

MINUTES OF THE HALF CROWN-MARSH NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICT COMMISSION ARCHITECT'S COMMITTEE

Approved at the 10-19-2026 Meeting

June 15, 2026. Meeting conducted in-person at 10 Hilliard Place, 11:00 AM

Commissioners present: Marie-Pierre Dillenseger, Chair; Ruby Booz, Sarah Holt, Ruth Webb, Members.
Commissioners Absent: Donna Marcantonio, Emily Oldshue, members.

Members of the public present: Godfrey and Janet Amphlett, 8 ½ Ash Street Place.

Staff present: Eric Hill, Survey Director

The Architect's Committee was called for case HCM-741 at the June 8, 2026 public meeting of the Half Crown-Marsh NCD Commission to allow for the Commissioners, Commission staff, and abutters, to review the amended landscaping plan with existing fence conditions and to better-understand visibility of sections of the fence from a public way. At the June 8th hearing, the applicant supplied the commission with an amended proposal which they did not have time to review beforehand and with the lack of documentation on existing sections and heights of fences, they voted to send the matter to an in-person architect's committee meeting as soon as the applicant would be ready to meet with complete plans.

The applicant notified staff on Wednesday, June 10th, that they had completed existing and proposed condition landscape plans and would be ready to meet for Monday, June 15 in the morning.

1) Public Hearing: Alterations to Designated Properties

HCM-741: 10 Hilliard Place, by Stefanie Gordon of Cambridge Botanica Designs: **Install perimeter fences around property and screening at front yard.** *Continued from 06-08-26 meeting.*

The group began with introductions. Besides the HCM Commissioners, staff and abutters present, also joining were Stefanie Gordon and Ana Stolle of Cambridge Botanica Design and Cole McDonough of McDonough Fence.

The abutters, Godfrey and Janet asked if the commission could begin talking about the section of fence abutting their property at 8 ½ Ash Street Place. The Commission agreed to start there.

Godfrey and Janet had concerns over the new fence posts and the potential to damage the existing yews on their property line, both the plantings themselves and the impact on the root system.

Cole McDonough stated that the posts would be newly laid and be about every 90" and there would be large, 7'-0" panels of fence with an open topper. The posts would be dug by hand and the contractors

would do everything in their power to preserve the yews on the site and not destroy their root systems. It was added that the fence would be unpainted and would weather over time.

Marie-Pierre Dillenseger explained to the abutters that while these were important matters to the owners, the placement of the fencing supports and retention of the existing plantings is not subject to review by the Commission.

Ruth Webb asked about slightly bumping out the fence on a section to protect the existing yews and their root system. She added that it is a suggestion that the contractor and landscape designer could look into.

Godfrey and Janet Amphlett, the abutters, had to leave but thanked the Commission for its work and attention to the project.

Moving along the perimeter of the site, the Commission looked at the chain link section of fence visible from Mt. Auburn Street.

Eric Hill explained that the view of this section was from Mt. Auburn Street and thus, subject to review by the Commission.

Stefanie Gordon, the landscape designer, explained that they would install a new fence on the property of 10 Hilliard Place that was directly in front of the 7.5'-8' chain-link fence on the abutter's property at 145 Mt. Auburn Street. The intent was to completely screen the existing chain link fence there from view by a new, solid fence with open topper.

Marie-Pierre Dillenseger asked Stefanie if they spoke with this abutter and if they were supportive of this new fence. She also asked why they did not just work with the abutter to remove the chain link fence and build a singular fence in its place, as it was clear that they did not speak to them to explain the proposal beforehand.

Stefanie Gordon stated that she nor the owners had reached out to the abutters but knew that the gardener for the property owner liked to have climbing vines on that fence, so they intended to not disrupt that and add a new fence behind.

Generally, the Commission agreed that a new 8'-0" section of fence on this span would be appropriate given the minimal visibility and the ability to tie-in with the abutting fence at 18 Ash Street.

The group then walked to the southern span of the fence visible from Mt. Auburn Street and it was discussed how the new top soil and slight regrading made the existing fence appear shorter. Marie-Pierre Dillenseger explained that a new, 8'-0" fence would appear taller than the existing fence which was partially buried in the new soil.

The review terminated at the front yard fence, where it was explained by Stefanie Gordon that the enclosure would be 5'-0" and meet a 4'-0" garden fence with arbor gate at the front yard. The 5'-0" transformer enclosure would be tall enough to properly screen the height and scale of the transformer required by Eversource.

Eric Hill explained that only fences and gates taller than 4'-0" are subject to review and approval by the Commission. Any fences 4'-0" or less are exempt from review.

Stefanie Gordon explained that the requirement by Eversource shifted their design greatly and has been a challenge to mitigate its impact on the property and garden. They will also plant a new tree in the front yard to replace one that was removed during the renovations and excavation on the site.

The Commission began deliberations and Ruby Booz began, stating that she was supportive of 7'-0" sections on the sides and rear but not 8'-0"+ on all sections like proposed. Ruth Webb agreed and stated that 7'-0" should be appropriate and provide privacy while still being open enough at the top to allow views through the yards.

Stefanie Gordon conceded, stating that they would be okay with 7'-0" sections of fence on the sides and rear, but still wanted an 8'-0" section to block the chain link fence at the rear.

Sarah Holt stated that this would be an appropriate compromise and given the rear is less-visible, it should be okay to permit 8'-0" in that section

Ruth Webb agreed and asked about the transition between the transformer enclosure and taller 7'-0" fence. She wanted to know how the fence heights would transition.

Stefanie Gordon and Cole McDonough explained that it would be a sharp transition, but slope down towards the front of the street edge to meet the height and then ultimately the 4'-0" section.

Marie-Pierre Dillenseger explained that due to the site conditions and limited visibility from major public ways, a taller fence may be appropriate. She wanted to explain that each case is reviewed on its own merit and conditions, and this approval would not set precedence in future cases.

Sarah Holt made a motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the amended plan which approves a 7'-0" fence on all sections besides an 8'-0" section to cover the chain-link section and the front yard area with the 4'-0" sections with gate/arbors and the 5'-0" transformer enclosure.

Ruth Webb seconded the motion. The motion passed with 4-0 vote.

Approved.
