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Brookline Preservation Commission
MINUTES OF THE MARCH 21, 2019 MEETING
Brookline Town Hall, 5th Floor Hearing Room, 333 Washington Street

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Commissioners Present

David King, Chair
Elton Elperin, Vice Chair
Jim Batchelor
Wendy Ecker
David Jack
Richard Panciera
Elizabeth Armstrong

Commissioners Absent:

Peter Kleiner

Staff: Valerie Birmingham, Lara Kritzer

Members of the Public: See list

Mr. King called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Approval of Minutes

The Commission did not have minutes to review.

Public Comment (for items not on the agenda)

No public comment.

PUBLIC HEARINGS – LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS

21 Mason Street (Cottage Farm LHD) – Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish and reconstruct the detached garage, to enlarge window openings on the east façade, replace the sunporch windows, remove the wooden enclosure around the rear entrance, install a new window and new storm windows, install new copper gutters, and make in-kind repairs throughout the house to brickwork, gutters, wood trim, and windows. (Peter and Nancy Saperstone, applicants).

Ms. Kritzer presented the case.

Catherine Truman, Catherine Truman Architects, went over the proposal with the Commission; and clarified that they would like to enlarge two windows on the side and open up one window on the rear façade, all to be custom and match the existing windows. Further, Ms. Truman stated that they could not locate information in regards to the history of the side sun porch, but that they would like the windows to be operable and to replace the wood with steel. Lastly, Ms. Truman commented that they had no concerns about removing the black fence underneath the sunporch.

47 Robert Allen, esquire, Law Office of Robert. L. Allen, Jr. LLP, commented that they had spoken
48 with the neighbors and that he felt the proposed garage was an upgrade to existing conditions.
49

50 There was no public comment.

51
52 Mr. Batchelor asked for clarification in regards to the existing wood versus steel windows. Ms.
53 Truman replied that all were wood except three panels of metal casements located on the sunporch.
54

55 Ms. Ecker asked if the small windows on the rear were original. Ms. Truman replied that her team
56 believed so.
57

58 Mr. Elperin commented that he liked the stucco on the garage as a contrast to the brick house, but
59 that a brick garage would not be awful. Ms. Armstrong stated that she felt the existing garage was
60 attractive. Mr. King remarked that he could not think of a case where they allowed the demolition
61 of a building. Ms. Ecker stated that the garage was so simple that she would not object to its
62 demolition. Mr. Panciera commented that the garage had been designed to be inconspicuous, and
63 that a new garage should not be designed to look similar to the house; further Mr. Panciera
64 proposed the question of would the Commission allow the existing garage to be altered. The
65 Commission discussed altering the existing garage instead of demolition. Ms. Truman commented
66 that the owners do not like the existing garage. Mr. King remarked that he was concerned about
67 how other addresses would perceive the Commission allowing the full demolition of an intact
68 garage. Ms. Armstrong commented that not everything has to match, and that constructing a garage
69 to match the house was not enough of a reason to allow the full demolition of the existing garage.
70 Mr. Batchelor stated that preserving the garage was preferable and that the existing garage retained
71 characteristics of the 1920s. Ms. Ecker commented that people spend a lot of money to purchase a
72 home in Brookline, and should be able to remove a simple garage.
73

74 Mr. Elperin made a motion to deny the request to demolish the garage, but to allow new windows
75 and doors on the existing garage to be reviewed by staff. Ms. Armstrong seconded the motion.
76

77 The Commission VOTED: 6-0-1
78 6 in favor, 0 against and 1 abstained from voting.
79

80 Mr. Elperin commented that he felt the proposed window enlargements on the east façade was
81 boring, and asked if there was a compromise that could be made as the existing façade was livelier.
82 Ms. Truman explained the interior configuration and reason for the proposed enlargements. Ms.
83 Ecker asked if the windows were visible from a public way. Ms. Kritzer replied that they were. Mr.
84 Batchelor remarked that he felt the east façade proposal was OK as it is not a primary façade. Ms.
85 Ecker concurred.
86

87 Mr. Elperin inquired about the front door. Ms. Truman remarked that they were proposing a
88 custom door to match the existing.
89

90 The Commissioners discussed the west elevation and agreed that the black trellis could be
91 removed.
92

93 Ms. Truman further explained the design for the areaway. Mr. Elperin and Mr. King remarked that
94 the design seemed fine, and that they liked the stone cap.

95
96 The Commissioners discussed the proposed mortar wash and options with Ms. Truman.
97
98 Mr. Batchelor asked if the rear vestibule would be enlarged. Ms. Truman commented that they
99 were proposing to remove it. Mr. Elperin stated that an elevation is needed of how it would look
100 with the vestibule removed. Mr. Batchelor remarked that he was comfortable with the removal of
101 the vestibule.
102
103 Mr. Elperin made a motion to approve the application, except for the demolition of the garage, with
104 the allowance to put a cast stone top at the top of the brick wall at the areaway, and with the
105 submittal of drawings and details of the proposed rear elevation without the vestibule to be
106 reviewed and approved by staff. Mr. Elperin added that a detail of the steel windows should be
107 reviewed and approved by staff. Mr. Batchelor seconded the motion.
108
109 The Commission VOTED: 7-0-0
110 7 in favor, 0 against and 0 abstained from voting
111
112 **40 Dunster Road (Chestnut Hill North LHD) – Application for a Certificate of**
113 **Appropriateness to install a 42” vinyl gate and picket fence, granite piers, 42” black**
114 **aluminum fencing, curved monolithic bluestone lawn stairs, white painted brick fireplace,**
115 **built in masonry exterior grill and to regrade the rear lawn (Michael and Casey Buckley,**
116 **applicants).**
117
118 Ms. Birmingham presented the case.
119
120 Dan Gordon, Dan Gordon Landscape Architects, went over the proposal with the Commission, and
121 stated that the design was intended to be respectful of the street and character of the property. Mr.
122 Gordon presented a mockup of the vinyl fence material, but stated if the Commission had concerns
123 than wood would be used. Further, Mr. Gordon explained that the proposed black fence was meant
124 to match the fence on the Longyear Museum property next door, and would enclose the rear yard.
125
126 There was no public comment.
127
128 Ms. Armstrong requested further clarification in regards to the proposed piers. Patrick Taylor, Dan
129 Gordon Landscape Architects, went over the design.
130
131 Mr. Batchelor commented that while Azek and other plastic fencing material was more durable, the
132 Town has stated that fencing should be wood in Local Historic Districts if that is the appearance
133 the applicant is proposing. Additionally, Mr. Batchelor suggested looking at the Longyear Museum
134 fence in reference to the fence along Dunster Road. Mr. Elperin commented that he preferred the
135 front fence to not be white picket. Ms. Ecker stated that she thought the white picket matched the
136 house. Mr. Elperin stated that the proposed black aluminum fence along the rear and side should be
137 steel to be in keeping with the Design Guidelines for Local Historic Districts. Mr. Jack commented
138 that he did not like the notion of cutting off the open vista. Ms. Armstrong and Mr. King concurred
139 with Mr. Jack. Mr. Gordon remarked that he saw the fence along Dunster Road as an opportunity
140 to present the house to the street. Mr. Elperin commented that a steel black fence would provide a
141 better continuity on the street. Mr. King stated that he preferred no fence along the Dunster Road
142 property line. Mr. Gordon commented that they could work with the materials suggested by the

143 Commission. Mr. King asked if the applicant could work with a design with a metal fence with
144 piers and develop a solution to present back to the Commission. Mr. Gordon stated that they would
145 relook at the design. Mr. Elperin stated that aluminum rear fence should be steel.

146
147 Mr. Elperin commented that the driveway piers were too grand for a wood framed house. Mr.
148 Batchelor stated that the light fixtures on the piers should be simpler.

149
150 The Commissioners had no concerns with the proposed stairs.

151
152 Mr. Gordon stated that the proposed fireplace was meant to be a focal feature. Mr. Jack asked
153 about the distance from Dunster Road. Mr. Gordon answered about three hundred feet. Mr. Elperin
154 commented that it did not feel right. Mr. Batchelor recommended looking at the stone wall at the
155 Longyear Museum to have the fireplace fit better into the surrounding, and have a more rustic feel.
156 Mr. Panciera suggested using granite instead of painted brick. Mr. King recommended that the grill
157 and fireplace were scaled back. Mr. Batchelor stated that the question about the visibility of the
158 feature was important and that it should be looked at in comparison to 61 Spooner Road.

159
160 Mr. Batchelor made a motion to continue the application to a subcommittee that would conduct a
161 site visit and report back to the full Commission. The subcommittee would consist of Mr. King,
162 Mr. Elperin, and Mr. Batchelor. Mr. Jack seconded the motion.

163
164 The Commission VOTED: 7-0-0
165 7 in favor, 0 against and 0 abstained from voting.

166
167

168 **PUBLIC HEARINGS – DEMOLITION**

169

170 **139 Winthrop Road** – Application for the demolition of the house (Patrick McDevitt,
171 applicant).

172

173 Ms. Kritzer presented the case.

174

175 Shayna Duff, esquire, Law Office of Robert. L. Allen, Jr. LLP, introduced the applicants.

176

177 Irwin and Gloria Pless, 4 Addington Road, commented that they were concerned with the house
178 being demolished and the implications to the fabric of the neighborhood.

179

180 Mr. Elperin commented that he felt it was a handsome and unique house.

181

182 Mr. King made a motion to uphold the staff determination of significance for 139 Winthrop
183 Road and issue a twelve month stay of demolition through March 21, 2020. Mr. Jack seconded
184 the motion.

185

186 The Commission VOTED: 7-0-0
187 7 in favor, 0 against and 0 abstained from voting

188

189 **64 Dudley Street** – Application for the partial demolition of the house (Rony and Sharon
190 Shapiro, applicants).

191
192 Ms. Birmingham presented the case.

193
194 Alan Mayer, Mayer and Associates Architects, remarked that the house had seen terrible
195 alterations over the years, and that his team intended to make positive changes.

196
197 Mr. Batchelor asked staff what had triggered partial demolition. Ms. Birmingham explained
198 how the project triggered partial demolition.

199
200 Mr. Elperin made a motion to uphold the staff determination of significance for 64 Dudley
201 Street, and issue an eighteen month stay of demolition through September 21, 2020. Mr.
202 Batchelor seconded the motion.

203
204 The Commission VOTED: 7-0-0
205 7 in favor, 0 against and 0 abstained from voting.

206
207 **114 Rawson Road** – Request to lift the stay of partial demolition of the house

208
209 Ms. Birmingham presented the case.

210
211 Shayna Duff, esquire, Law Office of Robert. L. Allen, Jr. LLP, introduced the applicant. Ms. Duff
212 remarked that the project would also require a special permit.

213
214 An abutter asked for clarification about the design.

215
216 Tim Kasida, 104 Rawson Road, stated that the addition was overwhelming.

217
218 Mr. Elperin commented that the design looked a bit massive, and recommended that the roof line
219 come down, and the addition be pulled in on the left side to appear smaller. Additionally, Mr.
220 Elperin stated that the garage portion appeared almost as large as the house, and that the design
221 could be worked out so that it fit in better with the neighborhood without sacrificing too much
222 space or function. Mr. Batchelor, Mr. Jack, and Mr. Panciera agreed with Mr. Elperin’s comments.

223
224 Ben Saada, owner, commented that he did not always believe in entirely demolishing a house and
225 could work with the bones.

226
227 Mr. King commented that the front entry should be simplified or brought into the massing of the
228 structure.

229
230 Mr. King made a motion to continue the request to lift the stay of partial demolition to an
231 empowered subcommittee. The subcommittee would consist of Mr. King, Mr. Panciera, and
232 Ms. Armstrong. Mr. Batchelor seconded the motion.

233
234 The Commission VOTED: 7-0-0

235 7 in favor, 0 against and 0 abstained from voting.

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237 The meeting adjourned.

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