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Historic District Commission
Meeting Minutes February 9, 2010

TOWN CLERK, ACTON

Meeting called to order at 7:35 PM. David Honn (DH), Scott Kutil (SK), Kathy Acerbo-Bachmann, Michaela Moran (MM), David Barrat (DB), and Terra Friedrichs (TF) were in attendance. Ron Rose was present as a prospective HDC member. The meeting was held in Room 126 in Town Hall.

There were no Citizen's Concerns.

The January 12th, 2010 Minutes were approved as corrected.

The first appointment of the evening began at 8 p.m. Liping Swift from Sign-A-Rama was present to discuss application #0934, an application for a sign at 562 Mass. Avenue for a new salon called "Q Nails". KAB and SK said that they liked the sign, but that it would be better without the flourishes. Ron Rose asked a question about the other sign on the building, belonging to the neighboring business; will it stay on the building? He then suggested that the new sign not be the width of the bay window but instead be the width of the 3 windows above, which is a smaller width. MM suggested that the sign be raised higher above the bay window so as not to dominate the feature. TF asked the applicant if it could be raised and she said yes, but she would not want to make it smaller. MM motioned to accept the application with the following conditions: the sign is centered between the two architectural features (bay window and 3 windows above); the sign contain no flourishes, and that the sign be 2 ft X 7ft. DH seconded the motion. MM then added two conditions to the motion that there will be more space between the letter 'Q' and the word 'Nails' on the sign and that the font depicted in the photograph will be used. After some discussion a final condition was added to the motion that, as specified in the application, the sign be 3/4" MDO wood painted black with gold vinyl lettering and not illuminated. The motion passed unanimously.

At 8:30 p.m. David Shoemaker came in to discuss an amendment to COA #0911 regarding the windows to be used in the new cupola at 14 Newtown Road. David's presentation was unique and was well received by the Commission. He brought it two paper models to document his application, a model of the barn roof and a small 3-D model of the cupola. He also brought in the actual window that he is proposing to use in the cupola. This window was made of wood but was not a true divided light window; the muntins were simulated by a grill application over a sandwich plate of glass. David said that the real cupola will be about 35" square. The Commission members thanked David for his presentation. SK said that he thought the look of the window didn't match the rest of the new work. MM commented that the reveal on the window frame didn't look like the reveal on the windows that belong to the barn or house and that the reveal could be hidden by the carpentry used in the cupola. TF moved to approve the amended application with the added conditions that all window reveals would be covered, the apex of the cupola should have a non-lacquered cap the width of a shingle, and all windows would be painted wood. DB seconded this and the motion passed unanimously. This approval will be issued as an amendment to Certificate of Approval #0911.

KAB passed out a draft of the promotional material for the upcoming HDC educational events. Jade Mortimer, the Window Seminar instructor, has agreed to have the Seminar videotaped. TF suggested that we put the video on the Town's cable network. KAB said that the educational events will be promoted using newspapers, websites, library promotions, and other information outlets. MM said that the Board of Jones Tavern is willing to co-sponsor the walking tour of the Maple/Martin Street neighborhood.

At 9 p.m. the Acton Sidewalk Committee came in to discuss the Draft Guidelines for Sidewalks that was distributed to the Commission. KAB asked about the use of compacted stone walkways. She noted that Concord Center has stone dust walkways and that Carlisle has some asphalt walkways with compacted stone layered on top. DH said that the Town should negotiate with developers in order to have them install something better than the standard asphalt sidewalks. KAB suggested that the Sidewalk Committee include guidelines for stone walls. DH said that if the Town installs some brick sidewalks somewhere in Acton then people will see how nice they are and want to build more. DH said that more negative examples should be shown in the Guidelines and the Guidelines themselves should be included in the Town's Master Plan. KAB applauded the inclusion of street trees and other plantings in the Draft Guidelines for Sidewalks.

At 9:45 we opened up the latest WAVE plans. KAB said that the Commission might need a special meeting to examine the plans. MM assigned two teams, KAB and DH, and DB and SK, to review the plans together.

MM handed out the letter that DH wrote to the Federal Transportation Authority (FTA) about the proposed MBTA station. MM will alter the letter to repeat its main points in the first paragraph and then ask the FTA to re-open the Section 106 Review. MM also mentioned the there is still a possibility of a Massachusetts Environmental Policy (MEPA) Review. The time period for this Review has expired but if 10 citizens request a review it must be held.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 p.m.