

## MINUTES OF THE MID CAMBRIDGE NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICT COMMISSION

Monday, January 6, 2020, 6:00 PM, 2nd Fl. Meeting Room, City Hall Annex, 344 Broadway, Cambridge

Commission Members present: Tony Hsiao, *Chair*, Lestra Litchfield, *Vice Chair*, Monika Pauli, Charles Redmon, *Members*; Margaret McMahon, *Alternate*

Staff present: Allison A. Crosbie, Preservation Administrator

Absent Members:

Members of the Public: See attached list.

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Chair Tony Hsiao called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm. Mr. Hsiao made introductions and explained the meeting procedures. Commission member Monika Pauli arrived at 6:10.

### Public Hearing: Alterations to Designated Properties

**Case MC-5861: 113 Inman Street**, by Alex Van Praagh o/b/o Charles and Karen Korn. Replace side entrance/greenhouse, expand 3rd floor deck, construct new 1st floor rear deck, new window openings and window wells, and replace windows.

Ms. Crosbie introduced the property and showed slides. Mr. Van Praagh, the architect for the owners, described the project including replacing some of the windows with 2 over 2, constructing new window openings to allow more light into stairwell, extending the back deck on the third floor, and to demolish the attached greenhouse and build out the kitchen, not to go beyond the existing footprint. He explained that the third-floor deck above the new addition would read as a separate entity. He is also proposing new window wells to bring more light in, and egress windows on the basement level. Mr. Van Praagh also stated that the specifics of the basement design are still in progress but will include light wells. He also described the proposed deck on the first level.

Commission member Charles Redmon asked for clarification on the proposed new side entrance. Mr. Van Praagh replied that the side entrance will be in the same location as the existing one but will lead up to the first floor as well as down to the basement level.

Mr. Van Praagh noted that the exterior wood clapboard, trim, details are to remain and be repaired if needed.

Vice Chair Lestra Litchfield asked about the tall windows over the proposed dual entry. Mr. Van Praagh replied that they will bring light to an existing stairway.

Mr. Hsiao asked to see a site plan that shows all the proposed entrances because the drawings are not clear. Mr. Van Praagh replied that he did not have a site plan.

Ms. Litchfield asked if the basement will be a separate apartment. Mr. Van Praagh replied it is being designed for that potential.

Mr. Hsiao asked if the basement is accessible to the first level. Mr. Van Praagh replied that it is still to be determined. Mr. Van Praagh stated that the exterior design has been fully developed but the interior, including the basement are still being considered. The client would like a separate unit in the basement but that is still in flux. They are considering making it a separate unit in the future. Mr. Van Praagh said the structure has been a 2-family dwelling and might remain as such.

Commission member Monika Pauli asked about the decorative windows. Mr. Van Praagh answered that he is proposing two stained glass windows for the front foyer, which were typical for this particular period, and they will allow more light to the stairs.

Mr. Hsiao asked about window types. Mr. Van Praagh replied they would be fixed stained glass windows. Mr. Hsiao clarified he is asking about the other windows. Mr. Van Praagh answered that the windows will be Marvin Integrity which are wood interior with fiberglass exterior and real divided lights.

Mr. Redmon asked about any proposed landscape improvements. Mr. Van Praagh replied that he planned to work on that after the restoration work, emphasizing that this is not a development project. Mr. Redmon stated that he would like a landscape plan be submitted for staff review.

Ms. Pauli asked if the existing window details are to remain. Mr. Van Praagh replied yes, even though they are not shown on the elevations.

#### Commission Comments

Commission member Margaret McMahon stated that she is glad to see that the greenhouse is being removed.

Ms. Litchfield reiterated that a landscape plan be submitted for staff review. The owner, Charles Korn, stated that they are not making any major changes beyond addressing some drainage issues, and said the previous owner did a great job with the landscape.

Mr. Redmon asked about fencing. Mr. Korn answered that the existing chain link fence belongs to the neighbor but that they will be thinking of doing some kind of improvement.

Mr. Redmon made a motion to approve the application as presented and that the applicant submit a landscape plan for staff review. Ms. Litchfield seconded, and the motion passes, 5-0.

**Case MC-5862: 6-8 Goodman Road, by Anya Zibelnik.** Enclose front porch, install new windows and new dormer, and enlarge basement windows.

Ms. Crosbie showed slides and described the Colonial Revival house constructed in 1923.

Ms. Anya Zibelnik, the owner, described her past experience in restoring old houses in Cambridge, and that this house is for her two children. She explained her intention to improve the house and build to last a long time. She explained the house has no insulation and little electrical power, and she would like to make the front of the house more heart warming.

Ms. Litchfield asked what is the material of the panels. Ms. Zibelnik replied that it is board and batten, 1 by 2, with shingles in between, the columns are flat on flat bases. Ms. Litchfield asked if they are wood. Ms. Zibelnik replied it's a composite. Mr. Phil McLaughlin, the applicant's contractor, explained they are proposing to use boral which cuts like wood and doesn't rot, and the shingles are wood.

Ms. Pauli asked about the stone on the bottom. Ms. Zibelnik answered that they are adding concrete at the bottom for a foundation.

Mr. Hsiao stated that he is confused by the drawings showing the porch. Ms. Zibelnik answered that they initially were only going to partially enclose the porch but now they want to fully enclose it. Mr. Hsiao sketches his understanding of the front porch. Mr. McLaughlin explains that the entrance to the porch is from the side and that there would be a false window facing the front. Mr. Hsiao then asked if the column on the corner is then a full column. Ms. Zibelnik said yes, but it's a trapezoidal column.

Mr. Hsiao stated that he understands the need for more space and dressing up the front façade, but the plans and elevations have not caught up with each other and that he is just interpolating. He stated that he needs to see more accurate drawings showing how the proposed porch, especially the corner, will work.

Ms. Litchfield stated that since the front porch presents such a massive block why not leave it open on the side to lighten the corner? Ms. Zibelnik responded that she likes symmetry. Mr. Hsiao offered that the columns create the order and that the dynamic of the order is more interesting. Mr. Redmon noted that it also clarifies the front entrance. Mr. McLaughlin suggested a front door with a transom. Mr. Hsiao agreed. Ms. Litchfield said the corner could become a focal point.

Regarding the proposed dormer, Ms. Zibelnik said she looked at the surrounding neighborhood for ideas. She stated that she did not want the dormer to look “chunky.” Ms. Litchfield asked if the proposed dormer could be lowered. Mr. McLaughlin answered that there is not enough space. Mr. Redmon suggested two separate dormers. Ms. Pauli suggested that they align the dormers with the existing windows below. Mr. McLaughlin posed the possibility of two 10-foot long dormers.

Ms. Pauli stated that it’s the details that need more attention and will help with the decision process. Mr. Hsiao noted that where you turn the corner on the porch needs to be studied.

Mr. Redmon noted that the sidewalk is very close to the building and he’s not sure how the panels and pilaster details will work. Mr. McLaughlin replied that they will have to be recessed.

Regarding the back porch, Ms. Crosbie confirmed that it is not under the Commission’s purview because it is not visible from a public way.

Mr. Hsiao stated that the design language the applicant has chosen is interesting, but it doesn’t belong to any particular style. The rest of the house is very simple, but the proposed vocabulary is the opposite. While he is not opposed to it, Mr. Hsiao advised looking at Colonial Revival houses for direction. Ms. Zibelnik reiterated that she is looking to make it warmer.

Ms. Pauli noted the existing shingle siding. Mr. Hsiao suggested looking at the Shingle Style as well for an aesthetic guide. Mr. Redmon proposed a shingle wall with openings seemingly carved out of it.

Ms. Litchfield stated that she understands that the applicant is trying to soften the look of the front, but she concurred with Mr. Hsiao that they need to work out the details of the porch corners.

Ms. Litchfield made a motion to continue review of the application to allow the applicant to provide additional details of the proposed front porch alterations, and propose options for the dormer with correct measurements. Mr. Redmon seconded, and the motion passed 5-0.

### Minutes

Mr. Redmon motioned to approve the December 2, 2019 minutes, Ms. McMahon seconded, and approved, 5-0.

Mr. Hsiao adjourned the meeting at 7:13 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Allison A. Crosbie  
Preservation Administrator

**Members of the Public Present on January 6, 2020  
(who signed the attendance list)**

Charles Korn (owner)	6 Austin Park
Karen Korn (owner)	6 Austin Park
Ben Gersten (owner)	8 Goodman Road
Anya Zibelnik	75 Norfolk Street

Note: All addresses are located in Cambridge and/or Massachusetts unless otherwise noted.