



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

DRAFT MINUTES

Tuesday, December 13, 2011 at 8:00 p.m.
Third Floor Conference Room

Staff Present: Kristi Chase.

Members Present: Alan Bingham*, Dick Bauer, Tom DeYoung*, Abby Freedman, Eric Parkes, and Todd Zinn*.

Members Absent: Kevin Allen, Natasha Burger**, DJ Chagnon*, Sarah Degutis*, Ryan Falvey, Derick Snare*, Kelly Speakman and Brad Stearns*

*Alternates

Others present: Richard Alfred, George Born, Diane Dooley, Adam Duchesneau, Dana Le Winter, Paul Mackey, Richard Sidebottom, and Albert Rex.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm.

REVIEW AND COMMENT

HPC 11.116 – Mystic Water Works at Capen Court Housing Project

Owners: Somerville Housing Authority

- I. Create 60 affordable rental dwelling units for seniors and persons with disabilities by
 - a. Converting the existing Mystic Pumping Station into 25 units;
 - b. Demolishing the existing 1941 garage and office buildings at the rear of the property; and
 - c. Constructing of a 35 unit apartment building.

Albert Rex, Director of MacRostie Historic Advisors with ***Diane Dooley***, Principal of DiMella Shaffer ***presented***. He reviewed the State and Federal tax credit programs with attention to the lengthy process involved in determining which of the many worthy projects would receive the limited dollars available. They would be requesting another letter of support from the HPC in January.



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The impacts of the alterations to the historic fabric with special attention to the form, massing and location of the proposed new structure would be taken into consideration by the MHC. Special attention would be paid to the masonry. He went over the history of the building and the existing conditions.

They are planning to put 25 units of housing in the original building and are looking at ways to insert a new floor at the level of the meeting rails on the double hung windows. The rails would be fairly robust. Damage had been done to the walls and openings by the stored construction equipment. MHC would also be looking at masonry samples to ensure a good match. They were also considering the view corridor in the placement of the proposed second building. A complete inventory of the existing windows has been completed. Approximately half of the windows were repaired on site and the other half are totally deteriorated. They plan to try to retain the existing fan lights and restore the non-operable door on the east elevation.

The non-contributing second structure would be removed to make way for the new building, which would be located behind the historic structure and which would be minimally visible from the public ROW due to a stepped roof line and location. It would be set back 50' from the front building. There is a grade change of about 1-story so that the front and backs of the proposed new building will be on different levels. Cementitious panels will be used, painted to act as a backdrop.

No Staff Recommendations were made since this is a federal tax credit project and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation would be used under the guidance of the MHC.

Comment was received in support of the project from Dana LeWinter, Director of Housing who has been working with the Somerville Housing Authority. She said that there was a waiting list with over 400 people for the existing elderly housing. Adam Duchesneau, Planner for the Planning Division answered some questions about zoning and setbacks.

Documents: City of Somerville Ordinance sections 7.16 – 7.27, Draft Property Form B, HPC Design Guidelines, Plans and photographs of the building.

Discussion. The Commission was interested in the various ways of inserting floors that would be minimally visible from the exterior but had no recommendations regarding other approaches to be considered. Retention of the original doors where applicable and techniques to retain the fan lights were also discussed although some methods had been discounted due to the prohibitive costs involved. Architectural shingles will be used but will not replicate the historic slate. Scale and massing of the proposed new building were the primary topics. The northern end of the building raised the most comments for its height and prominence, although the visibility of it was through a narrow view shed between the heavily planted neighboring property and the existing historic building. While the Commission generally liked the project, there was some concern that it might be too prominent. A suggestion was also made to include a sculpture on the site referencing the historic building's waterworks past.

No Decisions were made.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Upcoming Meeting Schedule for 2012: January 17, February 21, March 20, April 17, May 15, June 19, July 17, August 21, September 18, October 16, November 20, December 18.

All of the applications summarized above are available for public inspection at the Commission's Office on the third floor of City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, on Mon. -Wed. 9:00 am - 4:30 pm; Thurs. 9:00 am - 7:30 pm; and Fri. 9:00 am - 12:30 pm. Since cases may be continued to a later date(s), please check the agenda on the City's website, or call before attending (tel.: (617) 625-6600 x. 2525). Continued cases will not be re-advertised. Interested persons may provide comments to the Historic Preservation

Commission at the hearing, by fax to 617-625-0722, by e-mail to kchase@somervillema.gov , or by mail to the Historic Preservation Commission, City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA 02143.