

Historic District Commission
Town Hall, Room 126
Meeting Minutes, 12 June 2018

Meeting called to order at 7:31 PM. Attending: David Honn (DH) Anita Rogers (AR), Ron Regan (RR), Fran Arsenault (FA), Maria Crowley (MC) and John Benson (JB) Selectmen Representative. David Shoemaker (DS) absent.

7:31 pm **Citizen's questions** – A concerned citizen contacted the HDC about a fence being removed at 612 Mass Ave. FA forwarded info about the property to the members. DH reached out to Ann Forbes and Michaela Moran about the history of the fence. Neither Michaela or Ann recalled the application, but Ann also didn't think that the fence would have been approved. Thomas Buckborough stopped by to monitor a meeting and may be interested in joining the commission.

7:38 AR makes a motion to approve the May 8th and May 22nd; approved unanimously.

7:40 Project spreadsheet review: 39 River St applicants are scheduled for next meeting at 7:45 to go over their plan, including desire to replace all the windows. They applied for a building permit and were directed to us.

7:45 **34 School St.** – Application 1815 – Michaela Moran not present.
DH goes over changes. There is a stair case not up to code in rear that needs an extended platform for both units to use. Remove chimney in back el. Need a hand rail on the stone steps from sidewalk to front walk, already suggested wrought iron hand rail, no balusters.

There was a design discussion for the platform and stairs in the. AR had some thoughts including switching existing door and window and re-orienting the platform. We will suggest to Michaela to have an architect come up with a design.

DH assigns MC as liaison, we need details for the platform and railing. An example photo would suffice for railing style. For the Platform a design/plan or sketch is needed. DH – any thoughts on the chimney? AR – need engineer to evaluate structure to see if it can be cut off and supported from the roof up. FA – prefer if it could be kept. RR – there are

two other chimneys, this one is in the back, don't think it would be a big impact to lose it. AR – one less hole in the roof to cause problems. DH – everyone should take a walk by to get a feel for the significance of the chimney by next meeting. DH – anyone think this needs a public hearing? Consensus was notices should suffice. MC – what about AC units in application? DH – need to figure out what kind of units and where they will be placed, ideally not visible if mini-splits.

8:15 **270 Central St.** – Application 1813 - Amy Molchan not present. FA discussed requirements of the certificate with the applicant, in particular the square lattice tops, and Amy was able to find a source of Cedar that allowed them to stay in budget, so they will build the fence based on the certificate requirements.

8:16 **25/27 School St.** – Application 1816 - David and Laura Veo not present.

DH sent a letter on May 17th and passed around copies to the commission explaining that there isn't enough information in the application for us to consider it because it only requests demolition of all structures with no plan on what will be built. DH felt that he made this clear in previous meetings and emails and in the last meeting with Laura the implication was that she would submit an application to remove the garage/greenhouse, concrete block addition to the blue building, and the trailer to get a better idea of the space. DH in the letter he asked that the FAR be calculated on any plans submitted and that South Acton Village has a maximum of 0.4, as we don't want to review plans that don't meet zoning. DH would like finalize the application today as he has not had any feed back from the applicants. DH suggested we could add a finding to the application that any junk like the trailer and other non-building debris could be removed.

AR makes a motion to deny the application to raze all buildings on the site. RR seconds. DH does a roll-call vote for the motion: RR – for, FA – for, MC – for, AR – for, DH – for. Motion passed. DH will file the rejection.

8:33 **HDC Boundary Signs.** DS had contacted Scott Kutil, who worked on getting the original signs installed, and Scott said that where most of the signs were missing it is because the state wouldn't let us put signs on roads that are owned by the state. DH – we could contact people near the beginning/ends of the district and ask if we can put the signs on their

property. RR – the town took ownership of part of Mass Ave/111 in front of the Village Works so they could add parking, so we may be able to add one there. DH – Mathias would probably be amenable to have a sign on his property. AR – could DS get us the addresses at the edge of the districts where we could send a letter to the owners? RR asked how far back would they need to be so they are out of the right of way? DH – we would need to ask Corey York, they could end up being pretty far back. FA will contact the sign guy for the Historic Commission plaques to see if he could make them and for what price. RR passed around his phone with a photo of the sign on Windsor Ave. and will send to FA to show the sign guy.

8:47 **HDC Newsletter.** MC talked to Matt Frost (Town IT guy) about the tech options. We could submit a PDF that could be linked from our page on the town website. We can't just send an email to residents in the districts, we have to follow the email laws. We can have people sign up via the footer link "news" on the town website email lists, add a new option for HDC newsletter. We can have more than one page with links. We can use any document format, such as MS Word or PDF or draw/write out by hand how we want it to look. DH printed out email with ideas and had RR read to the commission.

MC – our existing page is nicely organized. DH – we should have a copy of the current home owners letter be linked to the existing page. FA – we sent a letter to RE agents to instruct them to inform buyers of properties in the district, that should be added. DH - what do we want for the first issue? MC – I was thinking we could send a post card to residents in the districts telling them about the newsletter, we can't send email first. DH can we put a blurb on the front page of the town website? Dh we should make the first newsletter before sending out the cards. AR – what about HC property owners, they could be interested in the content too. DH – call it Preservation Newsletter. There are about 600 properties on the resource list. MC do we want to check with HC first? FA – I am going to meeting on 6/13 and can ask. MC – when do we want to have the first one out? DH – not before the second meeting in September. DH – 7 or 8 years ago the "Window Woman" gave a presentation that was tapped. Could we link to a video? There are a lot of resources that exist already that we should link to instead of re-inventing the wheel. What properties can we highlight? 104 Main St. could be in first issue. DH – what about Habitat

for Humanity house at 43 School St. it covers a lot: affordable housing in district, used CPC funds.

9:20 **Chair Update.** 53 River St. meeting at rec-center. Need to send a letter to remind them it is in a historic district and removing the dam or any of the buildings would require HDC approval. JB gave an overview of the presentation.

90 School St. The applicant missed the third and final ZBA rescheduled meeting so the ZBA voted to deny the application for a Special Permit.

9:25 Meeting adjourned.