



Historic District Commission

Meeting Minutes

11/12/2019

7:30 PM

Room 126, Town Hall, 472 Main St, Acton, MA 01720

Present: David Honn (DH), Anita Rogers (AR), Ron Regan (RR), Fran Arsenault (FA), Arthur Leavens (AL).

Absent: David Shoemaker (DS), Dean Charter (DC) BOS liaison.

1. Opening

Chair David Honn opened the meeting at 7:32 pm.

2. Regular Business Regular Business

- A. Citizen's Concerns – Brian Berkwitz of 48 School Street stop by to ask some questions about new windows; DH will put him on the schedule for next meeting. FA – 270 Central St. asked her about storm doors; DH said they don't need an application.
- B. Approval of Meeting Minutes – AL makes a motion to approve the minutes of 10/8 and 10/15, DH seconds, the motion was approved 4-0.
- C. Review Project Tracking Spreadsheet – It is okay to swap numbers for 1923 and 1924; note the address for 1931 and 1932 should be 70 School St.
- D. Chair's update –
(1) Application to CPC for funds to plant trees in HDC. FA discussed this issue with Ryan Hunt, the new tree warden in the highway department, who will file an application for \$15k CPC funds on behalf of the HDC to plant trees in the district. DH asked the commission members to identify locations where we want trees. DH – replace the large black walnut that was near 270 Central St. and large tree removed between 111-113 School St. RR – there are two trees between 30-38 Windsor that are dying.
(2) Hosmer house as potential meeting place for HDC and HC. DH – Check out the Jenk's Library behind the Hosmer House at 300 Main St. It was renovated and a new parking lot added. Maybe the HDC and HC could use it for our meetings. DH will investigate if it is available, AL asked about potential issues with opening or closing it for us to use.

3. New/Special Business [or other applicable agenda items]

- A. New Barn and Fence at 66 School St. (application 1925 and 1926) by Sandra Mika, Peter Lukacic
AR liaison. Applicants present. There was a barn at that site that collapsed in 2017; the proposed new barn will be located inside the boundaries of the original. The original was 22'x23' and the new barn will be 20'x20'. The original barn had pine floors, but the new



bar will have a slab and frost walls and will be used to park one car. The barn will be post and beam and have a sliding barn door mounted on the outside. The original had a sliding door, but it was mounted on the inside. DH noted that inside sliding doors are hard to seal and keep the weather out. The barn will have 6 over 6 double hung true divided lights, single glazed. AR noted she would be open to SDL windows, but Peter prefers the slenderness of the muntins of the true divided light windows he selected. The roof will have asphalt architectural shingles.

There is an existing 6 foot stockade fence that is in terrible shape that the applicants want to replace with a 6 foot fence where the bottom will be 4 feet of vertical tongue and groove and the top will have a 2 foot English Lattice with a square pattern.

FA will coordinate with the Beacon to schedule notice for public hearing.

No motion or voting.

B. New Roof at 20 Concord Road (application 1927) by James Bricker, Acton Congregational Church

AL liaison. Applicant present. The existing roof is 3 tab shingles; it is leaking and causing a problem with mold in the attic and other water issues. AR suggests gutters may help the water issues by getting the water away from the house. DH goes over the HDC general roof guidelines. AR notes that Architectural shingles are more common and easier to get now versus 3 tab shingles. There doesn't appear to be a ridge vent now, and DH advised that if one is not needed, one should not be installed. The applicant said the attic isn't insulated. Applicant was counseled to discuss with the contractor whether a ridge vent is necessary and, if so, to make sure it runs gable end to gable end. DH: We've approved GAF Timberland and Certainteed Architectural shingles, but make sure to get the lower profile ones, which are marketed as High Def; don't get the Ultra High Def. AR makes a motion to approve the installation of Architectural shingles with drip edge colored to match the trim (white), gable-to-gable ridge vent if needed. RR seconds. James will give AL the shingle selection.

The motion was approved 5-0. Pending abutters notices.

C. Replace Front door at Cut Above 584 Mass Ave (application 1921) by Marc Foster

RR liaison. Applicant present. RR passes around photos of the damaged areas on the door for review. There is a crack along the hinge side rail from the bottom of the door up to near the top of the bottom hinge about 2 inches in from the edge. There are some minor surface splits on the opposite side rail and a crack in the bottom panel from the hinge side to the mail slot. The mail slot isn't operable; there is plywood on the inside backing the panel. The glass in the door is beveled around the edges and is not wavy glass. AR asked if Marc could use a flat panel instead of the double hip raised panel, add trim to match the other door, and use beveled glass. It was suggested that Marc price the replacement in both Mahogany and Fir, because the Mahogany may not be that much more and would last longer.

Marc is only replacing the "slab" and not replacing the frame, i.e. not using a pre-hung



door. DH noted that the threshold isn't HC accessible; the building department may have an issue with that. Marc said the backdoor of the shop has a ramp and is HC accessible. DH asked if the thumb latch and deadbolt unit could be salvaged. Marc doesn't think so. DH – ideally, the latch and deadbolt should be replaced with a similar setup, something with an antique finish like antique brass. AR offered that unfinished brass would age relatively quickly and give a more natural looking finish. AR said that Needham Lock and Decorative Hardware or Raybern Decorative Hardware has a good selection of hardware that is appropriate.

RR makes a motion to permit replacing the door with a Fir or Mahogany door, with beveled glass and flat panel bottom trimmed like the original door. The hardware will be a thumb latch and deadbolt. Marc will supply the HDC with final hardware selection and shop drawing for final approval. AL seconded.

The motion was approved 5-0.

D. Replace skylights and selected roofs at 608 Mass Ave (application 1928) by Anna Taller, Evan Schechter

FA liaison; Evan Schechter present. Evan proposed replacing (1) the skylights on the flat roof at the south east corner of the house and (2) the existing rubber roof with new rubber roof. Evan said he couldn't match the same exact size of the existing skylights. The new ones are 1 inch shorter and 2 inches wider. The applicants also want to replace the rolled asphalt shingles on the flat front porch roof with rubber. The surface of this roof is not visible from the street. AR asked if the curb for the skylights would be taller than the original. Evan didn't think so. DH determined that, because (1) there would only be a slight change in skylight size and (2) the roofs aren't visible from the street, this should be CNA.

No motion or voting.

E. Gardner field at 525 Mass Ave (no application) by Friends of Gardner Field

Paul Swydan and board members of the Friends of Gardner Field attended. A handout was supplied with information about the field, group, and plan for improvements in three phases. The first phase includes a parking lot and entrance with fencing. The group is looking for CPC funding for phase one. Paul went over the history of Gardner field and its historic significance. The field is named for Harriet Gardner, a teacher at the West Acton School that was located where the field is now. Paul noted that the foundation of the school is buried under some of the playground equipment. DH said it would be nice to mark out the foundation and put a plaque about the school. Other places in town, Morrison farm for example, have identified such foundations with markers. Look at the South Acton train station for an example of markers containing historic information. DH also offered that a stone wall instead of a fence could double as a bench for people to sit and eat ice cream. DH suggested looking at the parking lot at Hosmer house for an example of a nice layout of a parking area that is not just a large asphalt area like an office parking lot. Paul said one of the landscape architects had seven different options for parking-lot material; they are thinking of including pavers or other elements to break up the asphalt. The town



planner said that it needs to be something that is plowable. FA noted that Selby said there was a town parcel on the east side of the condos next to the field that could be used for parking. Paul said the water district wants to reserve that parcel for access to the area south that may be used for a well in the future. DH said to come back when you have early plans for the parking and entrance way.

No motion or voting.

F. Propane tanks at 20 River St. (application 1924) by Gail Mooney, Steve Manning

DH liaison; Steve Manning present. DH noted that National Grid doesn't offer gas service to the house and a few others in that area. River Street will be the governing way so screen from River Street with some wood fencing. The tanks should be about the same size as 43-45 School St. Use the fencing on the 45 side as an example, although that is a bit tall at 6 feet. Screening for this project doesn't need to be that tall.

AR makes a motion to approve two 100 gallon propane tanks on the west side of the house to be screened by a wooden fence. RR seconded.

The motion was approved 5-0. Pending abutters notices.

Adjournment At 9:56 p.m., it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting

- Meeting minutes of October 8th and 15th of 2019;
- Application 1925/1926;
- Application 1927;
- Application 1921 and photos by RR;
- Application 1928;
- Friends of Gardner Field handout; and
- Application 1924.