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Brookline Preservation Commission
MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 10, 2019 MEETING
Brookline Town Hall, Room 103, 333 Washington Street

Commissioners Present

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

Commissioners Absent:

David Jack

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

Commission Members reviewed the draft meeting minutes for the March 21, 2018 Preservation Commission meeting and made revisions at this time. Mr. Elperin moved to approve the draft minutes as revised. Ms. Armstrong seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Members next reviewed the June 11, 2019 draft minutes and submitted revisions as well. Mr. Elperin moved to approve the minutes as revised. Ms. Armstrong seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Members then reviewed and revised the July 9, 2019 draft meeting minutes. Mr. Elperin moved to accept the draft minutes as revised. Mr. King seconded the motion and all voted in favor with the exception of Ms. Armstrong, who abstained as she was not present at that meeting.

Commission Members reviewed the draft minutes for the 44 Dunster Road Subcommittee. Mr. King moved to approve the minutes as written and Mr. Elperin seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

The minutes of the 17 Hawthorn Road subcommittee meeting were reviewed and revised at this time. Mr. Panciera moved to approve the minutes as revised and Ms. Armstrong seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Commission Members agreed to continue their review of the 16 Prescott Street and 61 Spooner Road Subcommittee minutes until the next meeting.

Public Comment (for items not on the agenda)

47
48 There was no public comment at this time.

49
50 **PUBLIC HEARINGS – LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS**

51
52 **51 Abbottsford Road (Graffam McKay LHD) – Application for a Certificate of**
53 **Appropriateness to restore a platform, door, and railings in order to provide egress from**
54 **the third floor, restore a set of oval windows, replace existing vinyl windows with wood**
55 **windows on the west side bay of the third floor, replace existing vinyl windows with wood**
56 **windows on the third floor front and rear dormers (John Reinstein and Nancy Gertner,**
57 **applicants)**

58
59 Ms. Kritzer reviewed the case report.

60
61 Owner Nancy Gertner explained that the house was on the historic walking tour used by the
62 Kennedy Birthplace National Historic Site and that they had wanted to restore its missing
63 original features for years. She noted how changes in the 1950s had undermined the original
64 design and explained how the proposed work was consistent with both their needs and the
65 history of the house. Owner John Reinstein explained that the new third floor door was needed
66 for emergency egress. The house had previously had access through a window but he was more
67 comfortable having a door if needed. The proposed new railing around the third floor access
68 was consistent with their need for safety.

69
70 Mr. King opened the discussion to public comment. There was none at this time.

71
72 Mr. Elperin thought that it was reasonable to want to install railings for safety around the roof.
73 He thought that the railings shown in the photo would be a good match for the house but was
74 concerned that the 3D image presented used a different type of railing. He asked to have the
75 image corrected and for scaled drawings to be submitted for the proposed changes. He stated
76 that he would like to see a dimensioned plan as well as scaled drawings for the new oval
77 windows on the Naples Road facades. He suggested that they install the key details shown in
78 the historic photos on the new oval windows as well. For the wood replacement windows in the
79 bay, he questioned the use of the eight over one window, noting that it had been four equal
80 sized windows as originally designed. Mr. Elperin stated that he was ok with using wood
81 double pane windows in the dormers as they would be replacing vinyl windows that were
82 already double pane. Mr. Elperin questioned whether it would be better to use 5/8” instead of
83 7/8” wide muntins.

84
85 The Contractor stated that they could use a 7/8” muntins with the putty glaze but that the 5/8”
86 muntins were available in the turned finish and that they could use the 5/8” muntins if the
87 Commission preferred them. He noted that they were not planning to make any changes to the
88 design or configuration of the muntins and had not proposed the additional trim on the oval
89 windows as they were concerned about the cost. Mr. Elperin asked to confirm the design and
90 placement of the oval windows with a simple 2D drawing of the new windows in relation to
91 the dormer. The Contractor stated that there would be no change in the dimensions of the bay

92 window or dormer and explained how the windows would be installed without impacting the
93 window frame.

94

95 Mr. King noted that the new double pane windows would replace vinyl replacement windows
96 and that there were no original windows left on the third floor of the building. He thought that
97 it would be better to install single pane wood windows in their place but asked whether the
98 Commission should consider allowing double pane windows in this case. He recognized that
99 the Applicant could install vinyl double pane windows in the openings instead as they were
100 already in place. Mr. Elperin thought that requiring property owners to use storms to save
101 original windows was correct but questioned using them with newer replacement windows. He
102 noted that new single pane windows would not be the same as the original windows on the
103 house. He thought that the requirement to preserve historic fabric did not need to apply when
104 replacing later alterations.

105
106 Mr. Batchelor asked for additional information on which windows would be replaced.
107 Members reviewed existing photos of the house and noted that the windows on the first and
108 second floors were largely intact but all the third floor windows were gone. The historic photo
109 with the original oval windows was also reviewed. It was noted that the building had once been
110 a two-family home but that it has been a single family house now for many years.

111
112 Ms. Armstrong noted that because the windows were already vinyl, the owners had the option
113 of installing new vinyl windows in their place. She thought that the new windows were an
114 improvement over the existing ones and that it would be appropriate to allow the use of double
115 pane replacement windows in this case since the existing windows were already double pane.
116 Mr. King noted that the modern windows would eventually fail and members discussed when
117 if it might be appropriate to allow double pane windows to be installed in place of new single
118 pane windows. Mr. King noted that it was good to have a sense of how all of the Commission
119 members felt on this subject.

120
121 Mr. Elperin noted that new six-over-one windows were proposed for the dormers and
122 wondered if it would look odd with the vinyl one-over-one windows in the other dormers. The
123 Contractor explained that this work was considered to be phase one and that they planned to
124 renovate the right side of the third floor in the future, at which point they would replace the
125 remaining vinyl windows with six-over-one wood windows. Mr. Batchelor thought that the
126 type of window to be used was a difficult call. He thought that going back to wood windows
127 should be encouraged and also understood the wish to install double glazed windows. He
128 thought that the Owners were doing a good job with the structure and that they should be given
129 some leeway on the windows. Members discussed whether one-over-one or six-over-one
130 windows should be used. Staff noted that the surrounding buildings all had a similar mix of
131 one-over-one windows on the first two floors and six-over-one windows at the attic level.
132 Members agreed that six-over-one windows should be used.

133
134 A question was raised about installing new storm windows. Mr. Elperin was not sure why
135 storm windows should be installed if they were not protecting original fabric. Mr. Batchelor
136 noted that the owners were making an effort to keep the historic character of the building and
137 that putting back original details was encouraged.

138 It was noted that the Applicants had separately applied to install two new a/c condensers below
139 the metal fire escape in the rear left corner of the building. Members thought that the proposed
140 concept was fine and did not feel that filling in the risers was necessary.

141
142 Two door styles – one with a full glass door and one with a half glass door – were provided for
143 the Commission’s review. Members agreed to leave it to the owner to decide. The Owners
144 stated that they preferred the half glass option.

145
146 Mr. Elperin moved to approve the installation of the new deck with wood railings with square
147 balusters to be supported by the submission of a dimensional drawing; a new half-glass wood
148 door in the northeast dormer; new six-over-one double hung wood simulated divided light
149 windows with 5/8 inch muntins in place of the vinyl replacement windows in the northwest
150 and southwest dormers with the understanding that the asymmetry between the dormers will
151 be corrected in the future with the installation of a matching wood window in the southeast
152 dormer; new eight-over-one and four-over-one double hung wood simulated divided light
153 windows in the third floor bay on the Naples Road façade as submitted; and two new wood
154 simulated divided light oval windows according to a new drawing to be submitted which
155 shows the relationship of the windows to the third floor bay and with the request that the
156 owners consider adding the block detail shown on the early photos of the house around the
157 oval windows if possible. Mr. Batchelor seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

158
159 **PUBLIC HEARINGS – DEMOLITION**

160
161 **25 White Place – Request to lift the stay of partial demolition of the house (Alan Rawizza,**
162 **applicant)**

163
164 Ms. Kritzer reviewed the case report.

165
166 Attorney Robert Cornetta, Owner Alan Rawizza, and Architect Thomas Rose were present for
167 the discussion. Mr. Cornetta stated that they were asking that the existing demolition delay be
168 lifted in order to construct a 145 sf. addition over the existing kitchen. He added that they had
169 met with neighbors to discuss their concerns with the design.

170
171 Mr. King opened the discussion to public comment. Ben Moor, 24 Davis Avenue, stated that
172 he had had concerns that the original plan was not in keeping with the area. He had since met
173 with the owner and their representatives to discuss changes to the design and had wanted to
174 make sure that the current proposal was in keeping with the existing building. He had
175 questioned the proposed roof material and noted that the rest of the building had an
176 architectural asphalt shingle roof. He stated that this is a beautiful neighborhood and a National
177 Register District.

178
179 Members reviewed the proposed plans. Mr. Elperin thought that it was a very nice, very
180 modest addition and that the proposed metal connector was a nice way to separate the two
181 roofs. Mr. King asked about the pipes shown on the photos as running up the side façade. Mr.
182 Rawizza stated that it was for an existing mini-split system in the house. Mr. Batchelor asked if
183 they would be keeping the existing offset between the house and the rear addition. Mr. Rose

184 answered that they would. Mr. King moved to accept the proposed design as submitted and lift
185 the delay of demolition. Mr. Elperin seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

186

187 **290 Tappan Street – Application for the partial demolition of the house (290-292 Tappan**
188 **Street LLC, applicant)**

189

190 Ms. Birmingham reviewed the case report.

191

192 Attorney Shayna Galinat represented the applicants. She noted that they had originally been
193 scheduled for the August meeting and thanked the Commission for allowing the continuance
194 while they worked on the proposed design. The Applicants were planning to make changes to
195 the house which they believed would trigger demolition review. The project was also under
196 review with the Planning Board and ZBA.

197

198 Mr. King opened the discussion to public comment. Ted Offner, 295 Tappan Street, stated that
199 he supported the staff finding that the building is historically significant. Amitabh Seraf, 294
200 Tappan Street, also agreed with the staff finding.

201

202 Ms. Armstrong agreed that the building was historically significant and noted its contribution
203 to the streetscape. Ms. Ecker thought that the house had an interesting design. Mr. Elperin
204 moved to uphold the staff determination of significance for 290 Tappan Street and issue a
205 twelve month stay of demolition through September 10, 2020. Mr. Kleiner seconded the
206 motion and all voted in favor.

207

208 **95 Clark Road – Application for the partial demolition of the house (Susan Fuld,**
209 **applicant)**

210

211 Ms. Birmingham reviewed the case report.

212

213 Architect Miriam Spear and Owner Susan Fuld were present for the discussion. Ms. Spear
214 stated that she recognized that the ca. 1929 main house was historic but thought that the current
215 appearance of the flat roofed 1964 addition detracted from its historic character. Ms. Fuld
216 stated that she had lived in the house for 28 years and that the addition was often mistaken for a
217 garage, which she thought spoke to the fact that it did not work with the rest of the house. She
218 added that their neighbors were very supportive of their plans for changes to the building.

219

220 Mr. King clarified that the Commission had to look at the house as a whole and not its
221 individual elements. He opened the discussion to public comment and there was none at this
222 time.

223

224 Mr. Kleiner stated that the consistency of the property with the other homes built at the same
225 time was the strongest reason for its historic significance. Ms. Fuld stated that they had built an
226 addition on the rear of the house in 1996 and that no one had raised the question of its
227 significance at that time. Mr. King agreed with Mr. Kleiner. He thought that it did not have a
228 lot of significance on its own but that it did as part of a group which the Commission tended to
229 find significant. Mr. Elperin thought that it was a substantial house that fit well on the site. Ms.

230 Spear stated that she was not questioning the significance of the house, just the addition. Mr.
231 King explained that the Commission could only look at the building as a whole at this stage.
232 Mr. Kleiner moved to uphold the staff determination of significance for 95 Clark Road and
233 issue a twelve month stay of demolition through September 10, 2020. Mr. Elperin seconded the
234 motion and all voted in favor.

235

236 **7 Pine Road – Application for the full demolition of the garage (Faheem Rasool and Neda**
237 **Shahhosseini, applicants)**

238

239 Ms. Kritzer reviewed the case report.

240

241 Owners Faheem Rasool and Neda Shahhosseini explained that they had lived in the house for
242 16 years. Both the house and garage were non-conforming and they were planning to replace
243 their garage with a new building that sat farther back from Pine Road. They explained that
244 even their Mini could not fit into the existing garage which also had termite damage.

245

246 Mr. King opened the discussion to public comment. There was no public comment at this time.

247

248 Mr. Elperin thought that the house and garage were married together and made a very nice
249 pair. Mr. Kleiner noted the connection between the house and Historic Williamsburg which
250 shared the same project architect and thought it was hard not to find the buildings significant.
251 Mr. Kleiner moved to uphold the staff determination of significance for 95 Clark Road and
252 issue a eighteen month stay of demolition through March 10, 2021. Mr. Elperin seconded the
253 motion and all voted in favor.

254

255 **229 Boylston Street – Application for the full demolition of the house (Shawn Nightingale**
256 **and Jay Jakubowski, applicants)**

257

258 Ms. Kritzer presented the case report.

259

260 Attorney Shayna Galinat represented the applicants. She asked the Commission to find the
261 structure to be not significant. She explained that property was being sold in conjunction with
262 223 Boylston Street and that both the house at 223 Boylston and the garage at 229 Boylston
263 had already been found to be not significant. She believed that 229 Boylston Street was now
264 out of place in this neighborhood and noted the new construction already taking place on
265 Leverett and Boylston Streets. A question was raised on the use of the building and it was
266 noted to be residential.

267

268 Mr. Elperin agreed that the building looked out of place and thought that it was ultimately
269 doomed due to the ongoing redevelopment of Route 9. However, he did not feel that the
270 Commission could not find it to be significant due to its design and the integrity of its original
271 detailing. Mr. King agreed that it was a handsome structure with a lot of interesting detail and
272 wondered if it could be moved.

273

274 Mr. King opened the discussion to public comment. Todd Laskin stated that he is a realtor and
275 had been in the house. The interior has not been maintained and he did not think that the house

276 could survive a move. He noted that Brookline was encouraging development in this area and
277 was concerned that a one-year delay would limit its potential. He also thought that the physical
278 structure was badly deteriorated. Ms. Galinat agreed that the future development of both sites
279 would be impacted if a delay was imposed.

280
281 Mr. Batchelor asked if the owner was aware of the recent change in the bylaw that ties the
282 demolition application to the owner and not the property. Ms. Galinat stated that they were
283 aware of the requirements. Ms. Armstrong asked if the Commission was bound to find a
284 property historic because it had once been a nice structure. She noted that it no longer had a
285 neighborhood and now appeared to be out of place in this location. Mr. King did not think that
286 the Commission was bound to find the structure significant but noted that the house had
287 retained integrity of material and design. He wondered if it could be restored and asked if the
288 age and integrity of design was enough to find a structure historically significant.

289
290 Mr. Elperin noted that the house had retained its original windows and detail and thought that it
291 was remarkable that so much historic fabric was intact in this area. He was not sure, though,
292 whether the building had a chance of surviving in this location. Mr. Batchelor noted that this
293 property was raising a curious element in the process. He thought that this was a significant
294 older house but did not think that it was in the best interest of the town to have it removed. Mr.
295 Panciera agreed but did not think it was inconsistent to find a house historically significant and
296 still feel that it could come down. Ms. Armstrong noted that there was a provision in the bylaw
297 for demolition by neglect and this issue was reviewed.

298
299 Mr. Laskin stated that he thought the neighborhood had already changed dramatically and no
300 longer supported this type of housing. Ms. Galinat thought that the Commission could consider
301 not imposing a delay in certain instances when it would cause an undue burden on the property
302 owner or project.

303
304 Mr. Batchelor moved to uphold the staff determination of significance for 229 Boylston Street
305 and issue a twelve month stay of demolition through September 10, 2020 with the recognition
306 that there will need to be changes to the site in the future. Mr. Elperin seconded the motion and
307 all voted in favor.

308
309 **50 Stearns Road – Application for the full demolition of the house (Apiary LLC,**
310 **applicant)**

311
312 Ms. Birmingham presented the case report.

313
314 Attorney Shayna Galinat represented the applicants. She stated that she had nothing to add and
315 that her clients would work with the Commission if a delay was imposed.

316
317 Mr. King opened the discussion to public comment. An abutter stated that this was an
318 important house and that the neighborhood had already lost multiple homes. She thought that
319 this was one of the few individual houses left in the area.

320

321 Ms. Ecker thought that this was a significant house and noted that it was one of the last ones on
322 the street. Ms. Armstrong noted that there were other homes across the street and that it did not
323 stand alone in the area. Mr. Elperin thought that this situation was similar to the previous one
324 on Boylston Street and that a very similar argument could be made for its significance.

325
326 Mr. King moved to uphold the staff determination of significance for 50 Stearns Road and
327 issue a twelve month stay of demolition through September 10, 2020. Ms. Ecker seconded the
328 motion and all voted in favor.

329
330 **75-77 Griggs Road – Application for the full demolition of the house (Griggs Road Realty**
331 **LLC, applicant)**

332
333 Ms. Birmingham presented the case report.

334
335 Attorney Shayna Galinat was present along with the owners of the building and Architect Kent
336 Duckham. She presented a letter from Albert Rex of MacRostie Historic Advisors explained
337 why the building should not be considered historically significant because it was of later
338 construction and an architectural intrusion in the neighborhood. Mr. Duckham pointed out that
339 the National Register district skips all of the other contemporary buildings in the area. He
340 thought that it was only included because of the buildings surrounding it and that it did not
341 have the same level of historic character as the other structures. He added that they planned to
342 knit the two sides back together with a new design for a two family structure.

343
344 Mr. King opened the discussion to public comment. A neighbor stated that this was a very
345 interesting street and neighborhood situated in one of the lowest points in Brookline. He was
346 concerned with the environmental issues that could be raised with the demolition of the house.
347 Mr. King explained that the Commission could only consider the historic significance of the
348 building at this time. A second neighbor felt that just because the building did not fit into the
349 neighborhood did not mean it was not historically significant. Susan Mulski, 81 Griggs Road,
350 stated that she was very concerned with the proposed development.

351
352 Mr. Elperin noted that this building had never been a contributing structure and was not
353 wonderful architecture in and of itself. He thought that the building could be found Not
354 Significant. Ms. Ecker agreed that it was not part of the overall historic character of the
355 neighborhood and was not an interesting structure on its own. Mr. Kleiner moved that that the
356 Commission not uphold the staff determination of significance for 75-77 Griggs Road. Mr.
357 Elperin seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

358
359 **OTHER BUSINESS**

360
361 **Design Guidelines Update**

362
363 Staff explained that there had been several discussions in recent months about the need to
364 update the existing Design Guidelines. Mr. Batchelor moved to create a Design Guideline
365 Subcommittee to begin work on revisions to the guidelines. Mr. Panciera seconded the motion.
366 Ms. Ecker, Mr. Elperin, and Mr. King volunteered to serve on the subcommittee. It was agreed

367 that additional members could be brought at different times to assist with specific sections. Mr.
368 Kleiner asked what the drivers were for this process. Members noted that questions had come
369 up over the last few months about how to address outdoor elements and features, steel
370 windows, and the use of double versus single pane windows.

371
372 A question was also raised about Accessory Dwelling Units. It was noted that Karen Martin in
373 the Planning Department is working on this issue at this time.

374
375 The meeting adjourned at 9:07.

376
377