

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MID CAMBRIDGE NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICT ARCHITECTS COMMITTEE

Tuesday, April 20, 2021, 2:00 PM, online Zoom meeting

Commission Members present: Tony Hsiao, *Chair*, Lestra Litchfield, *Vice Chair*, Charles Redmon, Monika Pauli, *Members*

Staff present: Allison A. Crosbie, Preservation Administrator, Sara Burks, Preservation Planner

Members of the Public: See attached list

Meeting held via online zoom webinar, <https://tinyurl.com/MCArchApril20>.

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. The meeting ID was **859 5761 4166**.

Commission Chair Tony Hsiao called the meeting to order at 2:05pm and made introductions and explained the meeting procedures. The meeting was recorded.

Case MC-6112: 12 Fayette Street (Continued), by 12 Fayette Street Ventures LLC. Construct new building in rear of lot, alter rear portion of existing structure, reconfigure windows, remove chimney.

Architect Alison Hammer presented three options noting that they were asked to study reducing the massing.

- A. "3 in front, 2 in back" – 3-story building closer to Fayette Street, 2 story at the back and side
- B. "Gable roof: - cross gable", 2 ½ story
- C. "Clerestory carve-out" – varying roof forms, lower at back near tree canopy, preferred by applicants, best for passive house.

Mr. Hsiao asked if the GFA has changed. Ms. Hammer replied yes, all were reduced from 350 to 450 sf.

Mr. Hsiao asked about heights. Ms. Hammer replied 35' at peak and 28.5-30' at sides for clerestory. Mr. Hsiao asked what are the benefits of each. Ms. Hammer answered the mansard was a simpler plan, the gable is more difficult for floor plan.

Ms. Litchfield stated she thought the Commission asked the applicant to look at taking a story off, it's less about FAR, more about height. The carve-outs don't address the massing issues. Ms. Litchfield asked how many bedrooms. Ms. Hammer replied 3 above ground and a playroom/study, 2 egress wells in basement, but most likely only 1 bedroom. Ms. Litchfield noted that the programming hasn't changed much. Ms. Hammer replied that they eliminated one of the large rooms.

Ms. Litchfield noted that they wanted to bring the height down considerably. This only brings it down a couple feet on average.

Commission member Charles Redmon stated that they had hoped to see a 2-story building, the clerestory scheme has some volumetric improvements with carve outs.

Mr. Hsiao stated he thought they were going to present an L-shaped 2-story with a penthouse, you've lost the 2-story datum line with the clerestory scheme, looks taller from some angles. It's not there yet.

Ms. Hammer stated they took out the study on the 3rd floor and suggested they could carve out mechanical room on 3rd floor. Mr. Redmon suggested a north-south linear plan.

Ms. Litchfield noted that it is still a massive house, the height is magnified by the clerestory scheme. Ms. Hammer noted that they do have a scheme with a 2-story portion at the front and the 3rd story is set back. Mr. Hsiao stated that they want to see more mitigation of 3rd floor.

Ms. Hammer explained that the site slopes down quite a lot, pointing to elevation/section.

Mr. Redmon suggested going back to the clerestory and work from top down to reduce GFA, set back from all sides.

Ms. Litchfield stated that the cut out exaggerates the height, it doesn't mitigate the overall massing.

Commission member Monika Pauli agreed with the other Commissioners, her reaction against the mansard had to do with the angle and height/mass, she suggested starting with 2 floors, band as low as possible, step in from that with penthouse, a simple volume with something on top. Ms. Litchfield concurred.

Mr. Hsiao noted that the clerestory scheme looks like a ski chalet and emphasizes height. Mr. Redmon suggested strongly emphasize 2-story mass, penthouse on top set back.

Ms. Litchfield noted that the Swiss consulate on Broadway and Ellery was successful. Mr. Hsiao explained that it's held back on all sides, very different on top from strong base. He also wanted to make top of 2-story portion the railing of a 3rd floor deck so no extra railing.

Ms. Hammer noted that 8.5' first floor ceiling height, 8' 2nd floor ceiling height.

Mr. Redmon left the meeting, noting he agreed with 2-story and penthouse. Ms. Litchfield agreed although she prefers 2 story with no penthouse. Ms. Hammer responded that they could do that, but it would mean expanding floor plates.

Mr. Hsiao stated that they're trying to thread the needle in mitigating excessive infill by reducing bulk and mass, that the Commission needs to see further reduction without enlarging the floor plates. Ms. Litchfield concurred noting that is what they asked for at the last meeting, and that houses behind houses should be more diminutive, what they have presented is inappropriate. Ms. Litchfield explained it would have been nice to see a 2-story without larger floor plates. Ms. Hammer replied that they did make a reduction. Mr. Hsiao stated the Commission still needs to see a reduction in massing. Ms. Hammer stated they will continue to look at ways to reduce in some areas.

Members of the Public Present on April 20, 2021

Panelists:

Alison Hammer, architect
Sean Hope
Scott Zink
Andrew Collins

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scott@zredevelopment.com

Attendees:

John Gorman
Sonia Sake
Gao-wen Shao
Marie Humblet
Hallie Speight
Allen Speight
Hugh Russell
Helen Snively
Katherine Ellin
Amy Meltzer
Heidi Samojluk
John Pitkin
Regina Barzilay

14 Fayette Street
32 Carleton Road
9 Fayette Street
13 Bigelow Street
33 Antrim Street
33 Antrim Street
1 Corliss Place
1 Fayette Park
2 Corliss Place
45 Antrim Street
33 Antrim Street
18 Fayette Street
39 Antrim Street