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*Brookline Preservation Commission*  
**MINUTES OF THE May 14, 2019 MEETING**  
**Brookline Town Hall, Room 103, 333 Washington Street**

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**Commissioners Present**

David King, Chair  
Elton Elperin, Vice Chair  
Wendy Ecker  
Peter Kleiner  
Richard Panciera, Alternate  
Elizabeth Armstrong, Alternate

**Commissioners Absent:**

Jim Batchelor  
David Jack

**Staff:** Valerie Birmingham, Lara Kritzer

**Members of the Public:** See list

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

**Approval of Minutes**

Commission Members reviewed the draft minutes for the November 6 meeting which had been revised to include additional details from the 14 Allerton Road discussion. Ms. Ecker moved to approve the minutes as revised. Mr. King seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

**Public Comment (for items not on the agenda)**

Ernie Frey, Town Meeting Member for Precinct 7, explained that he was concerned with preventing future demolition when there was no plan in place for the replacement structure. He noted that the mansard cottage on Harvard Street had been torn down two years ago and its replacement structure had only recently been approved. The demolition had been permitted much earlier than necessary and the result was a longstanding construction site and eyesore. He understood that the Commission oversees the Demolition Review Bylaw and noted that the Bylaw did not focus on what will replace the demolished structure. Mr. Frey thought this was a problem and wanted the town to consider amending the bylaw to prohibit demolition before a replacement building has been approved. He stated that he had written to the Building Commissioner about this issue and had spoken with Preservation Staff. Mr. Frey asked the Commission to also voice support for this type of action and to formally discuss it at an upcoming meeting.

Ms. Armstrong asked about the review process for 127 Harvard Street. It was noted that the building had been found to be historically significant and that the owners had waited out the demolition delay. It was also noted that the change as described would require changing the Demolition Review Bylaw at Town Meeting. Ms. Birmingham stated that this was part of a larger discussion. Dennis DeWitt had raised this concern last year when the Commission was working on its other changes to the Bylaw but the Commission had chosen not to move forward on this issue at that time. Mr. Frey stated that he had also spoken to Dennis DeWitt about this issue. He explained that both Cambridge and Swampscott had bylaws which allowed for this type of review and felt that this change needed a petition warrant article.

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49 Ms. Armstrong expressed concern with adding extra steps to the delay process and going beyond the  
50 power already given to the Commission. She questioned whether the Town was ready to bring this  
51 forward. Mr. Kleiner asked if Brookline would really want to have a design review board to review  
52 these projects and thought that the Planning Department might be a better place for this type of review.  
53 Mr. King thought that this was a legitimate concern and was willing to continue to work with Mr. Frey  
54 on the issue. Mr. Frey stated that he would work with Mr. DeWitt to review the issues involved and  
55 would be back in the future with more specific ideas.

56

## 57 **PUBLIC HEARINGS – LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS**

58

### 59 **262 Walnut Street (Pill Hill LHD) - Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to** 60 **remove an existing chimney (Thomas Schwartz and Britta Mueller, applicants)**

61

62 Ms. Kritzer presented the case report. Owner Thomas Schwartz explained that they were  
63 renovating their basement and would like to add space to the interior by removing the non-  
64 functioning chimney. He believed that it had originally been installed for an early oven and that it  
65 was the second chimney on the house.

66

67 Mr. King opened the discussion to public comment and there was none at this time.

68

69 Mr. Kleiner asked if the chimney had been reviewed in a previous application. He thought that it  
70 had been discussed when the kitchen addition was installed on the rear façade. Mr. Schwartz stated  
71 that he had purchased the house in 2011 and that the previous owner had renovated the kitchen. He  
72 had done an addition to the rear of the house but the chimney had not been part of that discussion.  
73 Members noted that it was the only chimney now on the house and that it was no longer in use.

74

75 Ms. Ecker stated that a house of this age would have a chimney and thought that it was an historic  
76 element of the house. She was also sure that there had been a prior chimney on the house that had  
77 since been removed. Mr. Kleiner noted other utilitarian chimneys that the Commission had fought  
78 to save and suggested that the Owner consider supporting the chimney at the roof if they wanted to  
79 retain the space on the inside. Mr. Schwartz stated that he understood that this was an option but  
80 would prefer to not have the chimney going through the roof at all.

81

82 Ms. Armstrong agreed that it seemed wrong to not have a chimney on the building. Mr. King noted  
83 that the remaining chimney was quite small and was inclined to let it go. He saw the point in  
84 having a chimney but felt that the original chimney would have had more to it than the existing  
85 one. Mr. Batchelor agreed and did not think that the existing chimney was a character defining or  
86 significant element of the house. Mr. Panciera agreed with Mr. Batchelor. Mr. Batchelor moved to  
87 allow the existing utilitarian chimney to be removed from the house. Mr. King seconded the  
88 motion. The motion passed by a vote of 5 to 2 with no abstentions. Ms. Ecker and Ms. Armstrong  
89 voted against the motion.

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92

### 93 **18 Spooner Road (Chestnut Hill North LHD) - Application for a Certificate of** 94 **Appropriateness to demolish the existing detached garage, rear deck, and rear addition in** 95 **order to construct a new detached two-car garage and two-story rear addition and to regrade**

96 **the rear corner of the site and install new retaining walls around a reconstructed driveway**  
97 **and parking area (Will and Gray Hughes, applicants)**  
98

99 Ms. Kritzer presented the case report. Attorney Jennifer Dopazo Gilbert was present with owners  
100 Will and Gray Hughes and their architect, Liz Cahill of ARTarchitects, to present revised plans.  
101 Ms. Gilbert noted that they had met informally with the Commission in February with a different  
102 plan from the one now proposed. Ms. Cahill explained that the in 2012 the owners had done a  
103 project to reprogram the mudroom and alter the access to the existing deck. She reviewed the  
104 different versions of the current project to add a new garage and addition to the house that had been  
105 considered so far. The existing garage was undersized at 22'x 20' and located in the rear yard. In  
106 February, they had proposed to relocate the garage to the side yard and attach it to the house but the  
107 Commission had had issues with the proposed location and had asked the owners to consider  
108 altering the existing garage in its current location. Expanding the existing garage in its current  
109 location would use up the rest of the rear yard so they were now proposing to move it to a new  
110 location in the rear corner of the property. The garage would be located in the side yard at the rear  
111 of the property and aligned with the rear of the house.  
112

113 Mr. Elperin asked about the roof on the previously proposed garage. Ms. Cahill stated that it had  
114 matched the design of the existing garage. With the current proposal, they had decided to  
115 differentiate the new garage from the existing house by using a streamlined exterior façade design  
116 and a flat, green roof.  
117

118 Mr. King opened the discussion to public comment. Hannah Parker, Middlesex Road, stated that  
119 they lived behind 18 Spooner Road and were aware of the water problems at the rear of the site.  
120 She believed that these were caused by a damaged 1916 water drainage system and wanted to make  
121 sure that the current project address the water issues. She also preferred to see the garage match the  
122 house.  
123

124 The Owners stated that they were not aware of the drains but were developing their design to  
125 address the flooding issues on the site. Ms. Armstrong asked what their plans were for drainage.  
126 The Owners stated that they were planning to work on the drywell system and Ms. Gilbert stated  
127 that they would be developing a stormwater drainage plan. Ms. Armstrong asked if they needed  
128 zoning relief. Ms. Gilbert answered yes, that the project would need minor relief for an increase in  
129 FAR and setback relief.  
130

131 Mr. Elperin stated that he had no issues with the orientation of the garage or its location but asked  
132 to see more information on the material to be used in the green roof. He discussed the appearance  
133 of the commonly used vegetation and the options available. He also suggested that they reconsider  
134 the proportions of the top of the garage over the garage door, which looked like it had been lopped  
135 off. Concerning the proposed addition, he asked if the owners would be coming back in the future  
136 to reconstruct the deck. The Owners stated that they had no plans to have a deck in the future. Mr.  
137 Elperin reviewed the design of the rear façade of the addition and stated that he thought the  
138 fenestration at the bottom of the façade read a little boring and flat. He asked the applicants to  
139 consider ways to liven up the elevation and Ms. Cahill agreed to work on this.  
140

141 Mr. Batchelor asked if the rear façade of the house was visible from the public way. Members  
142 reviewed photos showing the visibility of the rear façade from Middlesex Road. Ms. Cahill noted  
143 that they had pulled the edges of the addition back behind the corners of the existing house. Mr.

144 King thought that the house was getting very big with the new addition and asked at what point it  
145 would become too large for the site. Ms. Cahill noted that the deck on the rear façade already  
146 projected out farther than the proposed addition. The addition would be taller than the deck but was  
147 pulled in from the edges of the existing house. She did not feel that they were really adding to the  
148 mass of the house and noted that the addition would be low as it ended on the first floor. Mr.  
149 Batchelor thought that moving the side wall back one to two more feet would make a big difference  
150 to the design. He noted that this would allow them to move the air conditioning condensers farther  
151 over so that they could be tucked behind the existing rear corner of the house, which would also be  
152 a gain. It was noted that the house already had three a/c condensers which would be relocated from  
153 under the existing deck to the right façade of the house. Mr. Batchelor stated that he would like to  
154 see the a/c condensers pulled back behind the jog in the house.  
155

156 Mr. Batchelor also liked the idea of the green roof on the garage as it is not the primary building on  
157 the site. He asked if the applicants were using sedum for the roof. Ms. Cahill stated that they were  
158 still researching options but were considering sedum. She explained that they would need 8 inches  
159 of soil for grass and that she thought that sedum would have a neater look. Mr. Panciera noted that  
160 flat roofed garages were a common element in Brookline. He was not sure about using grass and  
161 was concerned that it would have a wild look. Members discussed the green roof material options.  
162

163 Mr. King asked about the increased width of the driveway in front of the garage. Ms. Cahill stated  
164 that they needed to create a turnaround area. She also noted that they would be lifting up the  
165 driveway by about a foot to level it off and were adding retaining walls around its outer edges to  
166 hold back the surrounding landscape. Mr. Batchelor asked the Applicants to consider reducing the  
167 amount of paving to the left of the garage so that it was more of a turnaround area than a parking  
168 area. He noted that they might also be able to remove some of the retaining walls with this  
169 reduction. Ms. Cahill agreed with the change and that it might require fewer walls and the other  
170 Commission Members also thought that it would look more natural. It was noted that the existing  
171 tree in the driveway would need to be removed.  
172

173 The gutters on both the new house and garage were proposed to be aluminum K style gutters to  
174 match similar gutters that were already installed on the house. Commission members agreed that  
175 copper or wood gutters would be more appropriate but did not have a preference on the style. Mr.  
176 Panciera noted that they had provided more leeway to discrete addition and pointed out that copper  
177 and aluminum gutters could not be tied together. Mr. Batchelor thought that it was important to  
178 avoid using aluminum on the garage but thought that it would be alright to use it on the rear  
179 addition. Ms. Cahill noted that the garage door would be wood. Mr. King suggested that it would  
180 be nice to add windows to the garage door as well.  
181

182 Mr. King moved to approve the construction of a new addition on the rear façade with aluminum  
183 gutters as submitted and with the suggestions that the architect introduce more variety into the basement  
184 and first floor windows on the rear façade and pull the right façade of the addition back far enough  
185 behind the right façade of the existing house to provide space for the air/conditioning units to be  
186 installed behind the plane of the right façade; the demolition of the existing garage; and the siting and  
187 design of the new garage with agreed upon modifications to be reviewed by staff including the wood  
188 garage door, copper gutters, and green roof material and appearance; and the replacement and regrading  
189 of the driveway as submitted with the apron to the left of the garage doors to be reduced in size to a  
190 turnaround area. Mr. Batchelor seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

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**PUBLIC HEARINGS – DEMOLITION**

**47 Waverly Street – Request to lift the stay of partial demolition of the house (691-693 Heath Street LLC, applicant)**

Ms. Kritzer presented the case report. Architect George Warner and Owner John Mannix were present with Attorney Jennifer Dopazo Gilbert, who explained that the project had received its zoning approvals in March. Mr. Warner noted that the house was included on MACRIS, at which time it had had asphalt siding. The proposed plans will add a third floor to the building which was noted to be smaller than most of the other homes in the area. The new owners wanted to improve the building and Mr. Warner noted that there were several other three-story mansard homes in the area and would keep the existing stained glass, front entrance transom and newel posts. They intended to reconstruct the bay window and significantly improve it. The mansard style roof would also allow the Owners to install solar power there in the future. Mr. Warner explained that the dormers on the left façade had been altered to meet a neighbor’s concerns. The only change to the footprint of the building would be a small expansion to create access to the basement. The basement currently has a bulkhead but the owners would like to have full door access to the space. The house has been used as a two-family structure but had not been built as one and needed some access improvements at this time.

Mr. King opened the discussion to Public Comment. There was none at this time.

The siding was noted to be cedar clapboard. Mr. Warner was asked whether the house had any original brackets and answered no, that he had taken the detailing of the brackets from another Mansard roofed house on Washington Street.

Mr. Elperin thought that the proposed design was a complete transformation of the existing house but was a nice design. He was concerned that the shed dormer on the left façade was a little clunky, though, and thought that brackets should be added to the rear elevation. On the right façade, he thought that the set of three French doors needed to be trimmed rather than set into clapboard. He noted that the other windows were not proposed to be trimmed as richly as the doors. Mr. Elperin suggested that the window frame have two parts or head casings to dress up the windows. It was noted that the doors would have a thin railing surrounding them.

Mr. Kleiner stated that he preferred to see the existing fenestration retained. Mr. King agreed that the existing fenestration should be preserved. He noted that the windows had a strong impact on the design with their tall, narrow proportions and two-over-two design and suggested that the muntins on the doors be removed to pick up on that detail. Mr. Elperin thought that the height of the building was appropriate. Mr. Warner stated that the windows had been altered to work with the interior and that none of the existing windows were planned to be retained. Mr. Batchelor thought that stepping the windows was alright but found the left third of the right façade to be jarring when viewed with the front façade. Members discussed the size and treatment of the windows and the design alterations to the house. Mr. Warner agreed to take another look at the head casings for the windows.

Mr. Panciera thought that it was a nice design questioned how the new design elements were differentiated enough from the historic features of the house. Members suggested that the doors on

239 the right façade should be double and not triple doors and that the windows should be moved away  
240 from the left corner of the façade. Ms. Armstrong thought that the rendering gave a favorable view  
241 of the building and Mr. Elperin suggested that the plans be revised to be more in keeping with the  
242 rendering.

243  
244 Mr. Elperin moved to continue the discussion to an empowered subcommittee of one to review  
245 revisions to the final plans in order to lift the stay of demolition. Mr. Batchelor seconded the  
246 motion and thought that the third floor mansard roof was too tall and should be lowered slightly. A  
247 question was raised about the use of shed dormers. Mr. Warner stated that they would need to  
248 consider how those could be altered and still meet the neighbor's concerns. He promised to look  
249 into a less vertical option for the windows. The motion was passed by unanimous vote. Mr.  
250 Elperin was appointed to the empowered subcommittee.

251  
252 **86 St. Paul Street - Request to lift the stay of partial demolition of the apartment complex**  
253 **(Chestnut Hill Realty, applicant)**  
254

255 Ms. Birmingham presented the case report. Andrew Martineau was present on behalf of owner  
256 Chestnut Hill Realty and thanked the Commission for considering their proposal. He stated that  
257 there had been limited discussion when the determination was made and would like to discuss why  
258 these buildings were historically significant. It was noted that the development marked a transition  
259 from rowhouse to apartment complex and that the historic significance of the property included the  
260 style of the buildings and their orientation to the street and courtyard. He noted that the buildings  
261 did not have a lot of architectural detailing and that the proposed work did not involve demolition  
262 or changes to the orientation of the buildings. He felt that an appropriate compromise would be to  
263 allow the installation of the air conditioning units in the brick façade in exchange for the restoration  
264 of the windows.

265  
266 Mr. Elperin stated that the fenestration, particularly the balance and contrast between the larger and  
267 smaller windows, was an important element of the building. The structure had minimal but  
268 significant detail at the top of the facades, including the glass block stair tower. He stated that the  
269 existing design was complete and that the addition of the air conditioning units added an element to  
270 the building but not beauty. He suggested that the Applicants consider other options for the  
271 building. He thought that the proposed units were a 1950s solution that would destroy the integrity  
272 of the design.

273  
274 Mr. Martineau agreed that this was not the most aesthetically pleasing solution but noted that it was  
275 an economic solution as the company would prefer to put their money into the new windows. Mr.  
276 King stated that he appreciated the offer. However, the current proposal would modify the main  
277 facades which had been very carefully designed and organized. He agreed that the installation of  
278 the a/c units would ruin the proportions of the facades.

279  
280 Mr. Elperin asked if the a/c units could be moved below the windows. Mr. Martineau answered that  
281 the heating units were already in that location. Mr. Batchelor asked if the units could only be  
282 installed on the rear facades of the buildings. He noted that all of the buildings had a primary and  
283 secondary façade and that it was common to differentiate the rear façade. Mr. King noted that  
284 Chestnut Hill Realty had owned these buildings for many years and that the proposed vinyl  
285 window system was not a tenable solution for the continued long term ownership of the building.  
286 He thought that the a/c units were also not a long term solution for the structures. Commission

287 Members agreed that funds would be better spent putting in long term solutions for these spaces.  
288 Mr. Martineau stated that the current proposal was the only one that had been designed and  
289 budgeted for the site. Mr. Batchelor asked if they had considered incorporating the a/c units into  
290 the future window project and having them installed over the windows in the existing openings.

291  
292 Ms. Armstrong stated that the current proposal was not an adequate reason to lift the stay on  
293 demolition and thought that the delay should continue to run. Ms. Armstrong moved to deny the  
294 request to lift the stay of demolition based on the current proposal as the Commission feels that  
295 there are better alternatives available that will be less detrimental to the building. Mr. Elperin  
296 seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

297  
298 **370 Washington Street – Application for the full demolition of the building (370 Wash LLC,**  
299 **applicants)**

300  
301 Ms. Kritzer presented the case report. Attorney Jennifer Dopazo Gilbert was present on behalf of  
302 the owners. Mr. King moved to uphold the staff determination of significance for 370  
303 Washington Street and issue a twelve month stay of demolition through May 14, 2020. Ms.  
304 Armstrong seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

305  
306 **15 Toxteth Street – Application for the partial demolition of the house (Walter and Velvizhi,**  
307 **applicants)**

308  
309 Ms. Birmingham presented the case report. Attorney Jennifer Dopazo Gilbert was present on behalf  
310 of the owners. Ms. Gilbert stated that the project was barely partial demolition and expected to  
311 come back before the Commission in the future to lift the stay. Mr. Batchelor moved to uphold  
312 the staff determination of significance for 15 Toxteth Street and issue a twelve month stay of  
313 demolition through May 14, 2020. Mr. King seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

314  
315 The meeting adjourned at 9:00PM.

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