

Minutes of the Avon Hill Neighborhood Conservation District

Monday, November 24, 2014 - 5:30 PM - 831 Massachusetts Ave., Basement Conference Rm.

Commissioners Present: Constantin von Wentzel, *Chair*; Robert Crocker, Catherine Henn, Heli Meltsner, *Members*; Art Bardige, Mark Golberg, John Sanzone, *Alternates*

Commissioners Absent: Theresa Hamacher

Staff Present: Charles Sullivan

Members of the Public: see attached sign-in sheet

With a quorum present, and in the absence of the chair, senior member Heli Meltsner called the meeting to order at 5:35 P.M. She made introductions and reviewed the hearing procedures. She designated the alternates as voting members in order of their arrival.

Mr. von Wentzel arrived at 5:40 and assumed the chair.

Public Hearing: Alterations to Designated Properties

AH-498: 14 Hillside Ave. (continued), by 14 Hillside Avenue Nominee Trust. Construct garage and mudroom. Rebuild cupola with windows. Window and door alterations and replacement. Construct dormer.

Mr. Sullivan showed slides of the site. He noted that the applicant had returned for approval of a revised design.

Peter Wright, the architect, said that his client wished to convert the carriage house, which most recently had been an architect's office, to a single-family residence. The project would involve addition of a one-car attached garage to the east side of the building, where it would be screened by 33 Washington Avenue. There would be a new dormer on the right side of the north-facing roof, which was unlikely to be visible from the street. Windows would be replaced with replicas to save energy. The cupola would be restored, but the 22"x51" louvers would be replaced with clear sash. The chimney and a fire escape would be removed. HVAC equipment would be under the southwest corner of the house and screened from view. A pergola would be constructed along the north wall of the house. A substantial amount of pavement would be removed; new pavement would be asphalt. A light post at the end of the driveway and landscape lights along its length would be added.

John Sanzone asked about the height of the garage. Mr. Wright said it would be 10'4" at the front, no higher than the adjacent gutter of the carriage house.

Ms. Meltsner asked for further details about the windows. Mr. Wright said that few were original, and most were in poor condition.

Ms. Henn asked about the landscape lights along the driveway. Mr. Wright said they would be downward-facing, and probably about 30" high.

Mr. Bardige asked if the front door was being relocated; it was not.

Mr. von Wentzel asked for questions of fact from members of the public.

Jo Ann Citron of 33 Washington Avenue asked about the siting of the garage. Mr. Wright said it was within the 10' setback from the property line, and about 40' from 33 Washington.

Blue Magruder of 82 Avon Hill Street said she would speak for a friend, a direct abutter at 46-48 Avon Hill Street. Mr. Wright described the location of the HVAC equipment and how it would be screened. There would be no floodlighting of the property.

Mr. Sullivan asked if there was or would be a fence on the retaining wall. Jill Schuman of 44 Avon Hill Street said that there was currently a chain link fence and many overgrown trees. She would favor a board fence. Martin Cafasso, the owner, said there was mostly overgrown brush alongside the building.

Mr. von Wentzel asked for comments.

Merhe Sater of 44 Avon Hill Street said he was happy to see the fire escape removed. Dead trees should be removed.

Mr. von Wentzel asked Mr. Sullivan about the proposed window replacement. Mr. Sullivan replied that this would be inconsequential because the proposed Jeld-Wen windows were accurate replacements and the building was over 100' from the street, so there would be no discernable impact on the public's view of the house.

John Sanzone said the window replacement was a little questionable in terms of the guidelines, but he would accept it. The garage massing was acceptable, and the cupola was very appropriate.

Ms. Meltsner said the project was greatly improved, but she would prefer to see the windows restored.

Mr. Crocker said the garage door should look like a wood paneled door. The proponents agreed.

Ms. Henn, Mr. Golberg, and Mr. Bardige agreed that the project was much improved.

Mr. von Wentzel said he appreciated the restoration of the cupola and thought it was acceptable to lose the chimney. The relocated garage and use of permeable paving would protect the monumental oak tree.

Mr. Bardige moved to approve the project as proposed on the ground that it conformed to the objectives and guidelines of the district, but to delegate the design of the garage doors and other construction details to the staff. Ms. Henn seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Henn moved to approve the October 20, 2014 minutes. Mr. Crocker pointed out a typo on page two. Mr. von Wentzel seconded, and the corrected minutes were approved unanimously.

Ms. Meltsner moved to adjourn, Mr. Bardige seconded, and the meeting ended at 6:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles Sullivan
Executive Director

**Members of the Public
Who Signed the Attendance Sheet
November 24, 2014**

Martin Cafasso	14 Hillside Avenue
Peter Wright	107 Larch Road
Jo Ann Citron	33 Washington Avenue
Anne Cushman	33 Washington Avenue
Blue Magruder	82 Avon Hill Street
John Hurwitch	82 Avon Hill Street
Jill Schulman	44 Avon Hill Street
Merhe Sater	44 Avon Hill Street

Addresses are in Cambridge unless otherwise specified.