

Approved 11/7/13
Additional Corrections 12/5/13

Minutes of the Cambridge Historical Commission

October 10, 2013 - 806 Massachusetts Avenue - 6:00 P.M.

Members present: William King, *Chair*; Bruce Irving, *Vice Chair*; William Barry, M. Wyllis Bibbins, Robert Crocker, Jo M. Solet, *Members*; Joseph Ferrara, *Alternate*

Members absent: Chandra Harrington, Shary Page Berg, Susannah Tobin

Staff present: Sarah Burks, *Preservation Planner*; Kathleen Rawlins, *Assistant Director*

Public present: See attached list.

Chair King called the meeting to order at 6:03 P.M., made introductions, and explained hearing procedures; present also were Messrs. Ferrara and Bibbins and Dr. Solet.

Dr. Solet agreed to defer her property's case until later in the meeting. [Messrs. Irving and Barry arrived].

Mr. King explained the consent agenda procedure, reviewed the agenda, and asked if there were any cases that any member of the public, commission, or staff would recommend for approval per the consent agenda for which it would not be necessary to have a full hearing. He recommended case 3142 for approval per the consent agenda. He asked if anyone present wanted a hearing on that case.

Hearing no objections, Dr. Solet moved to approve the following case, per the procedures of the consent agenda policy, and authorized the staff to review and approve construction details:

Case 3143: 31 Hawthorn Street, by Shikhar Ghosh. Change exterior paint colors.

Mr. Bibbins seconded Dr. Solet's motion. Mr. King designated Mr. Ferrara to vote as alternate. The motion passed 6-0. [Mr. Crocker arrived].

Public Hearing: Alterations to Designated Properties

Cases 3102 (continued): 28 Fayerweather Street, by Vartan Keshishian. Enlarge breakfast room; construct dining room addition and patio; alter dormers on the south side; alter landscape structures; construct circular driveway and excavate drive to new basement garage; exterior alterations including expansion of front stairs; restoration of slate roof and balustrades; paint exterior of house.

Ms. Burks showed slides and presented the background for the case. The Arthur Astor Carey House was not in a historic district, but is a City Landmark. At a previous meeting, the Commission approved in principle reconstruction of the kitchen addition, enlarging a bedroom, dining room, and deck, and altering the roof for increased space in the third floor, which will be minimally visible from a public way; the house's other exterior features would be restored. The circular driveway was proposed to be restored and extended to a three-car garage at the rear of the house. The stone pillars marking the entrances to the original driveway were extant and would be relocated. The owner would restore the original paint colors, although color was not subject to approval for the landmark.

Doug Okun, the architect, explained the proposal to enlarge a bedroom, replace the existing chain link fence with a replica of the original wood fence, and restore the original colors. The windows, masonry, widow's walk, and front porch and stairs would all be restored.

Bill Hutchins, landscape architect, detailed the landscape plan, including restoration of the circular drive in brick and pedestrian walkways in bluestone, and removing overgrown shrubbery and replanting.

Mr. Okun explained to Mr. King that the entrances to the driveway would be marked by the stone pillars, 15' apart; the driveway would widen to 18' (reduced from an originally contemplated 20') to allow two cars to pass. The rear driveway would be 10' wide. Mr. Okun told Ms. Burks that the area behind the Reservoir Street wall near the corner of Fayerweather and Reservoir was to be paved for visitor parking; the Reservoir Street wall would be extended to protect the entrance to the driveway. He informed Mr. Barry that the gate onto the pedestrian gate on Fayerweather Street ~~was~~ would be widened from 3' to 7'.

Marylee Meyer of 10 Dana Street voiced several concerns. In response, Mr. Okun confirmed that the rear driveway was large enough to allow cars to turn into the garage and that the entrance to the main drive closest to Reservoir Street would be moved farther from the corner. The depth of the kitchen addition was 1' greater than the existing. A large tree on site was hollow and its future uncertain. The water element from a prior proposal had been removed. The yellow color matched an original sample. The owner preferred a circular driveway for ease of access.

John Sanzone, 540 Memorial Drive, asked how many cars could fit in the circular driveway and the visitor space; Mr. Okun said seven but reiterated that the lot would be screened from the street by the extension of the wall.

Mr. Okun told Ms. Meyer that the exterior lighting scheme was incomplete, but would not include spotlights on the house. Security lights on the rear were being considered. The pedestrian way was 7' wide to allow two people to walk side by side. Ms. Meyer commended the architects for replacing the wood fence and the gate. However, although the changes were acceptable when viewed individually, when taken as a whole the design seemed too processed and manufactured, too clean and new. The bucolic atmosphere of the original Colonial Revival house and landscape were being lost in a cluttered design.

Mr. King said he thought the visitor parking pad was to be for two cars only. At present, the corner lot was wonderfully green; he hoped that, coming up Fayerweather, one would continue to see that. Mr. Hutchins said new plantings would include broadleaf evergreens such as rhododendrons and laurel. Mr. Okun explained that the current wall was 4' above the sidewalk, on top of a soil mound, with the cars below; he told Ms. Burks that a retaining wall around the parking pad was not necessary. The

maple tree would be kept in place. Mr. Okun informed Mr. Barry that one of the driveway pillars would be moved when the entrance was widened from 10' to 15'. The wall and gate posts would match the original materials.

Mr. Barry said he was less concerned about the amount of paving and the width of the sidewalk than he was by the vertical elements of the proposal; Mr. King was concerned about the appearance of brick vs. paving stones. Joseph Ferrara agreed; 18' of driveway was a lot of brick, and the scale was overlarge for the driveway of a single family home. He asked for the texture of the material to be considered, such as pea stone vs. brick vs. pea stone. The landscape architect said that the driveway had been mocked up with rope several times, and the owner was satisfied that two cars could pass. He did not agree that the materials were too intrusive and noted that brick was more durable than asphalt.

Mr. Barry again expressed concern about the amount of paving and the material; he suggested putting the building in context and reducing its impact on passersby. The elements of scale should be examined: the driveway entry should be as narrow as possible and the pedestrian gate could be reduced from 7' wide to 5' or at least no wider than the steps to the front door. Mr. Okun stated that the architects and the owner have considered these items; there was concern that a snowplow have room to turn into the driveway without damaging the pillars.

Mr. King reminded the applicant that the Commission had asked for more architectural detail. Mr. Okun pointed out the new room and the choice of historic paint colors. He showed images including landscape detail and explained how the new wall on Reservoir related to the relocated driveway entrance. Mr. Okun told Dr. Solet that the shutters were a mix of new and original, pointing out that odd window sizes abounded on the house.

Mr. Okun explained to Marilee Meier that both kinds of bluestone would be restored.

Mr. Barry instructed the staff to work with Mr. Okun on construction details for replicating original conditions.

Mr. Okun told Mr. King that the deck would be 1' x 4' planks of mahogany or ipe. Mr. King reiterated the suggestion to reduce the width of the pedestrian gate on Fayerweather Street to 5'. Mr. Ferrara voiced his concern with the scale of the project, especially the width of the driveway and entrance; he asked if the driveway could again be mocked up on site. Mr. Okun agreed. Mr. Ferrara urged him to considering narrowing the drive to 14'.

Mr. Barry moved to approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the landscaping plan and architectural details as presented, with the condition that the width of the driveway entrance, the extent of paving, and the pedestrian entrance be reduced with authority delegated to the staff to approve.

Mr. Ferrara seconded the motion, which passed 7-0. Mr. Okun agreed not to build the driveway or other street elements until approved by the staff.

Public Hearing: Demolition Review

Case D-1308: 33 Richdale Avenue, by Hathaway Partners LLC. Consider amended design proposal for partial demolition of Hathaway Bakery building and new construction.

Mr. King explained that the Commission had found the structures significant and preferably preferred in the context of the initial proposal and had imposed a six month demolition delay, which would expire in January 2014. In December 2013, the Commission would have a hearing to consider whether to initiate a year-long Landmark study; the building would be protected during the study period as if it were already a landmark. The Commission could also vote to lift the delay if a more suitable proposal was submitted.

Ms. Burks showed slides and reviewed the history of the buildings.

Rob Wolfe, an owner, said described the amended proposal. Fully preserving the single story building would increase the cost of the project and result in the loss of green space but it was the direction suggested by testimony at the last hearing and by staff. Improving the landscape would improve the entire area: the present hard site does not absorb water. The two-story building was a mishmash of alterations and additions to the original building and should not be considered preferably preserved.

Joel Bargman, the architect, explained that parking would be located to the east of the building and would comply with zoning requirements. The new construction would be constructed at the rear of the lot, parallel to the railroad tracks and separated from the front building by an interior courtyard with a glass connector. A large glass window would replace the garage bay door on the east end. He said the team had considered restoring the two-story building, but believed it was not feasible. Based on the building's structural design, apartment layouts would be long and narrow. An interior, open air atrium was impractical. The rear of the single-story building was in poor shape, with water damage from ongoing leakage and a bowed brick wall. The owners wanted to demolish the rear and build new apartments with modern windows, balconies, and a center courtyard, which would benefit the front apartments as well, allowing the high windows to become a pleasant clerestory. The bricks on the front façade would be re-pointed, new sills and windows installed, and the foundation system repaired.

In regard to the two-story building, Dr. Solet asked if a covered atrium was feasible. Mr. Bargeman said that, although it might introduce more light, installation would be problematical because the basement was in the center of the structure. He said the space could be planted, but that it was unusual for residential building to have an enclosed courtyard.

Mr. King noted that numerous letters had been received from members of the public, as well as a petition with many signatures; some of the letters requested the building be returned to industrial use. Mr.

Wolfe said the area was zoned Residence C-1; while industrial use was not allowed, existing office and warehouse uses were grandfathered.

State Representative and City Councillor Marjorie Decker said she was baffled that a developer with such a positive history of good design and understanding of scale was allowing costs to prevail over design and preservation. She believed the neighborhood was being short-changed. If the owners were not more responsive to neighborhood concerns, an important part of the neighborhood could disappear.

Mr. Wolfe responded that the project team was very concerned about preservation and design, but the two-story building was in bad shape and not worth saving without its architectural integrity intact. The proposals were all allowed—to the letter—under zoning.

Ms. Decker said more of an effort should be made to engage with the neighbors and was concerned that their opinions were not be given enough weight. She said there should be much more opportunity for dialogue. Mr. Wolfe pointed out his team had invited 130 neighbors and abutters to talk with them at a neighborhood association meeting.

Peter Miller, 46 Porter Road, asked if the developers had considered building fewer than 54 units. Sam Wolfe, an owner, said that many different options had been considered.

Eric Hoagland, 17-19 Upland Road, a Cambridge native, disagreed with his neighbors about the project; he wanted to invite more people in to Cambridge, to provide more housing. While he acknowledged that the building was historic, at present it was used as a warehouse. He did not support delay of the project or landmark study.

Liz Moore, 75 Richdale Avenue, asked what percentage of the building would be saved. Mr. Wolfe explained that the façade was 158' long; roughly 60 percent of the frontage would be preserved. The brick was delicate and must be carefully braced while work goes on behind.

Mr. King asked how much of the original footprint would be preserved.

Evan Gerber, 34 Cambridge Terrace, wondered at the extent of visual change.

Mr. Wolfe said there would be no negative impact on the Richdale Avenue façade; the new three-story addition would be clad in clapboards, similar to the existing houses. The apartments would be loft style.

Mr. Gerber stated that only a small portion would actually be saved and from an aesthetic point of view would look very different. The “historic intent” was also very different. The owners should be more respectful of the surrounding neighborhood. Mr. Wolfe said the new building would be clearly visible over the front structure, and Mr. Gerber stated that such a large apartment building did not fit with the intent of the neighborhood.

Deb Litchfield said design was not about pushing zoning to its limits.

Mr. Wolfe provided his email address if the neighbors wanted to contact him.

Dean Grodzins, 12 Parker Street/33 Richdale Avenue, stated that originally it was to continue to be office space. Was a warehouse not financially viable? Mr. Wolfe said it was not just a question of money. How could the designers work with the existing neighborhood? How could they use the building in an evolutionary way?

Elizabeth Stern, 20 Cambridge Terrace, asked why not reduce both the height and the number of units. She asserted that the 1939 two-story building was not a mishmash, but an equally valid part of the structure. She suggested parts of both buildings be preserved, and an entrance could pierce the center of the building. More could be done if the number of units were reduced. Mr. Wolfe noted that removing the two-story portion brought in light and air.

Elizabeth Vandermark, 33 Cambridge Terrace, said she appreciated the information provided, and understood the design challenges but was concerned with the impact of the new construction on the neighborhood. From Buena Vista, the new development would be a wall blocking the view and suggested reducing its height.

Jim Sperling, an attorney at 21 Bates Street, said he represented some of the abutters. Preserving only the oldest piece was not consistent with general historic preservation practices. As proposed, the project was massive and overwhelming.

Mr. Wolfe said the owners had considered many schemes, including reuse of the 1939 building; he suggested it might be possible to reduce the height of the new apartments.

Jackie Piret, 79 Upland Road, asked what the comparative heights were. Sam Wolfe said that the front building was 22', the new rear structure would be 45'. Carol Cohen, 40 Porter Road, said a 45' building would be a slap in the face to those who lived across the tracks.

Steve Perry, 24 Cambridge Terrace, an architect, said that, for each project, architects explored many different designs; although Mr. Wolfe stated that many designs had been studied, the Commission and the community had seen only two not dissimilar schemes. He urged the design team to present more of the discarded designs.

Sam Wolfe informed Mr. Hoagland that six of the 54 units would be affordable housing.

Chris Lutz, 75 Richdale Avenue, said that when the design was presented, people were horrified and scared. He believed the owners should be more willing to compromise, to reduce the height and the number of units to fit in better with the neighborhood. Rob Wolfe said those things had been considered and rejected. Sam Wolfe said that the architects had tried to respond to the opinions of many different constituents and to blend elements that were important to everyone. At the first meeting, preservation of the single-story façade seemed to be very important; more of that façade was saved in the new proposal.

Mr. Lutz reiterated Ms. Cohen's concern regarding the view across the tracks and stated his objections to the density of the design. Mr. Wolfe said the track side as considered as another front façade

to be softened with balconies, slight setback, and green space. Zoning allowed 23 percent permeable surface. Mr. Lutz countered that it would be better for the neighborhood if the design were less dense than allowed.

Karen Hull, 75 Richdale Avenue, said that she and her husband are new residents and will have a kitchen view toward the side of the building. She was very concerned with height and thought the images of the front of the building were misleading.

Arlene Miller, 75 Richdale Avenue, balked at the use of the word “historic”—if the building was historic, it was ALL historic.

Mr. King responded by quoting Charles Eliot, “When is history?” Mr. King said that every building was historic, but some might not be worth saving. These buildings were had been found to be significant and preferably preserved in the context of the first design proposal. The ~~submitted petition~~ asked the board not to terminate the preferably preserved status applicants were presenting a revised design with the hope that the Commission would cut short the demolition delay. Mr. King said he believed that the owners were interested in designing a good and pleasing project. The architect was proposing to fix up a deteriorating building; the hearings provide a forum for discussion.

One Hwang, of 1 Richdale Avenue, pointed out that Cambridge required one parking space per apartment—in this case, fifty-four spaces would be required. She suggested an indoor dedicated bike parking or offering tenants MBTA passes.

Charlotte Moore, of 9 Rutland Street, stated her frustration about the project. She quoted from letters from Charles Sullivan to Rob Wolfe and to Liza Paden, Planning Board staff at the Community Development Department, requesting revised plans that saved a meaningful portion of the building. Ms. Moore said that saving more bays was not real preservation, nor did it make up for the loss of the two-story building.

Oliver Radford, 24 Cambridge Terrace, an architect, said that his office was in the building, which had an interesting history. It was the largest brick building in the area and has been developed at the same time as the neighborhood.

Elizabeth Stern stated that Mr. Sullivan’s demolition memo made a compelling argument for preservation of the buildings as relics of an earlier time in the city when industry flourished and ordinary people toiled.

Dr. Solet said that clearly considerably more work needed to be done, and she moved that the preferably preserved status not be rescinded and the demolition delay not be terminated. Mr. Irving seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.

Mr. Irving suggested that, in submitting a new design, the architect reconsider how much of the building could be preserved and the height of the new structure. Mr. Irving believed the two-story

building's entryway was a crucial piece and suggested incorporating it into a new design. Mr. Ferrara agreed that how much could be saved and the height were important considerations, as well as the appearance of the façade facing the tracks. Mr. King urged the architects consider the appearance of the building from different vantage points.

Public Hearings: Alterations to Designated Properties, continued.

Case 2984: 15 Berkeley Street, by Jo and Mike Solet. Remove existing rear fence and install new fence at rear of property.

Dr. Solet recused herself and left the table to sit in the audience.

Ms. Burks showed slides and reviewed the background of the case. She explained that the light shining onto the Solets's driveway from the adjacent rear property created hazardous conditions for drivers and pedestrians. A new wood board fence was proposed.

Mike Solet, 15 Berkeley Street, explained that the present fence had been damaged by storms and then propped up. The fence replaced an earlier stockade fence, predating the historic district. The fence was on the rear property line; a chain link fence was directly on the other side of the Solet's wood fence. He and Dr. Solet proposed to install a new taller fence to better block intrusive lights and sounds from the condominium behind 15 Berkeley. The distance from both Berkeley Street and Concord Avenue to the fence was greater than 125'. The new fence would not have a latticed top.

Mr. Solet said a Certificate of Appropriateness was being applied for, in part because the new fence would not violate any tenets of the historic district, nor would it detract from the historic nature of the street. A Certificate of Hardship might be issued instead: the security lights on the condo building are very bright and blind both drivers and pedestrians. Mr. Solet explained that he and Dr. Solet had communicated with the condo owners, who were not cooperative. The Inspectional Services Department stated that the light violated the zoning ordinance, but had not taken any steps for enforcement. A 12' fence was proposed.

Mr. King noted that the last certificate to be issued for an 11' or 12' considered for a tall fence was for the corner of Mount Auburn Street and Elmwood Avenues~~streets~~. He said it was difficult to find any fence this high appropriate in the historic district. However, he believed that there ~~was~~ is a substantial hardship and that the Commission could find that a Certificate of Hardship could be approved without substantial detriment to the public welfare and without substantial derogation from the intent and purposes of the statute. The fence would be far back from the street. Mr. King said he would not support a Certificate of Appropriateness, but would vote in favor a Certificate of Hardship.

Mr. Irving moved that a Certificate of Hardship be granted with the stated finding and for the reasons stated. Mr. Barry seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.

New Business

Determination of Procedure: Alterations to Designated Properties

Case 2937 (Amendment): 7 Phillips Place, by Lincoln Institute of Land Policy. Install solar hot water collector panels on roof.

Case 2938 (Amendment): 9 Phillips Place, by Lincoln Institute of Land Policy. Install solar hot water collector panels on roof.

Ms. Burks showed slides and described the location of the proposed panels, which were mocked up on the buildings when the photographs were taken.

Ella Willard-Schmoe, representing the applicant, explained that two 4' x 7' solar collectors in black anodized frames would be installed on each roof and supply 60-75 percent of the hot water. On No. 9 the panels would be on a flat roof; the angle of the roof and the collectors made them almost invisible from the street. On No. 7 the panels would be installed on the upper slopes of the gambrel roof, between a skylight.

Dr. Solet asked how the system would operate under snow cover and where the sun would be reflected off the panels. Ms. Willard-Schmoe explained that snowmelt depended on the slope of the roof and indoor activities; her company had not determined where the reflection would hit, which Dr. Solet suggested would be useful information. The collectors faced Phillips Place not Berkeley Street.

Ms. Willard-Schmoe explained to Mr. Ferrara that the panels on No. 9 would not be visible; the panels on No. 7 might be visible in the winter.

Ms. Burks told the Commissioners that the application had been received after the deadline and was being heard as a late application. Both Dr. Solet and Mr. King suggested that the Lincoln Institute discuss the installation with the Aiellos.

Mr. Irving moved to approve, subject to the 10-day notice provision, a Certificate of Appropriateness for No. 7, where the panels are slightly visible, and that a Certification of Nonapplicability be issued for No. 9, where the panels are not visible. Mr. Barry seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.

Preservation Grants

IPG 14-02: 56 Magazine Street: Pentecostal Tabernacle. To restore stained glass windows and roof. (\$100,000 grant requested)

Ms. Burks presented the grant request, explaining that repair and restoration of the stained glass windows and roof repair were parts of a larger project. The Tabernacle estimated a cost of \$190,000 for both projects. The highest priority was given to stabilization of the stained glass windows and their

frames, which would be restored and reinstalled. The first \$50,000 would be granted outright and up to a second \$50,000 would be given on a matching basis.

Mr. Irving moved to approve the grant. Mr. Barry seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.

Minutes

Mr. Bibbins moved to approve the minutes of the September meeting. Mr. Irving seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.

Mr. King adjourned the meeting at 9:38 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen L. Rawlins
Assistant Director

**Members of the Public
Who Signed the Attendance List on October 10, 2013**

Steve Way	156 Mount Auburn St	Cambridge 02138
Mike Solet	15 Berkeley St	Cambridge 02138
Dennis Carlone	9 Washington Ave	Cambridge 02140
Doughlas Okun	156 Mount Auburn St	Cambridge 02138
Bill Pressley	219 Parker St	Newton
Mark Porter	10 Alfred St	Medford 02155
Charlotte Moore	9 Rutland St	Cambridge 02138
Elizabeth Stern	20 Cambridge Terrace	Cambridge 02140
Jane Delaney	51 Mount Pleasant St	Cambridge 02140
Liz Vandermark	33 Cambridge Terrace	Cambridge 02140
Oliver Radford	24 Cambridge Terr, #1	Cambridge 02140
Stephen C. Perry	24 Cambridge Terr, #1	Cambridge 02140
Peter Miller	46 Porter Rd	Cambridge 02140
Marjorie Yates	36 Upland Rd, #3	Cambridge 02140
Vartan Keshishian	28 Fayerweather St	Cambridge 02138
Paul Lyons	675 Mass Ave	Cambridge 02139
Marylee Meier	10 Dana St	Cambridge 02138
Christopher Lutz	75 Richdale Ave, #15	Cambridge 02140
Sally Lutz	75 Richdale Ave, #15	Cambridge 02140
E. B. Moore	75 Richdale Ave, #17	Cambridge 02140
Ella Willard-Schmoe	675 Mass Ave	Cambridge 02139
Joe Sullivan	79 Upland Rd	Cambridge 01240
Jim Sperling	21 Bates St	Cambridge 02140
Cluis Dahl	54 Regent St	Cambridge 02140
Leonie Gordon	75 Richdale Ave, #3	Cambridge 02140
Marjorie Sagan	75 Richdale Ave, #7	Cambridge 02140
Arlene Miller	75 Richdale Ave, #10	Cambridge 02140
Karen Hull	75 Richdale Ave, #5	Cambridge 02140
Gene Hull	75 Richdale Ave, #5	Cambridge 02140
Jeff Listfield	4 Cambridge Terr, #2	Cambridge 02140
Rebecca Listfield	4 Cambridge Terr, #2	Cambridge 02140
One Hwang	1 Richdale Ave, #14	Cambridge 02140
Jacqueline Piret	79 Upland St	Cambridge 02140
Ellen Wolfe	75 Richdale Ave, #14	Cambridge 02140
Leslie Loomis	23 Cambridge Terr, #1	Cambridge 02140
Lesley Phillips	1643 Cambridge St, #52	Cambridge 02138
Ann Jenkins	56 Regent St	Cambridge 02140
Dennis A. Benzan	1 Pine St	Cambridge 02139
Sam Wolfe	19 Maple Ave	Cambridge 02139
John Sanzone	540 Memorial Dr	Cambridge 02139
Arthur Wolfson	33 Richdale Ave	Cambridge 02140
Carol Cohen	40 Porter Rd	Cambridge 02140
Dean Grodzins	33 Richdale Ave	Cambridge 02140
	Home: 12 Parker St	
Evan Gerber	34 Cambridge Terr	Cambridge 02140