

DRAFT Minutes of the Cambridge Historical Commission—THIS DRAFT HAS NOT YET BEEN REVIEWED OR APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION

Minutes of the Cambridge Historical Commission

January 7, 2021 – Meeting conducted online via Zoom Webinar (858 0640 7543) - 6:00 P.M.

Members present (online): Susannah Tobin, *Vice Chair*;
Elizabeth Lyster, Caroline Shannon, Jo Solet, *Members*;
Gavin Kleespies, Paula Paris, *Alternates*

Members absent: Bruce Irving, *Chair*; Joseph Ferrara, Chandra Harrington, *Members*;
Kyle Sheffield, *Alternate*

Staff present (online): Charles Sullivan, *Executive Director*, Sarah Burks, *Preservation Planner*

Public present (online): See attached list.

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 present, Ms. Tobin called the meeting to order at 6:06 P.M. She explained the online meeting instructions and public hearing procedures then introduced the commissioners and staff. She designated both alternates to vote on all matters and dispensed with the consent agenda procedure.

Public Hearings: Alterations to Designated Properties

Case 4400 (continued): 3 Church Street, by First Parish in Cambridge. Review construction details of site plan and restoration of exterior architectural details.

Mr. Sullivan shared his screen, showed slides and provided an update about the previous hearing. He indicated the remaining details for discussion were at the ramp, plaza and steps.

David Torrey of Torrey Architecture shared his screen and displayed the updated plans. He described the intersection of the front landing with the walkway and the front of the building. A flat PVC trim board would be added at the bottom of the wall. A flame finished granite base would be added at the corners and would look like a cap on the existing granite foundation. He displayed the revised design of the railings that would have a continuous top rail. At the intersection of the ramp and the Old Burying Ground fence, there would be a 1-foot wide gutter/trough of concrete.

Ms. Tobin asked for questions of fact from the Commission.

Dr. Solet asked about the types of bricks to be used in the plaza. Would they match the city sidewalk brick? Mr. Torrey replied that they would re-use bricks already on the plaza, which were City Hall pavers and similar to the sidewalk bricks. Mr. Sullivan noted that the sidewalk brick might change in the future to be consistent with current brick sidewalk specifications. He said it would not be a bad thing to have a delineation of materials at the property line.

Mr. Kleespies asked if it would be better to have dirt rather than a concrete trough at the intersection with the iron fence. David Jay, landscape architect for the church, said the dirt would sprout weeds. It was possible that they could find a permeable material, but one did not immediately come to mind. The concrete trough would have a steep enough pitch to keep the water from ponding.

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Ms. Tobin asked if members of the public had questions or comments. No one indicated as such and she closed the public comment period.

Ms. Paris thanked the applicants for a very responsive presentation.

Mr. Sullivan recommended that the plans be accepted as presented, the certificate of appropriateness be finalized and any remaining details be delegated to staff.

Dr. Solet so moved. Mr. Kleespies seconded, and the motion passed 6-0 in a roll call vote.

Case 4455: 11 Berkeley St., by 11 Berkeley Realty Trust c/o Barbara Pedersen & Katsy Korins.
Remove, relocate, and add selective windows and doors.

Mr. Sullivan showed slides of the house designed by architect William Ralph Emerson, a progenitor of the Shingle Style along with H.H. Richardson. He described renovations by the previous owner approved by the Commission in 1998.

Jennifer Lyford and Steve Hart of Hart Architects displayed elevations detailing the proposed alteration of windows and doors on the south and north sides of the house.

Ms. Lyster asked what was driving the proposed changes. Ms. Lyford said the changes would add light in a bathroom, adjust the location of windows at a kitchen sink, and bring more light to the north side of the building. Ms. Lyford asked if the window sizes and patterns were appropriate to the style of the house. Mr. Sullivan said that most of the areas impacted by the project had been altered previously. The changes were not incongruous and would not be prominently visible from a public way.

Dr. Solet noted that some of the proposed windows were true divided lights (TDL) and some were simulated divided lights (SDL) while most of the existing windows were TDL with exterior storm windows. Why not have a unified appearance? Ms. Lyford explained that on the north elevation there were some existing SDL windows in the same room and they wanted to match those. Mr. Hart said that the doors on the south elevation were proposed as SDL to avoid having storm doors on the French doors.

Mr. Kleespies asked if an existing window could be refurbished and re-used on the north elevation on the first floor. Ms. Lyford agreed that could be done.

Ms. Tobin asked if members of the public had questions or comments. No one indicated as such and she closed the public comment period.

Dr. Solet said the proposal looked appropriate and she would be following progress closely as she lived in the neighborhood.

Ms. Paris moved to approve the application as described with the re-use of one window on the north elevation and subject to review and approval of construction details by staff. Dr. Solet seconded the motion, which passed 6-0 in a roll call vote.

Public Hearings: Demolition Review

Case D-1564 (continued): 88 Holworthy Street, by Stephen Sillari. Demolition of ell of house (1874); selective demolition of bay and portico; move the house away from the property line.

Mr. Sullivan shared his screen and showed slides of the house. He reported that last month the Commission found the building significant and continued the hearing in order to allow time for further design development before making a determination about whether the building was preferably preserved in the context of the proposed replacement.

Stephen Sillari, the owner, made opening remarks and introduced his architect, Dan Anderson.

Mr. Anderson shared his screen and described the design modifications made in response to the comments at the last meeting. On the front house (containing two units), the bay and portico would be retained. The height of the foundation would increase by one foot. Minor changes were made on the right side to the area well and stairs. He described the materials (clapboards and traditional trim), entries, decks, and porches. The two-unit building at the rear of the site would have a white laminate rain screen with areas of natural wood shiplap siding, a flat roof, below-grade terrace, wood decks and metal railings.

Ms. Shannon asked about the balcony on the rear of the front building. Mr. Anderson said the balcony would measure 3.5 x 6 feet. Ms. Shannon said she appreciated the design development but noted that he was using a more modern language on the right and rear elevations than on the front and left elevations. Mr. Anderson said the balcony faced the more modern rear building but he would consider traditional detailing for the balcony.

Dr. Solet wondered if there was a subtler way for the front and back buildings to relate to each other. Mr. Anderson said that at the last meeting he had heard a strong preference for traditional restoration of the front house and a modern style for the rear building. The window placement did not mirror on the two buildings for privacy reasons. The foundations would align and the scale and massing of the two buildings were similar.

Mr. Kleespies asked about the dormer windows on the front house. Mr. Anderson said he had re-designed the window sizes on the dormers.

Ms. Tobin asked for questions of fact from the public.

Dr. Ferahnaz Kahyaoglu, resident of 88 Holworthy Street, said she had submitted a copy of the court order to the Commission and asked why the hearing was moving forward. Ms. Tobin asked her to focus her questions on the proposed architectural plans. Dr. Kahyaoglu said the application was unlawful and the Commission should not be discussing it. She said she had not received a reply from the City Solicitor.

Ms. Tobin asked if members of the public would like to comment on the proposal. No one indicated as such and she closed the public comment period.

Ms. Lyster asked for an explanation of the Commission's role and procedures. Mr. Sullivan said

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the role of the Commission under the demolition delay ordinance was to decide if it was in the greater public interest to allow the project to proceed or to impose a demolition delay. In this case he noted the deteriorated condition of the house and the fact that the project would create additional dwelling units.

In answer to the resident's concerns, he said he had been instructed by the City Solicitor to tell the building commissioner that no permits should be issued until the court case was resolved.

Ms. Shannon indicated that she supported the revised proposal.

Dr. Solet said the design had progressed quite a lot since the last meeting. It was unusual to hear a case with a dispute over ownership and tenancy, but the Commission's purview was limited. She asked if the rear balcony and door were visible from a public way. Mr. Sullivan said they would not be visible.

Mr. Kleespies said the design of the front house had been improved. He agreed that it was a difficult situation with emotionally charged issues between the parties, but he supported the proposal.

Ms. Paris agreed with Mr. Kleespies assessment.

Mr. Kleespies moved to find the existing house in its present location not preferably preserved in the context of the revised proposal, with the condition that construction details be reviewed and approved by staff. Ms. Lyster seconded the motion, which passed 6-0 in a roll call vote.

Preservation Grants

Case IPG 21-5: 1555 Massachusetts Ave., by Harvard Epworth M. E. Church (#5). \$63,000. Restore stained glass windows.

Mr. Sullivan showed slides of the church's stained-glass windows. He described previous grants in 2009, 2013, and 2019 for restoration of other windows. The proposal was for restoration of eighteen windows with a total cost of approximately \$125,000. The application was for fifty percent of the cost. He recommended a grant of \$50,000 and noted that the envelope repairs to the church would be completed at the conclusion of this project. He noted that a court decision involving CPA funds stipulated that they could not be used for the restoration of stained glass with religious iconography. He noted that there was no such iconography in the windows at hand.

Ms. Paris asked if there was a maximum amount any one organization could receive in preservation grants. Mr. Sullivan said there was not. Ms. Paris asked if any of the windows in this scope had already been restored with Commission funds. Mr. Sullivan answered that none of the windows previously restored with oversight or funds from the Commission needed to be redone.

Ms. Lyster asked if historical significance factored in the decision of how much money to award a project. Mr. Sullivan agreed and described the grant program, which allowed an initial outright grant of \$50,000 and additional funding on a matching basis until the goals of the program (securing the building envelope, achieving accessibility and functionality) were met. The intent was to address deferred maintenance first with an outright grant, and then to use additional grants to leverage other fundraising.

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Mr. Kleespies noted that Frederick Rindge had contributed the funding for the original design and construction of the church, as he had done with City Hall, the Library, and Manual Training School.

Dr. Solet congratulated the church on its sustained efforts for the preservation of the building. She moved to approve a \$50,000 grant (requiring an equal or greater match) to help complete the restoration.

Ms. Paris seconded Dr. Solet's motion, which passed 6-0 in a roll call vote.

Minutes

The Commission reviewed the November and December 2020 minutes. Dr. Solet offered several corrections to spelling and grammar. Ms. Burks noted that she would correct David Jay's first name, which she had mistakenly recorded as Andrew.

Dr. Solet moved to approve both sets of minutes, as corrected. Mr. Kleespies, "quick off the draw," seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-0 in a roll call vote.

Directors Report

Mr. Sullivan reported on the resumption of meetings of the East Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District Study Committee on January 20.

New Business

Ms. Burks noted the distribution of the Conflict of Interest law and Ethics Summary. She asked the Commissioners to return the receipt forms to her.

Ms. Lyster moved to adjourn. Ms. Shannon seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by roll call vote.

The meeting adjourned at the respectable hour of 7:47 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah L. Burks
Preservation Planner

**Members of the Public
Present on the Zoom Webinar online, January 7, 2021**

Jennifer Lyford	Hart Architects, 50 Church St, Belmont
Steve Hart	Hart Architects, 50 Church St, Belmont
Jeffrey Berg	11 Perry Street
Stephen Sillari	91 Park Avenue
Keith Kenyon	Kenyon Law
David Moynahan	75 Kneeland Street, Boston
David Jay	760 Main Street, Waltham
David Torrey	75 Kneeland Street, Boston
Dan Anderson	875 Main Street
John Hawkinson	CambridgeDay.com
Dr. Ferahnaz Kahyaoglu	88 Holworthy Street
James Williamson	1000 Jackson Place
Elizabeth Kline	15 Kirkland Road
Tod Hibbard	23 Ellsworth Avenue, Apt 2
Anne Fernald	642 Huron Avenue
Erik Williams	87 Holworthy Street
Herbert Taylor	27 Avon Hill Street
Marie Elena Saccoccio	55 Otis Street
Alan Greene	82 Fifth Street
Changgang Lou	104 Holworthy Street
Liza Paden	6 Theriault Court
Jon Schwartz	5 bej [sic]
Barbara Pedersen	138 Absegami Run, Chatham
Gail Roberts	13 Berkeley Street
Katy C.	5 Berkeley Street

Note: Town is Cambridge, unless otherwise indicated.