

Minutes of the Half Crown-Marsh Neighborhood Conservation District Commission ***Approved at the May 15, 2017 Meeting***

March 20, 2017 - 6:00 PM at Lombardi Building, Basement Conference Room, 831 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge

Members present: James Van Sickle, *Chair*; Judith Dortz, *Vice Chair*; William King, Deborah Masterson, Peter Schur and Charles Smith, *Members*; Adrian Catalano, *Alternate*

Members absent: Marie-Pierre Dillenseger, *Member*

Staff present: Samantha Paull Elliott and Susan Maycock

Members of the Public: see attached list

Mr. James Van Sickle, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:02pm, gave an overview of the agenda, and discussed meeting procedures. He noted that Ms. Judith Dortz, Vice Chair, and Mr. Adrian Catalano, Commissioner, would be the voting alternates for the item.

HCM-370: 35 Willard Street, by Scott Zink of 35 Willard St LLC. Construct a six (6) foot tall fence.

Ms. Samantha Elliott, staff, gave an overview of the property and showed slides reflecting photos before their renovation project started and current photos.

Mr. Scott Zink, owner, gave an overview of the application request for a six (6) foot fence.

Ms. Deborah Masterson, Commissioner, asked if the existing fencing on Dinsmore Court was approved. Mrs. Elliott replied she could look into it. Ms. Masterson asked whose fence it was. Mr. Zink replied the abutters, not his. Ms. Masterson asked if his fence would be in line with the abutters fence and where would the gate be located. Mr. Zink replied it would be one foot behind the wall plane where the garage begins. Ms. Masterson asked if it would be six (6) feet along the side parallel to Mt. Auburn Street. Mr. Zink replied yes and that it would obscure the view of the trash, recycling, and A/C condenser.

Mr. Catalano expressed concern over setting a precedent and did not think that the taller fence would provide any screening. Ms. Dortz echoed his concern, adding that the site was already small. Mr. Van Sickle disagreed, noting that there were other tall fences in the area and the proposed fence would not block views between houses, nor was it blocking a view of the house from the street, which were reasons why other fences had been denied in the District recently. Ms. Dortz disagreed with Mr. Van Sickle, noting that it would be visible when walking down Willard Street.

Mr. Catalano asked if there would be a fence in front. Mr. Zink replied that it would be in front but lower. Ms. Masterson said that she recalled others in the area were required to have lower fences. Mr. Catalano asked about the entire fence having an open lattice topper. Ms. Dortz said she was opposed to the height regardless of how it was achieved. Mr. Catalano said he was open to finding a compromise. Dr. Peter Schur, Commissioner, said that the fence would not obscure the abutting property facing Mt. Auburn Street and felt maintaining thru-views was important. Mr. Van Sickle replied that this was an area where

it would be appropriate. Mr. Charles Smith, Commissioner, said he would be more comfortable if it transitioned up setback from the street rather than up to six (6) feet immediately.

Mr. Catalano ask if the fence would block light into the structure. Mr. Zink replied that the structure was taller than the fence and would not block any additional light beyond what was blocked from the abutting structures.

Mr. Van Sickle asked for questions from the public. There were none. He asked for comments from the public. There were none. He read an email submitted in support by an abutter, Ms. Henriette Lazaridis.

Mr. Catalano said he would support a fence with a two (2) foot lattice topper, but not a solid fence. Ms. Dortz said she did not feel comfortable supporting a fence of that height. Ms. Masterson also said she could not support a taller fence when taller fences had been denied in the area. Mr. Van Sickle added that he would support a taller fence in this area. Dr. Schur said he would prefer to vote separately on the two pieces. Mr. Van Sickle replied that it was not an unreasonable request. Ms. Dortz said that this fence would block the thru-views. Mr. Van Sickle noted that other fences in the area were taller in the back and shorter in the front as Mr. Zink was requesting.

Ms. Masterson made a motion to deny the fence between Mt. Auburn Street and Willard Street. Dr. Schur seconded the motion. The motion was approved 4 to 1 with Mr. Smith against.

Ms. Dortz made a motion to deny the fence and gate off Dinsmore Court. Ms. Masterson added the amendment that it was incongruous with the District Order's objective to maintain thru-views. Ms. Dortz accepted the amendment. Ms. Masterson seconded the motion. The motion was approved 4 in favor and Dr. Schur abstaining.

New Business

Ms. Masterson asked what the District Order said about replacement of an existing fence over the height of four (4) feet. Mrs. Elliott replied that she would look through the District Order and confirm the application.

Ms. Elliott offered an update on the meeting location search. She noted she had heard back from the Water Department Building which would require Cambridge Resident parking passes or parking coordinated in advance. As this was not an option, she noted that it appeared that at this time the Water Department Building could not be considered. Mrs. Elliott directed the Commission to reach out with other questions to Charles Sullivan.

Ms. Susan Maycock, staff, noted that she would begin attending the hearings in Ms. Elliott's place.

Ms. Dortz made a motion to adjourn. Dr. Schur seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 6:43pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Samantha Elliott
Preservation Administrator

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**Members of the Public
(who signed the Attendance list)**

[no one signed in on the Attendance List]

Note: All addresses are located in Cambridge unless otherwise noted.