

## MINUTES OF THE MID CAMBRIDGE NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICT COMMISSION

Tuesday, September 6, 2022, 6:00 PM, online Zoom meeting

Commission Members present: Tony, Hsiao, *Chair*, Lestra Litchfield, *Vice Chair*, Katinka Hakuta  
Monika Pauli, *Members*

Absent: Charles Redmon, *Member*

Staff present: Allison A. Crosbie, Preservation Administrator, Sarah Burks, Preservation Planner

Members of the Public: See attached list

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Meeting held via online zoom webinar <https://tinyurl.com/MCsep2022>

Due to statewide emergency actions limiting the size of public gatherings in response to COVID-19, this meeting was held online with remote participation and was closed to in-person attendance. The public was able to participate online via the Zoom webinar platform. The meeting ID was 838 5749 9195.

Commission Chair Tony Hsiao made introductions, explained the process, and called the meeting to order at 6:05.

**Case MC-6507: 452 Broadway, by Joan Burke.** Replace 6 windows with vinyl windows.

Ms. Allison Crosbie, preservation administrator, presented slides of the property and history.

Ms. Joan Burke, the owner, had technical difficulties connecting to the meeting. The Commission reviewed the application and felt there was enough information to make a decision. The Commission took note of the fact that the windows on the front façade facing the street will be restored, and the window replacements are on the sides of the building.

### Public Questions and Comments

Ms. Sue Butler of 14 -16 Clinton Street lauded the applicant's proposal to restore the windows on the front.

### Commission Comments

Ms. Lestra Litchfield, Vice Chair, moved to approve the application as submitted with recommendations including that new windows follow the same light configuration with simulated divided lights (SDL), repair or replace trim around the windows with wood, and that the contractor consult with CHC staff on the window details. Commissioner Katinka Hakuta added that the Commission commends the applicant for restoring the windows on the front façade facing the street. Commissioner Monika Paul seconded, and the motion passed, 4-0.

**Case MC-6536: 285 Harvard Street Apt. 109, by Raphael Schoenle.** Replace window with vinyl window.

Ms. Crosbie presented slides of the property and history.

Mr. Raphael Schoenle, the owner, explained the condition of the window and that he wants to install a more energy efficient window. He also explained that the proposed window matches the other replacement windows on the same façade of the building.

#### Commission Questions

Ms. Litchfield asked about the proposed window grills and explained that the Commission prefers simulated divided lights but understood the desire to be consistent with the other replacement windows. Mr. Schoenle shared his screen to show pictures of the existing windows on the building. Mr. Hsiao observed that the windows are not SDL, that they have snap-on grids between the panes of glass.

Ms. Pauli asked if there has been previous review of window replacements on this building. Ms. Crosbie answered that there have been several other non-binding reviews in the past.

#### Public Questions and Comments – none

#### Commission Comments

Ms. Hakuta noted that the existing window is beautiful, but she appreciates the wish to maintain consistency.

Ms. Litchfield moved to approve the application as submitted. Ms. Hakuta seconded, and the motion passed 4-0.

**Case MC-6542: 34 Maple Avenue, by Judy Goldman.** Replace 10 windows with vinyl windows.

Ms. Crosbie showed slides of the property.

Ms. Judy Goldman, the owner, explained she is replacing ten windows with a vinyl window/storm window combination. She went over the locations on the building and further explained that heating costs are increasing which necessitates replacing the windows. She described the windows as mostly 2/1, single pane windows.

#### Commission Questions

Ms. Litchfield asked if the proposed windows will all be 1/1. Ms. Goldman was not sure. Ms. Litchfield asked for more information regarding the replacement windows. Mr. Tim Carelli, the contractor, replied that the proposed windows are Provia, a higher end vinyl window with grills between the glass. Ms. Litchfield asked if they considered vinyl clad or other options. Mr. Carelli responded they looked at aluminum clad windows, but they were too expensive.

Ms. Litchfield noted that some of the existing windows appear to be replacements.

Mr. Hsiao noted that vinyl windows don't have SDL options because they tend to contract. Mr. Hsiao asked where the 2/1 windows will be located. Ms. Goldman went over locations.

#### Public Questions and Comments - none

#### Commission Comments

Ms. Litchfield stated that the Commission prefers SDL and that inexpensive windows tend to require replacement sooner. She also noted that it's hard to tell what the other windows look like.

Mr. Hsiao asked the applicant about the other windows on the building. Ms. Goldman answered that the windows on the first floor were replaced twenty years ago, and the owner of the third floor inherited the place with the existing replacement windows.

Mr. Hsiao motioned to approve the application with the recommendation to match the original 2 over 1 style window pattern with simulated divided lites (SDL). Ms. Litchfield seconded, and the motion passed 4-0.

**Case MC-6545: 18 Clinton Street, by Asha Daniere.** Construct 2<sup>nd</sup> floor addition, alter fenestration, replace siding and trim, remove chimneys.

Ms. Crosbie presented slides of the property and background information.

Architect Sam Kachmar introduced the project, and architect Axel Ramirez-Palacios presented the proposed design, explaining that the front of the house will maintain the same visual language, and the focus of the renovation is in the rear of the property. Mr. Ramirez-Palacios presented an axon view showing the second-floor alterations, noting the more contemporary look to the design, and he showed elevations of the whole project. Mr. Ramirez-Palacios also described the new windows.

#### Commission Questions

Mr. Hsiao asked how much square footage (SF) is being added. Mr. Ramirez answered 740 sf. Mr. Hsiao asked about the exterior cladding, windows, and trim. Mr. Ramirez replied that they are proposing wood clapboard siding and Marvin Signature SDL windows. Mr. Hsiao asked if the exterior is currently shingle. Mr. Kachmar said yes, it's currently wood shingle. Mr. Hsiao asked about the roof, porch, areaways and landscape, and paving. Mr. Ramirez responded that they are replacing the slate tiles on the roof, refinishing the porch and maybe re-roof it, and adding areaways to bring in more light, and they are reducing the pervious paving in the driveway. Mr. Hsiao also asked if the parking will be reduced since the units are being reduced from 6 to 2. Mr. Ramirez replied yes.

Ms. Pauli asked if the new dormers will be the same size. Mr. Ramirez answered yes but one will shift slightly.

Ms. Litchfield asked if the windows on the front façade of the existing building are getting larger. Mr. Ramirez

Ms. Hakuta asked why they are removing the chimney. Mr. Kachmar responded that the floor plan is impacted by the chimney especially since they are altering the number of units.

Mr. Hsiao asked if they are using electric heat. Mr. Kachmar said yes.

#### Public Questions

Ms. Sue Butler of 14-16 Clinton Street asked about the proposed heating. Mr. Ramirez-Palacios answered air source heat pumps. Ms. Butler commented that she has ground source heat pumps, and they should consider them. Ms. Butler also mentioned the City's allowable noise level maximum is 55 decibels. She then asked where the pumps would be located. Mr. Ramirez-Palacios responded that they will be located on the roof in the rear as per zoning guidelines.

Ms. Butler asked if they would be located by the driveway. Mr. Ramirez-Palacios said not likely.

Ms. Butler asked about excavation and what kind of foundation will be installed. Mr. Ramirez-Palacios answered the foundation will be a 10-inch concrete slab. Ms. Butler noted that at 12 Clinton Street they excavated right up to her property line, and it was a bad experience. Mr. Kachmar assured her that they will do their due diligence. Ms. Butler then stated that she had no issues with the windows but is disappointed with the loss of historic fabric.

Mr. Rohit Karnik of 20 Clinton Street asked about the color of the house which right now in the drawings looks too dark, and he remarked that the proposed construction will block sunlight to his home. Mr. Ramirez-Palacios showed images of what they are contemplating.

### Public Comments

Ms. Butler echoed Mr. Karnik's concern over the dark exterior color.

### Commission Comments

Ms. Litchfield referred to one of the elevations, remarking that it looks like an unrelenting wall and suggested it could be mitigated by inseting it a little bit. Mr. Kachmar responded that they are trying to honor the original intent. Ms. Litchfield commented that it looks like an awfully long extension and historically it would have been broken up. Ms. Pauli suggested a corner board, and Ms. Litchfield agreed saying that it would like a marker. Ms. Litchfield also stated that it would be a shame to lose the chimney, it speaks to the history of the place, evoking a previous era. She also suggested installing a faux chimney to maintain that historical reference. Mr. Kachmar replied that they would consider it.

Mr. Hsiao complimented the presentation, noting there are a lot of modifications to the existing building. Mr. Hsiao pointed out that the chimney could be reinvented, perhaps for ventilation, and reiterated that it would be preferable to preserve it. Mr. Hsiao mentioned a green design test case at Harvard by Snohetta (HouseZero on Sumner Road) that uses alternative means of ventilation. Mr. Hsiao also commented that the proportions of the windows should stay consistent with the modern aesthetic of the rear and noted that the vertical siding is compatible. Mr. Hsiao also recommended enhancing the landscaping along the driveway edge with more vegetation.

Ms. Litchfield agreed with Mr. Hsiao.

Mr. Hsiao also commented that the color is a personal choice. Ms. Litchfield pointed out that the CHC offers consultations on exterior colors.

Ms. Hakuta encouraged the applicants to keep one chimney, that it's in a historic neighborhood and it would help preserve the character of that neighborhood.

Ms. Pauli noted that the chimney adds physicality, an accent point. She stated that that the addition in the rear is appropriate, but perhaps the color of the rear addition could be a different color than the front.

Ms. Litchfield motioned to approve the application as submitted with the following recommendations,

- Use pervious paving as much as possible
- Consider additional landscaping on the site

- On the façade facing the driveway consider delineating the existing house from the addition with a corner board or painting the addition a slightly different color/tone.
- Reconsider removing the chimney, or construct a faux chimney, to preserve the character of the neighborhood
- Consult with CHC staff on paint colors and architectural details.

**Case MC-6552: 50 Inman Street, by Jameson Rogers.** Construct roof dormers and rear addition with deck.

Ms. Crosbie presented slides and gave a brief introduction.

Architect Adam Glassman presented the proposal, including replacing the front steps with a landing, installing black metal fencing, replacing windows with wood/aluminum clad windows, the gable with flush tongue-in-groove siding. Mr. Glassman stated that there are no remaining exterior details under the existing siding. The driveway will be replaced with permeable paving. Mr. Glassman also described the proposed dormers which require zoning relief, and the rear addition which will be recessed one foot on both sides. He also noted the expanded footprint and two window wells on the side. The building is being converted from two-family to a single-family home. Mr. Glassman also presented a site plan showing the landscaping.

#### Commission Questions

Ms. Pauli asked if they would consider adding more green space along property boundary/fence. Mr. Glassman replied that he can add more green space.

Ms. Litchfield asked for clarification on exterior materials, wood clapboard but pvc trim? Mr. Glassman replied yes. Ms. Litchfield asked if pvc would be used on the door surround. Mr. Glassman answered yes, most likely, it lasts a long time. Ms. Pauli expressed concern over pvc coming apart and not aging well, that for flat stock pvc is fine but for more intricate details, wood is better. Mr. Glassman responded that he can use wood for more fussy details.

Ms. Hakuta asked about the front elevation, that the dormers look very prominent and takes away from the look of the house, and she asked the Commission for their thoughts. Mr. Glassman showed a 3-d view that he says is more indicative of what it will look like. Ms. Litchfield noted that 2-d drawings do make the dormers look closer.

Ms. Pauli asked about areaways. Mr. Glassman answered that they are in the rear.

Ms. Litchfield commented that the handling of the basement egress was nice and sensitive.

#### Public Questions and Comments - none

#### Commission Comments

Ms. Litchfield stated that this is a great project, but that she prefers the trim to be wood, especially on the front portico which is the first thing people will see. And she would like to see the chimney preserved.

Ms. Pauli asked about the water table. Mr. Glassman answered there will be a water table. Ms. Pauli stated that she likes the project and reiterated her suggestion for more greenery at the edge. She also asked how many parking spaces will be on site. Mr. Glassman said two.

Mr. Hsiao concurred with his colleagues and appreciated the presentation. He remarked that the project was well thought out and appreciated that the addition was subservient to the existing structure. He also asked if there had been any consideration for electric vehicles although it's not in the Commission's purview, it's always good to include sustainable elements. Mr. Glassman responded that he is thinking about that.

Ms. Hakuta made a motion to approve the application as submitted with the following conditions:

- Add landscaping along property line adjacent to driveway,
- Consider sustainable initiatives in the renovation and new construction,
- Use wood trim especially for more intricate details,
- Consider keeping the chimney or constructing a faux chimney to preserve the historic character of the neighborhood.

Ms. Litchfield seconded, and the motion passed 4-0.

The August 1, 2022 minutes were approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:37 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Allison A. Crosbie, Preservation Administrator

**Members of the Public Present on September 6, 2022**Panelists:

Judy Goldman, owner	34 Maple Avenue
Tim Carelli, contractor	34 Maple Avenue
Joan Burke, owner	452 Broadway
Raphael Schoenle, owner	285 Harvard Street, unit 109
Sam Kachmar, architect	18 Clinton Street
Steve Hoheb, architect	18 Clinton Street
Axel Ramirez-Palacios, architect	18 Clinton Street m
Adam Glassman, architect	50 Inman Street
Jamie Rogers, owner	50 Inman Street
Rohit Karnik	20 Clinton Street

Attendees:

Sue Butler	14-16 Clinton Street
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