



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

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

MINUTES

Tuesday, December 14, 2010 at 6:40 p.m.
Third Floor Conference Room
Somerville City Hall

Staff Present: Kristi Chase, and Brandon Wilson (in and out).

Members Present: Kevin Allen*, Sarah Degutis*, Tom DeYoung, Ryan Falvey, Abby Freedman, and Eric Parkes,

Members Absent: Dick Bauer, DJ Chagnon*, O. Susan Fontano*, Barbara Mangum, Michael Payne, Derick Snare*, and Brad Stearns.*

*Alternates

Others present: Alan Bingham, Natasha Burger, David Chilinski, Darin DiNucci, Richard DiGirolamo, Michael Giuliano, Rob May, Marta Mirais-Storr, Albert M Pacheco,

The meeting was called to order at 6:40 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

November 16, 2010

*The Commission voted (4-0-2 (Eric Parkes and Sarah Degutis abstaining)) to **accept** the November 16, 2010 minutes as amended.*

EXPANSION OF LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS PROJECT – VOTE

- Vote on final recommendations of the Commission on Group C to the BOA after the joint public hearing with the Legislative Matters Committee on November 16, 2010.

*The Commission voted unanimously (6-0) to **approve** the letter recommending the consideration of all the*



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properties in Group C as meriting designation as Local Historic District status by the Board of Aldermen.

DELIBERATION OF HPC CASES

HPC 10.90 – 27 Warren Avenue (continued from 10/19/10):

Applicant: Darin DiNucci, Owner, seeks a **Certificate of Appropriateness** to:

1. Remove enclosed 2-story porch ; and
2. Replace with open 2-story porch.

Darin DiNucci presented. He has looked at several of the neighboring porches and now has the framing up. He is open to any ideas for the detailing and would like to meet with a Commission member to work them out.

Staff recommendations were read.

No Public Comment was received.

Discussion: Relative merits of the porch styles found in the neighborhood and which would be the most appropriate for the new construction. Wrapped posts with brackets were preferred. Eric Parkes would meet with Darin DiNucci to refine the ideas, who would return to the Commission with plans.

Documents: City of Somerville Ordinance sections 7.16 – 7.27, Property Form B, HPC Guidelines, Staff recommendations, photos of the building and neighboring buildings, hand-drawn plans approved at the meeting.

Decisions: The **Commission** voted unanimously (**6-0**) to grant a continuance at the request of the applicant.

A conditional Certificate of Appropriateness was issued on 10/26/10 for the framing. The details are still to be determined.

HPC 09.67 Demolition – 378-382 Somerville Avenue, formerly Londontowne Antiques:

Applicant: W. James Herbert, Trustee.

Several subcommittee meetings have been held over the summer with the HPC Staff, other OSPCD Staff, the Owner, his architects, and a representative from the DRC. The Applicant's team has prepared plans to develop the entire site and retain the historic façade of the building. A draft Memoranda of Agreement between the Owner and the SHPC will be reviewed and subject to approval by the SHPC.

Applicant has requested a continuance until January 18, 2011.

No Public Comment was received.

There was no **Discussion:**

Documents: None received this month.

Decisions: *The Commission voted unanimously (6-0) to grant a continuance at the request of the Applicant.*

HPC 10.105 Demolition – 6-8 Beacon Street – 1917 yellow brick garage:

Applicant: Richard DiGirolamo, Attorney for Inman Square Lofts, LLC.

10/21/10

Determination as to whether the subject building is considered “significant” under section 7.28 (b). Public testimony will be taken, followed by discussion and a vote by the Commission.

***David Chilinski, architect presented.** This is the second iteration of a new building for the site. All the permits had been place but it proved impractical to build. Site dimensions limit the way it can be reconfigured to construct the desired project. They intend to move the curb cut to the south as the center entry cuts into the proposed 6-unit building. They have already made changes to the plans per comments by the Design Review Committee such as setting back the gate to the parking area. They cannot retain the parapet because they would interfere with the windows required on the second level. The building would have a modern skin, metal shingles, and stainless or zinc juliet balconies. The walls would be retained to a height of 10’.*

Structurally, the building has rusted supports that are causing the front to detach. Cleaning the bricks to rebuild the facade would not be cost effective, nor would they fit well with the current design. They would be willing to reuse a small number of the bricks to poetically memorialize the garage, perhaps around the inset gate area.

***David** has incorporated a little history in the design but will not be able to do much at this stage. They will use color and possibly retain some of the materials such as the date block. They would like the project to be honest and dignified. These are schematic designs. Details could be fleshed out in a working session.*

***Richard DiGirolamo** noted that the project began permitting back in 2006. The awareness that the building may significance came late in the process. While these types of buildings may have significance, their retention is not the highest and best use. These buildings do not work well for adaptive reuse. He does not believe that this building should be considered ‘preferably preserved’. The City has other such buildings of more architectural merit that could be retained. Alderman Heuston is supporting the removal of buildings with former automotive uses.*

***Staff Recommendations** were read.*

***Public Comment** was received. **Al Pacheco** stated that the building was an eyesore. He has spent a good deal of time and money on his own place. He would like to see the area improved.*

***Discussion:** **Kevin Allen** noted that condition should not be taken into consideration, because adequate maintenance over time would have kept the building in good shape. The building is a significant part of the neighborhood. In an era when it was important to take cars off the street, many such storage garages were built. A decision was made to not integrate the façade of the building into the design, how could the building and its importance be incorporated?*

***Abby Freedman** was concerned about the lack of open space against the street. Could there be a more free-standing entry that would integrate the existing arch of the front façade? The proportions of the site were discussed and why they affect the ultimate shape of the building. Commissioners would like more*

input generally in the design of buildings replaced by more modern structures but only have purview if a building is 'preferably preserved'.

Eric Parkes agreed to take part in a working session before the Planning Board meeting on ways to reference the garage.

Documents: City of Somerville Ordinance section 7.28, Property Form B, HPC Guidelines, Staff recommendations, photos, hand-drawn plans approved at the meeting.

Decisions: The Commission voted (4-1(Abby Freedman)-1 (Eric Parkes)) that while the building "Is at least 50 years old", the building was not 'significant' because it is not "importantly associated ... with the broad architectural, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City" and "... in the public interest to be preserved or rehabilitated rather than to be demolished."

REVIEW AND COMMENT

HPC 10.101 – 161 Broadway – Park Garage Company & 165 Broadway – aka Cross Street Elderly Center

11/8/10

Rob May, Director of Economic Development Division presented.

Discussion: City has a development opportunity that could result in the restoration of the tower and parapet of the fire station at 165 Broadway. The building needs a lot of TLC and to expand services. The City has an option to buy 161 Broadway which could be packaged with 165 Broadway. One of the requirements would be the reconstruction of the parapet and façade of the Florentine Revival building, but might mean the loss of the rear half of it to a taller structure. Points would be awarded for the most retention and rehabilitation of the fire station. Secretary of the Interior's Standards would be applied to the project. The Commission was generally positive about a project that would restore the tower and parapet to the streetscape. **Kevin Allen** noted that even with NR status, there might not be enough tax credit to entice a developer.

HPC 10.106 – 56-61 Clyde Street – MaxPac Site

11/18/10

Applicant: KSS Realty and Master Clyde St Acquisition Realty Trust

Review and comment of revised plans recently submitted by the development team as per the Memorandum of Agreement signed with the SHPC.

Discussion: The Commission generally liked the plans for the buildings. There was discussion about the visibility of the screening of the utilities on the roofs. It was decided that the screening was not that visible. Landscaping needs to be fleshed out.

They liked the grid system windows and the new flattened gable end on Buildings B and E, which related better to the original curtain wall building.

There was very little comment about Building A. There had been an entry from the park area in the previous iteration but not in the new one.

The Commission appreciated the attention to the front stoops as a means for relating that building to the neighborhood, but suggested that this concept should be taken further, and that more work was needed to make Building C feel warmer and more residential along the Warwick Street edge of the development,

possibly by revisiting the materials used on that side of the building and/or by increasing the articulation in the top story to break up the mass of the building.

HPC 10.109 – 100 Temple Street – St. Polycarp’s Roman Catholic Church & Rectory Complex
Applicant: Somerville Community Corporation 11/29/10

Courtney Koslow updated the Commission on Phase II development. Revised plans have been submitted. The buildings will be in a softer style than the first one although still in a modern style. Metal would not be used. They will be green & sustainable and have a single loaded corridor. The buildings will flat roofs but be more articulated than the first building. There will be no elevator. The rental units will have 1-3 bedrooms.

Discussion: The Commission thought that the building should fit in better with the original context of the site. Materials such as a stone façade could help. An arched doorway might tie the building to the church. The east elevation could be broken with more articulation. Solar panels could be used to give more interest to the roof. Safety and privacy requirements were also mentioned.

Recent black and white photos of the school, library and convent have also been reviewed for submittal to the Massachusetts Historical Commission as part of a Memoranda of Agreement prior to the demolition of the buildings noted below determined significant by the MHC but not by the SHPC on 3/21/06 (**HPC 06.18**)

HPC 10.114 Demolition – 16 Butler Drive – 1950 buff brick Convent 12/13/10
Applicant: Somerville Community Corporation

HPC 10.115 Demolition – 16R Butler Drive – 1960 buff brick Library 12/13/10
Applicant: Somerville Community Corporation

STAFF REVIEW AND COMMENTS AS PER REQUEST OF OTHER DIVISIONS

HPC 10.107 – 860 Broadway – Subway 11/22/10
Planning Division

Proposed exterior alterations include paint and new signage that do not affect the existing fabric of the building.

HPC 10.108 – 61 Union Square – El Potro Mexican Restaurant 11/24/10
Storefront Improvement Program

Proposed alterations include paint and new signage that do not affect the existing fabric of the building.

DEMOLITIONS AND CERTIFICATES OF NON-APPLICABILITY REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY STAFF

HPC 10.110 –58-60 Bow Street, 365-377 Somerville Avenue - The Drouet Block 12/01/10
Applicants: Noblin & Associates, Consulting Engineers for the Gerrior Square Condominium Trust, Owners

1. Remove and replace damaged clapboards and wood trim to match existing.

HPC 10.111 Demolition – 152 Albion Street – circa 1923 concrete block garages 12/13/10
Applicant: Alan Patterson, Developer and Lawrence Fidalgo Trust, Owner

Simple concrete block garages in a residential neighborhood. No Building Permits were found for this address.

HPC 10.116 – 32 Warren Avenue 12/13/10
Applicant: William Sutherland

1. Repair and replace soffits, fascia and other rotted and damaged materials in-kind as needed.

PROJECT UPDATES AND OTHER BUSINESS

Project Updates

- **LHD Expansion Project** (Brandon Wilson with Kristi Chase & Amie Schaeffer)
 - Group C: Legislative Matters Committee expected to discuss and vote on recommendations to full BOA at tonight's meeting; hoped that BOA will follow-up with their vote at their last regularly scheduled meeting in December on Thurs. Dec. 16th. 2010.
- **Union Square Historic Surveying Project** (Brandon Wilson with Kristi Chase)
- **Milk Row Cemetery Restoration Project - Phase II** (Brandon Wilson)
- **Prospect Hill Tower Assessment Study** (Rob May)
- **Preservation Newsletter Project** (Amie Schaeffer with Brandon Wilson & Kristi Chase)
- **SHPC Subcommittee for Guidelines Revision** (Kristi Chase & Abby Freedman)
 - Formulated a basic outline of topics and content of the introduction
 - Next meeting to be held in the Garden Level Meeting Room on January 5, 2011 at 7:00 pm.
- **Preservation Awards Program** (Brandon Wilson with Derick Snare)

Other Business

- **SHPC Appointments/Re-Appointments**

Upcoming Events

- **Flag Raising on Prospect Hill on Saturday, January 1, 2011 at noon** (Brandon Wilson)

Meeting was adjourned at 11:15 PM

Upcoming Meeting Schedule for 2011: January 18, February 15, March 15, April 19, May 17, June 21, July 19, August 16, September 20, October 18, November 15, and December 20.

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.