

Approved 8/4/11

Minutes of the Cambridge Historical Commission

July 18, 2011 – 24 Berkeley Street - 8:00 A.M.

Members present: William B. King, *Chair*; Bruce Irving, *Vice Chair*; M. Wyllis Bibbins, Jo M. Solet, *Members*; Susannah Tobin, *Alternate*

Members absent: Robert Crocker and Chandra Harrington, *Members*; Shary Page Berg and Joseph Ferrara, *Alternates*

Staff present: Sarah Burks

Public present: Ken Taylor, 23 Berkeley Street; John Holland, 1126 Main Street, Weymouth; Jeff & Lisa Kerrigan, 24 Garden Street; Bob McCarthy, 1126 Main Street, Weymouth

Chair William King called the site meeting to order with a quorum at 8:10 A.M. and made introductions.

Case 2734: 24 Berkeley St., by Jeffrey & Lisa Kerrigan. Replace windows on front and sides of main house.

Mr. King explained that the public hearing on July 7 had been continued to July 18 for the purpose of inspecting the condition of the existing windows and to continue consideration of the application for replacement of the windows on the front and sides of the main block of the house.

Dr. Jo Solet noted that she had not been present at the July 7 hearing.

Sarah Burks, Preservation Planner, indicated that only the window replacement issue remained and that the other aspects of the application had been approved on July 7.

John Holland, of the Holland Companies, explained that the proposed new windows were manufactured by Pella. They would be wood 6-over-6 double-glazed simulated divided light (SDL), with a thick historic sill and wood exterior. The thickness of the muntin would be the same as the existing.

Mr. Irving asked for more detail on the proposed muntin. Mr. Holland said they would be 7/8" wide, but would not have a putty-glazed profile.

Dr. Solet asked what the issues were with the existing windows. Mr. Holland replied that the windows did not function well, were not well insulated, and had lead paint, which was a problem for the family with young children. The 1930s home needed to be fully rehabbed.

The Commissioners were invited inside to inspect the condition of the windows.

Upon inspection, Mr. Irving gave his opinion of the existing windows. He said they looked to be rock solid. He noted that the lead paint could be removed and the sash weather-stripped and tuned up. The resulting product would last much longer than a new double-glazed window and would probably cost less. If new windows were being purchased for energy savings, the homeowners would never get their money back. Storm windows were encouraged in the historic district as a way to protect original windows, which were important character-defining features of those buildings. The wood available for new windows did not rival the durability of the wood in old windows. He clarified that Pella makes a very good window and that he had no objections to that product being used in the new openings on the altered garage bay or the new addition. He encouraged the owners to repair the existing windows rather than replace them on the front and sides of the main house.

Mr. Kerrigan asked if it would be alright to have different windows in the front of the house from those on the back or in new openings.

Mr. Irving assured him that would be acceptable from an historic preservation perspective.

Dr. Solet pointed out that there were manufacturers who could make a new single-glazed wood window that would match all the details of the existing windows, if that was desired by the owners.

Ms. Burks summarized the inspection of the windows noting that they were in consistently good condition on the main block of the house, except for a rear bathroom window and a former door opening that had been modified to a non-operating single-sash window in the living room on the northwest (right side) elevation.

Mr. Holland asked for the different window in the living room to be treated separately in the Commission's decision process. He would consult a window restoration company to find out how much it would cost to restore the windows and if it would be practical to do so.

Ms. Burks encouraged the owners and Mr. Holland to get more than one estimate. She said she would provide a list of window repair contractors.

Mr. Irving moved to approve repair of the front and side windows visible from a public way, unless the owner established to the satisfaction of the staff that rehabilitation of some windows was not practical. He further moved, with regard to the different window in the living room, to approve either repair of the existing sash and installation of a storm window or replacement with a new single-glazed true divided light window to match the other windows in the living room. Mr. Bibbins seconded the motion, which passed 5-0.

Mr. Irving moved to expand the approval for the new window openings on the former garage and rear addition to include either the proposed Pella windows or new single-glazed true divided light wood windows with storms that would match the others existing in the house. Mr. Bibbins seconded the motion, which passed 5-0.

Mr. King noted that the windows probably would not be opened much in an air conditioned house.

Dr. Solet said she had not seen the condenser units on the proposed site plan. Mr. Holland said they would be on the side of the new addition.

Bob McCarthy of the Holland Companies described the proposed equipment and noted that it would be very quiet. They had used it in other projects.

Mr. King said the Commission had been told that the equipment would not be visible from a public way.

Ms. Tobin moved to adjourn. Mr. Irving seconded, and the motion passed 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:00 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah L. Burks
Preservation Planner