

**MINUTES OF THE MID CAMBRIDGE NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
**APPROVED AT THE AUGUST 7, 2017 HEARING**

Monday, May 1, 2017, 6:00 PM, Fourth Floor Meeting Room, City Hall Annex, 344 Broadway, Cambridge

Commission Members present: Nancy Goodwin, *Chair*; Tony Hsaio, Tony Hsiao, *Vice Chair*; Lestra Litchfield and Sue Ellen Myers, *Members*; Margaret McMahon and Charles Redmon, *Alternates*

Commission Members absent: Monika Pauli, *Member*

Staff present: Samantha Elliott

Members of the Public: See attached list.

---

Nancy Goodwin, Commission Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM. She reviewed the agenda as well as meeting procedures. She announced that all Mr. Redmon would be the voting alternate on all applications.

**MC-5169: 29 Dana Street, by Colding, Tobias Holck and Stine Grodal.** Construct bike shed and alter window and door openings.

Ms. Samantha Elliott, staff, showed slides and gave an overview of the structure and the application. She noted that this was a non-binding review.

Mr. Myoung Kim, introduced himself and the owner. He directed their attention to the photos and renderings in his packet which reflected the proposed changes. He noted that the changes were concentrated to the rear and left elevations. He continued, the goal of the project was to create more useable space, add an interior stair to the basement from the ground level and renovate the existing kitchen. He directed the Commission to page 4 which reflected the proposed changes to the kitchen and rear elevation.

Ms. Goodwin asked if they were also proposing window wells. Mr. Kim replied yes, windows for bedrooms in the basement. He added that they were proposing Marvin Clad windows. Ms. Goodwin asked if they matched the other windows. Mr. Kim replied no, it would not match the original windows.

Mr. Tony Hsiao, Vice Chair, asked where the bike shed was proposed. Mr. Kim pointed it out on the site plan and noted that their interior was to match the main structure in design and materials. Ms. Goodwin asked if the bike shed had a sliding door. Mr. King replied yes.

Ms. Sue Ellen Myers, Commissioner, asked for more information on the proposed steel fence. Mr. Kim replied it would be located along the property line to allow space for the kids to play. Ms. Lestra Litchfield, Commissioner, asked if the proposed fence was solid. Mr. Kim clarified no, it was a metal picket fence. Ms. Litchfield asked if there was an entrance gate. Mr. Kim replied yes there would be a gate across the driveway and the entry gate.

Ms. Goodwin asked why the windows in the kitchen were protruding six (6) inches. Mr. Kim replied to allow for a window seat inside. Mr. Redmon asked if the drawings or perspectives were correct regarding the projection. Mr. Kim said that the perspective was correct.

Ms. Goodwin asked for questions from the public; there were none. She asked for comments from the public; there were none.

Ms. Goodwin asked for comments from the Commission.

Ms. Litchfield recommended that they think about terminating the fence at the front yard instead of doing a sliding gate, as it may interfere with the front entry gate. Mr. Redmon, echoing Ms. Litchfield's concerns, recommended that they work out a detailed landscape plan to see how the lot, driveway and fence would work together. Ms. Litchfield recommended they look at 5 Dana Street, as they had a fence and it was rarely closed.

Ms. Litchfield suggested they consider the color of the windows, as if they change the color of the house in the future, the windows would be the same color.

Mr. Redmon asked if the windows operated. Mr. Kim replied the windows were casements. Ms. Litchfield asked if some were fixed. Mr. Kim replied yes.

Stanley T, abutter at 28 Dana Street, asked where the bike shed was. Ms. Litchfield offered her copy of the plans to reflect where on the site plan the bike shed was proposed.

Mr. Hsiao said the rendering reflected an interesting approach to modern detailing. He said that the site work demanded more attention and noted that boards or a presentation would have been more helpful to make the project easier to follow. He agreed with Ms. Litchfield that a further exploration of color was needed and that the gate needed to be reworked, as one would have to get out of their car to open the gate across the drive or leave it open all the time.

Ms. Pauli asked if the meters on the side of the building were going to get cleaned up as part of the project. Mr. Kim replied that it would be up to the utility company. Ms. Owner added that the area in question would change after the renovation work with the stairs being removed, a patio being added and additional landscaping.

Ms. Myers asked if the fire escape from the third floor would remain. Mr. Kim replied yes. Ms. Litchfield offered that they could ask zoning what was required. Ms. Owner replied that the stairs did not connect to the fire escape.

Mr. Hsiao asked if the site was level. Mr. Kim replied that it had a slight slope. Mr. Hsiao said that the landscaping plan should reflect that and would help to flesh out the details.

Mr. Redmon said it looked like the elevations did not match the house and asked if they were changing the house to match the plans. Mr. Kim replied no, that there were errors on the elevations that he would amend.

Mr. Redmon made a motion to approve the application as presented with the condition that the applicant return to staff with a completed landscaping plan that addresses the fencing and site slope elements and updated and corrected elevations. Ms. Litchfield amended the motion to include that the applicant consider color options. Mr. Redmon accepted the amendment. Ms. Litchfield seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5-0.

*Ms. Goodwin recused herself as she was an abutter. She got up from the table and joined the audience.*

**MC-5170: 115 Inman Street, by Jennifer Efron and Douglas Arsham.** Demolish and rebuild rear enclosed porch addition.

Ms. Samantha Elliott, staff, showed slides and gave an overview of the structure and the application. She noted that this was a non-binding review.

Jennifer Efron, an owner, introduced herself and gave an overview of the project scope. She noted that most of the work was limited to the interior and that the exterior components were limited to a previously enclosed rear porch. She said the main points of the project were to make the addition safe, raise the roof to align floor heights, and incorporated into the interior living space. Ms. McMahan asked if the porch was added. Ms. Efron said that it did not seem to be original but they could not find a permit for the porch. Doug Arsham, an owner, added that the permits in the archives were not clear and that you could see clapboard under the asbestos siding that existed currently. He added that the lumber seemed to be of more standard dimensions but the porch was not particularly sound.

Mr. Hsiao asked if the proposal was to demolish the entire porch and rebuilt it. Ms. Efron replied yes within the same footprint. Mr. Arsham clarified that it was not the entire rear only their half of the house. Mr. Hsiao sought to confirm that they were going back with clapboard to match the original siding as the plans noted. Mr. Arsham replied that they had not selected a material but knew that it would not be asbestos or vinyl. He said they had looked at cementitious plank and wood.

Ms. Myers asked who the chimney belonged to and if it was staying. Mr. Elliott directed them to a photo in the application packet. Mr. Arsham replied that it was not over the addition but generally loved over the original structure, not the addition.

Ms. Myers asked if they had talked to the attached unit's owner to consider residing the entire structure. Ms. Efron replied that they had not approached the abutting owner about this yet as they had only recently closed on the house but they have been working to keep communication open between the two sides of the double house. Mr. Arsham noted that this was a single family attached home, rather than a condo; he hoped to have a conversation with the other owner but was not certain of an outcome.

Ms. Pauli asked if they were adding window trim around the new windows. Mr. Arsham replied yes and noted that it was currently flat stock but they were hoping to do more. Mr. Redmon asked if they had considered to have the proportions match the existing windows. Ms. Efron replied yes, they were trying to do just that.

Mr. Hsiao asked for questions from the public. There were none. He asked for comments from the public.

Erin Graves, owner at 1717 Cambridge Street, asked how common double houses with different fenestration were in Cambridge. Mr. Hsiao replied that there were a number of such houses in Cambridge.

Louise Goff, architect for 1717 Cambridge Street, asked if the applicant would be bound to use the same material all the way back. Ms. Litchfield replied yes, but if it was proposed differently it would be reviewed as proposed.

Mr. Redmon said he thought there was an opportunity to extend the character and rhythm of windows in the house all the way across with replicating the header height. Mr. Arsham said that was the intent and noted that the newest set of plans had been updated to include matching header height. Mr. Redmon said that the Commission would need updated plans to show the changes. Mr. Arsham said he would email them to staff. Mr. Redmon added that the rhythm of two (2) windows was better than the three (3) proposed. Mr. Arsham replied that they were proposing to reduce it from five (5) windows down to three (3) windows downstairs and two (2) windows upstairs.

Mr. Hsiao said that the proposed changes have the potential of creating a more holistic view of the house but things like siding material choice and window patterns will impact that. He cautioned them against letting choices for the addition reconstruction drive the renovation/restoration of the entire house as the decisions they were making for this project were critical for the entire house.

Ms. Litchfield asked if they were adding glass doors. Mr. Arsham replied yes.

Ms. Litchfield noted that the Commission preferred wood over cementitious plank for a variety of reasons.

Mr. Hsiao asked if the applicant was proposing vinyl clad windows. Mr. Arsham replied yes. Mr. Hsiao said that the Commission always recommends historic materials when possible, including windows. Ms. Litchfield asked if they were replacing all windows. Mr. Arsham said yes. Ms. Litchfield recommended they confirm that the product would match the existing muntin pattern with a simulated divided lite product. Mr. Arsham handed them a Harvey window brochure, noting that these were the windows they were considering. Ms. Myers asked how many window they were seeking to replace. Mr. Arsham replied 20-25 windows. Ms. Litchfield asked what the muntin pattern was. Mr. Arsham replied one-over-one. Ms. Elliott noted that they would have the opportunity to match existing or match historic and that she would follow up on the specifics with the owners.

Ms. Pauli asked what they would use for the foundation on the addition. Mr. Arsham noted that the main house had emergency foundation repair which was CMU blocks and would be parged with concrete. He continued that the addition foundation would match.

Ms. Litchfield made a motion to approve the application with the following recommendations:

1. Provide updated plans prior to permitting reflecting window changes on the porch;
2. Research whether the third window on the first floor is needed;
3. Meet with staff to discuss window replacement options; and
4. Researching using wood clapboard instead of cementitious plank.

Mr. Redmon seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5-0.

*Ms. Goodwin joined the Commission.*

**MC-5171: 1717 Cambridge Street, by Erin Graves and Brian Carey.** Alter or remove chimneys.

Ms. Samantha Elliott, staff, showed slides and gave an overview of the structure and the application. She noted that this was a binding review.

Louise Goff, architect for 1717 Cambridge Street, introduced herself and gave an overview of the project. She noted that the chimney was no longer being used and they were hoping to recapture the interior space in the three (3) rooms that are impacted by the chimney. She said that they had talked to a contractor about replicating the existing chimney above the roof.

Ms. Litchfield asked how they would replicate the chimney. Ms. Goff said that from what had been discussed a box would be built out of 2x4s and clad with ¼ inch brick veneer. She noted that it would be secured with a rod.

Ms. McMahon asked if the existing could be left. Ms. Goff replied that it was a weight and structural issue. Ms. Litchfield asked if the structurally the 2x4 box worked. Ms. Goff replied that the contractor was confident of that and added that they would need to add some additional framing in the rafters for support. Ms. Pauli suggested they reach out to a structural engineer to confirm weight and height.

Ms. Goodwin asked if the chimney would have a cap. Ms. Goff replied yes.

Mr. Redmon moved to accept the application as submitted. Mr. Hsiao seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Hsiao made a motion to adjourn the hearing. Ms. McMahon seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously and the hearing was adjourned at 7:31pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Samantha Elliott  
Preservation Administrator

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

Stine Grodal	Owner	29 Dana St
Jennifer Efron	Owner	17 Decatur St
Doug Arsham	Owner	17 Decatur St
Susan & Stan Twarog	Owners [sic]	28 Dana Street
Myoung Kim	Architect	1766 Centre St, Boston
Erin Graves	Owner	1717 Cambridge St
Louise Goff	Architect	[sic] 1717 Cambridge St

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