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

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes

Tuesday, November 16, 2010
City Hall
3rd Floor Conference Room
6:00 p.m.

Staff Present: Kristi Chase, Amie Schaeffer, and Brandon Wilson.

Members Present: Kevin Allen*, Dick Bauer, DJ Chagnon*, Tom DeYoung, Ryan Falvey, and Abby Freedman. Kevin Allen arrived at 7:00 pm and DJ Chagnon arrived at 7:30 pm.

Members Absent: Sarah Degutis*, O. Susan Fontano*, Barbara Mangum, Eric Parkes Michael Payne, Derick Snare*, and Brad Stearns.*

*Alternates

Others present: Barbara Castro, Richard DiGirolamo, Jim Herbert, Janis Mamayek, Rob May, Jeff Meese, Charles Riordan, and Todd Zinn

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
September and October Minutes

*The **Commission** voted (**3-0-1** (Tom DeYoung abstaining)) to **accept** the September 21 and voted (**2-0-2** (Abby Freedman & Tom DeYoung abstaining)) to **accept** the October 19, 2010 minutes.*

DELIBERATION OF HPC CASES

HPC 10.83 – 8 Mount Vernon Street (continued at request of the Applicant)**:** Applicants:

Barbara and Fermin Castro, Owners, who seek a **Certificate of Appropriateness** to:

1. Install a metal fence and gates along a portion of the driveway and along the sidewalk property line.

Barbara Castro *presented. They would like to replace the ugly chain link fence with something nice. The fence would follow the lot line along the front of the property and around the corner to meet the corner of 12 Mount Vernon Street.*

Staff recommendations *were read.*

No Public Comment *was received.*

Discussion: *The Commission approved of the design for the fence and gate. Kevin Allen who arrived shortly before the end of the hearing noted that the George Wyatt House, a Greek Revival at 33 Beacon Street had a nice iron fence.*

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

Decisions: *The* ***Commission*** *voted unanimously* **(4-0-1 (Kevin Allen))** *to grant a* ***Certificate of Appropriateness*** *to:*

1. Install a metal fence and gates along a portion of the driveway and along the sidewalk property line

Because it met HPC Guidelines for fences.

HPC 10.90 – 27 Warren Avenue (continued at request of the Applicant): Applicant: Darin DiNucci, Owner, seeks a **Certificate of Appropriateness (C/A)** to:

1. Remove enclosed 2-story porch **(C/A)**; and
2. Replace with open 2-story porch **(C/A)**.

Detailed plans or photos of the proposed porch have not been received. Tenants are not living on the premises during the de-leading of the building so the urgency of constructing the porch for the second means of egress is lessened. Applicant has stated that he will have photos of porches that could be used as a basis for his design by the December HPC Meeting. A ***continuation*** *was granted* ***(4-0)*** *at the request of the Applicant.*

HPC 09.67 Demolition – 378-382 Somerville Avenue, formerly Londontowne Antiques (continued at request of the 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.

The Applicant has requested a continuation until November 16, 2010. They will present the proposed plans for the retention of the building and the development of the site from 378-390 Somerville Avenue.

Jeff Meese *and* ***Janis Mamayek*** *presented with additional comments from* ***Jim Herbert and Richard DiGirolamo.*** *Using the infill guidelines and the CCD zoning, they believe that they reached all their design goals for the project: renovate and repair the existing historic façade with some creative license on the turret roof. Magnum double-hung windows will be used in the ground floor retail space of the original building. Unfortunately no historic photos have been found of the original building. They would be retaining the undulating shingle pattern, brackets and detailing around the windows. Period appropriate materials would be used. The form and setbacks of the new construction recall the original 4-lots with a contemporary twist such as the pedimented windows, metal shingled roof, balconies and a conservatory/pergola on the roof. The details respond to those on the Drouet Block across the street. Accessibility was a major concern. Richard DiGirolamo noted that this building will be a major focus to the entry into Union Square from the west.*

No Staff recommendations *were read.*

Public Comment *was received. Rob May complimented the Staff, the Subcommittee and the Owner's team for a well designed project. He noted that it was a giant leap forward from the original plans. He was impressed by the pedestrian-oriented feel of the building. Rob discussed the changes to Union Square Zoning and the redevelopment that will result. This being the first example.*

Discussion: *Abby Freedman liked the conical roof but was still dubious about the size of the building attached on the back and top of the Carleton Street side of the building. Dick Bauer also shared her concerns about the massing. Abby noted that she would like to see more of a stepped transition between the historic building and any new construction.*

Documents: *City of Somerville Ordinance sections 7.16 – 7.27, Property Form B, HPC Guidelines, plans dated November 16, 2010.*

Decisions: *The Commission voted unanimously* ***(4-0)*** *to grant a request to* ***continue*** *the hearing until the December 14, 2010 meeting*

SECTION 106 REVIEWS CONDUCTED BY THE STAFF

HPC 10.79 – Green Line Extension (GLX)
09/08/10

Two meetings were held in October with MassDOT, consulting parties from Massachusetts Historical Commission, and the historical commissions of Medford, Somerville, Cambridge and Boston. Affected NR and NR eligible buildings were identified. Sound and vibration effects will be mitigated.

CERTIFICATES OF NON-APPLICABILITY ISSUED BY THE STAFF

None this month

DEMOLITIONS REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY THE STAFF

HPC 10.98 – 371 Beacon Street – 1927 Socony Service Station 10-29-10
Applicant: Sylvia Aidern Kirker McConnell Enterprises, Inc for George Makrigiannis, Owner

Building Permits revealed that originally a brick structure was constructed in 1927 for the Standard Oil Company of New York on this site. This was torn down and replaced at an unknown date with the existing concrete block building between 1934 and 1959. Staff did not find any building permit records for this alteration. The building is not architecturally distinctive and has been altered over time with modern doors, window systems, and EIFS. It also does not retain historic gas pumps or signage. Therefore, Staff has determined that the building was not significant.

HPC 10.99 – 67 Florence Street –wood outbuilding
10/26/10
Applicant: Rocco DeRenzo

The 15' by 8' building was not included on the survey form and had no known purpose. The windows and doors appear to have been salvaged. The roof is missing. No building permits were found for it and it did not appear on any of the pre- 1960 Sanborn Maps. It is located in what would be the parking area behind the infill construction approved by the Commission on August 17, 2010 and would not be visible from the public right of way. Therefore, Staff has determined that the building was not significant.

STAFF REVIEW AND COMMENTS AS PER REQUEST OF THE PLANNING DIVISION

HPC 10.94 – 75 Myrtle Street
10/14/10

Verbal Determination that proposed cell antennas on the modern apartment building will have 'no adverse effect' on the adjoining Florence Street Local Historic District.

HPC 10.95 – 29 Ward Street
10/14/10

Verbal Determination that the proposed enlargement of a circa 1927 garage to include a second story and to hide the 'granite' concrete blocks would be minimally visible from the street.

HPC 10.96– 15 Mossland Street 10/21/10

Project was sent back for extensive revisions by Planning Division. As proposed, a pre-1874 single family house would have been demolished. Further research is needed on the owners. No official demolition permit has been received.

HPC 10.97 – 6-8 Beacon Street – 1917 yellow brick garage
10/21/10

Recorded as part of the 1990 Commercial and Industrial PAL Survey, the building is a good example of the wave of automobile-related construction that occurred in the area during the early part of the 20th century. More than 25% of the building will be demolished and none of the main façade will remain. Staff believes that the façade of this building is an important link to the early use of the automobile in Somerville and should be retained. The design presented does not take the physical and historical context of the building into consideration with its design. No attempt has been made to retain any of its architectural features. The proposed alteration dominates the site and leaves nothing of any historical interest. There has been no attempt to even reference the original use of the building.

Under City Ordinance section 7-28, the Applicants will need to come before the Historic Preservation Commission for determinations of 'significance' and 'preferably preserved' statuses. No official demolition permit has been received. Staff will be meeting with the Planning Division and the Applicants on Wednesday, November 17th to discuss the options.

PROJECT UPDATES AND OTHER BUSINESS

Project Updates

- **LHD Expansion Project** (Brandon Wilson with Kristi Chase & Amie Schaeffer)
  - Group D properties (1865-1873) submitted to the BOA last week at Nov. 9th regular meeting for review and scheduling of another public hearing thereafter.

- **Union Square Historic Surveying Project** (Brandon Wilson with Kristi Chase)
  - Walking Tour introducing wider public to many of surveyed properties held Sun. Nov. 6th from 2-4:30pm.
  - Ed Gordon organized and led tour which highly successful and attended by nearly 50 people from many parts of Greater Boston area and Somerville, including Rob May and Alderman Tom Taylor.
  - Refreshments generously donated & enjoyed by many at conclusion by Cantina Restaurant
  - Tour videotaped by Communications Office so will be available for viewing on local cable station.

- **Milk Row Cemetery Restoration Project - Phase II** (Brandon Wilson)
  - Bike Committee also concerned about lack of public awareness & use of bicycle racks at site, and therefore patrons tendency to chain them to newly restored fencing on adjacent cemetery; need to install signage prominently at entry to DeMoulas lot and on fencing.
  - Paint on restored fencing not adhering well in several spots, and contractor Cassidy Bros promised to inspect & address by next spring.
- **Prospect Hill Tower Assessment Study** (Brandon Wilson)
  - Letter of Intent for Survey & Planning grant prepared and submitted by Brandon to MHC on Nov. 15th; funding sought for 2 studies related to renovation of

Prospect Hill Tower and expansion of surrounding Park to incorporate a major historic interpretive center.
  - Presentation of concept and possible master planning project to be made by TBA Architects, Inc. to various decision-makers over coming months.

- **Preservation Newsletter Project** (Amie Schaeffer with Brandon Wilson & Kristi Chase)
  - First Preservation Newsletter in over a decade finally completed, printed by SHS Printing Dept., and sent by U.S. mail to over 500 LHD owners last week.
  - Copies available to SHPC tonight!

- **SHPC Subcommittee for Guidelines Revision** (Kristi Chase & Amie Schaeffer)
  - Next meeting to review and compare other cities guidelines on scheduled for Thurs., December 2nd from 7 – 8:30 pm.

- **Preservation Awards Program** (Brandon Wilson with Derick Snare)
  - Deadline for nomination forms yesterday, Mon. Nov. 15th; extended until Mon. Dec. 6th; still seeking more nominations from SHPC members, especially from East Somerville, West Somerville and Ward 2 neighborhoods.
  - Brandon has contacted both SHS Director and Derick for update on program timetable.
  - Members sought for Awards Subcommittee tonight
  - Scheduling of site visit for nominated properties likely to be Sun. Jan. 22nd.

- **SHPC Appointments/Re-Appointments**
  - Additional candidates invited to tonight's meeting to determine level of interest – Welcome!

Upcoming Events

- Flag Raising on Sat. January 1, 2011 – Invitation to Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company already extended and accepted.
- Commission's Holiday Party proposed for Sat. Jan. 29th. Volunteer house to host?
- Site Visits for Preservation Awards Subcommittee proposed for Sun. Jan. 22nd, 2011

The Commission meeting went into recess at 7:00 pm to attend a Joint Hearing with the Board of Aldermen Legislative Matters Committee regarding the Group C of the City-wide Local Historic District Expansion. The Meeting was reconvened at 8:15 pm and adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Upcoming Meeting Schedule for 2010: *Please note proposed change of date from Tues. December 21 to* ***Tues. December 14*** *to accommodate various vacation plans during the holiday season.*

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.