

DRAFT Minutes of the Avon Hill Neighborhood Conservation District

Monday, June 24, 2024 - 5:30 PM

Commissioners Present: Constantin von Wentzel, *Chair*, Mark Golberg, *Vice Chair*, McKelden Smith, Freweyni Gebrehiwet, *Members*, Theresa Hamacher, Lee Campbell, *Alternates*

Commissioners Absent: Heli Meltsner

Staff Present: Allison A. Crosbie, Preservation Administrator

Members of the Public: see attached sheet

This meeting was held via online zoom webinar, <https://tinyurl.com/AHJune2024>, 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 842 3778 8524.

Commission Chair Constantin von Wentzel made general introductions, explained the procedures, and called the meeting to order at 5:35.

Public Hearing: Alterations to Designated Properties

AH-855: 25 Lancaster Street, by Elizabeth Leohane Stott. Alter window and install window well.

Ms. Allison Crosbie, preservation administrator, gave a brief history of the property.

Mr. Adam Glassman, the project architect, presented the proposed window addition with window well and window alteration. He explained that the existing trim will be preserved, and new trim will match the existing. Mr. Glassman said that the new windows will be aluminum clad. He also presented a site plan and elevation with the proposed window well which will have a grate. He pointed out that a portion of the stucco foundation on the left side of the building will be temporarily removed for work in the basement level and will be put back.

Commission Questions

There were no questions of fact from the Commissioners.

Public Questions – none

Public Comments - none

Commission Comments

Vice Commissioner Mark Golberg stated that the proposal was consistent and appropriate.

Commissioner Lee Campbell agreed with Mr. Golberg.

Commissioner Theresa Hamacher concurred and complimented Mr. Glassman for his complete presentation.

Commissioner McKelden Smith agreed that the proposal looked good.

Ms. Hamacher moved to approve the application as it is not inappropriate to the character of the historic structure. Mr. Golberg seconded, and the motion passed 5-0 (Hamacher, Golberg, Campbell, Smith, Gebrehiwet).

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AH-854: 5 West Bellevue Avenue, by Simon Gustavsson. Alter front entry porch and fenestration on front facade.

Ms. Crosbie showed slides of the property and gave a brief history.

Mr. Michael Wiggins, attorney for the applicants, explained that the owners recently purchased the property, and their goal is to make the place more livable, and they understand the need to maintain the historic character of the building. They would like to bring in more light in the front of the house.

Mr. Jared Klein, the project architect, stated that the house is elegant and understated and that they would like to remove the gable roof over the entry and install an understated deck structure. He then showed examples in Cambridge where this type of structure occurs, including one designed by the architect of this structure, Alberto Haynes. Mr. Klein explained that they will be constructing a wood deck and railings with square balusters. He also stated that the existing spindle porch columns and corbels are in disrepair, and new columns will need to extend 6 to 10 inches to accommodate the deck.

Commission Questions

Mr. Golberg asked about the rendering of the proposed deck, noting that the railing looks rather light. Mr. Klein went over the dimensions and said that the rendering wasn't that accurate.

Mr. Campbell asked for clarification on the porch columns. Mr. Klein replied that the porch columns will get taller, not fatter, and that they are staying true to the architecture.

Ms. Crosbie asked to confirm that the column diameter is not getting bigger, Mr. Klein confirmed. Ms. Crosbie asked about the new railing at the entry level and if the new railing will be required to meet code because of the grade change. Mr. Klein answered that it does have to meet the current code.

Mr. Campbell asked about the railings. Mr. Klein answered that the railings will echo the ones on the existing ones on the porch.

Commissioner McKelden Smith asked to look at the porch design and asked for clarification on the railing details. Mr. Klein described the railings. Mr. Smith asked what is the benefit of the proposed deck. Mr. Klein said it will bring more light into the space and will give the family the opportunity to enjoy the morning sun. Ms. McGuighan, one of the applicants, pointed out that the front of the house is south facing so they would like an outdoor space on that side. Mr. Smith asked about elongating the columns and change in proportion. Mr. Klein replied that they are maintaining the look of the original.

Public Questions and Comments

Ms. Crosbie read an email from Patricia Moore of 10 West Bellevue Avenue opposing the proposed alterations.

Commission Comments

Mr. Golberg found the proposal appropriate.

Mr. Campbell expressed concern over the proposed door and suggested that the applicants consult with CHC staff.

Ms. Hamacher agreed that the proposal was appropriate but considered the loss of the architectural “echo” in the roof lines.

Mr. Smith stated he agreed with the neighbor that opposed the proposal and commented that the proposal might be considered appropriate, but it is not as attractive as the existing porch. Mr. Smith pointed out that the elongation of the spindle columns was way off the mark, and the balcony railing was too simple. Mr. Klein went over the proposed porch posts.

Ms. Hamacher then pointed out that the gable roof of the garage echoes the main gable roof of the house.

Mr. Wiggins stated that the owners would be amenable to working with CHC staff on the door design.

Ms. Hamacher moved to approve the proposal as appropriate to the character of the house and recommended delegating staff review on the door design. Mr. Golberg seconded, and the motion carried 4-1 (Hamacher, Golberg, Gebrehiwet, Campbell in favor, Smith opposed).

The meeting adjourned at 6:28.

Respectfully submitted,

Allison A. Crosbie
Preservation Administrator

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Members of the Public Present June 24, 2024

Panelists

Adam Glassman, architect	GCD Architects, Cambridge
Liz Stott	25 Lancaster Street
Michael Wiggins, attorney	
Jared Klein	WendelKlein
Olivier Changeart	WendelKlein
Simon Gustavsson & Kelly McQuighan	5 West Bellevue Avenue

Addresses are in Cambridge unless otherwise specified.