed basement windows be retained onsite if possible. Ms. Bellin seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion so carried.

13 Lynn Street

Barbara McLaughlin submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to install a new 4' tall fence.

Documents & Exhibits

- Applications: September 29, 2016
- Photographs
- Brochure from Boston Fence

The applicant Barbara McLaughlin was present.

Ms. McLaughlin presented her application and photographs of sample fence design.

Ms. Bellin asked for clarification that the proposed new fence would match the existing fence on the property.

Ms. McLaughlin replied in the affirmative.

Ms. Herbert asked if the new fence would be constructed in cedar.

Ms. McLaughlin replied in the affirmative and stated that she had received bids from two different fence companies. She stated that if she was unable to paint the fence this fall due to weather, she would paint the fence in the spring.

Mr. Hart recommended that the fence be stained and not painted, due to stain having a greater longevity on fences.

Ms. Herbert stated that a transparent stain could be used in the fall and a full-body stain in the spring.

There was no public comment.

VOTE: Ms. Bellin made a motion to close the public hearing. Ms. McCrea seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion so carried.

VOTE: Ms. McCrea made a motion to approve the fence proposal as presented. Ms. Turiel seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion so carried.

14-16 Hodges Court

Michael Becker submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations to property, including alterations to windows and fencing and installation of new skylights, door and retaining wall.

Documents & Exhibits

- Applications: October 3, 2016
- Photographs
- Elevation drawings

The applicant Michael Becker was present.

Ms. Herbert asked for clarification on the building's two-family use.

Mr. Becker replied that it is a legal four-family.

Ms. Herbert asked if it was possible to relocate the proposed driveway to Hodges Court instead of Derby Street.

Mr. Becker replied that he had not considered that scenario but could look into that option.

Ms. Kelleher reported that there may be City requirements for curb cuts in relation to setbacks from crosswalks and street corners. There would also be City review required for the removal of a parking space and parking meter.

Mr. Becker stated that he was not sure about City requirements.

Ms. Herbert suggested that a driveway from Hodges Court may allow retention of the tree in the side yard.

Mr. Becker replied that the tree is deteriorating and needs to be removed regardless of the driveway location.

Mr. Hart asked for clarification that the Commission has review authority over changes to the concrete wall and fence around the property. He also asked if an additional unit would be added in the basement.

Mr. Becker replied in the negative but stated that he planned to renovate attic and basement for use of the existing 4-units. He stated that he does not need ZBA approval since he was not proposing to change the current use.

Mr. Hart questioned whether it was premature to consider the application without approvals for curb cut and meter removal.

Mr. Becker replied that he doesn't believe that approvals are required for curb cuts, but may be required for removal of the meter.

The Commission discussed the proposed changes to the concrete wall and fence.

Mr. Spang asked how cars would access the proposed parking area since it appeared the grass begins approximately 1½' from sidewalk and slopes up to the house.

Mr. Becker replied that he proposed to excavate the yard. He presented plans to replace basement windows with door and large windows.

Mr. Spang expressed concern that this would result in a grade below the sidewalk.

Mr. Becker replied that the new grade would be flush with the sidewalk.

Ms. Harper expressed concerned that exposing the foundation may cause instability.

Mr. Becker replied that he believed the foundation would be stable.

Mr. Spang asked if the Building Inspector had issued a structural review to determine whether the retaining wall would remain stable after earth is removed during excavation.

Ms. Harper asked about the height of the door to be installed and whether it complied with building code requirements.

Mr. Becker replied that the door would be 74" tall.

Ms. Harper expressed reluctance to approve the door without approval from Building Inspector as to the required height for egress doors. She asked the applicant if he had identified other options if the Building Inspector doesn't allow the smaller door.

Ms. Herbert asked if the door is needed.

Mr. Becker replied that the door may not be required but he would prefer to have one to allow tenants to access the parking area.

Ms. Herbert recommended that the applicant work further with the Building Inspector before the Commission makes a decision.

Ms. Bellin asked for clarification on the proposed granite steps.

Ms. Herbert asked for public comment.

Mr. Corral, the brother of Nancy Corral, who owns the abutting property at 27 Herbert Street expressed Ms. Corral's concern about the proposed construction and removal of wall. He asked how far the yard would be excavated.

Mr. Becker replied that he is proposing to excavate up to the property line with Ms. Corral's property.

Ms. Herbert questioned if there are ways to ensure the neighbor's property will be protected while still allowing for parking area.

Mr. Hart stated that an engineer would be required.

Mr. Becker replied that he would hire an engineer and excavator if the Commission approves his plans.

Mr. Spang requested a site plan and expressed concern that the proposed parking area may not work. He expressed his opposition to the proposal, noting the following concerns: the property is located across from the NPS visitor's center and next to a prominent historic house; the placement of a parking area in

such a prominent location would be intrusive to district; the proposed excavation would result in the loss of the green space, which is important to the district; and the Hodges Court elevation is very important and the proposed changes to the basement windows would alter the building's historic appearance.

Ms. Herbert clarified that she would prefer retention of grass yard but would be amenable to allow for new parking in a congested area.

Mr. Becker replied that cars are now parked on sidewalk due to the narrowness of Hodges Court.

Ms. Bellin reiterated Mr. Spang's opposition. She stated that she would not want to see a parking area on such a prominent location on Derby Street.

Ms. Herbert asked Commission members if they would be supportive of a driveway from Hodges Court.

Ms. Bellin replied that this scenario would still result in the yard becoming a parking area.

Mr. Spang agreed with Ms. Bellin's comment.

Mr. Hart recommended continuing the Commission's review to determine whether parking meter could be removed, a site plan is needed, determination on requirements for basement door and egress requirements from basement, and an engineering study for excavation and retaining wall.

Ms. McCrea expressed her agreement with Mr. Spang and Ms. Bellin's concerns.

Ms. Harper stated that she would consider a new parking area accessed from Hodges Court if the applicant reconsiders the fencing.

Ms. Turiel stated that she would consider Hodges Court access.

Ms. Keenan stated that she would consider the option for Hodges Court.

Mr. Spang stated that if access was provided from Hodges Court, a large landscape buffer should be added along Derby Street.

Mr. Spang asked the applicant if the work was worth it to only get 2-3 parking spaces.

Mr. Corral stated that if there was a setback from the neighboring property, his sister may be more supportive. He reported that she hopes to attend the next meeting.

Mary Beth Bainbridge expressed her concern about soil erosion with so much excavation.

Mr. Becker replied that there is constant soil erosion occurring on the property now.

VOTE: Mr. Hart made a motion to continue the hearing until next scheduled meeting to allow applicant to further explore design alternatives. Ms. Turiel seconded motion. All were in favor and the motion so carried.

Mr. Becker asked for review of the proposed skylight request and presented photograph of mock-up proposal.

Ms. Kelleher reported that west slope is visible from Derby Street.

The Commission questioned how close the skylights would be located together.

Ms. Kelleher recommended that the applicant present an elevation drawing depicting location of proposed skylights.

Mr. Spang questioned whether Commission has approved the proposed interlocking blocks for the retaining wall. He expressed concern that it had a modern design.

Mr. Becker asked for recommendations on retaining wall.

Mr. Spang suggested a more traditional fieldstone wall.

The Commission asked Ms. Kelleher to determine Derby Street Historic District visibility requirements.

Ms. Kelleher will provide applicant with information on windows.

VOTE: Mr. Hart made motion to continue the hearing for all portions of the application to the November 2nd meeting. Ms. McCrea seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion so carried.

35 Chestnut Street - Clarification of Previous Approval

The applicant's architect Helen Sides was present.

Ms. Sides reported that the mason was unable to use old granite curbing for the addition's foundation and instead used old brick. This work is not visible from a public way. She also reported that the roofer has stated that the addition's roof is too shallow to install a standing-seam copper roof and instead recommended installing a flat-lock copper roofing. She noted that the roof is the only part of the new addition that is visible from a public way.

Ms. Herbert asked for clarification on why a standing-seam roofing could not be installed.

Mr. Hart noted that a standing-seam is not soldered, which may be problematic. A flat-lock roof is soldered.

Ms. Sides also reported that the addition will be clad in traditional wood clapboards to respond to the abutting neighbor's concerns. The clapboards will be painted to match existing.

VOTE: Ms. Bellin made a motion to approve the flatlock copper roof, clapboard siding and brick foundation for the addition. Ms. McCrea seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion so carried.

Request for Determination of Historic Significance – Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes

Mary Beth Bainbridge presented the request for a determination of historic significance for the Grotto.

Ms. Bainbridge presented the history of efforts to save St. Mary's Church. She reported that the group was now working with St. Mary's cemetery to relocate the grotto to their site. They are also working with a mason to restore the statues. They have identified a location at the cemetery to re-site the grotto and the mason has identified sections of the grotto to be rebuilt. She presented the historic significance of grotto and explained that the group would be seeking CPA funds for restoration. The group does not expect to be able to rebuild the grotto exactly as it was originally constructed at the church and would instead build a smaller version. She noted that the statuary has been preserved but not all of the stones were dismantled and saved.

Mr. Spang and Mr. Hart asked for clarification on whether the grotto would be rebuilt as it was originally designed and constructed or would be a smaller version.

Ms. Bainbridge stated that it would be too costly to rebuild as originally constructed in 1942.

Ms. Herbert asked for a rendering of the proposed design rebuild.

Ms. Bainbridge stated that it would retain a rustic appearance with similar stones.

Ms. Bellin expressed concern that if the Commission agrees that the original grotto is historically significant, the grotto would need to be rebuilt exactly as it was. If the grotto was not rebuilt in-kind, it would lose its historic significance.

Ms. Harper expressed her opinion that the sculptures and original stones are historically and culturally significant as remnants from a strong cultural community. She asked if the grotto would be built in a section of the cemetery where parishioners were buried.

Ms. Bainbridge suggested that the proposal to rebuild a version of the grotto would preserve the historic community culture.

Ms. Herbert suggested that the history of the community of St. Mary's was significant and the Commission should consider the recent history of the loss of the physical church.

Mr. Hart expressed concern that the Commission does not have enough information to determine if the artifact to be re-erected is historically significant since the Commission does not know what will be erected.

Ms. Bainbridge tried to clarify on the historic photograph what will be saved.

Mr. Spang asked how much it would be cost to rebuild in entirety.

Ms. Bainbridge replied approximately \$100,000.

Mr. Spang suggested that if the grotto was moved in its entirety then the Commission could support it as historically significant, but if only partially rebuilt, the Commission may not be able to support.

The Commission asked for the name of the mason working on the grotto.

Ms. Bainbridge replied that the mason's name is Fabio, a stoneworker who has worked a PEM. He has already helped to dismantle the grotto.

Ms. Herbert asked for the stonemason's resume, budget, and timetable.

Ms. McCrea stated that this information would be needed for CPA

Ms. Hart recommended that the friends group engage an architectural historian to identify historic significance of grotto.

Ms. Kelleher will provide names of local architectural historians.

Mr. Spang suggested that group consider a Kickstarter campaign, especially since they may receive much funding from CPA.

VOTE: Ms. Bellin made a motion to continue to the meeting of November 2. Ms. Keenan seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion so carried.

Approval of Meeting Minutes for October 5, 2016

VOTE: Ms. Turiel made a motion to approve the minutes of October 5, 2016. Ms. Bellin seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion so carried.

VOTE: Ms. Bellin made a motion to adjourn. Ms. McCrea seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion so carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Kelleher
Community Development Planner