

Somerville Historic Preservation Commission

Minutes

Tuesday, June 20, 2006
City Hall
3rd Floor Conference Room
6:30 p.m.

6:40 p.m. Meeting Called to order

Members Present: Dick Bauer, Stephen Glines, Michael Payne, Cheryl Vanderbilt, DJ Chagnon**, Susan Fontano*, Abby Freedman**, Jeff Meese*, Susan Rabinowitz**, Brad Stearns**. Abby Freedman and DJ Chagnon arrived at 6:48 pm. Cheryl Vanderbilt arrived at 6:50 pm and Susan Rabinowitz arrived at 7:15 pm.

Members Absent: John Bunzick, Barbara Mangum, David Guss*, Derick Snare*.

Alternates*

Alternate - non-voting.**

Staff Present: Kristi Chase; Katherine Montgomery, preservation intern

Deliberation of HPC Cases

Please be advised that the following cases will be heard in the following order or as soon following as practical.

HPC #06.35 – 45 Vinal Avenue

Applicant: Kevin Cipollaro for Glynnis Doucette, Owner

The Applicant seeks a Certificate of Appropriateness for the following:

1. Replace driveway with pavers; and
2. Erect a pergola at the end of driveway with an adjoining wood trellis fence.

The Applicant and his wife, Glynnis Doucette recently had a baby. Due to the new addition to the family, the Applicant was unable to submit all the information requested. He phoned to request that his case be heard next month (July), when he hopes to be more able to pull together all his photos and cut sheets.

*Michael Payne made a motion, seconded by Jeff Meese that the Application be **denied without prejudice due** to insufficient information. The vote was unanimous (6-0).*

HPC #06.36 – 93 Highland Avenue – City Hall Bus Shelter

Applicant: Arn Franzen, Senior Project Manager for City of Somerville, Owner

The Applicant seeks Certificate of Appropriateness for the following:

1. Demolish 10' x 12' brick bus shelter;
2. Enlarge area by cutting approximately 3' of granite wall and earth bank;
3. Reshape detailing to match existing along cut edge;
4. Install new concrete retaining wall; and
5. Install new 5' x 15' Pal-Li style CEMUSA bus shelter.

Because neither the Contractor nor the Project Manager was able to attend the meeting, the Staff presented the information on the proposed bus shelter and its installation.

Susan Fontano noted that the concourse is a major historic resource and is not the same as other areas of the City. Monies should be found for a more suitable shelter. That any structures located on the concourse should enhance the seat of government. Michael Payne noted that several years ago, the DPW wanted to put a large sign over the door of City Hall. Although it had been completed before it was brought to the attention of the HPC, it was denied because it did not meet the Guidelines. DJ Chagnon said that the proposed shelter was non-architecture but rather a big advertising wall. Jeff Meese mentioned that the existing structure was a bunker, late sixties riot-proof design which really detracts from the site. Abby said she would prefer no advertising on the site. DJ Chagnon and Brad Stearns both questioned whether CEMUSA would put up the shelter without the advertising given that would have their advertising on shelters everywhere else in the City.

Michael said that several years ago there had been a City Hall fencing project, granite walls had been part of that project. DJ noted that granite walls were not much more expensive than formed concrete walls that were proposed here once proper footings were dug and installed.

Susan Fontano would like to see alternatives to the proposed shelter. If a new bus shelter is to be located in front of City Hall, it should be done right.

The Commission had several questions about the project that the Staff was unable to answer regarding alternatives and absolutes. Dick Bauer noted that the Commission still had time to continue the case until July 18, 2006 and make an informed decision. Susan Fontano made a motion, seconded by Dick Bauer so that other options might be pursued regarding style, finish, advertising, etc. The Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to continue the case.

Demolition Reviews

HPC 06.16 D – 55-61 Clyde Street (MaxPac Site) - re: Update on proposed demolition of one vacant industrial building: 1928 Agar Manufacturing Company

Applicants: Leslie Donovan, Preservation Consultant; Matt O'Neill, Director of Development, KSS Realty Trust

Received
03/14/06

Determined Significant
03/21/06

Preferably Preserved
04/18/06

There had been no meetings with KSS since the last HPC meeting. A meeting is scheduled for 6/21/06.

HPC #06.27 D– 46 Pearl Street – re: Update on proposed demolition of 1871 Ezra Conant House

Applicant: John Mahoney, Developer

Received

04/20/06

Determined Significant

09/16/03

Preferably Preserved

05/16/06

A Subcommittee meeting was held with Mr. Mahoney on 6/12/06. Several neighbors attended and were supportive of the HPC effort to save the building. Mr. Mahoney was asked to submit various pieces of information to validate his claims of poor construction, unsafe conditions and the need to demolish as well as costs to rebuild. Neighbors and Commission Members are looking into land and building evaluation as well as possible buyers of the property. The Commission expressed a strong desire for Mr. Mahoney to continue with his original plans prepared by the firm of Boyes-Watson and not the more recently proposed plans.

Demolition Reviews by Staff Since Last Meeting

HPC 06.30 D – 143 Cedar Street – 1922 Concrete Block and Brick Garage (8 car)

Applicant: Mike Nikolosi

Received: 05/08/06

Decision: Not Significant (06/02/06)

HPC 06.37 D – 101 Orchard Street – 1927 concrete block garage

Applicant:

Received:06/06/06

Decision: Pending

Certificates of Non-Applicability Issued by the Staff

Section 106 and NEPA Reviews by Staff

HPC 06.32 – Cedar Street to Lowell Street Path Extension

Received:

5/16/06

Decision

“no adverse effect”

HPC 06.33 – 145-147 Broadway: Storefront Improvement Program

Received:

05/30/06

Decision

“no adverse effect”:

HPC 06.34 – 1291-1305 Broadway: Storefront Improvement Program

Received:

05/30/06

Decision

“no adverse effect”

HPC 06.38 – 94 Beacon Street: Cell Phone Antennae

Received:

06/06/06

Decision

SHPC review pending

Other Business

Introduction of new Commission member, Stephen A. Glines, Jr.

*Dick Bauer made a motion, seconded by Brad Stearns, to **approve the HPC May Minutes.** The vote was unanimous (7-0).*

- **LHD Repair & Maintenance Loan Program Proposal– Brad**
 - Subcommittee met and has beginnings of draft to be fleshed out

- **Expansion of Local Historic Districts Grant Project Update – Kristi**
 - Homeowner letter from Jim Kostaras introducing project completed
 - First mailing, Prospect Hill/Union Square going out this week
 - Formation of LHD Subcommittee

- **Milk Row Cemetery Preservation Grant Project Update – Kristi**
 - Met with Jan DaSilva from the MHC, Victor Walker and Francis Miller
 - Civil War monument has eagle back and is as pristine as its age allows
 - Several grave markers have been righted

Schedule of remaining SHPC meetings for 2006: Held on the third Tuesday of every month: July 18, August 15, September 19, October 17, November 21, and December 19.