

1 *Brookline Preservation Commission*
2 **MINUTES OF THE September 25th, 2019 MEETING**
3 **Brookline Town Hall, School Committee Room, 333 Washington Street**
4

5
6 **Commissioners Present**

7 David King, Chair
8 Elton Elperin, Vice Chair
9 David Jack
10 Richard Panciera
11 Elizabeth Armstrong
12 Wendy Ecker
13 Jim Batchelor
14

Commissioners Absent:

Peter Kleiner

15 **Staff:** Valerie Birmingham and Tina McCarthy

16 **Members of the Public:** See list
17

18
19 Mr. King called the meeting to order at 6:40 PM.
20

21 **Approval of Minutes**

22
23 There were no minutes to approve.
24

25 **Public Hearing-Warrant Article 21**
26

27 Jesse Grey introduces Warrant Article 21, the proposed ban on new natural gas infrastructure, to
28 the Commission, explaining its applicability to new construction and gut renovations as well as
29 exemptions for restaurants and the proposed appeal process. He asked for the Commissioner's
30 feedback on the proposal. The commissioners discussed the effectiveness of heat pumps, the
31 "green" content of the currently available grid power supply, and asked for further explanation of
32 the appeals process. Mr. Grey asked if the Commission was interested in being empowered to
33 grant recommendations for waivers. Ms. Armstrong explained it would be difficult for the
34 Commission to judge financial hardship and other commissioners agreed this is not something
35 they would want to be involved in. The Commission agreed to vote on the issue at the next
36 hearing
37

38 **PUBLIC HEARINGS – LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS**
39

40 **15 Circuit Road (Chestnut Hill North LHD)-** Application for a Certificate of
41 Appropriateness to install new gutters on the existing attached garage; repair and replace
42 existing windows and garage doors. (Jonathan and Danya Dinwoodley, applicants)
43

44 Ms. Birmingham presented the case.
45

46 There was no public comment.

47
48 The commissioners discussed the details of the garage door and gutters. Mr. Batchelor asked
49 staff if there was an original photo of the garage available. Ms. Birmingham replied that there
50 was not. Mr. Batchelor raised the concern that the new doors looked like carriage house doors.

51
52 Mr. Elperin made the motion to approve the plans as submitted with a final shop version of the
53 garage doors to be reviewed and approved by staff. Mr. Jack seconded the motion.

54
55 The Commission VOTED: 7-0-0
56 7 in favor, 0 against and 0 abstained from voting

57
58
59 **20 Adams Street (Crowninshield LHD)** – Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to
60 install new wood fencing, a metal gate across the driveway and a three piece arbor, and to
61 replace the wood screening around the air conditioning units with metal fencing. (Derek
62 Wallace, applicant)

63
64 Ms. McCarthy presented the case.

65
66 Mr. Wallace introduced himself and apologized for the fence violation over the summer. He
67 explained that the current application is an effort to provide a secure area in the yard for
68 children and a dog. He recently had an issue with a stranger trespassing and would like the
69 driveway gate to increase security. Regarding the A/C screening, he explained that the current
70 fences are redundant.

71
72 Mr. Nelson, a neighbor at 24 Adams Street explained that he uses a metal gate on his driveway
73 regularly and agreed that the fence on the property line needs improvement. He expressed
74 support for the project, stating that it is fully compatible with the neighborhood.

75
76 Mr. Jack asked about the reasons for choosing metal for the arbors. Mr. Wallace stated that
77 this was the suggestion of the landscape architect, mirroring the metal storm windows frames.
78 He also noted that this element of the project would require further zoning relief.

79
80 Mr. Elperin stated that he felt the use of metal was fine as the design of the arbor and gate are
81 simple. He expressed support for the idea of replacing the redundant A/C screen but
82 questioned the design of the metal panels and wondered if the screen could wrap around the
83 corners to be more structurally stable and reduce visibility.

84
85 Mr. King asked if the A/C units would be visible since the proposed screen is lower than the
86 original. Mr. Wallace stated that the panels could be higher but he didn't see a need for it.

87
88 Mr. Batchelor encouraged reconsidering the design of the screen, agreeing with Mr. Elperin's
89 earlier comments. Mr. Elperin mentioned the lack of detail in the gate drawing, requesting
90 structural details. Mr. King added that the gate should be iron, not aluminum.

91
92 Ms. Ecker asked if the gate was operated electronically. Mr. Wallace replied that it was.

93
94 Mr. Batchelor made the motion to approve the plans with the condition of a modest increase to
95 the height of the condenser screen and the metal panels extending around the corners to
96 provide structural support. Final details of the design to be approved by staff.

97
98 Mr. Panciera seconded the motion.

99
100 The Commission VOTED: 7-0-0
101 7 in favor, 0 against and 0 abstained from voting

102
103
104 **PUBLIC HEARINGS – DEMOLITION**

105
106 **95 Clark Road** – Request to lift the stay of partial demolition to the house. (Susan Fuld,
107 Applicant)

108
109 Ms. Birmingham presented the case.

110
111 Ms. Spear stated that she felt the proposed gable roof was more appropriate to the original
112 house than the existing flat roof.

113
114 There was no public comment.

115
116 Ms. Ecker asked if the siding would be wood clapboards. Ms. Spear replied that it would.

117
118 Mr. Elperin expressed general support for the design but asked whether there could be a better
119 arrangement for the windows. Ms. Spear explained that the intent was to line up the outer
120 windows with the ones below, while the inner two are placed according to the interior plan.
121 The commissioners discussed possible solutions. Ms. Spear explained that the bed was
122 between the inner windows, making it difficult to move them much.

123
124 Mr. Jack asked about the reveal in the transition between clapboard and brick siding (below).
125 Mr. Elperin added that the wood usually sits forward of the brick. Ms. Birmingham raised the
126 concern that a change in footprint may interfere with zoning. Ms. Spear noted that creating a
127 reveal does not need to add livable space.

128
129 The commissioners briefly discussed the cornice tie-in and further options for the windows.

130
131 Mr. Elperin made a motion to accept the design as submitted. Ms. Ecker seconded the motion.

132
133 The Commission VOTED: 7-0-0
134 7 in favor, 0 against and 0 abstained from voting.

135
136 **143 Laurel Road** – Request to lift the stay of partial demolition of the house (Joshua and
137 Hannah Ganjei, applicants)

138

139 Ms. McCarthy presented the case.

140

141 Mr. Worthington introduced himself, the applicants and the design team. Mr. Saltsman
142 explained that the design approach for the front and the back of the house were very different.
143 The front focused on minimal streetscape changes. Mr. Worthington added that the plans had
144 already received approval from the ZBA.

145

146 There was no public comment.

147

148 Mr. King stated that the addition is in the right place but that the original house had very
149 simple rooflines. He expressed confusion about the connection to the garage. Mr. Elperin
150 agreed that the rooflines are complicated. Mr. Saltsman explained that he had tried to use
151 simple rooflines, but the current solution seemed architecturally better. The commissioners
152 and architect discussed the possibility and aesthetics of different massing options. Mr.
153 Panciera mentioned that the addition created a large blank wall. Mr. Saltsman explained that
154 this part of the building is not really visible and the design is still in flux for this area.

155

156 Mr. Batchelor stated that the house is well preserved, that the design meets the goal of the
157 demo delay bylaw.

158

159 Mr. Elperin asked if the existing faux chimney was original. Mr. Saltsman replied that it
160 appeared to be. The Commissioners discussed the existing chimneys further.

161

162 Mr. Batchelor moved to approve the design as submitted, giving the applicants the opportunity
163 to make changes in consultation with staff if they are in keeping with the current design. Mr.
164 Panciera seconded the motion.

165

166 The Commission VOTED: 7-0-0
167 7 in favor, 0 against and 0 abstained from voting.

168

169 **162 Goddard Avenue** – Application for the full demolition of the house and chapel (Hellenic
170 Association of Boston, applicant)

171

172 Ms. McCarthy presented the case.

173

174 Mr. Mongold of Narrow Gate architects introduced himself.

175

176 Ms. Leung of 60 Thorndike Street commented that this is a beautiful property and it would be a
177 shame to demolish it.

178

179 Mr. Jack stated that he agreed with the staff determination and motioned to find both the house
180 and chapel significant. Ms. Armstrong seconded the motion.

181

182 The Commission VOTED: 7-0-0
183 7 in favor, 0 against and 0 abstained from voting.

184

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

186

187 No public comment.

188

189 **151-153 Babcock Street-** Advisory review of proposed new construction on two new vacant
190 lots.

191

192 Ms. Birmingham presented the case.

193

194 Mr. Duckham presented additional site plans, landscape and street photos to the commission. He
195 pointed out row houses in the district, explaining that he tried to work off the existing streetscape
196 to create the design, bridging between the 2 ½ and 3 ½ story buildings. Using a mansard roof
197 was his solution to achieve this. He stated that he had met with the neighbors, who were very
198 concerned with the addition of cars in surface parking, a problem solved by having the garages
199 underneath the houses. He explained the changes to date: changing brick siding to wood,
200 pushing the front building back to match existing street setbacks, shrinking the garage doors and
201 moving them closer together. The landscape study attempts to connect the front door with the
202 street. He stated that the neighbors were also concerned with the height, which is 35' or less.

203

204 Mr. King opened the discussion to public comment.

205

206 Michael Blau of 87 Crowninshield Road stated that he objects to the fence of the second home;
207 he would like wood fencing and plantings to provide privacy.

208

209 Ms. Birmingham reminded the audience that the Commission was not presented with subdivision
210 plans.

211

212 Kristina Colbert of 163 Babcock Street stated that Babcock Street was once named the prettiest
213 street. She expressed the feeling that the proposed homes are huge, and that their neighbor 157
214 is an exception among the single family homes on the street. She pointed out that the proposed
215 homes are not shaped like others on the street and there is no precedent for a garage under a
216 house on the street.

217

218 Mr. King asked if there was any precedent for this type of new development in a Local historic
219 District. Ms. Birmingham recalled the Crafts Landing case in Chestnut Hill North.

220

221 Ms. Armstrong asked who had subdivided and who gave permission for the lots. Mr. King
222 replied that 157 had sold half of their lot, approval was not required. An audience member
223 clarified that the owners of 157 had four deeds to the property. Mr. Allen confirmed this. Ms.
224 Armstrong asked if the project had gone to zoning yet. Mr. Allen explained that they were going
225 to preservation first. Ms. Ecker asked if the square footage was maxed. Mr. Allen stated that it
226 was not, the front is close, 6,158 allowed, while the rear is allowed 9,125.

227

228 Mr. Elperin stated that the mansard roof is strange, but not as much in its position between 157
229 and the apartment buildings. He expressed concern about the approach from the street and the
230 amount of garage visible on the rear unit, asking if this unit could be turned. Mr. Batchelor

231 shared this concern, wondering if things would fit better if the driveway was on the other side.
232 He pointed out that the driveway would then conform to the existing pattern in the neighborhood.
233 He noted that this district was formed because people did not want garages under houses. Ms.
234 Armstrong agreed, noting that this adds to the volume of the project.

235
236 Mr. King stated that there are two lots, but they are the size of one. The commission must
237 defend the district. He asked if the commission would be serving the district if they allowed 4
238 units where 1 should be. He suggested two units or lower square footage to lower the density.

239
240 Ms. Ecker asked about the appropriateness of the style. Mr. King stated that he was not
241 concerned with style so much.

242
243 Mr. Elperin stated that if this property was in the middle of the district he would feel differently.
244 He pointed out that 157 is raised just as high, which mitigates the effect of this development. He
245 also mentioned that if the cars come out (of the garages) and parked on the site there would be no
246 landscape. He asked for the car count requirement. Mr. Allen responded that they needed 2
247 spaces per unit. Mr. Panciera stated that he felt this property is the cornerstone of the district.

248
249 Mr. Jack pointed out that in the adjacent Crowninshield 40B development the garages went
250 under the houses. Mr. King recalled that the 40B was the project that started the district, and that
251 because of the 40B status, the commission's hands were tied. He also mentioned that only one
252 person opposed the creation of the district.

253
254 Ms. Ecker excused herself from the meeting.

255
256 Mr. Panciera mentioned that these houses have no traditional "front". Mr. Batchelor agreed,
257 adding that he supported increased density but it must be done carefully.

258
259 Mr. Elperin stated that he is opposed to 8 cars for 4 units. Mr. King agreed, noting that this site
260 is smaller than the one on Walnut St. and that was 2 units. He stated that two units is more
261 appropriate.

262
263 Ms. Birmingham asked the commissioners to comment on the mansard roof. Ms. Armstrong
264 could not recall if there were any in the district. Mr. Panciera stated that he had no objection to
265 the use of the mansard. Mr. Batchelor stated that mansards are not the problem, adding that he
266 really wanted to see the driveway on the other side. Mr. Allen confirmed that this was
267 possible.

268
269 Mr. Duckham mentioned that the upper level is set back from the street. Mr. Elperin noted that
270 this was unusual for a mansard.

271
272 Ms. Birmingham asked the commissioners what else they would want to see in the application.
273 Mr. Panciera requested a shadow study. Mr. Batchelor requested perspective drawings. He
274 also repeated his request to move the driveway, explaining that it would push the massing
275 closer to the apartment building. He suggested the architect explore the pattern of carriage

276 houses in his design. Mr. Elperin expressed support for using the building in the back to
277 increase density. Mr. Batchelor stated that he did not support the sunk garage.
278
279 Mr. King motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Elperin seconded the motion. The meeting
280 adjourned.