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Brookline Preservation Commission
MINUTES OF THE May 22, 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
Elizabeth Armstrong

Commissioners Absent:

Peter Kleiner
Richard Panciera

Staff: Valerie Birmingham and Tina McCarthy

Members of the Public: See list

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

Update on the modifications to the Brookline Reservoir Gatehouse

Annie Blair and Doug Manley go over the scope of work and how it will be completed. Dennis Dewitt, former commission member, provided advisory commentary.

Ms. Blair: Contractor came in under estimate, so the work was expanded to cleaning exterior, fixing the ridge stone, and restoring windows. Lists the problems with securing a subcontractor for window restoration. Describes completed work, general cleaning and mortar color/style selected with input from staff.

Mr. Manley (architect): Two phase project, interior restroom addition is separate. About 90% done with bid documents. Going out to bid in July.

Mr. King: Is repointing done?

Mr. Manley: No, still needs to be cleaned.

Mr. Dewitt: Doug assures me that when it is clean the joint will look less wide.

Mr. Manley: I think it will darken.

Discussion about mortar joints and cleaning.

Ms. Ecker: Asks about the condition of the roof.

Mr. Dewitt: Stated that the roof is done, goes over the process. States that the window grills on the reservoir side are to be restored and replaced.

47 Mr. Dewitt: Discusses the location of the pipes for the proposed rest room. States that staff
48 would prefer not to cut holes through the granite. Expresses that he feels this change will
49 eventually be made. Thresholds are 5 inches above the granite floor, not appropriate for reuse.
50 If original floor is to be used, thresholds must come down. Discusses options for addressing.
51 Argues that thresholds should be reduced to the height of the granite floor.

52

53 Mr. Elperin: Asks if the bathroom floor would then be the granite floor.

54

55 Mr. Dewitt: A strip would be, the rest built flush.

56

57 Discussion of floor levels, doors and thresholds.

58

59 Mr. King: No decision is necessary, this is just an informational update.

60

61 Mr. Batchelor: Suggests forming a subcommittee to consider in more detail.

62

63 Subcommittee formed: David King, Elton Elperin, David Jack and Wendy Ecker. Empowered
64 for recommendation. To meet with Staff, Ms. Blair and Mr. Dewitt on site.

65

66 Mr. Manley: Reminds the Commission that the deadline for the grant is June 30.

67

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

69

70 No public comment.

71

72 **PUBLIC HEARINGS – LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS**

73

74 **11 Copley Street (Crowninshield LHD)** – Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to
75 replace five windows on the third floor (Robert Pease & Carol Wingard, applicants).

76

77 Ms. McCarthy presents the case.

78

79 Carol Wingard & Robert Pease (owners) explain the reason for the application, third floor
80 windows are broken and mismatched.

81

82 Mr. Jack: Asks if the new window in the east gable will match the dimensions of the opposite
83 gable.

84

85 Mr. Pease: May be different, the windows are from different manufacturers. Points out that
86 you can't see them both at the same time.

87

88 Discussion of possibility of shrinking and centering the new window to match the opposite
89 side.

90 Mr. Pease: Expresses that he would like to center the window if there was an opportunity, but
91 the interior shelving and extensive stucco work that would be required make it unfeasible.

92

93 Mr. Elperin: States that the guidelines call for single glazed windows, expresses support for
94 that requirement.
95

96 Ms. Wingard: Most of our existing windows are double glazed.
97

98 Mr. Elperin: Points out that some do have storms, mostly on the first floor.
99

100 Mr. Pease: Asks for consideration of the fact that there are several previously replaced double
101 glazed windows nearby and they will be replaced with windows of better quality and material
102 than the existing.
103

104 Mr. Elperin: The replacement windows should be mulled together in the way that they would
105 have been originally with sufficient space for the sash pockets. Not too tight or too far apart.
106 It is hard to say exactly, but the other windows in the house should be used for reference.
107 Now that you are returning to double hung proportions it would be good if they were similar to
108 existing.
109

110 Ms. Wingard: Can you tell us what windows we should buy?
111

112 Mr. King: We can't tell you what windows to buy. Key point is that they be single pane. If
113 you replace in kind, you can put whatever is there. If you are using a better window, then you
114 should abide by the guidelines and use single pane.
115

116 Ms. McCarthy: Clarifies that whatever the Commission's determination is, staff will assist in
117 finding an appropriate window.
118

119 Mr. Bachelor: Recognizes that this house is a unique situation since it has multiple
120 replacement windows already, not totally opposed to the application but does feel that single
121 glazed is better from a preservation perspective. From an energy point of view, the
122 commission's position is that a single glazed window plus a storm is nearly the same
123 performance as a double glazed window. Asks to view the slide with the gable window. States
124 that a smaller window would allow for centering, dimensions matter less than symmetry.
125

126 Ms. Wingard: Discusses the process of patching the stucco and matching the color. The
127 patches do not look good.
128

129 Mr. Pease: Asks if it can be painted to blend in.
130

131 Mr. King: Explains that the Commission doesn't support the painting of stucco. We cannot
132 require you to make the window smaller. If you think the patches will make it look worse,
133 then we would not ask you to do that.
134

135 Brief discussion of replacing the middle dormer window.
136 Mr. Jack: Asks if the application is to replace the gable window with one of matching
137 dimensions, three windows.
138

139 Ms. Wingard: Yes
140
141 Mr. Elperin: States that the fit is tight, for three windows to be in that space, it will read like a
142 modern window. Suggests that the window be drawn out, possibly two windows would look
143 better.
144
145 Mr. King: Points out that the other windows in the house are narrow.
146
147 Mr. Elperin: Motion to form empowered subcommittee, to review an elevation drawing of the
148 gable window, all windows to be replaced with single glazed assemblies. All in favor.
149
150 Ms. Wingard: Asks for the timeframe for the subcommittee.
151
152 Mr. King: Within a few weeks. Asks who is available for the subcommittee.
153
154 Mr. Jack: Replies that he will do it.
155
156 **30 Irving Street (Pill Hill LHD)** – Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to install
157 two new window openings on the second floor of the house (Eric Graber, applicant).
158
159 Ms. Birmingham presents the case.
160
161 Mr. Graber states his reasons for the application, that the room is dark and the proposed
162 windows will provide needed light.
163
164 Ms. Ecker: States that the request seems reasonable.
165
166 Mr. King: Notes that drawings have been provided.
167
168 Mr. Elperin: The new will match existing?
169
170 Mr. Graber: Yes.
171
172 Mr. King: Motion to accept as proposed.
173
174 Ms. Ecker: Seconds the motion.
175
176 All vote in favor
177
178 **40 Dunster Road (Chestnut Hill North LHD)** – Application for a Certificate of
179 Appropriateness to install a 42” gate and wood picket fence, granite piers, 42” steel fencing,
180 curved monolithic bluestone lawn stairs, stairs leading down to Dunster Road, a fieldstone
181 fireplace, a fieldstone built in grill and to regrade the lawn; request to amend a Certificate of
182 Appropriateness to construct a two story carriage home addition, enclose an existing second
183 floor balcony, construct a dormer on the south elevation, remove an existing porch on the north

184 elevation and modify the front entry to include the associated exterior mechanical equipment
185 (Michael and Casey Buckley, applicants).

186
187 Ms. Birmingham presents the case.

188
189 Mr. Gordon: Summarizes process of revisions made to plan.

190
191 Mr. Bland: States that he is a neighbor and supports the application as proposed.

192
193 Mr. Lawson: States that he works for the Longyear Museum and represents the Museum's
194 support of the application.

195
196 Mr. Elperin: Thanks the applicant for the changes made. Questions the location of the
197 generator, asks if it could be further from a public way.

198
199 Ms. Ecker: Asks if the fireplace has a chimney.

200
201 Applicant: States that this is a gas fireplace.

202
203 Mr. King: States that he will speak to mechanical issues first. Summarizes the subcommittee
204 findings, two voted in support of the fireplace, one opposed. No regulations in place for these
205 freestanding outdoor fireplace. Guidelines state that condensers cannot be located in the front.
206 This location is visible from the street and is a permanent part of the landscape. Expresses the
207 desire for a policy regarding these sort of installations. States that he does not feel it belongs in
208 an LHD.

209
210 Ms. Armstrong: Asks how visible the fireplace is from Dunster Road

211
212 Mr. Batchelor: States that the rendering is accurate. Expresses that he feels it is far enough.
213 The neighboring Longyear estate has stonewalls in the landscape. Clarifies that he is making a
214 judgement call, not proposing a policy.

215
216 Discussion of the lowering of the fireplace chimney and location of fireplace.

217
218 Ms. Ecker: States that there are differences between the character and architectural elements of
219 the different local historic districts. The suburban character of the Chestnut Hill North district
220 makes it seem ok here but the same change might not work as well in Cottage Farm or Pill
221 Hill.

222
223 Ms. Armstrong: States that she is on board with the fireplace, but asks Mr. Batchelor to
224 explain exactly why it is ok in this case.

225
226 Mr. Batchelor: States that distance, visibility from street, materials being tied in to existing
227 landscape and restrained height are all important criteria.

228

229 Ms. Armstrong: Echoes Ms. Ecker’s view that this neighborhood is very suburban and adds
230 that the neighbors are in support of the project.
231 Mr. Batchelor: Clarifies that he feels more comfortable proceeding on a case-by-case basis, as
232 site conditions vary so much within districts.
233
234 Mr. King: Expresses concern about permanence of installation and questions whether future
235 owners will use and maintain.
236
237 Ms. Armstrong: States that people have always loved fire, applications have increased for
238 outdoor fireplaces.
239
240 Mr. Elperin: Recalls that he has seen abandoned fireplaces in Brookline.
241
242 Mr. Batchelor: Moves to approve the landscape design including the fireplace, which is not a
243 precedent, rather an exception due to minimal visibility, restrained height, and similar materials
244 existing in the landscape.
245
246 Mr. Elperin: Seconds the motion.
247
248 Ms. Ecker, Ms. Armstrong, Mr. Elperin, Mr. Batchelor and Mr. Jack vote in favor of the
249 motion. Mr. King opposes.
250
251 Discussion shifts to mechanical systems.
252
253 Mr. Elperin: Asks why the generator can’t go with the condensers.
254
255 Mr. Day: States that the proposed location is outside the setbacks.
256
257 Mr. Batchelor: Suggests that the fence should be acoustic to protect neighbors from sound.
258
259 Discussion of sound, proximity to neighbors, and the possibility of locating the generator in the
260 setback.
261
262 Mr. Day: States that he is willing to move the generator to be with the condensers.
263
264 Mr. Elperin: Moves to accept location of the condensers, with the generator moved to their
265 location and approve the fence and pipes.
266
267 Mr. Batchelor: Seconds the motion.
268
269 All vote in favor.
270
271 **14 Allerton Street (Pill Hill LHD)** – Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to install
272 exterior lighting on the house, detached garage, and rear terrace; continuation of a Retroactive
273 Certificate of Appropriateness to install a vent on the side of the detached garage (Christopher
274 Wilmott, applicant).

275
276 Mr. King asked if anyone was in attendance to represent the application. Ms. Birmingham
277 checked the hallway and returned to the room; she answered that it appeared no one was in
278 attendance to represent the application.
279
280 Ms. Birmingham presented the case.
281
282 Mr. Elperin asked about the dimensions for the smaller lantern alternative, and where it was
283 measured from.
284
285 John Carpenter, abutter at 68 High Street, stated he agreed with staff's case report that the
286 proposal appeared excessive; in addition, Mr. Carpenter remarked that at the subcommittee in
287 January the applicant's architect mentioned that there was a light in the ceiling of the front
288 entry porch and that the plan was to keep it. Mr. Carpenter continued to state that the locations
289 of the lights on the garage and porch were not bad, but questioned why three were needed on
290 the garage. Lastly, Mr. Carpenter remarked that the colonial age type of lanterns is not fitting
291 for this house.
292
293 Chris Fox, abutter at 36 Upland Road, remarked that he agreed that the lighting proposal was
294 excessive, specifically on the garage and tree which would shine into his house. Mr. Fox
295 remarked that a street light currently exists close to the driveway, not far from the tree. Mr. Fox
296 stated that light pollution should be taken into account.
297
298 Olivia Fischer Fox, abutter at 36 Upland Road, remarked that a neighbor asked her to ask the
299 Commission if the garage vent is to code because it is not 10' from the property line. Mr. King
300 answered that the building department would handle that question.
301
302 Tim Hintz, abutter at 16 Acron Road, stated that he was concerned with the lighting proposal
303 highlighting the new construction and that it does not seem appropriate with the minimal style
304 of lighting in the neighborhood; in addition, Mr. Hintz commented that he was also concerned
305 about light pollution as an abutter.
306
307 Mr. King stated to the Commission that Lara Kritzer, Preservation Planner, had sent lighting
308 guidelines from the Town of Concord around to staff and a few of the Commissioners, and that
309 they should be sent around to the entire Commission.
310
311 Ms. Armstrong stated that she assumed Allerton Street and Upland Road are relatively well lit
312 streets. Ms. Armstrong continued to state that street lighting is meant to provide safety, and
313 that individual owners should provide safety lighting at entrances.
314
315 Mr. Elperin stated that he was opposed to lighting the house other than the safety lighting and
316 at a lesser level, low lighting of the patio edge. Mr. Elperin remarked that the lighting plan was
317 not characteristic of the neighborhood. Mr. Elperin stated that he did not know about the style
318 of the lanterns and what would be better, but that he felt they were too large in comparison to
319 the relatively small front entry porch; and that there was too much lighting at the garage. Mr.

320 Elperin commented that the most appropriate proposed light is the one by the rear entrance on
321 the new addition.

322

323 Ms. Ecker commented that most people have one light by the front entrance.

324

325 Mr. Batchelor asked if the Commission had guidelines in regards to lighting. Ms. Birmingham
326 replied that the Commission did not. Mr. Batchelor stated that he felt lighting was important
327 and that he agrees with what has been stated, and that there has been quite a bit that has gone
328 into how historic districts should be lit. Mr. Batchelor continued that lighting in historic
329 districts tends to be subtle and that guidelines should state that additions in particular should
330 not be lit. Mr. Batchelor remarked that there needs to be a philosophical change with the
331 proposed lighting plan. Mr. Batchelor stated that the application should be reduced to
332 something that is necessary for safety; and that he did feel it was reasonable for each door to
333 have a light. Lastly, Mr. Batchelor stated that he did not feel that the landscape lighting or
334 lighting of the addition was part of historic district lighting.

335

336 Mr. King commented while it was not present in this plan, he did feel that some walkway or
337 stair lighting would be appropriate in a historic district.

338

339 Ms. Ecker commented that if the applicant would like to use the terrace than there should be
340 some light. Mr. Batchelor recommended that the applicant could put a light by the rear door
341 and use lights that are subtle in the rear.

342

343 The Commission discussed how to address each light in a motion. Mr. Batchelor stated he felt
344 that the two "SC" lights on the garage, a light by the octagon entrance, and a single ceiling
345 light by the front door would be OK. Mr. Elperin stated that he could see a small wall mounted
346 lantern by the front door.

347

348 The Commissioners discussed their preferences for lighting on the garage. Mr. Elperin stated
349 the security lighting on the garage could be screened and be for safety only. Mr. Batchelor
350 remarked that there should be a minimal approach, and that a small wall mounted light could
351 also provide safety.

352

353 The Commissioners discussed how to move the application forward and state the principles
354 discussed to the applicant.

355

356 Mr. King stated that the Commission could state that there can be a light at every entrance,
357 walks, steps, one at the front entrance and one or two lights at the garage, and that the applicant
358 should resubmit a variety of lights at each location to be reviewed and chosen.

359

360 Mr. Elperin asked the Commission about the size of the proposed entry lights. Mr. King stated
361 that he felt the light at the front porch should be in the ceiling, and that the other lights at the
362 rear addition and garage should be between 9 to 10 inches, but it depends on the light.

363

364 Mr. Elperin stated that he would like scale drawings of the lights. Mr. King stated that he
365 would rather see cuts than scaled drawings. Mr. Elperin commented that the Commission had
366 asked for and received scale drawings of the front entry porch.

367
368 Mr. Batchelor stated that he encourages this level of specificity.

369
370 Mr. King made a motion that the application should be revised, and that there could be a
371 smaller light at each entrance to include one light at the front entrance preferably in the ceiling,
372 one or two lights at the garage, one light at the rear addition, small lights by a walkway or
373 stairs; additionally the Commission would like to see scaled drawings of the proposed entry
374 lights. Mr. Jack seconded the motion. The Commission voted 6 in favor, 0 abstained, and 0
375 opposed.

376
377 Mr. King stated that he felt none of the options for the garage vent were acceptable, and that
378 the applicant should find a different way to heat the garage.

379
380 Mr. Batchelor commented that there might need to be an onsite meeting with an engineer to
381 discuss if the garage could be made comfortable with the uses normally associated with a
382 garage.

383
384 Mr. Elperin stated that he prefers there is no heat in the garage. Mr. Elperin stated that he
385 thinks global warming is an issue, and that every space regardless of whether someone can
386 afford it does not need to be heated as the world is dying.

387
388 Ms. Armstrong reminded the Commission that the vent had been installed without approval or
389 input from the Commission, and it is an eye sore. Ms. Armstrong continued that if there is no
390 good plan to relocate the vent, then it needs to be removed, and if not fines should be imposed.

391
392 Mr. Batchelor moved that if the vent is not approved, then it needs to be removed and if it is
393 not removed then there will be appropriate fines. Mr. Jack seconded the motion. The
394 Commission voted 6 in favor, 0 abstained, and 0 opposed.

395
396 Ms. Birmingham alerted the Commission that a cupola and copper weather vane in the shape
397 of a bear had been installed on the recently installed detached shed without approval. Ms.
398 Birmingham continued to state that the unapproved work would be heard at a June hearing. Mr.
399 Elperin asked if the shed was approved by the Commission. Ms. Birmingham replied that it
400 was part of the stamped plans and the shed itself appears to conform to what was approved.

401
402 **PUBLIC HEARINGS – DEMOLITION**

403
404 **119 Payson Road** – Request to lift the stay of partial demolition of the house (Joseph Allen
405 and Mary Kenda, applicants).

406
407 Ms. McCarthy presents the case.

408
409 Ms. Duff: Points out renderings in packet and outlines process of zoning approval.

410
411 Mr. Sousa: Explains changes to the existing house, the project takes an existing addition on
412 stilts and creates a foundation.
413
414 Mr. Hyman: States that he is a neighbor and supports the project.
415
416 Mr. Elperin: States that the addition sets in 1 ft. on the right side, steps out 1 ft. on the left and
417 that the commission usually asks additions to be set back. Asks if this is due to foundation.
418
419 Mr. Sousa: States that if the addition is set back it creates a weird void.
420
421 Discussion of roof intersection and foundation details.
422
423 Mr. Batchelor: States that this home is not in a local historic district. Agrees that Mr.
424 Elperin's point is valid, and that he is not convinced the addition will look good as proposed.
425 States that he would be fine with the walls being lined up, no setback. Suggests a 3D model
426 from the front would illuminate the difficulty with the proposed plan. Expresses support for
427 treatment of façade and footprint of the project.
428
429 Further discussion of foundation, roof rake and gable tie-ins.
430
431 Mr. King: States that the discussion is advisory. Motions to approve the application.
432
433 Mr. Elperin: Seconds the motion.
434
435 All vote in favor.
436
437 **1762 Beacon Street** – Application for the partial demolition of the building and full demolition
438 of the detached garage (Rony Shapiro, applicant).
439
440 Ms. McCarthy presents the case.
441
442 Mr. Souza: States the he feels the garage is not historic and asks for the Commission to
443 consider it separately from the house.
444
445 Mr. Jack: Asks if this in the Beacon Street corridor.
446
447 Mr. Elperin: Asks if the Workman's Circle owns this building.
448
449 Mr. Sousa: Explains that they have sold the building, and a developer has an agreement to
450 purchase.
451
452 Mr. Jack: States that this is a very historic property.
453
454 Mr. King: Moves to uphold the determination of significance.
455

456 Mr. Elperin: Seconds the motion.
457
458 All vote in favor.
459
460 The meeting adjourned.
461
462