

Historic District Commission
Town Hall, Room 126
Meeting Minutes, 11 September 2018

Meeting called to order at 7:36 PM. Attending: David Honn (DH), Anita Rogers (AR), Ron Regan (RR), Fran Arsenault (FA), Maria Crowley (MC) and John Benson (JB) Selectmen Representative. David Shoemaker (DS) absent.

- 7:36 pm **Citizen's questions** – FA – there is a hearing for 457 Mass Ave, red house near the junior high, the owner applied for a demolition permit. DH – That is in R2 zoning and needs 300 feet of frontage.
- 7:44 **Minutes for 7/24 and 8/14** approved unanimously.
- 7:45 **Project spreadsheet review:** DH – 86 School St looks like it put up a plastic fence running perpendicular to School St. It looks like it is over 6 feet high and would require a permit. DH will contact Frank Ramsbottom to check.
- 7:46 **267 Central St No Application** – Marc Foster present. Marc is buying the property from the Christian Science organization and wants to investigate what he can do with the property. Marc gave an overview of the situation: There was a broken pipe, lots of water damage and no insurance. He currently has an agreement for his tenants to use the parking lot along with Di Capri Pizzeria. RR – the windows are all vinyl and there is vinyl siding on the building now? Marc – yes. The existing structure has about 2000 SF of space in two stories. There is a basement but currently no access. There is a garage in the back along Pearl St. If possible, Marc would like to remove the existing structures and put up 4 residential units as well as keep the existing parking lot. DH – The FAR in West Acton Village is 0.7. FA – mixed use would be nice with residential over commercial. DH/AR – that location is more in the “residential” area of the village, across the street from 276 that was just renovated. DH – preservation is one of the tenets of the HDC so our preference is to rehab the existing structure. Marc said that the foundation is a rubble foundation, the interior is destroyed and there is potentially a lot of mold making demolition more economically feasible. DH - You could strip down to the studs and rebuild, there is an example in West Concord that did something like that. DH we should have a site visit. DH – come up with a site plan of what is there now along with photos and we'll make an

- appointment for next meeting. FA will coordinate a site visit. DH – bring in zoning. Maybe this could be used for affordable housing and CPC funds could be used to make it more economical.
- 8:20 Jon Benson brought John Mangiaratti, the new town manager, to introduce him to the HDC. DH gave an overview of the last appointment.
- 8:25 **2 School St. Application 1825** – Glenn Burger not present. Glenn wants to replace a garage door on the side of the building with a metal pedestrian door and repair the clapboard siding around it. MC – Is this visible from Main St? AR – if it is visible he should use a smooth fiberglass door instead of a metal door. DH – It's about 75 feet from the street. AR – Therma Tru has a smooth fiberglass door with glazing that looks like a wood door. DH – Tell him the doors used on the new construction on River street are fiberglass. MC assigned liaison. DH wood siding to match. AR – in the certificate make sure to say coursing and exposure to match existing. MC made a motion, seconded by AR, vote approved unanimous.
- 8:32 **505 Main St. 1824** – Linda Tennyson Loiselle not present. New roof, Owens Corning Duration architectural shingles, new flashing and pipe flanges. AR liaison, FA will do abutters notices. AR makes a motion – stone grey shingles, ridge vent end to end drip edge to match trim color. DH we don't want shiny pipe flanges like aluminum. Rubber is acceptable. FA seconds, vote approved unanimous.
- 8:40 **4 Piper Lane** – The HDC needs to send a letter to MassHousing with concerns regarding the projects potential impact on the historic district. The contractor filed a 40B application with MassHousing and there is a 30-day window for comments. DH thinks this is too short as historically there has been 60 days. DH wants AR to send a letter to the Acton BOS asking them to request more time. DH doesn't think he should write the letter because he is an abutter/within 300 feet of the project.
- 8:45 **615 Mass Ave** – This property is on the left heading west out of West Acton Center on Mass Ave. The property was sub-divided into two lots and is for sale, but has been empty for a long time. DH wants to head-off any demo by neglect situation. DH wants to see if the town (Acton Housing) can acquire the property via CPC funds and use it for affordable housing, for example make 4 condo units. The property is behind on taxes,

maybe \$200k. MC – why hasn't the town taken the property for failure to pay taxes? DH – I think the taxes need to be more than the value. Stephen Steinberg told DH a while back that he would be interested in partnering on a project with that property. MC – who would be leading that project? DH – Acton Community Housing, Stephen wanted to be an investor in the project, but not involved in the development. DH doesn't think this project would be a good fit for Habitat for Humanity, as the building would need to be split up into multiple units. DH – I would like to send letters to property owners that are letting their structures rot away. I want town council to come up with a legal opinion on what the HDC powers are in this situation. John Mangiaratti asked if we send out letters to HDC properties, DH yes we send an annual letter. Could you include the extra information about neglect with that letter to houses that are deteriorating? DH – we could do that. The discussion turned to the Asa Parlin house and its condition, DH gave an overview of the situation. John is interested in coming up for a plan next year to do something with the property.

- 9:06 **Chair Update – 53 River St.** nothing new. **3-27 School St.** DH met with Selby, John Benson, John Mangiaratti and John Perkins to discuss using the site for parking temporarily. Selby will handle the temporary parking. **43 School St.** DH met with Habitat for Humanity for a color consultation. Still need letters for 124 Main St fan, 612 Mass Ave fence removal; need to add 85 School St to the list for the new fence.
- 9:15 **Abutters Notification Procedures/HDC Boundary Signs/HDC Newsletter.** – Discussion of procedure issues, MC discussed an issue that the building department didn't send out notification letters, the abutters list from the assessor's office had some bad addresses. There was a debate about doing notices ourselves or having the building department do them. John Mangiaratti said he would like to help the HDC with processes issues and resources. He brought up maybe making the application an online form. We'd need to figure out how to handle the fees.
- 9:30 Meeting adjourned.