

**SOMERVILLE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

**Minutes**

**Tuesday, February 19, 2008**

City Hall

3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Conference Room

6:40 p.m.

**Staff Present:** Kristi Chase, Brandon Wilson.

**Members Present:** Kevin Allen\*\*, Dick Bauer, Tom DeYoung, Ryan Falvey, Abby Freedman, Barbara Mangum, Jeff Meese, Michael Payne, Brad Stearns\*\*. Barbara Mangum arrived at 7:15 pm.

**Members Absent:** DJ Chagnon\*, Ian Judge\*, O. Susan Fontano\*, Susan Rabinowitz\* Derick Snare\*.

**Others Present:** Ted Dow, Mike Libby, Adam Dash, Tom Bent, Richard DiGirolamo, Christos Poutahidis, Peter Quinn

**\*Alternate**

**\*\* Non-voting Alternate**

Meeting called to order at 6:45

**Final Review and Approval of HPC Minutes: January 2008**

*Motion made by **Dick Bauer** to approve January Minutes as written with the additional note that Tom DeYoung was present at the January Meeting, seconded by **Jeff Meese**. The vote was 7-0.*

**DELIBERATION OF HPC CASES**

**HPC 07.79 – 59 Cross Street - Continued**

Applicants: Champion Windows for Somerville Homeless Shelter, tenants, on behalf of Somerville Hispanic Association for Community Development, Owners.

The Applicants seek a **Certificate of Appropriateness** for the following changes to previously approved plans:

1. Replace 14 wood replacement windows on second floor on the front portion of the building with wood replacement windows.

*The Applicants had followed the Commissions suggestions. **Ted Dow** of Champion Window has gone to Brosco but did not quite see what he wanted, so he then went to Bradco, another company with whom he was familiar. Wood replacement windows needed to be custom, they had vinyl on the exterior. He found the Harvey Tru-channel. He spoke with Robert at J&C Adams. They had sash kits. He spoke with his installation people and took a sample to the Shelter. The window measurements for the replacement wood windows are not taken the same way that he is used to for vinyl windows. What was going in does not solve the needs, has nothing like ... the benefits are not there. His installation team says that the windows do not address drafts because the casing is out of square, the frame is not square but the new windows are square.*

- 1). He can give the money back.*
- 2). Do his best the work would not be warranted by Champion*
- 3). Install the Champion windows and cover with exterior storm windows.*

*The Clients appreciate the work put in. **Mike Libby** said that he was biased toward Champion but did not want to have problems with the windows in the future. Ted Dow had told him that the new sash would not fit the existing windows which were out of square and only partially solved his problems.*

***Brad Stearns** showed a Brosco replacement window borrowed from J&C Adams. Brosco windows are available as single or double pane with Low E coating. This led to a discussion about tint and reflectivity, clearly the Low E windows were darker than those without it. Storm windows would mitigate some of the reflectivity problems.*

*Good frame preparation would eliminate the problems of making the windows fit the frames. Harvey Tru-channel storm windows have a U value of .04 which leads the addition of storms to insulated glass windows to a "belt and suspender" approach to dealing with the infiltration of cold air. **Brad Stearns** said that he had his daughter sit next to an open window with good storms and she didn't notice it although it was cold outside. He also noted that it seemed that the biggest problem was one of installation, not impossible but it does take work to prepare the openings for the windows.*

***Ted Dow** suggested that perhaps they could install the Champion windows with storm windows over them to camouflage the vinyl. **Michael Payne** noted that it would not be a good idea as heat would build up between the storm and vinyl window and deform the vinyl. **Ted Dow** said that his company had installed windows that way and it would not void their warrantee. This led to a discussion about the relative sizes of the necessary sash. The window sash needs to be larger than the storm windows in order to be able to access the storms leading to a wider than normal frame around the window.*

***Michael Payne** said that while the original material is long gone, changing the materials to something less would change how the building reads. The Commission is aware of the need for attention to cost and energy efficiency. They are trying to meet both needs as well as maintaining and protecting the historic fabric of the City. They recognize that wood replacement windows are more difficult to install than vinyl replacement windows but wood windows with storms would meet the goals of the Somerville Homeless Coalition and the SHPC.*

***Michael Payne** made a motion, seconded by **Jeff Meese**, to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the replacement of 14 double-hung wood replacement windows with either single-pane or insulated glass wood windows with low-e coating with storm windows. The vote was unanimous (7-0).*

**HPC #08.03 – 1-3 Harvard Place**

Applicant: Tom Bent, Owner

The Applicant seeks a **Certificate of Appropriateness** for the following changes to previously approved plans:

1. Replace 2/2 wood double-hung windows with 6/9 simulated divided light double-hung replacement sash from Brosco on 1 Harvard Place to match those on 3 Harvard Place; and
2. Replace wood shingles on rear of building with clapboard to match existing on all other sides of building.

*Tom Bent described his project. Brad Stearns showed the sample Brosco window that he had been lent by J&C Adams. The Commission discussed the tinting of the windows and noted that it would not match the existing. Tom Bent said that he would like to look at them side by side to see how much they differed but did not want to install anything that would distract from the historic character of his building.*

*Dick Bauer made a motion, seconded by Jeff Meese to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for both pieces of work with a preference for no Low-E glass if possible on the windows. The vote was unanimous (7-0).*

**DEMOLITION UPDATES****HPC 08.02 D – 377-379 Summer Street – Jenney Gas Station**

Applicant: Chris Poutahidis, Owner; Richard DiGirolamo, Agent

Determination as to whether the subject service station is considered “significant” under section 4.2 of the Demolition Review Ordinance #2003-05. Public testimony will be taken, followed by discussion and a vote by the Commission.

*Richard DiGirolamo presented for his client. Mr. Poutahidis bought the building from Jenney Manufacturing Company in the late 1960s and has owned the site for over 30 years. Mr. Poutahidis also owns the house next door, giving him over 8000 SF in land area on which they could construct a building with ground floor retail, offices and seven residential units. The site has housed a variety of automotive uses such as repair and rental. It has no significance. It is located oddly on the lot. The Owner cannot move his plans forward with the building standing on the lot, which is a key parcel in the Davis Square Central Business District that could be highly strategic for spurring more development. Elm Street as far as Grove Street is where most of the activity in the Square happens. The Elm/Summer Street end of the Square has one fifth of the pedestrian activity. This is an effort to bring more activity through the construction of a mixed use building. The service station is not unattractive and not bad except for its location on a key parcel, however there is nothing architecturally or historically significant about it. The development of the site could make more of the neighborhood, be an economic stimulus and bring vibrancy to this end of the Square. These automotive buildings are not practical in this day and age. The location is not good for such uses and no other uses are probable.*

*When the Staff found that the parcel in question held far less than 8000 SF mentioned above, it was noted that the house adjacent was also slated for demolition. No request for this had been received by the Staff and*

*therefore that building had not been surveyed and could not be reviewed by the Commission for ‘significance’ at this time.*

***Michael Payne** led a short discussion about the setting of the service station and its importance on a major crossroad. There had been 3 other service stations and a supermarket at this intersection as well as the existing buildings noted on the survey form. These businesses had all located there because of the activity of the intersection. The intersection was no longer as busy as it had been in its heyday and people took their cars elsewhere for gas.*

***Jeff Meese** pointed out that the HPC does not govern uses of a building, only its appearance from the street and went on to review the criteria from the Demolition Review Ordinance used to determine significance. The building does not meet Criteria A for being on National Register of Historic Places or subject of an application for such. It does appear to meet Criteria B for associations with the advent of widespread automobile use in Somerville during the 1920s as well as the beginning of branding of American products and buildings with a regional character for businesses. This led to a discussion about the number of Jenney Stations within the City limits (not known) and their distribution throughout the region. Gas stations were important in developing the concept of ‘place-product-packaging’ using prominent locations and distinctive architecture to identify and distinguish themselves from their competitors. The Jenney Manufacturing Company used Colonial Revival style architectural motifs such as hipped roofs and cupolas to do so.*

***Christos Poutahidis** said that the gas tanks had been removed and that the slate roof was leaking. He bought the building from Jenney in the late 1960s.*

***Dick Bauer** stated that due to the cultural and historical development of the character of gas stations demonstrated, he would have a hard time saying that the building was not significant. This was not the time for weighing significance against highest and best use of these types of buildings. He went on to make a motion, seconded by **Jeff Meese** that the Commission determine the building to be significant for the above reasons, because it is part of a group of buildings at the intersection, including the Rosebud Diner and the old Somerset Bank building and because the building is unique in Somerville as the only known surviving Jenney Station and only one of three buildings of similar character, having hipped roofs and cupolas. The vote was unanimous (7-0).*

#### **HPC 07.66 D – 23 Milton Street**

Applicant: Eden Frye, owner

Subcommittee meeting scheduled for Tues., February 26 at 6:30 pm in 3<sup>rd</sup> fl. Conf. Room to discuss options for this building deemed to be preferably preserved.

***Jeff** stated that he could not make a meeting on that date and could it be rescheduled?*

#### **HPC 06.27 D– 46 Pearl Street – 1871 Ezra Conant House**

Applicant: John Mahoney, Developer

<b>Received</b>	<b>Determined Significant</b>	<b>Preferably Preserved</b>	<b>9 Months</b>
04/20/06	09/16/03	05/16/06	02/16/07

*Mr. Mahoney originally submitted a request for a demolition permit in August 2003. However, after the building was determined 'significant' in September 2003, he submitted a letter stating that he would not demolish the building but would rehabilitate it. In April 2006 he resubmitted a request for a demolition permit. Attempts to meet with him subsequent to the determination that the building was 'preferably preserved' were inconclusive. The nine month review period ran out in February of 2007.*

*George Landers, head of ISD received a call (10/30/07) from Mr. Mahoney saying that he would be coming in for a Demolition Permit. George Landers said that ISD would be holding him to all code requirements, including set backs and parking for his new building. The Staff has still not heard anything from Mr. Mahoney (2/7/08).*

#### **DEMOLITIONS REVIEWED BY THE STAFF**

(none during this past period)

#### **CERTIFICATES OF NON-APPLICABILITY ISSUED BY THE STAFF**

(none during this past period)

#### **OTHER BUSINESS - PROJECT UPDATES**

- **Patriot's Day Event– Mon. April 21, 2008**
  - Planning has begun; subcommittee of SHPC needed to help; first organizational meeting to occur this Thurs. Feb. 21, at Historic Somerville meeting at 7 pm, at Somerville Museum
- **Preservation Awards Program**
  - First presentation to SHS CAD students given by Derick and Brandon on Feb. 14<sup>th</sup>; field visits to learn first hand re: historic neighborhood and building measuring techniques scheduled for Feb. 26 and March 4<sup>th</sup>.
- **Real Estate Course on Historic Preservation – Thurs. March 20, 2008**
- **Preservation Month Events**
  - Preliminary planning of events started; subcommittee to help would be great!

**Schedule of regular SHPC meetings for 2008:** To be held on the third Tuesday of every month, except for June\* due to a conflict with Bunker Hill Day and September\* due to elections: March 18, April 15, May 20, June 24\*, July 15, August 19, September 23\*, October 21, November 18, and December 16.