



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

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

MINUTES

Tuesday, March 20, 2012 at 6:40 p.m.
Third Floor Conference Room

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

Members Present: Dick Bauer, Alan Bingham*, Natasha Burger**, Tom DeYoung*, Ryan Falvey, Abby Freedman, Kelly Speakman, and Todd Zinn**.

Members Absent: Kevin Allen, George Born*, DJ Chagnon*, Eric Parkes, Derick Snare*, and Brad Stearns*

*Alternates

** Natasha Burger was the last alternate to arrive and was therefore non-voting except in the cases of 30 Day Street (when Alan Bingham recused himself and left the room while his wife presented their case),

**146 Hudson Street: Todd Zinn voting when Kelly Speakman recused herself since the company for which she works had professional dealings with the developer.

Others present: Evelyn Battinelli, Rosemary Broome-Bingham, Ed Doherty, Christopher Ferry, Richard Graf, Sabato & Gus Grieco, Barry King, Barbara Magnum, Amie Schaeffer, Peter Quinn, Arlene & John Quinn, and Scott Zink.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to approve the February 21, 2012 Minutes as amended.

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):



CITY HALL • 93 HIGHLAND AVENUE • SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS 02143
(617) 625-6600 EXT. 2500 • TTY: (617) 666-0001 • FAX: (617) 625-0722

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HPC 12.016 – 25 Clyde Street – 1820-1858 H. Timney Brick-workers Cottage

2/27/12

Applicants: Mark Hammer, Architect for Stateside Realty Group, LLC

1. Demolish existing garages at the rear of the property (C/A);
2. Remove east side enclosed entry(C/A);
3. Replace entry with a window (C/A);
4. Rebuild brick foundation (C/NA);
5. Infill lower level entry to the street (C/A);
6. Enlarge rear addition to accommodate second stairway (C/A);
7. Replace wood shingle siding with wood clapboard (C/A);
8. Remove inappropriate replacement and other windows (C/A); and
9. Replace them with 2/2 double-hung wood replacement windows (C/A);
10. Repair or replace all rotted sills (C/NA);
11. Replace or replicate exterior trim to match existing as needed (C/NA);
12. Remove minimally visible chimney (C/A);
13. Replace roof (C/A);
14. Construct or rebuild the second floor entry stairs (C/A);
15. Construct a new deck on west side rear (C/A);
16. Install fencing around rear and sides of lot (C/A);
17. Remove asphalt from the entire yard (C/A);
18. Install cobble and stone aggregate parking areas (C/A);
19. Landscape the remaining area (C/A); and
20. Construct a free standing 2-unit structure designed to resemble workers cottages on lot with an existing 1-family dwelling (C/A)

Due to possible changes to the proposed plans in response to the Fire Department's review, the case will be continued to the HPC's April 17, 2012 meeting in order to present a more finalized package. The Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to continue the case at the applicant's request.

HPC 12.018 – 30 Day Street – 1878 Eliza Stebbins House

3/1/12

Applicant: Alan Bingham and Rosemary Broome-Bingham, Owners

1. Remove 1 window on rear ell on the north (C/A) and east (C/NA) sides of the building;
2. Replace with French doors (C/A);
3. Install new porch on rear of building (C/A);
4. Relocate existing side entry to a location on the rear not visible from the public right of way (Approved HPC 10.073 on 9/24/10);
5. Remove a window not visible from the public right of way (C/NA); and
6. Replace with a door (C/NA).

Rosemary Broome-Bingham presented. *They would like to build an open porch on the rear of the building. They currently do not have good access to the yard. They believe that the rear portion of the building might have been used as a darkroom. The porch would follow the building lines around and be minimally visible. There are still some design issues regarding types of balusters and whether to angle or round the edge of the porch.*

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, photos of the property and plans by Eric Parkes, architect dated 3/1/12 and cut sheets from JP Moriarty & Company for exterior porch parts and balusters.*

Discussion: *The Commission agreed that the proposed work met HPC Guidelines and that the details were well-thought out. The porch and changes were at the rear of the building, well away from the street and set behind the main body of the building. Abby Freedman said that she had used new French doors on her porch and that they had worked well for a number of years and that they should also think about what could be seen of the porch from the inside. Turned balusters were generally preferred to square ones but since they would be minimally visible from the street. Angled edges to the porch would be easier to construct and would not require specially made rails.*

Decision: *Because the proposed project met HPC Guidelines for porches and new additions and would be minimally visible from Day Street,, the Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to grant a **Certificate of Appropriateness (C/A)** and to issue **Certificates of Non-Applicability (C/NA)** to:*

1. Remove 1 window each on rear ell on the north (C/A) and east (C/NA) sides of the building;
2. Replace with French doors on the north (C/A) and east (C/NA) sides of the building;
3. Install new porch substantially in accordance with the plans presented on rear of building (C/A); and
4. Relocate existing side entry (**HPC 10.073 C/A granted on 9/24/10**) to a location on the rear not visible from the public right of way;
5. Remove a window not visible from the public right of way (C/NA); and
6. Replace with a door (C/NA).

HPC 12.019 – 1 Westwood Road – 1929 Somerville Historical Society Museum

3/1/12

Applicant: Barbara Mangum, President of the Trustees of the Somerville Museum

1. Repair and repaint all windows, exterior doors and trim in-kind;
2. Repair and replace all rotted and damaged wood trim and gutters in-kind as needed;
3. Repair and replace slate roof, copper flashings, gutter liner and valleys in-kind;
4. Install snow guards;
5. Enlarge side porch to include:
 - a. A wheelchair lift, partially screened from view;
 - b. A new roof with a painted wood entablature supported by tapered Doric columns; and
 - c. New stairs.

Richard Graf presented. *Additional comments and information was received from Barbara Mangum, President of the Trustees of the Somerville Museum and Evelyn Battinelli, Director of the Somerville Museum. The Massachusetts Cultural Council cannot release the funds for the roof and window repairs until the ADA requirements are met. They are now planning interior renovations for an accessible bathroom and have drawn up plans to make the exhibition space in the building accessible as well. They spent considerable time reviewing the various options. The most obvious ones, such as elevator or ramps, had serious drawbacks as to their effect on either the historic fabric and setting of the building, or on the neighbors. The visually important entry on Central Street is not in use and could not work in a manner that would address the ADA. It was decided that enlarging and reworking the current side entrance, which is actually the entry in use would be best.*

They are proposing to enlarge the porch to contain a wheelchair lift that would be styled to work with the Colonial Revival style building. Evelyn Battinelli, Director of the Somerville Museum and Barbara Mangum, President of the Board of Trustees commented on the new importance of the planned Westwood Road entry and the need to make the Museum more accessible to all.

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, photos of the building, drawings and plan sheets 1-6 dated March 6, 2012 by Richard Graf.*

Discussion: *The Commission noted the contributions the Museum, and Historic Somerville have made to the City and were in full approval of the proposed plans to enlarge the porch to incorporate the ADA access.*

Decision: *Because the proposed alteration met HPC Guidelines, the Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to grant a **Certificate of Appropriateness (C/A)** per plans presented and to issue **Certificates of Non-Applicability (C/NA)** to:*

1. Enlarge side porch to include:
 - d. A wheelchair lift, partially screened from view;
 - e. A new roof with a painted wood entablature supported by tapered Doric columns; and
 - f. New stairs.
2. Repair and repaint all windows, exterior doors and trim in-kind;
3. Repair and replace all rotted and damaged wood trim and gutters in-kind as needed;
4. Repair and replace slate roof, copper flashings, gutter liner and valleys in-kind; and
5. Install snow guards in-kind.

REVIEW AND COMMENT

14-16 Aldersey Street – c. 1871 Elizabeth and Stephen Fenno House

Applicants: Abby Freedman & Julie Schneider

Abby Freedman *recused herself from the Commission business and presented. Because there have been problems with squirrels and other vermin coming into the house through various means, they plan to install chimney caps and have a few different styles, one of which will need to be approved. Since timing of the installation is an issue, they would like a sense of the Commission's preferences and will return next month for official approval of this minor alteration of the building. The cap will be installed at-risk.*

No 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, photos of the building.*

Discussion: *The Commission agreed that the proposed chimney cap was one that had been previously approved by the Commission and that the Commission was highly likely to approve the same cap next month for use on her building.*

Decision: *No vote was taken.*

DEMOLITION REVIEWS

CURRENT CASES WITHIN 9-MONTH REVIEW PERIOD

HPC 08.72 – 92 Properzi Way, circa 1850, James W. Maloy House

Applicant: Moshe Safdie Associates, Owner

10/20/11

HPC 11.109 – 29 Day Street, circa 1870, Rich Collins House

11/15/11

Applicant: Kaj Vandkjaer, architect for Borderline Improvements LLC, Owner

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

1/17/12

Applicant: Doug S. Beaudet, Owner

DETERMINATION OF PREFERABLY PRESERVED

HPC 11.126 – 18 Cottage Avenue – circa 1850, N. Willson Boarding House (continued)

12/20/11

Applicant: 18 Cottage LLC

Richard DiGirolamo requested a continuation to the April 17, 2012 meeting on behalf of the applicants.

No Staff Findings were read.

No Public Comment was received.

Documents: City of Somerville Ordinance sections 7.28, Draft Property Form B, HPC Design Guidelines, and photos of the buildings.

There was no Discussion.

Decision: The Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to grant the requested continuance.

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, February 16, 2012. Public testimony followed by discussion and a vote by the Commission.

HPC 12.017 – 146 Hudson Street – circa 1924 Edward J Heath House and 5 concrete block garages

Applicant: Richard DiGirolamo, Attorney for Edward Doherty, Owner

2/29/12

Richard DiGirolamo presented. He is not aware of any significance of this vacant house or its garages which are located in an RB zone. The owner proposes to demolish the house and garages to construct a new building with 3 units by right.

Staff Findings were read.

Public Comment was received from the neighbors John and Arlene Quinn, who share the 9’ driveway with the house and garages at 146 Hudson Street. Arlene grew up there and knew the previous owners. Her house was where Admiral Pride grew up. She used to be able to see all the way down Hudson Street but now with the new condo development, there are strangers looking in her windows. Christopher Ferry, renter wanted to be sure that no hasty decisions were made.

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

Discussion: Kelly Speakman recused herself from the voting and did not offer comment on the project. Liability issues, certified plot plans and the importance of neighborhood meetings were discussed. It was noted that the house probably had clapboard underneath the aluminum siding. that brackets could be seen on the porch and was described as a ‘Betty Boop’ house for its diminutive scale and 1920s appearance. Todd Zinn noted that single family houses with large yards were in great demand. Arts and

Crafts houses are not common in this part of town and the Commission thought it was a little gem despite the aluminum siding. Dick Bauer found the mention of the Consumers Purchasing Alliance in 1938 was a tantalizing piece of information and said it should be investigated further as that may be very significant. All noted that the garages were very run-of-the-mill.

Decision: *The Commission voted unanimously (7-0) that the garages were not ‘significant’ and 6-1 (Tom DeYoung) that the house was ‘significant’ because it was 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.*

Specifically this was due to the Arts and Crafts styling of the house and the association with the Consumers Purchasing Alliance

HPC 12.020 – 16 Linden Avenue – circa 1900 triple-decker

3/2/12

Applicant: Richard DiGirolamo, Attorney for New Market Properties LLC, Owner

Richard DiGirolamo presented. *Scott Zink and his father bought the property to develop as they had done a number of properties. This three-decker had a large yard that could be developed but due to the positioning of the house on the lot, they could not do so without adversely impacting the neighbors and retain the building. They spent many hours in meetings with the architects, the Planning Division, neighbors and other attempting to meet all the requirements. In the end, it was decided that the best alternative would be to start anew without trying to retain the original building. They plan to work with the character of the street.*

Staff Findings *were read.*

No Public Comment *was received.*

Documents: *City of Somerville Ordinance sections 7.16 – 7.27, Property Form B, HPC Design Guidelines, photos with*

Discussion: *The Commission noted that the three-decker was not an architectural marvel but did relate well to the other buildings on the street.*

Decision:

OTHER ACTION ITEMS

Milk Row Cemetery MPPF Grant Application to the MHC

1. Summary of proposed scope of work
2. Vote on draft letter of support from the Commission
3. Other measures to evidence widespread support

STAFF REVIEW & APPROVAL OF DEMOLITIONS & CERTIFICATES OF NON-APPLICABILITY

None this month.

STAFF REVIEW AND COMMENTS AS PER REQUEST OF OTHER DIVISIONS

PLANNING DIVISION REVIEWS

None this month.

SECTION 106 REVIEWS

None this month.

UPDATES ON PROJECTS AND OTHER BUSINESS

PROJECT UPDATES

HPC Guidelines Revisions (Abby Freedman with Amie Schaeffer)

- Committee met on Monday, 3/5/12 from 7-9pm
- Update on progress
- Next meeting on Monday, 4/2/12 from 7-9pm

Milk Row Cemetery Preservation Master Plan Implementation (Brandon Wilson)

- Submission of grant application to MHC for Round 18 of MPPF Program with deadline of March 30th.
- Application for \$34,000 matching grant for two high priority recommendations: 1) rehabilitation of tombs housing the earliest residents of the cemetery, including members of the Tufts family; and 2) design and installation of site and interpretive signage to increase public awareness of Cemetery's historic significance.
- Scope of work limited by availability of CDBG funds for 50% match plus grant administration.
- Other Master Plan implementation work continues in collaboration with Somerville Garden Club, Historic Somerville, Somerville Museum, Department of Public Works and the Transportation Division of OSPCD. This work includes landscaping enhancements, installation of benches, regulations signage, and off-site bicycle racks, and development of a Docent Program to increase public openings and appreciation of local history treasures.

West Branch Library Improvements (Brandon Wilson)

- Accessibility Study well underway with 3 proposals reviewed with WBL Director on March 9th;
- Next review and discussion with Library & OSPCD Staff on April 3rd
- Enhancements to Children's Room and resources in progress with Library Staff, community members, and architectural students.

Preservation Awards Program (Brandon Wilson, Derick Snare, and Amie Schaeffer)

- Derick continues to advise and guide SHS CAD students with their architectural drawings, ensuring building accuracy and highlighting significant elements.
- Amie is installing 2011 Awards Exhibit at the last venue, Century Bank on Fellsway West, this week before returning the drawings to the property owners.

- Letters sent out to the 2012 winning property owners with advance notification about the Awards Ceremony at the Somerville Museum on Thurs., May 31st. Remember to mark your own calendars!

Planning for Upcoming Events (Brandon Wilson & Kristi Chase) (All welcome & encouraged to attend!)

- **Patriot's Day Celebration at Foss Park.** (Monday, April 16th, 10am-noon)
 - Colonial Fair planned with Colonial era food, games and folks in period clothing,, with likely brief poem readings by local youth and opportunity to greet Paul Revere and his horse on his way from Boston to Concord and Lexington. Volunteers still needed!
- **May Preservation Month Events** (Tentative list)
 - "The Menace of the Three Decker" talk (Thurs. May 3rd, Somerville Museum) by Stuart Brorson, sponsored by Historic Somerville, in collaboration with the SHPC;
 - Jane's Walk (Sat. May 5th) to take place in Hinckley-Magoun Area, in part to highlight the proposed local historic district there;.
 - "Researching Your House and Family" talk (date & time TBA) by Kristi Chase, in collaboration with the Som. Central Library Staff;
 - Milk Row Cemetery Opening & Tour (Thurs. May 17th, 6pm) by Barbara Mangum, Historic Somerville President, in collaboration with the SHPC;
 - Walking Tour "From Mansions to Mudflats: East Somerville's Cornucopia of Cultural Treasures" (Sun. May 6th, 2-4:30pm) by Edward Gordon, in collaboration with East Somerville Main Streets
 - Historic Bike Tour highlighting "Somerville Parks, Then and Now" (Sun. May 20th, 2-4:30pm) in collaboration with Somerville Bike Committee.
 - Memorial Day Parade (Sun. May 28th) with Historic Somerville contingent.
 - Preservation Awards Ceremony (see info. above)

Reminder: Complete Training for "Conflict of Interest" law for members not completed yet.

POTENTIAL UPCOMING CASES

360 Mystic Avenue/100 Fellsway West

- Structural engineers report received stating that it is not feasible to rehabilitate the building.
- HPC and Planning Staff met with Applicant's attorney Richard DiGirolamo on 1/26/11 to request further information and verification.

NEW BUSINESS

Upcoming Meeting Schedule for 2012: 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.