

Minutes of the Half Crown-Marsh Neighborhood Conservation District Commission

Minutes approved at the May 11, 2015 meeting

April 13, 2015 - 6:00 PM at Friends Meeting House, 5 Longfellow Park, Cambridge

Members present: James Van Sickle, *Chair*; Deborah Masterson and William King, *members*; Peter Schur, Marie-Pierre Dillenseger and Charles Smith, *alternates*

Members absent: Judith Dortz, *Vice Chair*

Staff present: Samantha Paull

Members of the Public: see attached list

Mr James Van Sickle, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:05pm and gave an overview of the agenda. Mr. Van Sickle discussed meeting procedures. He noted a change to the order of the agenda, as the architect for 35 Willard Street, the first item, had asked for a delay. Mr. Van Sickle noted that HCM-276, 277 Mt. Auburn Street, would be heard first.

Mr. Van Sickle designated voting alternates for HCM-276 Mr. Charles Smith and Dr. Peter Schur, for HCM-275 Ms. Marie-Pierre Dillenseger and Dr. Schur, and for HCM-276 Ms. Dillenseger and Mr. Smith.

HCM-276: 277 Mt. Auburn Street, by Paula Barry. Window replacement.

Ms. Samantha Paull gave a brief overview of the history of the structure and summary of the application's scope. She noted the first and second floor windows had been replaced on the structure prior to 2007. She added that she had been unable to find an approval for the windows by the Commission.

Mr. Chris Barry, an owner, presented his case to the Commission. He noted the windows on the first two floors had been replaced prior to their ownership.

Mr. Bill King, Commissioner, asked when the windows had been replaced. Mr. Barry responded that he was uncertain as his father-in-law had done the work. Mr. King asked to confirm that the third floor had the original windows. Mr. Barry responded yes. Ms. Paula Barry said there were storms on 3rd floor only. Mr. King noted that the use of a two over one window would be more consistent with the original design of the house. He continued that it would have been required had they reviewed the replacement of the windows on the first two floors.

Mr. Smith asked if the owners had looked into a two over one product. Mr. Barry responded no, the proposal was to replicate what had been previously installed on floors one and two. Mr. Smith noted that the use of a two over one was more in keeping with the character of the house. Ms. Barry asked if the Commission preferred that replacement windows matched the original. Mr. Smith said yes. Mr. Barry replied he was sorry that the windows had already been ordered.

Mr. Van Sickle asked if single or double pane had been ordered. Mr. Barry responded double pane Harvey windows had been ordered.

Ms. Paull directed the Commissioners to the recent photographs to show the extant conditions.

Mr. Van Sickle asked if the windows were Harvey wood. Mr. Barry responded the windows were vinyl. Ms. Masterson asked if the windows had already arrived. Ms. Barry responded that the windows were sitting in a warehouse.

Mr. Van Sickle stated he felt replicating the historic muntin pattern was important.

Mr. King noted that vinyl window products tend to start breaking down around ten years and as the extant windows are almost ten years old, it is important any future replacements utilize the historic muntin pattern. Ms. Barry responded that they would be happy to look into adding an exterior muntin.

Ms. Masterson asked what the window guidelines said about vinyl. Mr. Van Sickle replied the Guidelines do not like them as the quality is not great and they do not last as long as wood products; thus, the use of vinyl is generally discouraged.

Mr. King made a motion to approve the window replacement as proposed with the conditions: (1) the applicant research if the windows ordered will function with an applied muntin that replicated the historic two over one muntin pattern; if the windows were able to function as a double hung sash with an applied muntin, the applicant shall apply the muntin; and (2) future replacement products shall replicate the historic two over one muntin pattern. Mr. King added that the applicants shall follow up with staff regarding the product. Mr. Smith seconded the motion. Ms. Masterson stated she felt that it was more appropriate to require the applicant to use a window product that replicated the historic windows for the proposed replacement and future replacements, especially given the guidelines. Mr. Van Sickle asked if the reference to better replicating the historic window meant the material or muntin pattern. Ms. Masterson clarified that she meant both. Ms. Dillenseger stated her concern with losing the two over one character of the original windows.

The motion was approved with a 3-2 vote, with Ms. Masterson and Ms. Dillenseger voting nay.

HCM-274 (continued from March): 35 Willard Street, by Scott Zink. Exterior renovation, addition, deck, fence, and move structure.

Ms. Paull gave an overview of the structure's history and the previous application. She outlined the proposal on the application.

Mr. Peter Quinn, Architect, stated that he had taken the feedback from the previous hearing and completely re-worked the plans. He continued, the project reflected a two story addition on the rear, a roof deck, single story bays, and a three story bay on the left elevation. He directed their attention to the landscape plan which included a four (4) foot high wood fence and small outdoor patio area.

Mr. Van Sickle asked if Mr. Quinn could go over the alterations to the structure one by one. Mr. Quinn noted that there were three single-story bays and moving the structure to have conforming setbacks. Mr. Quinn continued that on the left elevation, toward Mt. Auburn Street, there was a 4.5 foot three story addition which was setback one foot from the front elevation. Mr. Quinn added that there was a roof deck above the garage addition and a side deck off the left elevation that included a pergola but did not count

toward FAR. He continued that the proposal also included adding more space to the basement to make it habitable, which would be done during the construction of the new foundation after moving the structure.

Ms. Masterson asked how much square footage was being added. Mr. Quinn responded around 1,500 square feet for a total of around 4,300 square feet. He noted that he did not have exact numbers as the garage was not included in the FAR as it provided the required parking.

Mr. King asked how much original fabric would remain. Mr. Quinn stated he was not certain as the project had not started but the interior walls would need to be removed as much of the siding, if it was not previously removed when the artificial siding was added. Mr. Smith added it is hard to know how much original siding is left under artificial and what shape it will be in; however, he felt the concept was great.

Ms. Dillenseger expressed concern that the plan was overpowering as the structure was expanding on each side and was concerned of the impact to surrounding properties and through views. Mr. Quinn responded that the setbacks on Dinsmore Court and Willard Street would be increased when the structure was moved.

Mr. Van Sickle asked if the applicants had spoken with the neighbors. Mr. Scott Zink, an owner, replied yes and they supported the project. Mr. Van Sickle asked about a shadow study. Mr. Zink replied it was included in the packet. Mr. Van Sickle noted that most of the impact appears to be from the existing three story portion with a small impact from the addition at 12 o'clock. Mr. Van Sickle asked if the neighbors had seen the shadow study. Mr. Zink replied no, but the neighbors had seen the proposed plans. Ms. Henriette Lazaridis, an abutter at 4 Dinsmore Court, stated she admired the renovation of the property, but noted her concern with the impact of the additions to her open space and through views. She asked if they had considered a one story garage addition. Mr. Zink stated that it would not be consistent with the marketplace or financially feasible to remove or substantially reduce the addition further. Ms. Lazaridis noted that it will impact the residents on Dinsmore Court, specifically during the construction process. Mr. Zink stated he would be happy to work out the process with the residents of Dinsmore Court.

Mr. King asked if the proposal still included a six (6) foot fence. Mr. Quinn stated it was modified to a four (4) foot fence. Mr. King commended the amendment. Mr. Van Sickle asked about the proposed materials. Mr. Quinn noted they were proposing a two over two simulated divided lite, cedar siding and would prefer to use PVC trim where possible.

Mr. King made a motion to approve the project as proposed stating he felt the goals of the District were substantially met. Mr. Smith seconded the motion.

Ms. Masterson emphasized her concern for a substantial addition adding almost 2,000 square feet including the garage. Ms. Masterson commended the applicant for working to preserve the structure while renovating rather than seeking demolition, but was disappointed at the scale of additions and loss of through views.

Dr. Schur asked where the proposed air conditioning condenser would be located. Mr. Quinn responded in the interior courtyard. Dr. Schur asked about the impact of the noise. Mr. Quinn stated that the proposed modern condensers would have little noise as they were much quieter than older models and would have a fence and shrubs around it.

Mr. Van Sickle noted the guidelines for substantial alterations and additions, which emphasized the importance of have smaller lot coverage than existing, a lower height than the existing structure, exterior treatment that matches the existing or original, not entirely block through views, should not diminish light with new shadows and when excavation is included the applicant should have civil engineer calculations showing a minimal impact to water table. Mr. King asked if a soil report was submitted. Ms. Paull replied no.

Ms. Dillenseger lamented the loss of the relationship between 33 and 35 Willard Street and commended Mr. Quinn on relating the addition better to the structures on Dinsmore Court.

Mr. King amended his motion to include the approval subject to a soils report about flooding in alignment with the guidelines for substantial infill.

Ms. Lazaridis noted that she would lose her views in her yard to the Skating Club and asked if the garage could be done in another way. Mr. Van Sickle asked if it could be a single story. Mr. Zink stated that it would not work for the renovation.

Mr. Smith seconded the motion and confirmed the amendments. The motion was approved 3-2, with Ms. Dillenseger and Ms. Masterson voting nay.

HCM-275: 2 Kenway Street, by Ernie & Connie Kirwan. Exterior renovation, dormer addition, remove bay, and remove chimney.

Ms. Paull gave a brief overview of the history of the structure and the application. She noted the structure was originally constructed in 1894, under permit 4353 on a permit that approved four houses, 2, 4, 6, and 8 Kenway Street, to be built on the street. She continued that the structures have similar massing and form but each had slightly different ornamentation. She stated the house has two over two wood windows, decorative wood shingles on the first floor and in the gable end, clapboards on the second floor, recessed entry porch, two brick chimneys, and front facing gable roof. Ms. Paull clarified that the ownership had changed hands since the application was filed and the current owner, Mr. Ryan Guthrie of 2 Kenway Street, LLC, sent evidence of this for the file.

An owner, Ryan Guthrie was present. He stated that he renovated 18 Gibson Street a few years back. He noted that the stained glass window reflected in the plans was not ok with zoning, so it would be removed from the final plans. He also noted that the dormers were reduced to 15 feet to meet the dormer guidelines. Mr. King responded that the dormers relate to other dormers on Kenway and he had no problem with the addition of a dormer, either at the originally proposed size or the amended size.

Mr. Mark Hammer, architect, reviewed the plans with the Commission, noting that the structure has had alterations in the past, the shutters were removed, there was a variety of siding styles on the structure. He continued that the proposal included removing some of the skylights and the introduction of dormers for access and use of the large third floor. Mr. Hammer noted the proposed alterations on the rear elevation, removal of the bay and construction of a new bay and rear deck above.

Mr. Don DiRocco, architect, added that the plan included replicating porch details from 18 Gibson Street, adding shutters on the second floor and removal of the original shingle pattern on the first floor as he felt it was excessive on the first floor.

Ms. Masterson asked if other houses in the area had that shingle style. Ms. Paull responded that 6 and 8 have shingles on the second floor.

Mr. Arthur Hughes, a neighbor, stated that his house at 6 Kenway Street had been covered with an artificial siding. He noted that after it was removed, he discovered the eyebrow over the front window and the eyebrow was restored. He said he restored the character to his home. He felt that the structures on the street were all similar but all had their own unique features and were important to the context of the area. He said he hoped the structure would be restored.

Ms. Karen Gleason, a resident at 4 Kenway Street, stated she liked the proposal and how the houses on the even side of Kenway all relate to each other. She noted that she hoped the owner would work with the residents to discuss construction procedures, schedule, and dumpster location. Mr. Guthrie responded he hoped to have it located in the driveway.

Ms. Gleason asked where the condenser would be located for the air conditioning. Mr. Guthrie responded it would be located on the driveway side.

Mr. Hughes asked the owner to preserve the original shingles, noting that it was important to the character of the house and the street, with each house's details differentiating it from the same basic plan. Ms. Gleason agreed, the shingles were an important feature.

Mr. Van Sickle requested the owner work with staff on a proposed shingle design. Ms. Paull responded that staff would direct him to follow the historic shingle pattern to maintain the character of the structure. Mr. Guthrie responded that was not a problem, then asked if the Commission would be open to something different in the recessed entry.

Mr. King asked for the preservation of the chimney if possible. Mr. Guthrie responded that one of the chimneys was being preserved the other was proposed for removal.

Ms. Paull asked why the owner proposed to replace the front door. Mr. Guthrie responded that the door was in poor condition. Ms. Paull asked for him to clarify what he meant by poor and asked if he had looked into restoration of the door. Mr. Guthrie responded that he was happy to look at restoring the door and he felt restoration of the fabric, specifically the windows, was important to maintaining the character of the structure.

Ms. Masterson made motion to approve the application as amended with the smaller dormer and without the stained glass window, with the conditions that the historic shingle pattern was maintained on the first floor with the exception of the recessed entry and that the owner look into the feasibility of the restoration of the front door and delegated final construction details to staff. The motion was seconded by Ms. Dillenseger. The motion was approved 5-0.

Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes. Dr. Schur made a motion to approve the February 23, 2015 minutes as submitted with no changes. Ms. Masterson seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5-0.

The Commission reviewed the March 9, 2015 minutes. Mr. King and Mr. Smith provided edits. Ms. Masterson made a motion to approve the minutes with the proposed edits. Mr. Smith seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5-0.

Dr. Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Masterson seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5-0 at 8:10 pm.

**Members of the Public
(who signed the Attendance list)**

Scott Zink	Owner of 35 Willard Street	7 Morrison Rd W, Wakefield
Peter Quinn	Architect for 35 Willard Street	259 Elm St, # 301, Somerville
Chris Barry	Owner of 277 Mt. Auburn Street	26 Arlene Ave, Wilmington
Paula Barry	Owner of 277 Mt. Auburn Street	26 Arlene Ave, Wilmington
Ryan Guthrie	Owner of 2 Kenway Street	206 Andover St, Ste 1, Andover
Brandon Guthrie	Owner of 2 Kenway Street	206 Andover St, Ste 1, Andover
Arthur Hughes	Abutter	6 Kenway Street
Karen Gleason	Abutter	4 Kenway Street
Don DiRocco	Architect for 2 Kenway Street	19 Bishop Allen Drive
Mark Hammer	Architect for 2 Kenway Street	19 Bishop Allen Drive
Henriette Lazaridis	Abutter	4 Dinsmore Court

Note: All addresses are located in Cambridge unless otherwise noted.