

## MINUTES OF THE MID CAMBRIDGE NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICT COMMISSION

Monday, March 6, 2023, 6:00 PM, online Zoom meeting

Commission Members present: Lestra Litchfield, *Vice Chair*, Charles Redmon, Monika Pauli, Katinka Hakuta, *Members*

Absent: Tony Hsiao, *Chair*

Staff present: Allison A. Crosbie, Preservation Administrator

Members of the Public: See attached list

---

Meeting held via online zoom webinar <https://tinyurl.com/MCmar2023>. Due to statewide emergency actions limiting the size of public gatherings in response to COVID-19, this meeting was held online 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 836 1617 7923.

Commission Vice Chair Lestra Litchfield made introductions, explained the process, and called the meeting to order at 6:05.

**Case MC-6659: 15 Remington Street, by Nathan Wong/Plumosa LLC.** Alter fenestration, replace siding, trim, decking, and railings with cementitious and wood materials.

Ms. Allison Crosbie, preservation administrator, presented a brief history of the building built in 1892.

Mr. Nathan Wong, the representative for Plumosa LLC, introduced the project stating that Plumosa has owned the property for 10 years as a rental. He described the proposal as modest with no change in units, just minor exterior changes to improve the function. He then introduced Steve Hiserodt, the project architect.

Mr. Hiserodt shared his screen to present the proposal. He stated that the goal is to maintain the exterior of the building with some adjustments including window and door locations. He is proposing to replace windows with Marvin wood/aluminum clad windows and noted that currently there are several window styles and is thinking of using just 2/1 windows. He also remarked that the curved windows in the corner will be restored. Mr. Hiserodt also stated that they will restore or replace all the exterior architectural details, noting that some of the brackets are an unusual shape. He also said that some of the trim and molding is in poor condition. He explained the proposed changes to the windows on the right side of the building in response to the interior kitchen design and stated that the cornice detailing will match existing. He then showed the rear elevation where two windows will be removed, and then the proposed changes to the left façade toward the rear where two windows will be removed. He is also proposing to remove the two chimneys, remarking that one is not visible and the other is slightly visible from a distance. He also mentioned repointing the foundation.

### Commission Questions

Commissioner Katinka Hakuta asked about the window reconfiguration since the existing windows vary in the number of lites. Mr. Hiserodt replied that he is open to suggestions. Ms. Litchfield asked about the lite configuration at the adjacent building on the corner. Mr. Hiserodt answered that they are 4/2 or 6/2. Ms. Litchfield stated that she thinks that consistency would be better, that they should pick one configuration and stick to it, and she has no preference for which one. Mr. Hiserodt said he was leaning toward 2/2.

Commissioner Chuck Redmon asked how much of the siding is to be retained. Mr. Hiserodt answered none. Mr. Redmon asked about the turret. Mr. Hiserodt explained that the turret is not in good shape and that for proper weather barrier they'd like to strip it clean and start over.

Commissioner Monika Pauli asked about the 6/1 window the Mr. Hiserodt referred to. Mr. Hiserodt said that window is on the left side, but it's hard to see it. Ms. Pauli asked if it was an old window. Mr. Hiserodt said he didn't think it looked significantly old.

### Public Questions and Comments

None

### Commission Comments

Ms. Hakuta noted the fan light opening on the front façade and asked if the applicant would consider restoring it, or does it not work with the new interior? Mr. Hiserodt replied that inside you can't see this opening, but he can look into restoring it. Ms. Hakuta stated that restoring that window would be appropriate. Ms. Litchfield remarked the same fanlight window is on the left side and that it would be odd if they didn't have both fanlights and agreed with Ms. Hakuta's comment.

Ms. Pauli asked about the panels on the second floor of the turret. Mr. Hiserodt asked Ms. Crosbie to share the screen to look at photos of the different panel details. Mr. Hiserodt said that the panel details will be replicated.

Regarding fiber cement, Ms. Litchfield wanted to clarify that they are proposing to use it for everything except the shingled portion and the turret. Mr. Hiserodt confirmed that's what they are proposing. Ms. Litchfield pointed out that this building is next to a National Register (NR) structure (also owned by the applicant) where the Commission required wood clapboard siding. These two buildings are associated and viewed as one unit, and if 15 Remington is sided with fiber cement, it will look odd for two reasons. She explained that side by side, you can really tell the difference between the two materials. And if you use wood and fiber cement on the same building, right next to each other, it will look really odd. Where the turret meets the rest of the walls, visually it will be a mistake on many levels. She then asked if they considered using wood on the whole building or at least on the front, or the most visible sides. Mr. Hiserodt answered that they considered doing the same thing as next door and they were hoping for some sort of compromise, and he agreed with her comment on how the two materials will look right next to each other. Ms. Litchfield noted that the wood and fiber cement won't line up in the same way. Ms. Litchfield also said that using fiber cement on just the rear would be more appropriate. She pointed out how the building is so rich with details, that the two materials will make it look like

a patchwork. Mr. Hiserodt suggested that they look at using wood on the front, including the turret, and the left side.

Ms. Litchfield asked the other commissioners if they would like to weigh in on this topic. Ms. Pauli agreed with Ms. Litchfield. Ms. Hakuta also concurred with Ms. Litchfield. Mr. Redmon stated that the applicant has done a nice job in preserving the character of the building and agreed with the less fiber cement the better.

Ms. Hakuta stated that she agreed with Mr. Hiserodt on the lack of visibility of the chimneys and that although the Commission encourages the preservation or reconstruction of chimneys, in this case it's not warranted. Mr. Redmon concurred that these are also not heroic, or elaborate, chimneys. Ms. Litchfield agreed with Ms. Hakuta and explained that it's a good idea to make clear that these are important features to the Commission. Mr. Hiserodt affirmed that the chimneys on the adjacent NR structure are being reconstructed.

Ms. Litchfield asked if any of the commissioners would like to make a motion. Mr. Redmon motioned to accept the proposal as submitted, with the following recommendations:

- Replace clapboard siding with wood, and at a minimum consider limiting the cementitious materials to the siding on the rear and right facades.
- Restore the fanlight on the front facade.
- Maintain or replicate the panel and window details.
- Consult with CHC staff on revised design details.

Ms. Pauli seconded, and the motion passed 4-0.

The February 6 2023 minutes were approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:47 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Allison A. Crosbie, Preservation Administrator

**Members of the Public Present on March 6, 2023**

Panelists:

Nathan Wong, applicant  
Steven Hiserodt, architect

Plumosa, Newton MA  
DH Architects, West Roxbury

Attendees:

Kevin Quinn

Plumosa, Newton MA