

MINUTES OF THE HALF CROWN-MARSH NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICT COMMISSION

Approved at the 04-10-2023 Meeting

March 13, 2023. Meeting conducted online via Zoom Webinar- 6:00 P.M.

Commissioners present: James Van Sickle, Chair; Jo Solet, Adrian Catalano.

Commissioners Absent: Marie-Pierre Dillenseger, Vice-Chair; Peter Schur, Rory O'Connor.

Staff present: Eric Hill; Sarah Burks

Due to statewide emergency actions limiting the size of public gatherings in response to COVID-19, this meeting was held online with remote participation and was closed to in-person attendance. The public was able to participate online via the Zoom webinar platform.

With a quorum of commissioners and the applicant present, James Van Sickle, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:14 P.M. He explained the online meeting instructions and public hearing procedures then introduced the commissioners and staff.

HCM-577: 7 Foster Place, by Maggie Booz, Smart Architecture. Replace six windows.

Eric Hill, staff, showed slides and explained the history of the site and the workers cottage at 7 Foster Place. He explained that Foster Place was laid out in 1853 with nearly all houses on the dead end street built between 1853 and 1855. The houses on Foster Place historically were all near-identical in form and detailing and have seen varying levels of alterations since the mid-19th century. Mr. Hill noted that the applicant was before the commission in 2022 where a new addition was approved for the southwestern corner of the property. Work has begun on the addition and now the owners are looking to replace the six windows (four on the façade and one on each side elevation at the second floor). Mr. Hill noted that given the age and style of the houses, it is possible that the windows are not originally two-over-two and were replaced sometime in the later part of the 19th century.

After Eric's presentation, Maggie Booz of Smart Architecture, the applicant, added that it is possible that the windows are original but agreed that they were historic. Ms. Booz added that the project's goal is to modernize the house, while maintaining the integrity of a workers cottage in the district. She explained that many windows in the district had been replaced, but the proposed replacement is one of the best in the market to replicate historic proportions and profile.

Mr. Van Sickle opened the hearing up to questions of fact and comments by commissioners. He then asked Ms. Booz if they would be applying traditional sill pieces and if so, what size?

Maggie Booz stated that they would be including them and could not think of the dimension presently, but said they were likely to be 2 ¼" which is typical for the style, size and age of the house.

Dr. Solet asked the applicants if there was any of the older, wavy glass panes existing in the six windows on the house. She also asked if there would be storm windows and noted how Allied storm windows are not very user-friendly to operate.

Ms. Booz explained that many of the windowpanes in the old windows appear to have been replaced as maybe two or three panes retain the wavy glass.

Adrian Catalano explained that he renovated a house at the corner of Mt. Auburn and Ash Street which had older windows. There are some good replacement window options in the market now which are better than some storm window options still available. The replacement window would not need a storm. He said that he is in support of the new windows proposed.

Mr. Van Sickle explained that he had been watching this house for the past few weeks as the construction commenced. He explained that at his home, he had *The Window Woman* look at his historic windows and after some time, it was discovered that the existing jambs were upside down. He added that many of the builders and homeowners historically made quick fixes to these houses. He added that his property has Allied Windows and enjoys them as they feature narrow muntins. He noticed there was some cold radiating from the windows so later added storm windows, which solved that problem. He concluded stating that the proposed windows for 7 Foster Place were appropriate as they were for a real window and not just an insert.

Owner, Michael Bradley, spoke and explained that they are new owners and are looking to convert the house fully to electric, while adhering to the historic character and nature of the cottage. They will have an electric heat pump, hot water, and are planning to add solar panels at the roof. They even plan to add reclaimed wood inside for the flooring.

Dr. Solet explained that the heat pump location and visibility are not presently being reviewed, but if they would be visible, it would need approval by the commission or staff.

Mr. Bradley acknowledged this and explained that the goal was to locate them in the far right corner of the property as the deck is finally removed. They are quiet and should not trigger noise ordinance violations.

Mr. Van Sickle agreed and added that new systems that produce both heat and air-conditioning must be elevated over snow. This could be approved at the staff level depending on visibility.

Jo Solet made a motion to approve the project as presented. Adrian Catalano seconded the motion.

Mr. Van Sickle began a voice vote with a vote of 3-0 in favor of the motion. Approved.

Adrian Catalano had to step away from the hearing. As the three-member quorum was lost, the commissioners adjourned the meeting without reviewing the October 2022 meeting minutes or the HVAC guidelines.

The meeting adjourned at 6:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Eric Hill, Survey Director, Cambridge Historical Commission