



Historic District Commission

Meeting Minutes

2022-11-22

7:00 PM

Online, Town Hall, 472 Main St, Acton, MA 01720

Present: David Honn (DH), Art Leavens (AL), Zach Taillefer (ZT), Anita Rogers (AR), Fran Arsenault (FA) (Select Board Liaison), Barbara Rhines (Cultural Resource Planner); Matthew Murphy (Acton meeting support)

Absent: David Shoemaker

Opening:

Chair David Honn opened the meeting at 7:02 pm and read the “remote meeting notice” due to COVID-19.

1. Regular Business

- A. Citizen's Concerns – None
- B. Approval of Meeting Minutes – November 9 meeting minutes. None available. Deferred to December 13 meeting.
- C. Review Project Tracking Spreadsheet / Chair Updates: None
Outstanding COA updates: None noted.

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

- A. 7:15 Continuation of Public Hearing for 267 Central Street: Demolition of a house and garage to build a new 4-unit structure. DH: Open the public hearing. The Applicants are not present, and so DH moves to continue the public hearing until the next hearing, scheduled for December 13 at 7:15 p.m. AL seconds. Vote: AL, AR, DS, DH, ZT approve.
- B. 7:20 #2229 Re-roofing of house at 95 School Street. Applicant Justin Thomas (JT) present. DH recuses self from Chair because JT is his next-door neighbor. Vice Chair Anita Rogers chairs the meeting. JT waives his right to oppose DH’s participation in the meeting and vote on the application. AR: We have fully discussed the application at the prior meeting. AR: Outlined the requirements for approval. JT: Asked if soffit vents are permissible and if aluminum flashing is permissible for the chimney. AR: Soffit vents are acceptable; aluminum step-flashing of the chimney is not. However, JT’s house currently has lead flashing for the chimney. If JT installs soffit vents (a good idea), he will likely



need to install a ridge vent, which must run gable to gable. There being no other questions or comments from the HDC members or the public, AL moved to approve the application, requiring that (1) the replacement shingles must be architectural fiberglass, HD (not UHD), e.g., Landmark architectural HD, applicant's choice of color, (2) the drip edge must match color of trim, (3) any ridge vent must run gable to gable or gable to opposite end as the case may be, (4) any chimney step-flashing visible from School Street must be lead, copper or lead-coated copper, not mill-finish aluminum, and (5) any necessary vent-pipe flanges visible from School Street must be covered by a black neoprene boot, or copper, lead or lead-coated copper flashing, with no visible mill-finish aluminum. AR seconded the motion. Vote: AL yes, ZT yes, DH yes, AR yes.

- C. 7:30 DH resumes as Chair. AR and AL have expressed interest in considering the adoption of a rule that would permit categorical approval of routine re-roofing applications. AL: As the last application just demonstrated, most re-roofing applications seek approval for re-roofing of buildings with architectural shingles, and in virtually every such case, the Commission approves the application with the same five requirements as in the application for 95 School Street. The Town Bylaw permits the Commission to identify particular projects that, because of routine treatment and results, do not need full Commission consideration but can be approved categorically after review by the member designated to initially review the applications to make sure that the work requested matches the work entitled to categorical treatment. Section 3.2.3 of the HDC Rules and Regulations, **Categorical approval**, already permits such treatment of applications seeking to install certain ridge vents and to install certain drip edges, both of which are parts of re-roofing jobs. Amending Section 3.2.3 to include certain, routine re-roofing applications would require newspaper notice and Town Hall posting 14 days prior to the hearing at which the proposal, in writing, is discussed and then re-consideration of the written proposal at the next HDC meeting. It makes sense to consider this change, eliminating the unnecessary commission review and approval. AR: Agrees with the suggestion, pointing out that roof leaks often need immediate attention, which the HDC cannot currently provide. DH and ZT agree. AL: Will provide information to BR so that newspaper and posting notice can occur at least 14 days before the Dec. 13th meeting and will draft a proposed amendment to HDC Rule 3.2.3, adding routine re-roofing to those categories of work subject to "categorical approval" for presentation at the meeting on Dec. 13.
- D. 7:45 # 2230 Windsor Avenue Window Replacement. Applicant Ellen Spero (ES) present. DH: AR and DH visited 25 Windsor, which is a Sears Craftsman home built in 1926. The windows appear to be original, and DH and AR counseled restoration versus replacement. ES reported no updates on her efforts to connect with an appropriate contractor. DH: This looks like an on-site job; will provide some guidance in that regard. DH and AR will send the applicants window restoration contacts and information. Will put this application on the agenda for Dec. 13 meeting.
- E. 8:00 #2222 Main Library Signage. Applicant Maria Palacio (MP), Director of Memorial Library present. MP: Presents a shop drawing of the proposal – a 72" x 36" wood sign, mounted on 4"x4" wood posts, painted brown with gilt, incised lettering. DH: Comments? AL: Looks good. AR: The posts appear flat at the top. Don't need caps, but should not be flat. ZT: Appears to be no hardware connecting sign to posts. Interior



connection? MP: Correct. ZT: I like it. DH: The lettering should be incised, along with a border maybe 1" from the edge. AR agrees. DH: The lettering looks too crowded. Consider dropping "Town of" from first line, making it simply "Acton." AR, ZT, AL agree. MP: Two questions: Does the lettering and border have to be gilt or could it be yellow? Big price difference. DH: See what price flexibility you can arrange. MP: Can we expect approval at the next meeting? I'd like to include this in this year's budget. DH: We will put this on the Dec. 13 agenda.

- F. 8:15 Chair Update: 53 River Street Historical Park. Select Board Member David Martin (DM) present to provide a brief update and answer any questions. DM: The project is proceeding apace, but due to certain regulatory delays, the COA permitting removal of the buildings on site will expire before removal is possible. Asks for extension of the COAs for another year. DH: Any questions? None from HDC members or the public. DH moves to extend the COA for one year. AL seconds. DH calls for the vote: AL: yes; AR: yes; ZT: yes; DH yes. Motion passes 4-0. AR will write and file the extended COA.
- G. Developing a Minimal Preservation Bylaw Warrant Article. DH suggests deferring a discussion concerning development of a proposed Bylaw regarding minimal preservation for submission to the Select Board until sometime after the new year. The Members agreed.

3. Consent Items

None

1. Adjournment

At 8:20 DH makes a motion to adjourn the meeting, AL seconds. DH takes a roll call vote: AL, AR, DH, ZT all approve.

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting

- #2229
- #2230
- #2222 Presentation

Additional materials can be found here: [Docushare HDC Folder](#)