

Approved 9/24/12

Minutes of the Avon Hill Neighborhood Conservation District

Monday, January 23, 2012 - 5:30 P.M. - 831 Massachusetts Ave., Basement Conference Rm

Commissioners Present: Theresa Hamacher, *Chair*; Art Bardige, *Vice Chair*; Robert Crocker, Catherine Henn, *Members*; Mark Golberg, Heli Meltsner, Constantin von Wentzel, *Alternates*

Commissioners Absent: Maryann Thompson, *Member*

Staff Present: Sarah Burks

Members of the Public: see attached sign-in sheet

With a quorum present, Chair Theresa Hamacher called the meeting to order at 5:36 P.M. She made introductions and reviewed the hearing procedures. She designated the alternates to vote in the following order: Constantin von Wentzel, Heli Meltsner, and Mark Golberg.

Public Hearing: Alterations to Designated Properties

AH-410: 16 Hillside Ave., by Paul and Anne Goldenheim. Extend roof overhang with new bracket at front door; add water diverter.

Sarah Burks, Preservation Planner, showed slides of the existing conditions and described the reasons for a binding review and the design guidelines.

Carol Marsh, architect of Helios Design Group, explained that there was no cover over the front door. The shingles were being water damaged. She described the proposed water diverter over the dormer and moving the gutter around the corner. The slate, gutter, and paint color would all match existing.

Mr. von Wentzel noted that due to the roof dormer and valleys, a lot of water was being funneled into that small corner. A larger gutter might be necessary.

There being no questions or comments from members of the public, Ms. Hamacher closed the public comment period.

Mr. von Wentzel praised the design which would continue the roofline at the same angle. The new diverter would not be incongruous with traditional construction. The design was well executed and appropriate. Ms. Meltsner, Art Bardige, and Catherine Henn concurred.

Mr. Bardige moved to approve the application, as presented. If a larger gutter was needed to control the water flow, that could be considered part of the current approval, subject to staff review. Ms. Meltsner seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0, with Mr. von Wentzel voting as alternate.

AH-407: 411: 38-40 Arlington St., by Robert P. Forbes, Trustee of Grace P. Forbes Trust o/b/o Adrian Catalano. Exterior repairs and rehabilitation of double house including: Replace slate with architectural shingle roofing on upper slopes of mansard. Replace windows. Remove chimneys. Remove concrete decks at front. Remodel front porch. Remove fencing at left of house. Add, remove, and alter select windows and doors. Remove screened porch and rebuild. Remove bulkheads and install stairway. Construct decks at rear including roof deck. Replace garage door. Re-grade and pave driveway. Install air conditioning condensers.

Ms. Burks showed slides of the current conditions of the house. She described the condition of the windows, which she had inspected on site. Most windows were original and in good, repairable condition. Some modern windows had been added near the back of the house, including a few replacement sash. The windows in the 3rd floor attic were in the poorest condition, which was not surprising for an unconditioned attic space.

Adrian Catalano, the owner, explained that his intention was to return the house to its original appearance. He summarized the proposed exterior repairs and changes including removing the 1950s concrete front decks. He would cover the porch deck and stair treads with stone and add a new wood handrail. He said that the house had been neglected for quite some time causing severe rot in a lot of the soffits and gutters. The weight of the slates on the upper portion of the mansard roof was taxing the interior walls. He proposed replacing the upper portions of the mansard with architectural shingles. The lower portions of the mansard would be repaired, maintaining the existing slate. The dormer roofs would be replaced with slate. He described the proposed roof deck on the ell at the rear.

Ben Wilson, the architect, indicated that the wood trim would be kept intact and restored.

Ms. Hamacher asked for more information about the proposed replacement windows. Mr. Catalano explained that the house had a hodgepodge of windows some old, some recent. He proposed replacing all the windows with a custom milled wood window. He said he had gotten an estimate for restoration of the old windows and it was cost prohibitive. Ms. Burks offered to provide additional names of window repair contractors so that other estimates could be solicited. Mr. Catalano said he did not want to have a mix of windows in any one room and preferred a double glazed product so that he could remove the storm windows.

Ms. Hamacher inquired about the new garage door. Mr. Catalano explained it would be similar in pattern but would be an overhead mechanical door.

Mr. von Wentzel explained that windows could be restored into good working order and last a very long time. Ms. Hamacher and Mr. Bardige expressed the Commission's recommendation to preserve historic wood windows whenever possible. Ms. Burks recommended that the Commission inspect the existing windows at a site visit before making a decision about replacement.

Mr. Wilson reviewed the elevation drawings and described the proposed changes to window locations and size, changes to doors, porches, rear decks, stairs, mechanicals, etc. He noted that the window trim on the ell was simpler than on the front block of the house. The ell did not have drip moldings or hoods. Mr. Catalano pointed out that both 42 Arlington Street and a house on Washington Avenue had roof decks.

Mr. von Wentzel asked if all three chimneys were proposed for removal. Mr. Wilson replied in the affirmative.

Ms. Meltsner asked why an architectural shingle was proposed for the upper portions of the mansard rather than a regular 3 tab shingle. She commented that double thick architectural shingles had a modern look to them. Mr. Wilson said there were a variety of architectural shin-

gle types to choose from. Manufacturers provide a longer warranty for the architectural shingles.

Mr. von Wentzel noted that all the slate was already gone from his house when he bought it. He had installed a faux slate called DuraSlate, which did not weigh as much as real slate.

Ms. Hamacher asked whether the proposed air conditioning condensers would be visible from a public way. Mr. Catalano answered that they would be located on the side of the garage and on the side of the house behind the existing fence. Ms. Burks noted that he proposed to remove the existing fence, which would make the proposed condensers visible.

Mr. Golberg asked if the house would remain in a two family arrangement. Mr. Catalano replied in the affirmative.

Ms. Burks asked if the driveway would be changed. Mr. Catalano replied that it was concrete now and he would repair it with concrete or pave it with stone pavers. It would be regarded because the garage was inaccessible due to a deep dip at the bottom of the driveway.

Ms. Hamacher asked for questions of fact from the public.

Vincent Panico, attorney for Seth Friedman of 36 Arlington Street, asked if the three chimneys would be replaced by false chimneys. Mr. Wilson answered that the proposal was to remove the chimneys and patch the roof, but not to replace the chimneys.

Ms. Hamacher asked for public comments.

Howard Medwed, of 58 Washington Avenue, said he had no objections to the project proposal.

Mr. Panico said that Mr. Friedman had spoken to Mr. Catalano about the location of the new air conditioning condensers, but Mr. Catalano had not wanted to locate them all by the side of the garage. Mr. Panico expressed concern that the units would comply with the noise ordinance requirements at the property line. He asked Mr. Catalano to test a similar installation of the mechanicals.

Ms. Henn noted that enforcement of the noise ordinance was the charge of the License Commission. Mr. Panico noted that the Commission did have jurisdiction of the visual appearance of the units. He suggested they not be permitted if they were going to create a legal nuisance.

Ms. Hamacher closed the public comment period.

The Commission deliberated about the proposed changes to the roof, chimneys, driveway, railings, roof deck, clapboards and trim, air conditioning units, fences, and windows. They asked the applicant to provide further documentation about the condition of the windows and their feasibility for repair. They asked the applicant to give further study to the air conditioning condenser location and fence designs and return with more information. The Commission noted that it was its expectation that cladding and trim would be repaired/restored rather than replaced, except where rotted or where necessary for changes in window and door locations and sizes. The Commission expressed its preference for retention and repair of chimneys, though it did not object to the removal of the back chimney at the ell. They recommended design details

and material selections for shingles, railings, and the driveway be delegated to the staff. No objections were voiced to the proposed roof deck.

Ms. Hamacher summarized the consensus of the commission and made a motion to approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior repairs to the house and alterations as described below:

1. Replace wood gutters with copper gutters with a profile to match the existing.
2. Remove slate from the upper planes of the roof and replace with new roofing material.
3. Remove the chimney on the ell.
4. Retain, or replicate from the roof up, the two chimneys on the main block of the house.
5. Remove uncovered concrete deck and stairs on either side of the front porch.
6. Install metal railings at front porch and cover concrete treads with stone.
7. Changes to select window openings on east, south, and west elevations.
8. Remove existing screened porch and reconstruct a smaller screened porch.
9. Remove bulkheads at rear and install stair and door.
10. Construct new rear wood decks at first floor; remove first floor window; remove non-original sidelight and awning at existing rear door of ell; and install matching French doors on rear of ell to access decks.
11. Replace side doors on east and west sides of ell.
12. Construct wood deck, railing, and privacy screen on roof of ell; remove two dormer windows and replace with new doors to access roof decks.
13. Replace garage door with new overhead mechanical door.
14. Re-grade and repave driveway.

The work described above is to be carried out as described in the architectural drawings by Bean Town Design titled, "38-40 Arlington Street" and dated January 8, 2012, with the condition that permit drawings be reviewed and approved by the staff for conformity with this certificate.

Approval would be granted subject to the following additional conditions,

1. Construction details and the extent of repair vs. replacement on the exterior of the building is to be reviewed and approval by staff.
2. Masonry repairs and repointing to be reviewed and approved by staff.
3. Roofing materials to be reviewed and approved by staff.
4. Driveway surface materials to be reviewed and approved by staff.
5. Railing details at the front porch to be reviewed and approved by staff.
6. Construction details of front two chimneys to be reviewed and approved by staff.

The following items would not be approved as part of the certificate and require further documentation and the review and approval by the full Commission at a continued public hearing:

1. Window replacement.

2. Fencing.
3. Air conditioning placement and screening.

Ms. Meltsner seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0, with Ms. Meltsner voting as alternate.

Staff Report

Ms. Burks reported on the staff review of a one-story addition at the back of 10 Avon Place. She said it would not be visible from a public way and had approved it on that basis.

Ms. Burks noted that an appeal of the Commission's decision in the 37 Lancaster Street case had been scheduled to be heard by the Historical Commission on February 2.

Minutes

The Commission reviewed the draft minutes of the December 19, 2011 meeting. Ms. Hamacher described the suggested changes and corrections offered by Mr. Medwed by email.

On page 6, Mr. Bardige said it should read, "Mr. Bardige said the Commission's responsibility was to approve or disapprove what was brought before it in the application, not to redesign the proposal." On page 7, Ms. Henn said she did have an exchange with Ms. Meltsner about the vote. Ms. Meltsner said Ms. Henn had inquired of her how she intended to vote. On page 6, "Mr. Levey..." was changed to "Members of the public..." The Commission agreed that no change was necessary regarding Mr. Medwed's written request for a continuance, which had been received by the Commission members prior to the hearing.

Ms. Hamacher described the suggested correction sent by email from Brian Levey to add that Catherine's Henn's had stated, when casting her vote, that she was voting in favor of the application only to avoid a tie vote. Ms. Henn said she had not made that statement and recommended that the proposed correction not be adopted.

Ms. Henn moved to approve the minutes, as corrected by the Commission. Mr. Golberg seconded the motion, which passed 3-0 with Mr. Golberg voting as alternate and Ms. Henn and Mr. Bardige also voting. Ms. Hamacher and Mr. von Wentzel abstained because they had not been present at the December meeting.

Mr. Bardige moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Henn seconded, and the motion passed 5-0, with Mr. von Wentzel voting as alternate. The meeting adjourned at 7:20 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah L. Burks
Preservation Planner

**Members of the Public
that Signed Attendance Sheet
January 23, 2012**

Chris Fuller	57 Marcella St, Roxbury 02119
Anne Goldenheim	16 Hillside Ave
Carol Marsh	29 Lincoln St, Hyde Park 02136
Ben Wilson	269 Grove St
Ed Ferjo	400 Washington St, Somerville 02143
Adrian Catalano	267 Grove St
Andrew Bram	43 Thorndike St, Cambridge 02140
Howard Medwed	58 Washington Ave
Vincent Panico	2343 Massachusetts Ave

Addresses are in Cambridge, unless otherwise specified.