

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MID CAMBRIDGE NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICT COMMISSION

Monday, September 9, 2019, 6:00 PM, 2nd Fl. Meeting Room, City Hall Annex, 344 Broadway, Cambridge

Commission Members present: Tony Hsiao, Lestra Litchfield, Monika Pauli, Charles Redmon, *Members*; Margaret McMahon, *Alternate*

Staff present: Allison A. Crosbie, Preservation Administrator

Members of the Public: See attached list.

Ms. Lestra Litchfield called the meeting to order at 6:05 P.M. Ms. Litchfield made introductions. Vice Chair Tony Hsiao arrived several minutes later.

Public Meeting: Informational Presentation

Report on the Nineteenth Amendment Centennial Committee's site selection study for a piece of public art. The Cambridge Public Library is one of several sites being considered.

Members of the Committee, Kimberly Sansoucy, Sarah Burks, along with Jennifer Matthews, presented information regarding the potential placement of artwork in Joan Lorentz Park in front of the Cambridge Public Library. In April 2019 the Cambridge City Council officially appointed the Committee due to the fact there is a lack of recognition of women in the city's commemorations.

At Joan Lorentz Park, the Committee is specifically looking at the space between the main path and the tot lot so as not to interrupt the open space where the community interacts. The site's proximity to Rindge and Latin High School and its accessibility via public transportation are factors that make this location desirable for installing an art piece that creates an experience. The final site selection will occur in October 2019.

An RFQ has been released nationwide, and the existing artist registry will also be considered. Three to four finalists will be selected in October along with alternates based on their past projects. Finalists will be paid to develop a proposal with public input. There will be criteria specific to the site that finalists are required to follow. Proposals will be presented to the larger community, and the final selection will be made in the summer of 2020.

Mr. Redmon asked if Michael Van Valkenburgh, the landscape architect of Joan Lorentz Park, will be consulted to inform the design, and encouraged involving Mr. Van Valkenburgh in the process. Ms. McMahon also suggested that they contact the Mid Cambridge Neighborhood Association since they have a very strong attachment to the park.

Ms. Litchfield asked about the idea of the art being an experience. Ms. Sansoucy responded that the piece should inspire people to act, participate in democracy, vote. Ms. Burks stated that she has been researching the suffrage movement in Cambridge for several years and believes this site presents a synergy with learning given its adjacency to the high school and the fact that the park is named after a

woman which is rare. She mentioned that they have met with the Park Committee and there was little negative reaction to the idea since the emphasis is still on passive use.

Mr. Redmon asked where one can view the Art Book. Ms. Sansoucy replied that artview.com is not for the public but that the final proposals will be available to the public for feedback.

Ms. Pauli asked how visible will the proposed artwork be; is it intended to attract passers-by from the street. Ms. Sansoucy answered that the scale will be a consideration.

Ms. Litchfield stated she could see something happening on the site they are considering but is also concerned about sightlines to the old part of the library but understands that the criteria has yet to be developed.

Public Hearing: Alterations to Designated Properties

Case MC-5751: 37 Bigelow Street, by Amrit Srivatsava & Maitreyi Mazumdar. Remove existing deck and stair, construct single-story addition.

Ms. Crosbie showed slides of the site and stated that although the property is included in the Bigelow Street National Historic District, the building under review was constructed in 1985 which is after the period of historic significance and therefore the review is non-binding. The building is located behind 35 Bigelow and is mostly visible from across a parking lot on Harvard Street.

Mr. Mike Dawson, the architect, stated that the owners' grandparents are moving in with the family and additional space is needed. He also mentioned that a Variance for a roof extension was granted in 1992 and the applicant will have to apply again to the BZA.

Ms. Litchfield asked about the proposed tall window. Mr. Dawson said it is intended to capture more light, and that there is a sloped roof. Ms. Litchfield noted that the building code might require a railing around the sloped roof.

Mr. Redmon asked what kind of brick is proposed. Mr. Dawson answered that he is looking to match the tone but not the specific color of the existing brick. Mr. Dawson also described the trellis to provide landscaping and screening.

Ms. Pauli asked about any additional changes to the siding. Mr. Dawson replied that the applicant is not making any other changes to the property.

Vice Chair Hsiao read two letters of support into the record. There were no other public comments.

Vice Chair Hsiao made a motion to approve the application as presented. Ms. Litchfield seconded, the motion passed 5-0.

Case MC-5772: 23 Greenough Street, by 23 Greenough Street LLC. Construct additional front door and remove side door.

Ms. Crosbie presented slides of the property, noting that the review is non-binding.

Mr. Aurel Garban presented product information on the proposed door for the front façade of the house.

Ms. Litchfield asked why add another entrance, noting that it can be nice to keep the look of a single family house. Mr. Garban replied that buyers like to have a separate entrance for privacy, and that a single entrance is good if you like your neighbor.

Ms. Pauli asked about mail boxes. Mr. Garban said he is going to install new ones.

Mr. Redmon made a motion to approve the application as presented. Ms. Litchfield seconded, and the motion passed 5-0.

Case MC-5752: 6 Sumner Road, by Richard Deshaies. Remove vinyl siding and wood clapboard underneath and replace with pvc siding.

Ms. Crosbie presented slides of the property.

Joe Danz presented the proposed project, stating that that the existing vinyl siding was not properly applied, leading to mold and rot on the wood clapboards underneath. He also stated that there is vermiculite in the walls and needs to be removed or encapsulated. Mr. Danz said the cost of removal is prohibitive, and he has proposed to install a blue membrane that is moisture resistant and install another synthetic siding, Grayne “cedar” shingle, while restoring the water table and cornice. Mr. Danz assured the Commission that he can make the building look original.

Mr. Hsiao responded that “original” is subject to interpretation.

Ms. Litchfield asked why shingle. Mr. Danz replied that shingles were more desirable, and they can be applied to just the upper floor. Ms. Litchfield stated that the Commission does not approve of this kind of material and she doesn’t understand why add something that was never there in the first place. Mr. Danz replied that the Grayne is thicker but that he could go with clapboard. Mr. Danz also said that Hardie board has silica in it and that he does not use it. He also noted that Benjamin Moore offers a paint for the shingle and that Boral has bought Grayne.

Ms. Litchfield noted that the cornice wouldn’t work with the shingles and that the photo of the house prior to vinyl siding shown by Ms. Crosbie is his roadmap for going forward.

Ms. Litchfield motioned to not approve of the application as submitted and recommended that the applicant use the historic image as the basis for selecting the siding and to consult with CHC staff on exterior detailing. Mr. Redmon seconded, and the motion passed 5-0.

Chair Elections

Mr. Redmon nominated Tony Hsiao as Chair and Lestra Litchfield as Vice Chair. Ms. Pauli seconded, and the vote was unanimous, 5-0.

Minutes

The Minutes for July 1, 2019 were approved, 5-0.

Mr. Hsiao adjourned the meeting at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Allison A. Crosbie
Preservation Administrator

**Members of the Public Present on September 9, 2019
(who signed the attendance list)**

Joe Danz	2 Prospect Ave., Roslindale
Aurel Garban	221 Lincoln St., Lexington
Amit Srivastava	37 Bigelow Street
Mike Dawson	113 Museum St., Somerville

Note: All addresses are located in Cambridge and/or Massachusetts unless otherwise noted.