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Historic District Commission
Town Hall, Room 126
Final Meeting Minutes, December 10, 2013

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Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM. Attending Kathy Acerbo-Bachmann (KAB), David Honn (DH), Pamela Lynn (PL), Ron Regan (RR) Anita Rogers (AR) and David Shoemaker (DS). Mike Gowing (MG) as BofS rep.

7:30 PM **Citizens' questions:**

Anne Forbes asked about the CPC document entitled Historic District Study and Design Guidelines & Standard.
KAB explained the origin of the document.

Anne Forbes suggested the value of having an administrative assistant to the HDC who knows the zoning code well and can reference it as other historic district commissions already have.

7:31 PM **Approved Minutes by Consent: November 26, 2013.**

7:36 PM **Paint Restoration: Town Hall, 472 Main Street**

KAB explained that the proposal had been discussed previously at a recent meeting.

Dean Charter provided copies of the Project Application which had already gone to the CPC. DC took the commission through a sequence of pictures and documents to substantiate the colors typical of the era.

DC explained that the back half of the document describes Sara Chase to whom he has turned to do a paint analysis. He will provide a lift truck to help her get up to the brackets where she is likely to be able to find evidence of the original paint colors. Belle Choate has provided a link to a historical discussion of the Harvard Town Hall, a smaller replica of the Acton Town Hall, describing about the similarities between the two town halls. For instance, they discussed the balustrade that Acton has and they wondered about whether Harvard should have one too.

DS asked about the role of financial considerations in the decision-making. DC explained that paint restoration has been a goal for some time.

The red house was repainted its current color from an Arthur Davis painting.

DH is pleased that Acton has turned to Sara Chase. DH insists on accuracy. AR wonders about Exchange Hall and the cost of painting Town Hall.

PL asked about the use of white and spoke positively about the Provincetown Hall that was studied by Sara Chase.

DH suggested that accuracy should be the focus of the presentation to Town Meeting. DH will write a letter of support on behalf of the HDC.

8:00 PM Citizen's Questions Regarding 270 and 274 Central Street

Carol and John Pavan accompanied by Peter Conant came to ask about two houses and a carriage house which are on sale by the West Acton Baptist Church. John was on the Planning Board for some years and understands the zoning issues.

Aerial views Second Empire style (large) Italianate, and Greek Revival. Second page more context. Carriage House = Arts and Crafts. A simple rendition of proposal of adding a dormer was shown.

The small house a single residence and large house, a duplex. The large building has fifteen apartments.

JP asked about the HDC's purview – frontage from Central Street? They have thought about how to minimize exterior changes recognizing that some changes may trigger additional changes.

DS asked about their intention to add additional volume. PC clarified adding volume is not the intention.

The interiors will require a great deal of work. Site reconfiguration will also be required including the semi-circular drive that could be minimized, privacy fence against the children's playground, and changes due to the need for a new septic system.

JP asked whether the application needs to be by single address or as a single project. KAB clarified that it has been done both ways. The key factor is that the clock starts when the application is received.

JP asked about the need for certificates for specific elements.

Will need to convert one window to a door as a second egress on the southerly side and does face the street. The dormer and vents DH clarified the view is from the length of the public way not just in front center of the structure.

DH suggested that some good site planning would be beneficial.

JP recognized that there would be a major septic system improvement in the back of the two large structures which may require a grade change.

Venting is preferred at the back of the house. When that can not be accomplished, screening with plants is often the best solution.

8:30 PM Citizen's Questions (Duval) Sign Company)

Ken Duval provided preliminary designs for a sign at 541 Mass. Ave. for the Stewart Design Group. KAB asked whether a second sign would be allowed on the building as Twin Seafood already has a sign. AR agreed research will need to be done. KD wondered about switching the location of the existing sign on the side of the building to the front. The current sign can only be seen from a portion of the public way.

KAB is not comfortable with the proposed location for a new sign near the top of the front of the building. DS wonders about fairness to other tenants who then might wish additional signs.

RR asked about a blade sign which PL asked about further.

MG suggested a directional sign might allow a second sign possibility.

In conclusion, the HDC suggested that the prospective applicant wait until the new construction is up with its new parking and pedestrian patterns.

9:00 PM Window Removal, 113 Main Street

DH explained the previous application to replace the roof and the structure work required to stabilize the structure. DH explained that the structural engineer suggested removing the two old metal windows. DH found the structural drawing convincing. Other windows remain near to the two to be removed. The exterior will be stucco like the existing wall surface.

An additional issue involves the owner's desire to support the wall from the inside which will require exterior reinforcements. AR and DH agreed that that element should be flat, not a 2 x 4 which would protrude and be visible.

The application is an amendment to previous application 1231. DH moved to approve amended application 1231 pending abutter notification with the only change being that the exterior be changed from wood to flat metal plates that would be painted to match the building and the infill will also match the wall color. Seconded by AR. KAB believes the proposal is realistic. Accepted unanimously.

Looking ahead with regard to Exchange Hall there is a question about a lift for the stage which may be similar to issues at the Women's Club. The owner has asked for help on this issue.

DS asked about the possibility of reconsidering the outside of the red building specifically the addition of clapboards.

Adjourned at 9:16 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Lynn, Secretary

