

Historic District Commission

Meeting Minutes

2025-04-08

7:00 PM

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

Present: David Honn (DH), David Shoemaker (DS), Anita Rogers (AR), Zach Taillefer (ZT), Art Leavens (AL), Barbara Rhines (BR) (Acton Cultural Resources Coordinator).

Absent: Fran Arsenault (FA) (Select Board Liaison).

Opening:

David Honn opened the meeting at 7:02 pm. DH read the “remote meeting notice” due to COVID-19.

1. Regular Business.

A. Citizen's Concerns – None.

B. Approval of Meeting Minutes – March 25 Minutes. DS moved their adoption, seconded by AL. AR, DH, ZT, DS in favor. Approved.

C. Review Project Tracking Spreadsheet / Chair Updates:

Outstanding and Completed COAs/CNAs/Denials

- 53 River Street # 2327 Renewal (AR) DONE
- 48 Windsor Avenue # 2507 – CNA DONE
- 5 Concord Road Interpretive Sign #2503 Amendment (AL) DONE
- 111-113 School Street Violation – corrective work to porch & railing in process. AR, as deputy Chair: one piece of PT was still visible at the last drive by, but 95% done. Will look again. Posts seem too tall.
- 48 School Street barn renovation PH scheduled for May 13, 2025 (see below)

2. New/Special Business or other applicable agenda items

A. 7:08 COA Renewal #2011 69 River Street – fence replacement. Applicant Kendra Wilson (KW) Joins. This is a request for a renewal of a COA issued 5 years ago, with the same materials. The current fence would be replaced with a 6' cedar privacy fence in several points. Likely not painted. AR: Thinks it is fine. AL: Asks about renewal, and notes that it needs to be a new application. ZT: Will there be a gate, and what hardware? KW: just where the current gates are. Standard black metal hardware. Asks if staining could be done. DH:

yes. DS, DH are happy. AL to write it up. BR: needs abutters notices, which must be out 10 days before COA can issue. AL: Moves we approve the application to erect a fence as shown in the 2020 COA, as described therein. AR, AL, ZT, DH approve. AL to write.

B. 7:22 48 School Street Pre-application discussion. Matthew Killam (MK) and Tim Hess (TH), architects, joins. Reminds the HDC of a modern direction for the renovation. Costs are constraining the design space. Hoping for a mid-May Public Hearing. Images are shared. AR: trying to recall the precedent version, but see that the evolution is in our recommended direction. This version feels more barn-like; the sash and siding are good choices. Positive reaction. MK: Roof pitch and height are as before. North wall is saved, and then extrude the pentagon toward the house. AL: Recalls that there was a part of the barn to be demolished. Curious about fenestration on South and East where most visible. TH: a hipped roof extension to the west would be removed. It is not particularly old or complementary to the larger barn envelope. Not part of the 19th century construction or vision. The windows have been moved; on the School St elevation are respectful of the current layout. South and East similarly. The West is considerably changed. AL: The design guidelines do ask that one sticks with the previous window arrangement. ZT: Are any of the windows currently original? Tim: vast majority are new. Thinks none are close to original (1860 or so). DS: Hope there is enough light in the East side. Asks about piping – they are rain runoff. Chimney is for a wood burning stove. DS: Likes it. DH: Current house shingles are 3-tabs; new work will be as well, and that flatter look should be considered. Good response to our last discussion. Galvanized hardware will be good. Facades are nice – interesting. Will the flue be stainless? TH: Yes. DH: Not sure HDC has ever approved a stainless flue. 101 Main St would be a possible reference for a stainless flue – black would be better. TH: North green feature will have some distinguishing dimensions and details. The foundation will remain visible and unchanged except where the new ramp on the East side will have it hidden, where it will be reworked. DS: need to discuss with the building inspector the state of the current foundation. The West side deck is low – no railing needed. MK: it will be a floating deck. DS: Effectively a dismantling. Historical precedent will require a careful presentation at the Public Hearing. Need to say why you are taking things down. DS: try to keep the back wall standing throughout the process. DH: try to reuse or share the old elements for re-use in the measure possible. Good also to show photos of exterior and interior to show the current status; and show re-use where you can. BR: Public Hearing waits for the application to arrive to start the calendar. DH: the dismantling strategy and motivation (visual and/or text) should be in the application. We will expect to have a number of follow-up visits with working drawings, window choices, lighting fixtures, etc. as the project advances. AL: The demo guidelines are important to follow, and arguments must be made to address the issues represented in those guidelines.

C. 8:10 9 School Street Pre-application discussion; future applicant chose not to join. AR: a couple of elements were dropped off at the office, but not yet complete. The HDC needs to see any alternatives to wood as examples.

D. 8:00 Outreach for new HDC members. DH: Talked with FA to look into realtors. Kathy Acerbo-Bachman to help identify possible persons. Asked Architecture organizations for

possible names. DS: Municipal Monthly. Pull in those with technical expertise. DH: Acton Unlimited. Those who have renovated multiple properties. BR: Historical Commission.

3. Consent Items

None

1. Adjournment

At 8:22 DH moves to adjourn the meeting, AL seconds. DH takes a roll call vote: DS, AR, AL, DH, ZT all approve.

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting.

- All relevant Applications and Documents, in Docushare