



Historic District Commission

Meeting Minutes

2023-07-18

7:00 PM

Online, Town Hall, 472 Main St, Acton, MA 01720

Present: Art Leavens (AL), Zach Taillefer (ZT), Anita Rogers (AR), David Shoemaker (DS), Barbara Rhines (BR) (Acton Cultural Resources Coordinator), Fran Arsenault (FA) (Select Board Liaison)

Absent: David Honn (DH)

Opening:

Anita Rogers opened the meeting at 7:03 pm. Art Leavens communicated the gist of the “remote meeting notice” due to COVID-19.

1. Regular Business

- A. Citizen's Concerns – None.
- B. Approval of Meeting Minutes – June 27, 2023: AL moved their adoption, seconded by ZT. AL, AR, ZT, DS, and voted to approve. Minutes approved.
- C. Review Project Tracking Spreadsheet / Chair Updates:

Outstanding COAs/CNAs/Denials –

1. 75 School Street Amend COA – Done (BR)
2. 481 Main St – ZT visited 5/1/2023. Discussed in a precedent meeting. Some windows visible from the street. One original, repairs foreseen. No application.
3. 461 Main Street – no application. DH in discussion with them.
4. 37 Windsor Avenue Window Review – application in, for next meeting.

2. New/Special Business or other applicable agenda items

- A. 7:11 Application # 2321: 525 Mass Ave Signage. Amy Wiechmann joins. AW: when first opened, one sign; now two businesses under one roof, and a second owner for the other enterprise. Propose to move Stamm and Black sign over (will be subject to a



separate application), and to put the sign for 'Home' right above the door. Informal poll said that there was misunderstanding about the retail aspect of the 'Home' store. AR: are the dimensions appropriate? AW: yes; checked with BR and DH via email. Typo, and width will be 84" but still compatible with bylaws. BR: Planning should be contacted to be sure that the dimensions are ok. AR: we can proceed with HDC, with approval contingent on Planning ok. Lights are placed where wiring exists. Has a proposal for the lights. AR: These need to be sent to HDC for review. ZT: Size should be ok with HDC. Will need to review the light fixture. Lighting indirect as shown. AW: Material and details of the sign design not yet selected, but plan to work with the same person who did Stamm and Black sign and others in the district. AR: that was a painted wood sign. ZT: high-density pvc could be ok, but the sign base and lettering must be painted. A covering over the sign to protect against weather has been approved in the past. DS: important to have the details of the design, but it looks ok. AL: Agree the basic idea is ok, but we need the details. AW: Next step is to consult the sign guy. AR: The blue clapboard must be visible around the sign, and a detailed drawing showing this detail is needed. Determine the border painting, and the thickness of the sign material. Mounting details are important also (standoffs from the clapboard). Recommend to make the width of the sign to extend to the outer edges of the glass below the sign (as drawn) – and not as wide as the door framing. Lights on the door frame must be compatible with lights on the signs. BR: Possible to come to a meeting on the 25th? AW: will strive to do so! Will consider removing the existing lights on the sides of the door.

B. 7:30 Application # 2321: 526 Ave Window Replacement Curt Dukeshire (Marvin Windows) joins. AR and DH walked through the building. CD speaks to submission material. Ultrex Fiberglass window, inside and outside. Limited expansion/contraction. Pultruded, allowing traditional sash. Simulated Divided Lite. Plan an insert approach, leaving the present exterior trim. The frame is 7/8", mostly hidden by the existing stop. Very little glass is lost. Mitred corners. Muntins can be 7/8". Storms could be returned after installation of the Marvins. AR: Triplex, 3 front doors. This application is for only a subset of the windows – four on the front, to the right of the façade, and the east façade. The windows are in relatively good condition, and could be restored. Currently most/all windows have storms, and the Marvin windows would not, leading to a broken façade; storms would need to be added back if Marvin windows were to be installed. The owner would like better energy and noise performance. AL: Also looked at the windows from the outside, and found them to be in reasonable condition. Restoration seems indicated, especially with the fact that only a subset of the windows would be replaced. DS: Agree. The HDC visit indicates that windows probably date from the 1800's. Maybe good to see if the building wants to refurbish all the windows, and perhaps upgrade storms. ZT: Agreed; refurbishment over replacement. AR: Agreed. It is presently a matched set. AL: similar to a Main St. application in which we denied an application to replace 19th century windows, because restoration was possible. AL: Moves that we deny the motion for the reasons stated. ZT Seconds. ZT, DS, AL, AR agree. The application is denied. The windows not in view from Massachusetts Avenue can of course be replaced, but one on the 'ell' in the back can be seen; this should be noted in the certificate. AL: Having disapproved the application, we do need to consider the issue of hardship, but the applicant is not present and has not requested a Certificate of Hardship, and the facts



would not support it.

- C. 8:00 Application #2324: 472 Main Street Garden. Cathy Fochtman joins. AR notes a nearby house with a large fountain on a berm. CF: It looks like the infrastructure project is completed, and the Garden Club has replanted the trough. Fountain is 64" high, larger bowl 32" diameter. Stone is 3'x3' with a brass plaque, indicating the gift from the Garden Club. AL: Uncertain if it will serve as a fountain or a planter. CF: Garden Club thought a planter; Town Manager intrigued to make it a working fountain. AL: could it be moved forward a bit to move off center. CF: yes, would place in the lower 1/3. AL: Likes the proposal. ZT: Likes the project and the reuse. Would prefer that it serve as a fountain. There should be a proper footing; we recommended a mockup. AR: This should be put in the certificate to ensure it will be best presented and offer flexibility for the plantings. Rather not have plants in it even if there is no flowing water. DS: no additional comments. AR: Move that we approve the application for the reasons noted. An Oval garden in the town hall, in the middle of the garden the existing Victorian fountain with plantings surrounding it. Prior to final installation decisions a mockup should be installed for the HDC to review the approach. At the edge of the garden closest to the Town Hall entry, a stone with plaque will be installed. ZT, DS, AL, AR agree.
- D. 8:30 Preliminary Discussion: 9 School Street COA/Window Selection. Siano-Perkins (SP) joins. SP: Just looking for approval for windows. Prefers the Windsor Pinnacle window. AR: cannot vote this evening as DH is not with us. SP eager to have an estimate for the costs of the windows and the drawings may not represent what would be actually installed. Wants to know if the kind of window would be acceptable. AR: The HDC needs to see the original drawings and the revised drawings to compare. The Hybrid would be acceptable; the Pinnacle has a frame which is not traditional in appearance, and would be difficult to install in a way that really looks like a traditional window. The Windsor Legend Hybrid would work well; the HDC members found it to be ok. The HDC does not want to restrict to one vendor. AL, DS, ZT, AR: finds this window acceptable. Will seek to discuss at the meeting on the 25 July.
- E. 8:45 Discussion: Concord Road Historic District; MHA Memo. No one present, and with DH missing the Committee chooses to delay discussion for later.
- F. 8:50 HDC Violations. AR: AR and DH happened upon the Gardner Field playground in construction, and found it to be notably different from the documents presented. Excavation not in the plans was performed and a significant retaining wall installed. Will be on the agenda for next week. BR: the Town Management is aware, and will come to discuss. AL: 550 Mass Ave fence was also an issue; a long plastic fence at the corner of Kinsley and Mass Ave.

3. Consent Items

None

1. Adjournment

At 9:00 AL moves to adjourn the meeting, AR seconds. AR takes a roll call vote: AL, AR, DS, ZT all approve.



Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting.

- All relevant Applications, in Docushare