



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

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

MINUTES

Tuesday, December 20, 2011 at 6:40 p.m.
Third Floor Conference Room

Staff Present: Kristi Chase and Brandon Wilson.

Members Present: Kevin Allen, Alan Bingham*, Dick Bauer, George Born**, Ryan Falvey, Abby Freedman, Eric Parkes, Kelly Speakman, and Todd Zinn***. Kelly Speakman arrived at 7:15 PM and did not vote on the first case because she had not heard all of the presentation. Dick Bauer arrived at 8:45 PM.

Members Absent: Natasha Burger**, DJ Chagnon*, Tom DeYoung*, Derick Snare*, and Brad Stearns*

*Alternates

**Non-voting Alternate in cases of significance.

***Non-voting Alternate after the first case.

Others present: Douglas and Vince Beudet, John and Madeline Belski, Richard DiGirolamo, Keith Glover, Lenore Hill, Dylan James, Attila Javor, and Steve Reilly.

The meeting was called to order at 6:50 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

November 15, 2011 minutes were not approved as the Commission requested that the recording related to the 50 Bow Street case be listened to in order to ensure that their decisions and conditions were accurately and fully presented as stated that evening. In addition, the Commission wanted to avoid the potential for misinformation or conflicting understandings to occur between different condominium owners in a given building, when exterior alterations were proposed. Therefore they discussed possible means to ensure that objective. For example, it was suggested that in the future Applications for Work in multi-unit condominium



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buildings should include submission of the condominium association documents that show who is authorized to sign the application on behalf of the association, that an authorized trustee(s) signs the application, and that an authorized representative of the entire association attend the Commission meeting to hear the deliberations, participate as appropriate, and finally convey the decision back to the other owners in the association.

Due to the issues confronting the Applicants as a result of the MHC's separate Preservation Restriction on the 50 Bow Street property, the Commission asked the Staff to identify any other historic buildings in Somerville which were subject to a MHC Preservation Restriction, and to circulate this information to relevant bodies within the City .

Kristi noted that the minutes of December 13, 2011 were still in an early draft stage and were not ready for the Commission to review and vote on at this meeting.

DELIBERATION OF HPC CASES

The Somerville Historic Preservation Commission will hold public hearings on the following applications, all in accordance with the Historic Districts Act, Chapter 40C of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended, and the City of Somerville Ordinance (Sections 7-16 – 7-28):

HPC 11.107 – 23 Pleasant Avenue, 1893 Henry Colson House (continued)

10/7/11

Applicant: Dylan James, Contractor for Timothy Brown, Owner

1. Remove rear basement door;
2. Install new bay window on ground floor;
3. Remove 2 windows on rear and rear side ell;
4. Replace with siding to match existing;
5. Remove and replace front, side and rear porch doors
6. Install a second set of stairs from rear entry landing into backyard; and
7. Replace 2 double-hung windows on rear west side of the building with Marvin wood windows.

***Dylan James presented.** During the repairs and reconsideration of what work was still needed, they discovered that one of the windows on the side of the building had been made smaller and should be returned to its original size and another one also needed to be replaced. These had not been included in the Legal Notice last month and were therefore not reviewed with the other items requested. He submitted photos of the 2 windows and described the details that would be added to the casings so that they would match the other windows on the building. He also submitted the refined details of the side porch and side door that had not been clear at the last meeting.*

***Staff Recommendations** were read.*

***No Public Comment** was received.*

***Documents:** City of Somerville Ordinance sections 7.16 – 7.27, Property Form B, HPC Design Guidelines, plans by Reisen Design Associates dated 08/08/11 and revised on 10/3/11, window specifications from Marvin®, brochure from Lemieux Doors showing # 2081, cut sheets for Simpson Door Company for Thermal French (SDL) 37944, and for Baldwin door hardware #6552 and #6554, and photographs of the building.*

Discussion: *Most of the work listed had been approved at the last meeting. The Commission found the proposed changes were appropriate and were in-keeping with the Guidelines. It was noted that the proposed changes to the porch posts and balusters were nicer than those originally sketched out.*

Decision: *The Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness to:*

1. Remove and replace side porch doors;
2. Rebuild side porch with the details presented;
3. Install a second set of stairs from rear entry landing into backyard; and
4. Replace 2 double-hung windows on rear west side of the building with Marvin wood windows

Because they met HPC Guidelines for windows and porches.

HPC 11.115 – 11 Linden Avenue, 1860 Isaac Story House (continued)

10/17/11

Applicant: Lenore Hill, Owner

1. Add a 4' by 9' addition to the rear of the existing dwelling with 2 additional windows;
2. Rebuild porch on 2nd floor south side without roof based upon historic photograph;
3. Add a dormer on the north side for stair headroom for safety egress from the 3rd floor; and
4. Construct a free standing 2-unit structure designed to resemble a barn on lot with an existing 1-family dwelling;

Lenore Hill presented. *The historic house has several small problems that should be rectified. The stairs to the 3rd floor are steep and narrow. They had planned a small dormer on the north side of the building where it will be the least visible to make the rooms in the gable more accessible but due to financial considerations this proposal is being taken off the table. They also submitted plans to enlarge the rear ell, but they have decided that they would like to build a small patio there instead. This is not visible from the street. They would, however, like to add another window to the rear ell as shown on the plans. They also plan to install porch railings over the side bay similar to those shown in a historic (circa 1980) photo. They would eliminate the porch roof since it was not original to the building. The porch would be similar in style to the modern rails and balusters on the front entry. The bracket that had been removed from the fascia for the porch roof would be replaced.*

They are also proposing to construct a 2-family house in a style reminiscent of a carriage house. Each unit would have approximately 2500 SF of space on 3 levels. The size is considered optimum for families rather than singles and couples.

Landscaping and trees would hide the parking area from the street. A stone retaining wall could be constructed that would be high enough to contain the light from the headlights and would be strong enough to withstand a collision.

Staff Recommendations were read.

Public Comment was received from **John and Madeline Belski**, who immediately lived next door to the property on the south side. *Their biggest concern is with the current and proposed parking arrangements. The cars are parked too close to their house. Someone could easily drive into their dining room by accident. Also headlights shine into their rooms. Car exhaust fumes are also a problem in the summer when windows are open. The Mrs. Carter, who owned the house many years ago had a wonderful garden with a lawn, fruit trees and lilacs. Cars were parked at the rear of the lot not in the front yard as they are now.*

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

Discussion: *The Commission recommended more decorative balusters or posts that would unite the ground floor piazza with the roof deck*

Abby and others noted that the proposed building is bigger than the house. She appreciated the Applicant's stated goals and liked the barn idea, but believes that it is out of scale with the house. She asked how small can they make the structure, but still make it economically feasible to build. Kevin noted that as 30 year residents of the street, the Applicants clearly understood the pressures on the neighborhood. George wondered if a saltbox approach might not work better with less presence toward the street but running deeper into the lot behind. Kevin commented on how the grade change helps minimize the size of the proposed structure. Kelly suggested that dropping down the eaves a bit would also help bring the building into better alignment with the house.

Brandon noted that car ownership trends in Somerville have been changing, with less people feeling the need for multiple cars. She thought that the ZBA might consider a reduction in parking spaces than is currently required due to the proximity of the property to the Red Line stop at Porter Square. She also mentioned that the Bed and Breakfast Ordinance allows for less parking under that use category.

The lot has its own integrity and serves as vivid reminder of what the City was like before the late 19th century and early 20th century infill. Members hoped that a solution could be found to meet both the applicants objectives yet still preserve the historic character of the site.

Decision: *With the agreement of the Applicant, the Commission **voted** unanimously (7-0) to continue the case until their next regularly scheduled meeting on January 17, 2012 so that more thought could be given to the design of the proposed second structure. A SHPC working group was constituted to include George Born, Eric Parkes, and Todd Zinn who were asked to work with the Applicant, refining the proposed project in such a way that it would meet HPC Guidelines.*

REVIEW AND COMMENT

None this month.

DEMOLITION REVIEWS

9-MONTH REVIEW PERIOD

HPC 08.72 – 92 Properzi Way, circa 1850 James W. Maloy House 10/20/11
Applicant: Moshe Safdie Associates

Update on status from Safdie Associates. A committee meeting should be scheduled in January.

HPC 11.109 – 29 Day Street, circa 1870 Rich Collins House 11/15/11
Applicant: Kaj Vandkjaer, architect for Borderline Improvements LLC, Owner

On-going review of details for the reconstruction of the original house. Applicants have met with Staff re: porch and entry designs based on similar buildings.

DETERMINATION OF PREFERABLY PRESERVED

None this month

DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Commission may make a preliminary determination under the City of Somerville Ordinance as set forth in Section 7-28 b (2) on whether any buildings are “significant”. Prior notice is not required by the Ordinance. New cases for a Determination of Significance may be added to the Agenda until Thursday, December 15, 2011. Public testimony followed by discussion and a vote by the Commission.

HPC 11.113 – 1 Village Terrace – pre-1874 Workers Cottage

10/25/11

Applicant: Doug S. Beaudet, Owner

HPC 11.114 – 2 Village Terrace – pre-1874 Workers Cottage

10/25/11

Applicant: Doug S. Beaudet, Owner

Richard DiGirolamo presented. *Owners acquired the property several months ago. These 2 contiguous lots are zoned RC. They had originally planned to demolish both buildings but after meetings with OSPCD Staff they have revised their plans to only demolish 2 Village Terrace and renovate 1 Village Terrace. A second 4-unit building would be constructed. While he respects the Staff's opinion, the Commission should take the condition of the buildings into consideration. They have been moved, altered, and no longer reflect the original buildings. In this economy, the conditions do not warrant the salvaging of both buildings.*

Steve Reilly and Doug Beaudet explained their plans for the new building and discussed some ideas for the rehabilitation of 1 Village Terrace.

Staff Research *was read. Village Terrace consists of a group of 4 buildings that had originally lined Dane Street and housed laborers. When the at-grade railway crossing was changed to a bridge with embankments, the buildings were relocated to a near-by vacant lot. Only the 3 buildings closest to Village Street remain.*

No Public Comment *was received.*

Documents: *City of Somerville Ordinance sections 7.16 – 7.27, Property Form B, plans and photographs of the building.*

Discussion: *It was noted that many of the small workers cottages in Duck Village are well-maintained and some have been rehabilitated. While the houses in and of themselves are not particularly significant, they are an assemblage. Village Terrace is on the opposite side of Village Street from most of the residential section of Duck Village. The area is bounded by industrial buildings along the railway. Village Terrace abuts one such rehabilitated building. 2 Village Terrace is closer to the railroad, backing up against the modernized former industrial building, and is visible from Dane Street, but not Village Street.*

Decision: *The Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to determine that 1 Village Terrace was 'significant' because it*

Is at least 50 years old, and is or has been determined by the Commission to be a significant building or structure after a finding that the building or structure is either:

- i. Importantly associated with one or more historic persons or events, or with the broad architectural, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City or the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, or*
- ii. Historically or architecturally significant (in terms of period, style, method of building construction, or association with a reputed architect or builder) either by itself or in the context of a group of buildings or structures, and therefore it is in the public interest to be preserved or rehabilitated rather than to be demolished.*

The Commission voted (4-3) that 2 Village Terrace was not 'significant'; most Commissioners noted that while the house shared the same history as 1 Village Terrace, it was not as important to the fabric of the neighborhood and that its loss would not have a negative effect on the Duck Village neighborhood.

Members recommended that some interpretive signage be installed to memorialize the demolished structure.

HPC 11.118 – 36 Rush Street – Patten-Clark House – pre-1874 Second Empire Residence 11/9/11
Applicant: Doug S. Beaudet, Owner

Richard DiGirolamo presented. *The building was damaged by fire and has stood vacant for some time. The building is unstable and a public safety hazard. The owners intend to essentially rebuild the house to look much as it stands today. They have a reputation for retaining as much of the historic character as is feasible.*

Staff Research *was read. The building is similar to many Mansards in the neighborhood. Some of them have been documented to have constructed by Alonzo Bowers who lived in East Somerville. Not much information could be found about the first owner, Bryant W. Patten, but the second Elijah Clark was an important figure in late 19th century Somerville. Staff noted that the Applicants have a reputation for sensitive rehabilitation and construction. While they keep the interiors simple, they do retain as much historic detail as possible or reference it on their buildings such as 50 Flint Street which had also been rebuilt after a fire.*

No Public Comment *was received.*

Documents: *City of Somerville Ordinance sections 7.16 – 7.27, Property Form B, structural engineers report from Roome and Guarrancino, LLC dated 10/12/11, list of Mansard style buildings within a ¼ mile of the address, and photographs of the building.*

Discussion. *Because the condition of the building was critical, there was not a lot of discussion about the significance which was self-evident. Most of the comments concerned the building details that could be saved or replicated.*

Decision: *The Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to determine that 36 Rush was not ‘significant’ because while it*

Is at least 50 years old, and is or has been determined by the Commission to be a significant building or structure after a finding that the building or structure is either:

- i. Importantly associated with one or more historic persons or events, or with the broad architectural, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City or the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, or*
- ii. Historically or architecturally significant (in terms of period, style, method of building construction, or association with a reputed architect or builder) either by itself or in the context of a group of buildings or structures, and therefore it is in the public interest to be preserved or rehabilitated rather than to be demolished.*

It was also determined that due to the condition of the building it was not in the public interest to retain the building but to reconstruct it. The Commission requested that they retain as many details as possible, and return for review and comment as they progress.

HPC 11.126 – 18 Cottage Avenue – circa 1850 N. Willson Boarding House 11/16/11
Applicant: 18 Cottage LLC

Richard DiGirolamo presented. *He conceded that there was no doubt that 18 Cottage Street was a significant building and that Staff’s research was accurate.*

Staff Research was read. *The building is among the earliest in the Davis Square area and can be seen on the 1852 Draper Map. In the late 1860s through the early 1880s, the building was used as a rooming house. It is the house for which Cottage Avenue is named.*

No Public Comment was received.

Documents: *City of Somerville Ordinance sections 7.16 – 7.27, Property Form B, photographs of the building.*

Discussion. *The Commission was in agreement that the building was highly ‘significant’ as one of the oldest buildings in Davis Square.*

Decision: *The Commission voted unanimously (7-0) that the building*

Is at least 50 years old, and is or has been determined by the Commission to be a significant building or structure after a finding that the building or structure is either:

- i. *Importantly associated with one or more historic persons or events, or with the broad architectural, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City or the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, or*
- ii. *Historically or architecturally significant (in terms of period, style, method of building construction, or association with a reputed architect or builder) either by itself or in the context of a group of buildings or structures, and therefore it is in the public interest to be preserved or rehabilitated rather than to be demolished.*

OTHER ACTION ITEMS

- **Commission Appointments & Re-Appointments** (Brandon Wilson)
 - Welcome George Born officially as new appointment recently approved by BOA
 - All other re-appointments also confirmed by BOA in November
 - **Conflict of Interest Law - Online Training** (Brandon Wilson)
 - Reminder #4 to complete & return Acknowledgement and Certification forms to City Clerk with copy to Brandon ASAP
 - **2012 Preservation Awards Program** (Brandon Wilson)
 - Awards Subcommittee to consist of Dick Bauer, Natasha Burger, Tom DeYoung, Abby Freedman, Brad Stearns, and Todd Zinn.
 - Site visit on Sun. Jan. 22nd to determine winners of both Director and Preservation Awards
 - SHS CAD students already met with CAD Architect Derick Snare and begun practice work
 - SHS Art students to begin their drawings in late January
 - **SHPC Holiday Party in January** (Brandon Wilson)
 - *scheduled for Friday, February 10 at Todd Zinn’s house.*
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STAFF REVIEW & APPROVAL OF DEMOLITIONS & CERTIFICATES OF NON-APPLICABILITY

HPC 11.124 Demolition – 57 Pitman Street – 1930 Concrete Block Storage Building 12/5/11
Applicant: Thomas Lichoulas

HPC 11.128 Cert. of Non-Applicability – 237 School Street – 1867 Elisha Hopkins House 12/14/11
Applicants: Jill Bogosian and Pam Greene

1. Repair or replace with clapboards and shingles with in-kind materials; and
2. Repair or replace window casings and other damaged trim such as the soffits and fascia in-kind as necessary.

HPC 11.130 Demolition – 181 Cedar Street – 1964 Ice Cream Drive-In 12/5/11
Applicant: Kristopher Ogonowski

HPC 11.132 Cert. of Non-Applicability – 38 Meacham Rd – 1891 Lucretia Waters House 12/14/11
Applicant: Michael Kaplan, Trustee for the 38 Meacham Road Condominium Trust

1. Repair rear dormer on driveway side of the house facing the carriage house using AZEK for the fascia.

HPC 11.133 Demolition – 125 Powder House Boulevard – 1924 Concrete Block Garage 12/14/11
Applicant: Tufts University

STAFF REVIEW AND COMMENTS AS PER REQUEST OF OTHER DIVISIONS

PLANNING DIVISION REVIEWS

HPC 11.127 – 1 College Avenue/419 Highland Avenue 12/8/11
Applicant: Middlesex Federal Savings Bank

The Middlesex Federal Savings Bank did major renovations on the building in 1967 during which time the façade was made more enclosed. The proposed opening up of the windows is more in keeping with the nature of a retail establishment and shopping district than the existing ones.

HPC 11.125 – 39 Elmwood Street 11/23/11
Applicant: GFC Development

According to HPC minutes, in reviewing the proposed development on April 19, 2011, the Commission was pleased on the whole with the amount of detail of the original house retained and looked forward to a completed plan. They noted that it is common for a street to have buildings of mixed ages and styles and that there was nothing inherently wrong with a Post-modern look. The retention of the existing house and the setbacks of the connector to the new construction set the building apart, setting a counterpoint between the old and new. It is important that some details of the original building, found on other similar houses on the street be replicated or referenced.

HPC 11.129 – 76 Broadway – Vinny’s Restaurant

12/15/11

Applicants: Vinny and Carole Anne Migliore, Trustees

The proposed new awnings, signage and lighting will have no negative effects on the building.

SECTION 106 REVIEWS

None this month

PROJECT AND OTHER BUSINESS UPDATES

PROJECT UPDATES

HPC Guidelines Revisions (Abby Freedman with Amie Schaeffer)

- Committee will be meeting on Wednesday, 1/11/12 from 7-9pm
- Update on progress at monthly meeting

West Branch Library Access Study (Brandon Wilson)

- Project kick-off meeting with consultant TBA Architects, Inc. this Thurs. Dec. 22nd

OTHER BUSINESS

Public Outreach Events (Brandon Wilson & Kristi Chase)

- 236th Anniversary of Annual Flag Raising Event to occur Friday, January 1st at noon
- Join the Procession from City Hall to Prospect Hill site beginning at 11:30 AM; colonial attire highly encouraged to add to the authenticity of the event; clothing and ideas available
- Brandon in process of planning event, with additional volunteers always welcome!
- All SHPC members urged to publicize (flyers to be distributed tonight as well as sent electronically) and encourage friends and neighbors to participate.

NEW BUSINESS

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.