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Brookline Preservation Commission
MINUTES OF THE APRIL 26, 2022 MEETING
Held Virtually using Zoom Online Software

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Commissioners Present:

Elton Elperin, Chair
Richard Panciera, Vice Chair
David Jack
David King
John Spiers, Alternate

Commissioners Absent:

Alex Villanueva, Alternate
Jim Batchelor
Peter Kleiner
Elizabeth Armstrong, Alternate
Wendy Ecker

Staff: Tina McCarthy, Jake Collins

Mr. Elperin opened the meeting at 6:33pm with a roll call. He asked Mr. Spiers to vote for Mr. Batchelor.

Approval of Minutes:

No minutes were reviewed or approved at this meeting.

Public Comment:

Mr. Elperin opened and closed the public comment portion of the meeting without any participants.

PUBLIC HEARINGS – LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS

53 Powell Street (Cottage Farm LHD) –Continued application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace windows (Lake Powell Nominee Trust, applicant). **Precinct 1**

Ms. McCarthy presented the application.

Mr. Elperin asked if the leaded windows are visible from Amory Street. Ms. McCarthy answered that they would be visible without vegetation.

Kyle Sheffield, architect, clarified that the leaded glass was only found on the upper sash of four windows at the rear of the building. He went on to explain that the interior program drove the changes to rear elevation, as the leaded glass window is over an existing stair which is slated for demolition.

Mr. Elperin noted that the second dormer from the left got deeper and taller and wondered if the change had previously been discussed.

47 Mr. Sheffield confirmed that it was reviewed at the subcommittee level. Code required that it be
48 expanded due to the bedroom behind it.

49
50 Mr. Jack believed there were concerns with losing the asymmetry of the building and the forced
51 symmetry of the proposal.

52
53 Mr. Panciera noted that the subcommittee did not object to more symmetry but rather the loss of
54 windows with leaded transoms that comes with this plan.

55
56 Mr. Elperin stated that he was fine with everything but replacing leaded glass transoms, even
57 though the rear would be visible in the winter months.

58
59 Public Comment:

60
61 Mr. Elperin opened public comment.

62
63 Michael Zarren, abutter, stated that he is the only person who can see the rear composition of
64 the house and expressed full support for the application as proposed.

65
66 Mr. Elperin closed public comment.

67
68 Commission Comment:

69
70 Mr. King asked why the subcommittee was fine with replacing the single-glazed windows with
71 double-glazed replacements.

72
73 Mr. Panciera responded that the windows are beyond repair.

74
75 Mr. King questioned if the Commission normally expects single glazed windows with storms.

76
77 Mr. Panciera responded that the existing windows are casement windows, and storm windows
78 are not optimal on casements.

79
80 Mr. Elperin agreed with Mr. Panciera.

81
82 Mr. Jack noted that he understood the rationale for casement windows. He went on to express
83 support for the work at the rear, due to its minimal visibility.

84
85 Mr. Spiers agreed with Mr. Jack. He stated that he understood the concerns with removing the
86 leaded glass, but was truly concerned only with what is visible from the public right of way.

87
88 Mr. Spiers made a motion to move to accept the applicant's proposal as presented with the
89 context the casement windows on the third floor are supported in this instance due to the
90 challenges posed by the replacement with single pane replacement. Mr. Elperin seconded the
91 motion.

92

93 David King – yes, Richard Panciera – yes, David Jack – yes, Elton Elperin – yes; John Spiers-
94 Yes

95
96 **62 Upland Road (LHD)** –Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a new deck
97 and set of stairs at the rear of the building, extend the basement stairs to the north side of the house,
98 revise masonry openings on the rear of the building and install new windows and door, and remove
99 the chimney in the center of the house. (Timothy Burke, applicant). **Precinct 5**

100
101 Mr. Collins presented the application.

102
103 Timothy Burke, architect, noted that there used to be a deck at the proposed location. The new
104 owners want a deck to join the family spaces and the kitchen. Removal of the chimney will
105 allow for more usable floor space.

106
107 Public Comment:

108
109 Mr. Elperin opened and closed the public comment without any participants.

110
111 Commission Comment:

112
113 Mr. Jack mentioned that he visited site and had difficulty seeing the rear of the building.
114 Expressed support for the work.

115
116 Mr. King agreed with Mr. Jack.

117
118 Mr. Elperin noted that had difficulty finding building from High Street. Found the design
119 thoughtful.

120
121 Mr. Spiers expressed support of proposal. Liked the idea of adding decks, which he believed
122 will add more balance to the rear.

123
124 Mr. Elperin made a motion to approve the application as submitted. Mr. Jack seconded the
125 motion.

126
127 David King – yes, John Spiers- yes, David Jack – yes, Elton Elperin – yes, Richard Panciera – yes

128
129 **17 High Street (Pill Hill LHD)** –Application for a Retroactive Certificate of Appropriateness to
130 install a mini-split condenser with piping (Emily Oliveira, applicant). **Precinct 4**

131
132 Ms. McCarthy presented the application.

133
134 Emily Oliveira, applicant, mentioned that she does not have a rear area to install a condenser,
135 however, she had spoken to a sign producer to produce a sign to cover the unit.

136

137 Mr. Spiers noted that the core issue is whether the completed work constituted an in-kind
138 replacement. He argued that it was a preexisting condition, regardless of the change in size. He
139 questioned what screening would look like.

140
141 Mr. King questioned how a sign would work in that location. Wished the applicant had brought
142 a proposal.

143
144 Mr. Elperin stated that he would prefer the unit be relocated to the rear or roof of the building.

145
146 Mr. Spiers believed the completed work constitutes an in-kind replacement, but asked the
147 applicant to investigate the feasibility of other options.

148
149 Mr. Panciera argued that it should not be considered an in-kind replacement, as an AC unit was
150 replaced with condenser.

151
152 Mr. Spiers requested that the applicant return with a complete application that includes an
153 assessment of alternative locations for the condenser and screening options for the condenser in
154 its current location.

155
156 Mr. Elperin made a motion to deny the retroactive Certificate of Appropriateness. Mr. Jack
157 seconded the motion.

158
159
160 David King – yes, Richard Panciera – yes, David Jack – yes, Elton Elperin – yes; John Spiers-
161 Yes

162
163 Mr. Spiers asked for language about the hardship clause so Commissioners can understand the
164 changes. Ms. McCarthy agreed to provide this language.

165
166

167 **PUBLIC HEARINGS – DEMOLITION**

168
169 **61 Heath Street-** –Application for the full demolition of the house and garage (William Holding,
170 applicant). **Precinct 14**

171
172 Mr. Collins presented the case.

173
174 Jennifer Dopazo Gilbert, attorney, represented the case. Mentioned that the previous owner
175 owned the home for over 70 years and did not maintain the home. The property has been greatly
176 altered, unsure what it means that these alterations have aged into significance.

177
178 Public Comment:

179
180 Mr. Elperin opened and closed the public comment without any participants.

181
182 Commission Comment:

183
184 Mr. King thought the house was interesting. Pointed out the wishbone casing on the second-
185 story dormer in particular. Believed the building to be significant.

186
187 Mr. Elperin agreed with Mr. King. Drew attention to the significance of previous residents.

188
189 Mr. Panciera asked if the property is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

190
191 Mr. Collins answered that it is individually listed.

192
193 Mr. Elperin made a motion to uphold initial finding of significance. Mr. Jack seconded the
194 motion.

195
196 David King – yes, Richard Panciera – yes, David Jack – yes, Elton Elperin – yes; John Spiers-
197 Yes

198
199 **46 Babcock Street** –Application for the full demolition of the house (Alexander Argiros, applicant).
200 **Precinct 8**

201
202 Ms. McCarthy presented the case.

203
204 Ms. Dopazo Gilbert, attorney, represented the case. She asked the Commission to consider if
205 this house is truly significant due to many alterations over the years.

206
207 Public Comment:

208
209 Jane Patrick, trustee of condo association abutting the buildings to the right (52-54 Babcock
210 Street). Explained that the garage was built at the same time as her building and matches the
211 façade aesthetically. Clarified that two bays are owned by 46 Babcock Street, but it was
212 previously owned by the 52-54 Babcock Street building. Expressed support for finding the
213 garage significant, as she believed demolishing the end bays would destroy the whole building.

214
215 Commission Comment:

216
217 Mr. Jack read this as a group of buildings. Thought the buildings show the pattern of
218 development of the neighborhood. Believed both buildings should be found significant.

219
220 Mr. King disagreed with Mr. Jack. Felt the alterations made it not significant. Did not feel the
221 garage is significant either.

222
223 Mr. Spiers appreciated the observations about a cohesive neighborhood but did not support that
224 view in this case. Supported the idea of aging into significance but felt that the aluminum
225 siding disqualified this house. Did not see significance for the house, undecided about the
226 garage.

227

228 Mr. Elperin sympathized with Mr. Jack’s observations but felt there had been too many changes
229 to find it significant. Did not support significance for the garage either.
230
231 Mr. Panciera stated that much integrity is gone but houses like this can be revived. Siding can
232 be removed and should not disqualify the house. Found the house significant. Garage is not
233 significant.
234
235 Mr. Elperin made a motion not to uphold the significance determination for the garage. Mr. Jack
236 seconded the motion.
237
238 David King – yes, Richard Panciera – yes, David Jack – yes, Elton Elperin – yes; John Spiers-
239 Yes
240
241 The motion passed.
242
243 Mr. Jack made a motion to find the house significant. Mr. Elperin seconded the motion.
244
245 David King – no, Richard Panciera – yes, David Jack – yes, Elton Elperin – no; John Spiers- no
246
247 The motion failed. The house was found not significant.
248
249
250 **686 Washington Street-** Application for full demolition of the commercial unit (Washington 686
251 LLC, applicant). **Precinct 10**
252
253 Mr. Collins presented the case.
254
255 Ms. Dopazo Gilbert, attorney, represented the case. Clarified that only the storefront portion is
256 included in the application.
257
258 Public Comment:
259
260 Mr. Elperin opened and closed public comment without any participants.
261
262 Commission Comment:
263
264 Mr. Elperin stated that the addition had gained significance over time.
265
266 Mr. Jack remarked that the building is not very architecturally interesting, but the storefronts
267 and garages form a cohesive street edge on Washington Street that defines the street.
268
269 Mr. Panciera agreed with Mr. Jack.
270
271 Mr. King agreed with Mr. Jack but did not believe that it would be a great loss. Invited the
272 applicant to seek a lift of stay.
273

274 Mr. King moved to find the building significant. Mr. Elperin seconded the motion.

275
276 David King – yes, Richard Panciera – yes, David Jack – yes, Elton Elperin – yes; John Spiers-
277 Yes

278
279 Catherine Grant, applicant, clarified that the plan was not to remove the building. Ms. Dopazo
280 Gilbert stated that new plan may not trigger demolition, but they intend to seek a lift of stay if it
281 does.

282
283 **OTHER BUSINESS**

284
285 **179 Babcock Street (Graffam McKay LHD)** - Review of an unresolved violation at the address. The
286 Commission will vote whether or not to declare the situation illegal under MGL 40C. **Precinct 2**

287
288 Ms. McCarthy presented the case history.

289
290 Mr. Elperin stated that it is a violation.

291
292 Mr. King made a motion to declare the replaced windows illegal under 40 C and request the
293 Town take appropriate action. Mr. Jack seconded the motion.

294
295 David King – yes, Richard Panciera – yes, David Jack – yes, Elton Elperin – yes; John Spiers-
296 Yes

297
298 **182 Babcock Street (Graffam McKay LHD)**- Review of an unresolved violation at the address. The
299 Commission will vote whether or not to declare the situation illegal under MGL 40C. **Precinct 8**

300
301 Mr. Collins presented the case history.

302
303 Mr. Spiers asked about the case history report. Mr. Collins explained more about his
304 enforcement actions. Mentioned the letter received from the homeowner, which was included
305 in the meeting materials.

306
307 Mr. Spiers noted that he read letter and still felt this was a violation.

308
309 Mr. Spiers made a motion to declare the work at 182 Babcock illegal under 40 C and request
310 that the Town take appropriate action. Mr. Elperin seconded the motion.

311
312 David King – yes, Richard Panciera – yes, David Jack – yes, Elton Elperin – yes; John Spiers-
313 Yes

314
315 **Review and discussion of proposed Ice Skating Complex at Larz Anderson Park.**

316
317 Ms. McCarthy explained the background briefly.

318

319 Mr. Elperin spoke about the park's various Preservation Restrictions and its National Register
320 listing. Noted that the chapter of the report that focused on the site of the present rink was
321 vague. Believed the Commission should weigh in on the historic fabric as well as new
322 construction.

323
324 Mr. King wanted the letter to speak directly to the Preservation Restriction and what it allows.
325

326 Mr. Spiers asked about the next step of conducting a historic resource survey.
327

328 Peter Senopoulos, resident, thanked the Commission for considering the issues. Spoke about the
329 historic walls from the Larz Anderson estate and Auto Museum. Believed that proposal is out
330 of character with the history of the park.

331
332 Mr. Elperin recalled the review of a historic wall torn down and replaced in this park. Mr.
333 Senopoulos confirmed that the walls were the same.
334

335 Mary Dewart, resident, clarified that the study proposed restoring a small portion of the historic
336 garden. Argued there is no funding to restore that garden. Noted that the historic fabric had
337 been long removed.
338

339 Commissioners expressed concern about the lack of engagement in the process with the
340 Preservation Commission and the requirements of the Preservation Restriction and National
341 Register District.
342

343 Mr. King requested the letter oppose the project.
344

345 Mr. Elperin tasked Mr. King and Mr. Spiers to draft a response letter to the project.
346

347 Meeting adjourned 9:29pm
348