

Approved 11/2/09

Minutes of the Mid Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District Commission

October 5, 2009 - 6:00 P.M. – 831 Massachusetts Avenue, Basement Conference Room

Commission Members: Nancy Goodwin, *Chair*; Tony Hsiao, *Vice Chair*; Lestra Litchfield and Carole Perrault *Members*; Siobhan McMahon and Sue-Ellen Meyers, *Alternates*

Staff: Sarah Burks

Members of the Public: See attached sign in sheet

With a quorum present, Ms. Goodwin called the meeting to order at 6:01 P.M.

Public Hearing: Alterations to Designated Properties

MC-3526: 2-3 Corliss Pl., by Katherine Ellin & Gilead Tadmor. To alter two doors, remove rear porch, and alter select windows.

Ms. Burks showed slides and described the views from Antrim Street and from behind the Longfellow School.

Katherine Ellin, an owner, displayed the drawings and described the proposed alterations including changing the two front doors to a single door, possibly with sidelights. Other changes included windows at the back of the building.

Ms. Goodwin asked about the existing windows.

Hugh Russell, of 1 Corliss Place, said the house had mostly two-over-two wood sash. The proposed replacements were one-over-one windows. He said the windows on his house were similar, but painted black with the effect that the center muntin was not very obvious.

Ms. Ellin said she was considering using Anderson or Marvin windows. Some of the existing windows in the house are wood and others are vinyl replacements.

Mr. Hsiao noted that only the front doors were likely to be visible from the public way.

Ms. Perrault urged the owners to reconsider using two-over-two windows. Ms. Litchfield concurred. The old windows were one of few original details left on the house and spoke to the age and style of the building. Interior and exterior muntins with a spacer bar were preferable to a snap in grid.

Ms. Burks suggested that sidelights would help to balance the proportions of the façade where two doors were being replaced by a single door.

Hugh Russell spoke in support of the application. He noted that he was on the study committee for the Mid Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District.

Ms. Litchfield moved to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness with the recommendation that the owners use two-over-two simulated divided light windows and sidelights on either side of the new front door. Mr. Hsiao seconded the motion. Ms. Goodwin designated Ms. Meyers to vote as alternate, and the motion passed 5-0.

MC-3535: 55 Antrim St., by Jeff Perkins. To rebuild front porches. *Hearing canceled.*

Ms. Burks reported that the owners had changed the scope of work to include repairs in kind to the porch decking, roof, and railings and that she had approved the work administratively with a Certificate of Nonapplicability. The hearing had been cancelled.

MC-3536: 102-104 Inman St., by Lenore F. M. Schloming. Alter side porch of front house; re-grade driveway; construct addition connecting two rear buildings.

Ms. Burks showed slides and explained that the Greek Revival double house (1845) at the front of the lot was listed on the National Register of Historic Places, but the other buildings on the lot would be considered non-contributing. She suggested that the alterations to the steps on the front house be reviewed for a binding certificate, but that the connecting addition between the garage (1948) and the rear house (1967) be reviewed for a non-binding certificate.

Skip Schloming, an owner, reviewed the site plan and described the proposed alterations including regarding the driveway, attaching the garage to the back house, and rebuilding the steps at the back of the front house. The steps would be reoriented so that they are parallel to the side wall of the house instead of perpendicular. The existing porch roof and doors were added in 1989. The steps would be built in the same way as the new steps at the front of the building, using pressure treated framing, finished with mahogany treads, pine risers, and 2 x 2 inch balusters. The bottom step would angle away from the retaining wall.

Ms. Litchfield moved to approve the application for the alteration to the steps on the front house. Ms. Perrault seconded the motion. Ms. Goodwin designated Ms. McMahon to vote as alternate, and the motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Schloming proceeded to describe the proposed atrium addition that would connect the garage and the rear house. He reviewed the plan and elevation drawings. Standard 30" x 64" windows would be on the combined building as often as possible. A hexagonal window at the top of the addition would add interest to that elevation. The existing Texture 111 siding on the rear house would be replaced with Hardie boards or wood clapboards. The clapboards on the garage would be replaced where necessary. 1" x 6" cornerboards would be used. The roof of the addition would be above the roof of the garage so that there would not be an awkward valley at the intersection.

Mr. Hsiao acknowledged that very little of the addition would be visible from the public way, but encouraged the owners to build a three dimensional model of the garage, rear house, and proposed addition. The model would help flesh out the details of the complex geometries of the roof intersections. There might be a simpler solution which would not require structural modifications to the rear house. He noted that the design of the front house was ordered and controlled compared to the variety found at the combined rear house.

Mr. Schloming said he had tried to relate the altered rear house to the front house by choosing clapboards, cornerboards, and in selecting the proportions of the windows.

Ms. Burks pointed out that the rear house was very obviously a creation of the mid twentieth century and encouraged the owner to maintain a clear delineation between the historic front house and the modern rear house, rather than trying to blur the lines and match elements such as cladding, trim and window proportions.

Mr. Hsiao recommended making the atrium addition even more transparent and eliminating the roof cantilever.

Ms. Goodwin suggested a round window instead of a hexagonal window. The addition could be like a glass knuckle.

Ms. Perrault noted that the quality of the materials and craftsmanship would be the key to the success of the project.

Mr. Hsiao moved to approve the non-binding certificate of appropriateness for the atrium addition and alterations to the garage and rear house as submitted, but with the recommendations that a physical model be built and that the owners explore making the addition more transparent and differentiated from the existing pieces. Ms. Perrault seconded the motion. Ms. Goodwin designated Ms. Meyers to vote as alternate, and the motion passed 5-0.

Minutes

Ms. Perrault moved to approve the August minutes as submitted. Ms. Meyers said she would not vote because she had been absent. Ms. Litchfield seconded. Ms. Goodwin designated Ms. McMahon to vote, and the motion passed 5-0.

Ms. Perrault moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Litchfield seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:10 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah L. Burks
Preservation Planner

Members of the Public
Who Signed Attendance Sheet 10/5/09

Katherine Ellin
Hugh Russell
Skip Schloming
Lenore Schloming

2 Corliss Pl
1 Corliss Pl
102R Inman St
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