

Historic District Commission  
Town Hall, Room 126  
Meeting Minutes, 20 October 2015

Meeting called to order at 7:33 PM. Attending: Ron Regan (RR), Anita Rogers (AR), and David Foley (DF), Chingsung Chang (CC, Selectmen Representative), David Shoemaker (DS; note-taker); not present David Honn (DH)

Citizens: David Hale, Fran Arsenault, Xiao Wu  
Move to approve Oct 6 Minutes; accepted unanimously

- 7:34pm      Citizens:
- 1) David Hale lives across the street from 25-27 School St (incl residence, former garage, freight building with basement and greenhouse) and is considering purchasing it now that it is on the market and wishes to discuss the possibilities for the property with the HDC. Concerns with the grandfathering of the building issues as considerable work was done without a building permit. Would like to maintain the original building, House and freight building; however, there is a modern garage, greenhouse, etc., which really do not belong. Alternatively considering removing everything, and building something which would be historically appropriate. If the residence remains, then the external façade would need attention, and there are issues to egress for several of the apartments. Might be a commercial enterprise. AR: Notes that our comments are not binding. AR Thinks it would be difficult to receive approval for demolition. RR: Historical photos had more charm. Moved from a different location, and was elaborated when moved there. DF: An appropriate commercial use might help guide what would be best.
  - 2) Wu: a proposal. Fine Artist; interested in the Asa Parlin house. As an artist, thinking of supporting by internal decorations to be contributed. Also would like to see if it would be possible to use the Asa Parlin House as an Office. DF: Brings up the distinction of Historical Commission vs. Historic District Commission. It is in the HDC Town Center District. Several problems with the Parlin House – well and sewage and sprinkler would not be possible. AR: Recommends speaking with the Town Manager.

XW: volunteers to help. RR: Report on the house concluded the cost to renovate were excessive.

7:58 Lucy Goldstein; Village Works in W Acton, signage for the Wellness Center. spaces for wellness professionals. There is a house just in front of the offices, and difficult to see signage. Two questions: the basic sign, and a directional sign. 1) Basic sign is simple, with the name of the business and a graphic. Requests a variance for the 28"x 36" (high) planned sign. Distance from Mass Ave sidewalk to the sign is ~50 ft. Would like to give the sign some depth with carved stepping stone elements in graphic . 2) Directional sign, under the space where e.g., Acton Coffee Shop sign would be; the sign would have a gentle curve. Triangles or Arrow under the name to indicate the direction. DF: prefers Arrow. DS: looks like it was just stuffed in there – as wide as possible between the trim pieces. Would be great to reduce width a bit. AR: free standing sign possible? DS: would want it to be quite substantial. DF: usually the directional sign has a less complete representation of the Logo; LG: explains that it maps the path to the Wellness Center. AR: comfortable with the main sign, including size, relief; and likes the version with the frame. DF: for the Directional Sign, finds it more poster like and feels too much like it is a full second sign, so not allowed. If there is a smaller version, better. Many suggestions follow to try to make a reduced size and to reduce the sense of it being a second full sign. DS: support to bring the sign a bit forward. AR: Maybe a wrap-around sign drawing people along; DS says this solves his problem, DF says it takes on more of the directional sense. AR: could be a metal sign. DF notes that the single application covers both of the signs. Application #1534 A main, #1534 B, directional. RR: Last sign for Wave had a border or a profiled frame; is this inconsistent? DF: the lack of frame and variety of presentations can help build the sense of the Village. AR fine without a frame. AR: For App 1534, the main sign will be A; directional B. For A, Move that we approve for the Wellness at VillageWorks a 28" wide by 36" high sign, to match the artwork per the application and per the description with the stepping stones raised from the surface of the sign with a subtle gradation, no more than 1" in height or carved into the surface. Sign to be mounted proud (roughly 1") off

the clapboard with standoffs. The sign will be wood with painted surface and painted letters. Spot lighting as shown in the application. 1534 B will be discussed at a later meeting. Voted, and approved unanimously.

8:34 6 Newtown Rd: Rob Gilham. (DS recuses himself) Application for some roofing work. Two components: 1) Flat roof between two roofs. The surface cannot be seen from the road, should not change the appearance of the house. Presently rolled roofing; would be replaced with rubber roofing. 2) Dormer on the south-west corner of main roof; lots of problems with ice dams. Ice and Water barrier needed. Would require that the shingles would be removed and replaced, and the contractor claims the replacement shingles would be identical with the present shingles. AR: the house is *not* architectural shingles; they look like 3-tab. Standard practice is to put in Ice and Water over the entire surface and that is the recommendation. Best approach would be to remove the shingles, place rigid insulation, sheathing, then I&W (or any equivalent product). It would require some carpentry to get the right visual result – remove rake board, clapboards and a new rake board to the vertical surface because of the additional wall height. The basic problem is insulation. The Committee recommends reconsidering to put off the repair until it can be done well. HDC recommends 3-tab shingles. The new drip edge must match the trim.

DF: 1) Replace the Middle roof material with rubber roofing material (EPDM) in the area as stated in the application. The drip shall be finished to blend with the existing white trim. 2) Repair of the West Dormer roof will include water and ice barrier and replacing old shingles with 3-tab shingles to match the existing roof (and not architectural shingles).

Motion voted and approved unanimously.

(DS returns)

8:48 Peter Henry (owner of the restaurant) and Ken Duval, Duval Sign. No Application yet; wanted HDC input as part of the design process. Ken Duval wishes to propose an alternative material (high density polyurethane) for signs. Material is long lasting and will maintain its appearance. The material carves better with both powered and manual carving. The lighter weight reduces risk for the installers and pedestrians. Good adhesion to paint. DF: how

- does the paint wear? KD: weathers like a car – fade. AR: paintable with a brush? KD: yes. DS: can a paint-buildup be made to give it more the visual appearance of a wooden sign? KD: yes; offers to mill brush strokes in the manufacturing process, but the HDC does not like this idea much. HDC requests a sample with paint buildup and a sample letter to see the finished appearance.
- Peter Henry: a proposal for a Brewery sign. Effort was made to put some historical elements into the signs, and to be appropriate to the commerce. For the main sign, PH requests we consider a sign requiring a variance, for 18' length (the HDC would have required a max of 13.4' without a variance). There is a second circular sign proposed which is not consistent with the bylaws. It may be that it can be considered a directional sign to the door. (The town bylaw limits the overall area and may require review.) RR: finds the sign successful. AR, DS: prefer the larger font. DS: likes the true gold leaf. DF notes that the fact that the oversized sign outline on the original architectural drawings was part of an approved project does not indicate that the HDC approves of that size!
- 9:31 CPC Zoning: Scott Kutil has studied zoning for the HDC. SK has assembled an application to help perform a study and craft bylaws which are consistent with this. RR recalls discussions of SK with Roland Bartl, and finding complex legal issues; actual changes in the zoning laws are needed. RR recalls SK wanting to make surveys or inventorying of all properties, and this may not be welcome for all District residents; it might be considered to be invasive. DS: important that the HDC craft a realization plan that builds support in the community for the zoning change. The Committee will discuss again at its next meeting.
- 9:54 85 School: Making a shed or garage (RR)
- 10 Wood Lane, Godley: Essential repair (DF)
- 9:59 Formal Review of the Wave Project, as invited by Frank Ramsbottom. AR: recalls that a number of points were raised during the process, but believes the Wave project was substantially realized as drawn and approved.
- 10:11 RR Recuses himself, and notes that an application from RR has been made for a repair. HDC discusses if repairs should be bought to the attention of the HDC. AR: not necessary for simple carpentry to restore to a good state with painting as an example.
- 10:14 Move to adjourn; seconded and voted unanimously