

Approved 2/24/14

Minutes of the Avon Hill Neighborhood Conservation District

Monday, January 27, 2014 - 5:30 PM - 831 Massachusetts Ave., Basement Conference Rm.

Commissioners Present: Robert Crocker, Catherine Henn, Heli Meltsner, *Members*; Art Bardige, Theresa Hamacher, John Sanzone, *Alternates*

Commissioners Absent: Constantin von Wentzel, Mark Golberg

Staff Present: Charles Sullivan, Samantha Paull

Members of the Public: see attached sign-in sheet

With a quorum present, but in the absence of Mr. von Wentzel and Mr. Golberg, Theresa Hamacher assumed the chair and called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M. She made introductions and reviewed the hearing procedures. She designated the alternates as voting members and noted that Mr. Crocker would recuse himself because he was an abutter.

Public Hearing: Alterations to Designated Properties

AH-467: 109 Avon Hill Street, by Charles and Louise Weed. Construct 2nd floor addition, projecting bay, and laundry room addition; alter fenestration and replace windows throughout.

Mr. Sullivan showed images of the site, which was visible from both Avon Hill Street and Bellevue Avenue. He noted that it would be a binding review because it involved construction of an addition and altering a covered porch

Louise Weed, an owner, said that she and her husband were 35-year residents and that the changes they proposed were necessary so they could remain in the house. They wished to have a compliant stair to the third floor, an enclosed mudroom off the driveway, and replacement windows throughout except on the second floor, where they had already been replaced.

Ms. Henn asked if the windows could be restored. Dave Powers of S+H Construction responded that it would be just as expensive as replacements. The new 2+1 Marvin windows would have simulated divided lights.

Mr. Sullivan pointed out that filling in a second floor window facing Bellevue Avenue would unbalance the façade. Mr. Crocker observed that the third floor window on Avon Hill Street was a 2+2 and wondered if that was the original pattern throughout.

Ms. Weed informed Ms. Henn that an FAR variance would be required for the project.

Acting Chair Hamacher asked if there were questions of fact.

Mary Jane Kornacki of 103 Avon Hill Street asked for clarification of changes on the south elevation.

Acting Chair Hamacher read three letters in support of the project and asked for public comments.

John Stone of 23 Bellevue Avenue said he approved of the project. Robert Crocker of 120 Avon Hill Street agreed.

Acting Chair Hamacher closed the public comment period.

Ms. Hamacher said the two aspects of the project that concerned her were the ornamentation of the mudroom enclosure and the replacement windows. Ms. Meltsner agreed, and noted that new insulated windows would not have a long life; a restoration specialist should be asked to evaluate the existing ones. Ms. Hamacher added that storm windows could be installed over the old sash.

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Mr. Bardige noted that the replacement Marvin's on the second floor had storms over them. He said that he would recommend restoration, not require it. Ms. Hamacher noted that this would be a change from the Commission's usual approach, because the guidelines recommend restoration. To do otherwise would require a policy change.

Ms. Henn moved to approve the application as proposed, except that existing older windows should be restored, not replaced; the ornamentation on the porch outside the mudroom should be retained; and the new door should be similar to the existing. Ms. Meltsner added that the new windows should match the existing 2+1 pattern and the details of the existing casings and sills, and that the decision about restoration vs. replacement should be delegated to the staff. Ms. Henn agreed. Ms. Hamacher noted that the changes were not inappropriate to the style of the house. Ms. Meltsner seconded the amended motion, which passed unanimously.

Minutes

Ms. Henn moved to accept the minutes of the November 25, 2013 meeting as presented. Ms. Meltsner seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Other Business

Mr. Bardige explained his dissatisfaction with the current approach to window preservation and asked to have a discussion about the matter at a future meeting.

Ms. Henn moved to adjourn. Mr. Bardige seconded, and the meeting ended at 6:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Charles Sullivan
Executive Director

**Members of the Public
Who Signed the Attendance Sheet
~~November 25~~ January 27, 2013**

Dave Powers, S+H	40 Pheasant Run, Wellfleet
Louise Weed	109 Avon Hill Street
Chuck Reed	109 Avon Hill Street
John Stone	23 Bellevue Avenue
Mary Jane Kornacki	103 Avon Hill Street
Doug Hannah, S+H	23 New Street

Addresses are in Cambridge, unless otherwise specified.