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Brookline Preservation Commission
MINUTES OF THE May 2nd, 2022 Subcommittee meeting
Held Virtually using Zoom Online Software

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Staff: Tina McCarthy

Applicants: Tony Filardo (architect), Jennifer Dopazo Gilbert (lawyer), Jeff Birnbaum (Owner), Troy Sober (landscape architect), Ashley Clark, Bob Allen, Catherine Truman (architect)

Commissioners: Elizabeth Armstrong, Elton Elperin, Ric Panciera, Dave Jack

Public: Dennis Dewitt, Keira Lee

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Mr. Elperin called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

Troy Sober presented the landscape architecture plans. Reviewed the current position of 25 Cottage house & exterior materials. Heard that the house should be rotated toward Warren Street at the last meeting; this was done. 222 Warren site plan had not changed. Reviewed exterior landscape materials, including pool, fence, lighting plan, terracing, built in kitchen.

Mr. Elperin asked for public comment.

Dennis Dewitt appreciated the rotation of 25 Cottage Street and the removal of the driveway doughnut. Expressed concern about the proximity of 25 Cottage to Warren Street and the visibility of 222 Warren to the rear. Suggested to slide 25 Cottage to the South.

Mr. Sober drew sight lines on the site plan to 222 Warren. Noted that the rear private space was valuable to the client. The lot line had already been pushed toward the 39 Cottage side of the property when the house was rotated for the current plan.

Mr. Dewitt mentioned the intense landscaping in between 25 & 222, which may eventually block views. Asked about a view shed easement that may be a part of the deal. Mr. Sober discussed possibility, and noted that 222 Warren is not visible today. Mr. Elperin supported the idea of a view shed easement and investigating potential forms for this.

Mr. Elperin thought the rotation of 25 was successful in some respects, though it was reducing views of 222 Warren Street from the previous plan. Mr. Jack asked if others supported the rotation of Cottage. He expressed his own support. Mr. Panciera also supported the move, asked that the view to 222 be studied further. Did not feel that an incremental move of 25 back was worth fighting about. Mr. Jack agreed and stated that the goal is preserving 25 Cottage Street and preserving 222 Warren Street as much as possible. Resigned to changes in landscape. Mr. Panciera stated his feeling was also resignation, not comfort, with the plan.

Mr. Allen thanked Mr. Panciera for being ok with his feelings of resignation. Stated that a view shed easement could be arranged.

47 Mr. Elperin asked how the wall to the rear of 222 would be constructed. Mr. Sober stated that
48 they are preserving the location of the wall. Conservation review would also be required due to
49 the wetland buffer. We will be required to preserve the vegetation downhill. The goal is to
50 preserve as much as possible, whether we are adding back plants or keeping what is there. The
51 present wall did not exist prior to 2005. The wall is a requirement of rotating the garage, to
52 create the turning radius space. He then reviewed the plan for the landscape of 222 Warren.
53

54 Mr. Jack asked the subcommittee about how much say the commission has about the rear of
55 222. Mr. Elperin stated that small details are not visible, but the retaining wall may be. He
56 asked whether Conservation may force the revision of the plan. Mr. Sober stated that they
57 could require revegetation of the hillside. Likely will not refuse the wall entirely. He stated
58 that the wall will likely not be visible from Warren Street, as it is at grade. Apologized for
59 mislabeling height of the wall in the plans.
60

61 Tony Filardo presented architectural plans for 25 Cottage. Noted shutters added on rear ell
62 addition. Single story ell to the left, as existing. New wood siding, asking for Boral water
63 table; all other trim and siding would be wood. Windows are Pella Reserve Traditional, most
64 replaced except curved window at 222. Front door will be a mahogany door to match existing.
65 Similar materials between the homes.
66

67 Mr. Elperin asked about retaining the windows, which is expected in LHDs. Noted that those
68 on the front porch of 25 could be restored. Wood thermal glazed windows can be installed in
69 additions, but in the main body of the house should be replaced in-kind. Mr. Jack asked about
70 visibility. Mr. Dewitt pointed out that shrubbery does not obstruct visibility in an LHD. Mr.
71 Elperin stated that artificial slates have not been approved in any other case by the Commission
72 and did not support the artificial water table. Commissioners discussed some treated wood
73 alternatives and Mr. Panciera noted that the current wood on the building had already long
74 outlasted any of the available manufacturer's warranties.
75

76 Mr. De Witt asked about the disappearing chimneys and stated that they should be returned.
77 He asked if the 13'10" garage ceiling height could be lowered to reduce the massing of the rear
78 addition. Mr. Elperin stated that he was OK with the large volume and appreciated the
79 simplicity of the design. Mr. Panciera would prefer it were smaller, but ok as it was to the rear.
80

81 Mr. Dewitt asked about the width of the window shutters, should they be the correct width to
82 cover the windows? Mr. Filardo explained that they are bi-fold due to the proximity to the
83 edge of the house but agreed to explore the full shutter option. Mr. Allen stated that they will
84 make the shutters however the Commission wants the shutters.
85

86 Discussion of chimney removal. Mr. Jack felt it should be rebuilt above the roof. Mr. Elperin
87 and Dewitt agreed; this is the Richardson bedroom chimney. May consider the removal of the
88 one to the left.
89

90 Mr. Jack summarized that the subcommittee was accepting of the present location of 25
91 Cottage Street. Would like more information about the rear retaining wall. He asked that
92 original materials be retained wherever possible. Mr. Elperin noted specifically the windows

93 and slate roof, which should be retained. Mr. Panciera recalled the view shed easement that
94 was discussed.

95
96 Mr. Sober asked about materials selection, lighting review and approval and asked what would
97 be required for signoff on the landscape package. Mr. Panciera stated that with the exception
98 of the lighting the Commission would not need to review much. He thought the site lighting
99 might not be appreciated by the Commission. Mr. Elperin would prefer fewer lights, but there
100 did not seem to be a lot of extra lights.

101
102 Mr. Elperin asked for one more subcommittee meeting to address the architectural issues.
103 Staff should follow up with a contractor to remove the bedroom materials and meet with Ms.
104 Gilbert & Mr. Birnbaum to discuss details. Staff will provide the Preservation Restriction at
105 182 Walnut to Ms. Gilbert so that they may begin developing a draft PR.

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108 Meeting adjourned at 2:45 PM

DRAFT