



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
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Todd Zinn

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Denis (DJ) Chagnon (Alt.)
Ryan Falvey
Derick Snare (Alt.)
Mark Sternman

Historic Preservation Commission Minutes

**Visiting Nurses Association, Community Room, 3rd Floor, 259 Lowell Street
 6:40 p.m. on Tuesday, April 21, 2015**

Staff Present: Kristi Chase.

Members Present: Jillian Adams, Dick Bauer, Heather Davies*, Ryan Falvey, Brad Stearns*, Mark Sternman, Todd Zinn. Todd Zinn recused himself for the hearing on 140 Morrison Avenue (HPC 2015.012)

Members Absent: Alan Bingham*, George Born*, DJ Chagnon*, Abby Freedman, Eric Parkes, Derick Snare*.

*Alternates

Others Present: Rev. Dr. Karen Coleman, Emily Monea, Alderman Katjana Ballantine, Chris Frost, Peter Lee, Bennie Ber, Varda Koerner Lis, Brian Green.

Community Preservation Act (CPA) Business

- General update (Dick Bauer and Emily Monea)

Emily Monea told the Commission that there had been changes to the team working on the Historic Preservation Plan. The new team will include Amie Hayes, Sarabrent McCoy, and a new consultant yet to be hired. Emily will continue managing the project. She expects the Plan to be completed in the fall but not in time for the release of the pre-applications for the next round of CPA funds.

Proposed Alterations to Local Historic District Properties

88 College Avenue (HPC 2015.009)	
Applicant:	Christopher Frost
Property Owner:	Melissa and Christopher Frost
Application Date:	March 12, 2015
Legal Notice:	<i>Install a finial on turret.</i>



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Recommendation:	Certificate of Appropriateness
Current Status:	Heard on Tuesday, April 21, 2015
Presentation:	Chris Frost presented. They have done extensive renovations. He would now like to make his mark on the property, something a little untraditional. As a sculptor, he had created a tree for a tower on a house in Mendon. He would like to do the same here.
Public Comment:	An e-mail from John Amaral, neighbor said that he had no objections to the proposal.
Staff Report:	Staff determines that the alteration for which an application for a Historic Certificate has been filed is appropriate for and compatible with the preservation and protection of the 88 College Avenue Local Historic District; therefore Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission grant Christopher and Melissa Frost, Owners a Certificate of Appropriateness for the following. 1. The finial sculpture shall be installed in a manner that is reversible.
Documents:	Staff Report based upon the City of Somerville Ordinance sections 7.16 – 7.27, HPC Design Guidelines, and Massachusetts Historical Commission Property Survey Form, and site visits.
Discussion:	The lightning rod and grounding the assemblage was discussed. A copper wire goes from the finial, through the walls to the basement and then out to the ground. Dick Bauer was concerned about the size. Chris Frost said that the one in the photo is a little larger than the one he intends to create for College Avenue. The tree in the photo was for a taller building out in the country. He thought that the one planned would have exactly the right amount of presence.
Decision	The Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness is contingent upon the following conditions: 1. The finial shall be constructed as shown in the conceptual plans submitted on March 12, 2015 and attached. 2. The finial sculpture shall be installed in a manner that is reversible. 3. If the approval differs from the plans, new plans shall be submitted to Historic Staff prior to commencing the work; 4. Historic Staff shall issue a sign-off upon completion of the project that this was done in accordance with the Certificate and approved plans.

198 Central Street (HPC 2015.011)	
Applicant:	Dean Cassassa
Property Owner:	Dean & Carmel Cassassa
Application Date:	4/2/2015
Legal Notice:	<i>Alter rear doors, windows, and porch for egress.</i>
Recommendation:	Certificate of Appropriateness
Current Status:	Heard on Tuesday, April 21, 2015
Presentation:	Staff presented in the absence of the Applicant. The Applicant would like to alter the rear of the building by switching the locations of doors and windows on the first and second floors. The alterations would be minimally visible from Adams Street at an angle between buildings.
Public Comment:	There was no public Comment.
Staff Report:	Staff determined that the alteration for which an application for a Historic Certificate has been filed is appropriate for and compatible with the preservation and protection of the 192-198 Central Street Cutler Downer Row Houses Local Historic District; therefore Staff recommended that the Historic Preservation Commission grant Dean Cassassa, Owner a Certificate of Appropriateness for the alterations noted below with the following contingen-



	<p>cies.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The location of windows and doors on the second floor rear elevation of the rear ell may be reversed; and 2. The egress stairs from second floor and first floor may be relocated. <p>A Certificate of Non Applicability for those items not visible from the public right of way.</p>
Documents:	Staff Report based upon the City of Somerville Ordinance sections 7.16 – 7.27, HPC Design Guidelines, and Massachusetts Historical Commission Property Survey Form, and site visits.
Discussion:	Jillian Adams wanted to know specifically where the HVAC equipment and stairs would be located. The plans submitted were merely a sketch on top of a photograph. This was insufficient for the Commission to make a determination based upon all the facts. More information was requested.
Decision	<p>The Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to deny without prejudice a Certificate of Appropriateness was denied due to insufficient information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Submittal did not include plans of existing conditions or the proposed location of the HVAC. 2. Submittal did not include specifications for the existing windows and doors regarding size, type and style. 3. Submittal did not include specifications for the proposed windows regarding size, type and style.

140 Morrison Avenue (HPC 2015.012)	
Applicant:	Katia & Brian Green
Property Owner:	Katia & Brian Green
Application Date:	4/2/2015
Legal Notice:	<i>Remove main chimney & rear deck, enlarge rear addition and enlarge basement windows.</i>
Recommendation:	Certificate of Appropriateness
Current Status:	Heard on Tuesday, April 21, 2015
Presentation:	Bennie Ber, architect presented. The house is the end unit in a row. The Owners would like to enlarge their living space by removing the rear porch and adding to the rear ell, deepening the basement and enlarging it somewhat. The side yard would be regraded to allow for windows. A retaining wall will be constructed along the property line. The chimney was located in the middle of the areas that were redesigned, making the layout extremely awkward therefore they proposed to remove it and rebuild a reproduction of it from the attic or roofline up.
Public Comment:	An e-mail was received from Martha E. Cleveland, neighbor in support of the project.
Staff Report:	<p>Staff determined that the alteration for which an application for a Historic Certificate has been filed is appropriate for and compatible with the preservation and protection of the William H. Pierce Rowhouse Local Historic District; therefore Staff recommended that the Historic Preservation Commission grant the Owners of 140 Morrison Avenue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the alterations noted with the following contingencies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The addition shall be constructed as shown in the conceptual plans submitted on April 14, 2015 and attached. 2. The proposed new window openings shall be located and sized to match the width of the windows located directly above as shown in the conceptual plans submitted on April 14, 2015 and attached. 3. The grading shall be substantially as shown. 4. The retaining wall shall be grey stone colored Versa-Lok® or similar.



	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. The new windows shall be Pella® Architect Series double hung windows with Integrated Light Technology. 6. The new doors shall be Pella® Architect series wood doors as shown below. The stairs shall be simple wood with hand rails to match. 7. The concrete foundation shall have brick veneer to match the existing. 8. The brick veneer shall be consistent to the original in size, shape, and color of brick installed with traditional setting and grouting procedures. 9. The color shall be a variegated dark red/brick in a color to match the existing brick. 10. The chimney shall have traditional stepped metal flashing. 11. The termination of the chimney shall have a simple corbel to match the existing chimneys on the other houses in the row. 12. If the final plan deviates from the plans approved, new plans shall be submitted to Historic Staff prior to commencing the work; 13. Historic Staff shall issue a sign-off upon completion of the project that this was done in accordance with the Certificate and approved plans.
Documents:	Staff Report based upon the City of Somerville Ordinance sections 7.16 – 7.27, HPC Design Guidelines, and Massachusetts Historical Commission Property Survey Form, and site visits.
Discussion:	Todd Zinn recused himself because he is acquainted with the Applicants and left the room. The Commission discussed the exposure of the foundation and the treatment of the side walls. Bennie Ber said they were committed to matching the existing brick foundation with veneer bricks. As much of the original bricks would be retained as possible. Grout color and texture would be matched. The window openings were found to be clever and non-traditional. The chimney brick veneer would also match the existing. There was some concern that the neighbor was aware that her property would end with a retaining wall at the line.
Decision	<p>The Commission voted unanimously (6-0) to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness is contingent upon the following conditions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The addition shall be constructed as shown in the conceptual plans submitted on April 14, 2015 and attached. 2. The proposed new window openings shall be located and sized to match the width of the windows located directly above as shown in the conceptual plans submitted on April 14, 2015 and attached. 3. The grading shall be substantially as shown. 4. The retaining wall shall be grey stone colored Versa-Lok® or similar. 5. The new windows shall be Pella® Architect Series double hung windows with Integrated Light Technology. 6. The new doors shall be Pella® Architect series wood doors as shown below. 7. The stairs shall be simple wood with hand rails to match. 8. The concrete foundation shall have brick veneer to match the existing. 9. The brick veneer shall be consistent to the original in size, shape, and color of brick installed with traditional setting and grouting procedures. 10. The color shall be a variegated dark red/brick in a color to match the existing brick. 11. The chimney shall have traditional stepped metal flashing. 12. The termination of the chimney shall have a simple corbel to match the existing chimneys on the other houses in the row. 13. If the approval differs from the plans, new plans shall be submitted to Historic Staff prior to commencing the work; 14. Historic Staff shall issue a sign-off upon completion of the project that this was done in accordance with the Certificate and approved plans



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De-Designation Request

1170 Broadway & 7 Clarendon Avenue (HPC 2015.006)	
Applicant:	Saint James Episcopal Church
Property Owner:	The Episcopal Church of the USA
Application Date:	February 12, 2015
Legal Notice:	<i>Request to de-designate 1170 Broadway and 7 Clarendon Avenue</i>
Recommendation:	Denial of request
Current Status:	Heard on Tuesday, April 21, 2015
Presentation:	Rev. Dr. Karen Coleman presented. There had been no contact between the Commission and those at the church who held fiduciary responsibility for the church. She feels that a member of the congregation and the Executive Director of the Commission acted on their own. The church was unaware of the designation until after it had occurred, so there were no conversations and no consensus regarding it. While they may, in the end, agree with the significance of the Church, they want to understand what it means to them. She intends to submit the Report to the Church headquarters in Boston. More than anything else, she would like an apology from the Commission on the way the designation was handled.
Public Comment:	Alderman Katjana Ballantine stated that Amie Hayes, Planner for the City said that the process was unusual and not as transparent and open as it should have been. This raised a flag for her. She was concerned that the process set out by MGL Chapter 40C was insufficient. If the required use of the Assessors database does not necessarily give the information needed, what process could be put in place to cover these situations.
Staff Report:	The City of Somerville is composed of a number of historic resources that visually describe the history of the City. Adopting the 1985 Historic District Ordinance, a number of historic resources were designated as local historic districts, which is an acknowledgement that these buildings are of special importance to the history of the City. The intent of this Ordinance is to “Protect, enhance and preserve cultural and historical resources... Safeguard the City’s historical and cultural heritage ... [and] Enhance the City’s image to residents, visitors and tourists...” As the Historic Preservation Commission administers this Ordinance, the Commission is responsible for establishing the standard of integrity and significance that is to be conveyed by properties given historic designation status. These standards serve to protect, enhance and preserve designated properties and the Commission is then responsible for upholding these standards throughout the City for all designated historic properties and to defend these standards as tools used by the Commission to accomplish the intent and purpose of the Ordinance. Regulating the integrity of local historic districts, as in the ability of these districts to convey significance, serves to enhance the City’s image by preserving the heritage of the City. Similarly, if a building within a local historic district is no longer composed of integrity, and is no longer able to convey significance, such building should be de-designated as a local historic district. However, 1170 Broadway and 7 Clarendon Avenue retain their integrity and convey their significance. Maintaining designation for buildings that uphold the established standard values the importance and purpose behind historic designation and does not compromise the intent of the Historic District Ordinance; therefore, Staff recommends the Historic Preservation Commission not to support the de-designation of 1170 Broadway and 7 Clarendon Avenue.
Documents:	Staff Report based upon the City of Somerville Ordinance sections 7.29, National Park Service Guidelines for Integrity, additional research in the Somerville Journal.



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Discussion:	Mark Sternman was concerned about 2 things. 1. Something was wrong with the process and 2. The Church was obviously of historic significance. The process needs to be looked at carefully because whatever the decision by the Commission it would be precedent setting. Jillian Adams discussed her previous job and her role as an advisor to churches. She would be happy to meet with them and discuss what the church processes are, preservation restrictions, how they helped churches, and what the impacts are in the long run. Dick Bauer explained that the process of designation does not require approval from the owner of the property designated, only the Board of Aldermen. The Ordinance was followed to the letter of the law, unfortunately the name and address of the owner in the Assessors Database was out dated and incomplete. He apologized for the poor communications and misunderstandings on the part of the Commission. The Commission would revisit the process by which notification was made with special attention to follow up on properties that were inhabited by churches and other non-profits as tenants but technically owned by a centralized organization. Several layers of authority need to be contacted in these cases.
Decision	The Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to put the decision on hold while everyone had a chance to think about what the request represents and whether a middle road is possible since de-designation would not be the best option. Jillian Adams would meet with the Saint James Episcopal Church to discuss their issues.

Properties within the Demolition Review Period

56 Line Street	Cambport Group LLC	1/20/2015	10/20/2015	1st pref pres mtg sched for 5/7/2015
63 Hudson Street	Rebecca Fordon & Eric Chon	1/20/2015	10/20/2015	MOA waiting for signatures
20 Kent Court	Keith Glover & Attila Javor	9/16/2014	6/20/2015	Waiting on new Zoning
18 Kent Court	Keith Glover & Attila Javor	3/17/2015	9/17/2015	
35 Moreland Street	Kevin Slattery	3/17/2015	9/17/2015	Develop MOA
14 Kent Court	Shangzhe Xuyu	3/17/2015	9/14/2015	Develop MOA

Other Business

- 315 Broadway – Memorandum of Agreement – Update

Peter Lee stated that he had left everything up to the contractor. They had spent a lot of money on the staging and the attempt was unsuccessful as the cast stone was deteriorated and crumbling. They saved what they could and removed it to the DPW yard for safe-keeping. It was suggested that a plaque would be a lasting memorial to the building and its uses. The wording and style need to be developed.

- Mystic Waterworks Pumping Station Housing Project, Round 12 support letter

The Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to continue to support the project. The letter was signed.

- Election of Officers at the May 19, 2015 Meeting

Minutes:	November 6, 2014 – Preferably Preserved
Minutes:	November 18, 2014 – HPC
Minutes:	December 11, 2014 – CPA Advisory
Minutes:	December 16, 2014 - HPC
Minutes:	January 13, 2015 – CPA Advisory
Minutes:	February 12, 2015 – CPA Advisory
Minutes:	February 26, 2015 – HPC CPA Preservation Plan Meeting
Minutes:	March 17, 2015 – HPC
Minutes:	April 2, 2015 – Preferably Preserved



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	The March 17, 2015 and the April 2, 2015 minutes were unanimously approved by those attending the meeting. The other out-standing Minutes were not complete and therefore not reviewed
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Reports and plans are available on the City of Somerville website at www.somervillema.gov/departments/historic-preservation-commission/hpc-cases-and-decisions and on the third floor of City Hall at 93 Highland Avenue. Cases may be continued to a later date(s); therefore, check the agenda on the website 48 hours in advance of the meeting or call (617) 625-6600 x2500 to inquire if specific cases will be heard. Continued cases will not be re-advertized, but will be listed on the agenda. Interested persons may provide comments to the Historic Preservation Commission at the public hearing, by email to historic@somervillema.gov, by fax to (617) 625-0722, or by mail addressed to the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission.



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