

Minutes of the Cambridge Historical Commission

June 27, 2019 – 10 Church Street, Cambridge - 8:00 P.M.

Members present: Bruce Irving, *Chair*; Susannah Tobin, *Vice Chair*; Joseph Ferrara, *Member*; Gavin Kleespies, Paula Paris, Kyle Sheffield, *Alternates*

Members absent: William G. Barry, Robert Crocker, Chandra Harrington, Jo Solet *Members*

Staff present: Charles Sullivan, *Executive Director*, Sarah Burks, *Preservation Planner*;

Public present: See attached list.

With a quorum present, Mr. Irving convened the hearing at 8:15 P.M. He explained that the purpose of the meeting at the 10 Church Street project site was to view the mockup of the façade materials and integrated lighting which had been brought in and lifted against the existing building with a crane. He noted that there was also a video screen with a rendering of the full façade of the proposed new building and the lighting simulation.

Public Hearing: Alterations to Designated Properties

Case 3987 (continued): 10 Church St., by Kirche, LLC. Demolish existing theater building and construct new mixed-use building. To review a materials demonstration of the proposed expressive façade of terracotta tiles with integrated LED lighting.

Anthony Galluccio, attorney for the applicants, described the sample lighting displays to be shown to the Commission and public. He said the applicants were open to setting limitations on the brightness, velocity, time of day, etc. He said he wanted the community to get comfortable and excited about the design.

Mr. Irving asked for questions of fact from the Commission and then the public.

Marilee Meyer of 10 Dana St asked how tall the building would be. Nathan Wong, representative of the owner, answered that it would be 68 feet tall, which would be one story higher than the existing building. He went on to explain that the terracotta materials of the facade were manufactured in Spain, outside Barcelona and the small company that makes them is very busy so it takes a long time.

Mr. Galluccio said the texture and material proposed for the facade cladding would work as a design with or without the lighting.

A member of the public asked whether the metal frame around the mockup would also be in the final design. Mr. Wong answered that there would be a metal frame but it would not be as large as in the mockup.

Valentin Spiess of iArt lighting design consultants in Basel, Switzerland explained the subtle lighting and animation. He showed a sample design called Dusk. Mr. Wong said this first sample was monochromatic with almost imperceptible movement of the light. Mr. Spiess then showed a sample called Evening. He said that the lower half of the building could be lit while the upper half could be turned off. Mr. Wong explained that this showed the typical evening setting for the lights which was a soft glow. Additional samples showing monochromatic or multi-colored children's art were displayed as well as an animated underwater scene with fish swimming across the facade. Another sample was shown that had animated trees growing vertically up the façade.

Mr. Galluccio said there could be a design contest for school children and they could be taught about computer coding.

A member of the public asked who would decide what gets selected for lighting designs on the building. Mr. Galluccio said community participation and unexpected views would be a good thing for the street life of the Square. He showed a sample lighting design for dance month with people dancing in the display.

Frank Kramer of Avon Street asked how the design standards would be proposed. What would be included? Mr. Galluccio said the design standards could be included as a condition of a special permit from the Planning Board. It also could become part of a future lighting ordinance.

Charles Teague of Edmunds Street said he was concerned about the technological capabilities of the building given to the next owner. It could be misused.

Mr. Galluccio said the point of the meeting tonight was to show that the proposed lighting was not like Las Vegas or Times Square but was very subtle. It would provide a way to interact with the street life of the Square.

A member of the public asked what would be the brightest lighting level? Mr. Galluccio answered that the brightness could be regulated via special permit conditions.

Mr. Teague said the building should be constructed to green building standards.

Mr. Spiess spoke to the energy usage required for the lit facade. It did not take a lot of energy he said. The brightness was regulated with a uniform contrast ratio, the maximum being four times the brightness of the surrounding light. As an example, he said the street lights were a thousand times brighter than the lights on the facade. At night, less energy was needed for the lighting. The energy needed for the facade was low enough that it could be produced by solar panels on the building. It would require zero energy draw.

A member of the public asked how many hours a day the lights would be turned on. Mr. Galluccio answered that it would not be on all day but the specific hours had not yet been determined.

A member of the public asked about blue spectrum light and the effects on public health. Mr. Spiess explained that the color of the light at night would be very warm and not in the blue spectrum.

Tom Berendt of Humboldt Street asked why the applicants had not provided a mock-up of the window systems. Would the windows be made of clear transparent glass? Beth Whitaker, the local architect, answered that the glass of the storefronts and the upper story windows would be transparent. The division of the façade into terracotta sections and window sections would help break up the massing. The keyhole opening within the mass of the building was forty-two feet across.

Mr. Irving asked if there was a motion to continue the hearing for up to 120 days as requested by the applicant. Mr. Kleespies made a motion to continue to another hearing to take place within 120 days. Ms. Paris seconded the motion which passed 5-0.

Mr. Kleespies made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Sheffield and passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah L. Burks
Preservation Planner

**Members of the Public
Who Signed the Attendance List on June 27, 2019**

John Ciancio	1400 Massachusetts Ave
Douglas Houston	1 Waterhouse St
Heather Houston	1 Waterhouse St
Frank Kramer	7 Avon St
Jan Ferrara	195 Brattle St
Jordan Howley	1558 Massachusetts Ave
Chris Mackin	48 JFK St #2
Cat Turco	93 Winthrop St
Philip Borden	93 Winthrop St
Liz Walker	16 Blakeslee St
Marilee Meyer	10 Dana St
Joanna Fink	6 Ballord Pl
Fred Meyer	83 Hammond St
Charles Teague	23 Edmunds St
John Hawkinson	jhawk@alum.mit.edu
Amy Perlmutter	23 Avon St
David Stafford	26 Mt Auburn St
Mac Pierce	119 college Ave, Somerville
Sarah Kochan	11 Capital St, Newton
David Torrey	128 Pearl St
Luke McKinnon	Cambridge
Luke McKinnon, Jr.	Cambridge
Leah Milby	Cambridge
Lola Milby	Cambridge

Note: Town is Cambridge, unless otherwise indicated.