

Approved 10/5/09

## Minutes of the Mid Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District Commission

August 3, 2009 - 6:00 P.M. – 831 Massachusetts Avenue, Basement Conference Room

Members Present: Nancy Goodwin, *Chair*; Tony Hsiao, *Vice Chair*; Lestra Litchfield, Carole Per-rault, and Charles Redmon, *Members*; Monika Pauli, *Alternate*

Staff: Sarah Burks

Members of the Public: See attached sign in sheet

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With a quorum present, Ms. Goodwin called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M.

### Public Hearing: Alterations to Designated Properties

**MC-3414 (amendment): 116-118 Amory St., by Cacciola Development.** To amend certificate to include the demolition of the ell of #116 and to review the details of the gut rehab project.

Ms. Burks showed slides of the condition of the buildings prior to commencement of work and current conditions. She summarized the background of the case, which involved the reconstruction of areas that had been damaged by fire, and explained that the scope of work, including demolition of the ell of the front house, had exceeded what was permitted. The applicants had made an amended application and were requesting an amendment to their Certificate of Appropriateness to proceed according to the revised plans submitted.

Eddie Cacciola, the applicant, described how the ell collapsed when the basement was being excavated.

Ms. Litchfield asked if the ell was completely gone, to which she received an affirmative reply.

Ms. Goodwin recalled that the Commission had looked under the sheathing at the site visit and the structure was in poor condition.

Andrew Shinn, an abutter, asked about the style of the house, and Ms. Burks answered that it was of the Italianate style and period.

Mr. Hsiao asked if the windows on the southwest side elevation were being moved. Mr. Cacciola replied that the previous architect had proposed moving the windows, but since that would cause the grandfathered status on that side to be lost, they had decided to leave the windows in their original locations.

Ms. Litchfield asked what material was proposed for the entrance hoods. Mr. Cacciola replied that it would be 3-tab asphalt shingles to match the main roof. Ms. Litchfield suggested using tin or copper standing seam instead. Mr. Cacciola agreed.

Ms. Goodwin asked about landscaping and Mr. Cacciola described the three areas that would be planted. Ms. Goodwin noted that they would need to review and approve a final landscape plan and trim details.

Mr. Redmon expressed the Commission expectation that all the trim would be of wood. He said the angle of the entrance canopies should all be consistent. The railings, roofs, brackets should all be similar to each other. Mr. Redmon asked about gutters. Mike Giacobello replied that a gutter was needed on the canopy of the ell because it was near the upper roof and received more water. Mr. Redmon concurred. He moved to find that the amendments were not inappropriate to the character of the houses or the neighborhood context. He moved to approve an amended Certificate of

Appropriateness, subject to review and approval of construction details and a landscaping plan. Mr. Hsiao seconded the motion, which passed 5-0.

**MC-3494: 80 Kirkland St., by Georgio & Harriet Trapani .** To construct dormer.

Ms. Burks showed slides and summarized the application for a new dormer on the left side of the house, for head room in a new stair.

Joseph Tatone, the architect, said that all new materials would match those used on the other dormers. He explained that the existing stair did not have adequate head room and were very steep. A code compliant stair and a bathroom were being added to the top floor. The 88 s.f. added with the dormer would increase the non-conforming FAR by a tenth of a percent and the project therefore needed zoning relief.

Ms. Perrault asked why the dormer could not be simplified to have one plane. Mr. Tatone explained the complex geometry of the dormer was needed in order to keep the top of the dormer from exceeding the ridge height of the main roof.

Mr. Hsiao and Mr. Redmon made several design suggestions, including making the dormer larger in order to simplify the geometry. Mr. Tatone said those were good ideas, but the goal was to increase the head room. Mr. Hsiao suggested sketching the dormer three dimensionally so that the true form would be fully understood. Mr. Tatone said they needed to have the zoning hearing, but would be happy to discuss other designs with the Architects Committee before finalizing the plans. Mr. Hsiao moved to accept the application, as submitted, with the recommendation that the owners explore a singularly massed dormer with a height the same as the dormers on the other side of the house, and on the understanding that all materials and window details would match the existing. Mr. Redmon seconded the motion, which passed 5-0.

**MC-3495: 24 Irving St., by Aardvark Realty Trust.** To install solar thermal panels.

Ms. Burks showed slides and described the house and the visibility of the proposed solar panels from Irving and Cambridge streets.

Bruce Dike, the contractor of Solar Hot Water Co., displayed a sample of the proposed solar tube. The installation would be 64" high at its tallest point. The panels would face south. He displayed and explained a roof plan showing the proposed locations of the panels.

Ms. Perrault asked if the installation would be reversible if the equipment became outdated. Mr. Dike replied that it could all be unbolted from the roof and some plumbing would have to be disconnected.

Ms. Goodwin asked if the installation would supply enough hot water for the entire building. Mr. Dike replied in the affirmative.

Ms. Pauli asked if the design accounted for shadows of neighboring buildings. Mr. Dike answered in the affirmative.

Francis Donovan, of 42 Irving Street, said he was excited to see someone finally trying out solar technology. He encouraged the Commission to approve the application.

Margaret McMahan, of 14 Highland Avenue, said she did not think that much of the installation would be visible from the public ways. She said that some compromises would be necessary as people started to make choices for alternate energy such as this.

Ms. Perrault expressed her agreement with both Mr. Donovan and Ms. McMahon.

Ms. Goodwin noted that the installation would not be very visible.

Ms. Litchfield moved to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness, as submitted. Mr. Hsiao seconded the motion, which passed 5-0.

**MC-3496: 23 Maple Ave., by John Deyab.** To replace three windows.

Ms. Burks showed slides and explained that the dormer windows in the mansard roof were inset and there was limited visibility from the street. The kitchen window on the first floor at the back would not be visible.

John Deyab, an owner, explained that his uncle had replaced these windows over 40 years ago. The windows being replaced were not the original arched windows, but a later rectilinear replacement sash. They were rotted and needed to be replaced. His aunt had complained of the draft and cold.

Derek Brown, of Home Depot, described the Sequel by Weather Shield all wood window units with simulated divided lights with interior and exterior grids, and a shadow bar between the layers of glass. He said the company had had good success with getting this window approved.

Ms. Goodwin asked about the condition of the exterior arching frame. Mr. Deyab replied that it was in good condition and had been well maintained. The existing original arched windows were not being changed. From the outside, you could not tell if the sash were arched or square.

Ms. Perrault asked if there were existing storm windows. Mr. Deyab said there were none on the top floor, which was one reason that it was so cold in the winter.

There were no questions or comments from members of the public.

Mr. Hsiao said the applicants were taking a sensitive and sensible approach to the problem. He commended them on selecting an all wood window. The simulated divided lights would be very close in appearance, especially as viewed from the street in this case.

Ms. Perrault moved to approve the application for Certificate of Appropriateness, as submitted. Mr. Redmon seconded the motion, which passed 5-0.

**MC-3497: 203 Prospect St., by Cambridge Affordable Housing Corp. o/b/o Just A Start Corp.** To alter select windows and doors and to demolish a small portion of the side addition.

Ms. Burks showed slides and described the limited visibility of the house, which was set back behind other buildings, from Prospect Street and St. Mary Road.

Lauren Curry, of Just A Start Corporation (JAS), explained that JAS hoped to acquire the building and rehab it as a single family, three bedroom, affordable unit for purchase. She displayed a site plan and described the changes that would be visible from a public way. The front wall would be retracted and rebuilt in line with the foundation wall.

Mark Boyes Watson, the architect, described the problems with the existing front wall and the decision to rebuild it in its original location above the foundation wall.

Ms. Curry described the changes to the front entryway, replacement of many windows and the front door. The siding and the casings would be kept. The parking would remain in its existing location but would be reorganized.

Ms. Perrault asked what kind of windows were to be used. Ms. Curry answered that they would use Harvey Classic vinyl windows with grids. The number of window replacements would depend on the results of the lead inspection. Some of the existing windows might be original. She described the site plan and planter boxes.

Walter Silver, an abutter of 48 Amory Street, said he was concerned about the parking. His master bedroom was closest to the parking area in question. In the past, there had been problems with noise and fumes related to the parking area. He said he would be willing to meet with JAS about his concerns. Ms. Curry said there was a board fence behind the chain link fence. Mr. Boyes Watson said the 5' strip between the parking and the fence could be planted. The house was 7' from the lot line.

Ms. Curry showed a draft subdivision plan.

Mr. Hsiao said the project, in general was commendable, including bringing the front wall back to the foundation line. As for the parking, there should be continued protection from headlights. He said he had no objections to the proposed reorganization of windows and doors.

Mr. Redmon moved to approve the application, as submitted. Ms. Perrault seconded the motion, which passed 5-0.

**MC-3498: 2 Amory Pl., by Josh Bartholomew & Kristie Welsh.** To construct rear addition and alter rear dormer windows.

Ms. Burks showed slides and described the addition that had been approved to the attached neighboring house.

Ms. Goodwin asked if the proposed addition at 2 Amory Place was smaller than at 1 Amory Place. Bhupesh Patel, the architect, replied in the affirmative, adding that the goal was to preserve as much of the back yard as possible. On this side, it was possible to expand further into the side yard and preserve the back yard. He described the rubber roofing, an expensive detail that was necessary to ensure water tightness in the valley between the house and the addition. He reviewed the plan and elevation drawings and described the proposed materials. The base of the concrete foundation would be clad with prefabricated concrete panels in a chocolate brown color, and the same cladding would be carried around to the existing part of the house. He described the new basement stair. The vinyl and asphalt siding would be removed and wood clapboards returned to the house. Pricing information was being provided to the owners of #1 as well.

Ms. Pauli asked about the panels on the second floor. Mr. Patel answered that the 10" cedar panels for a clean box on the addition would be in contrast to the detailing of the existing mansard. He said that the larger casings she pointed out were on an existing window that was being retained.

Mr. Hsiao said the scale related to the old, but the form was a clear modern break. He said he liked the dynamism of how the addition was slightly different in plan from the addition to #1. He said he appreciated the thoughtful design.

Ms. Goodwin agreed. It was terrific that the owners were going to restore the clapboards to the house.

Ms. Perrault asked what the abutters' reactions had been. Mr. Patel replied that they were interested in keeping the view of the back yard open and the applicants had reached agreement with their neighbors on that point.

Mr. Hsiao moved to approve the application, as submitted. Mr. Redmon seconded the motion, which passed 5-0.

Public Meeting: Determination of Procedure: Alterations to Designated Properties

**MC-3504: 44A Irving St., by Robert Mancell and Rebecca Schrader.** To install replacement windows.

Ms. Burks showed slides of the existing conditions.

Stu Grifkin, of Renewal by Anderson said he was there representing the owners. He described the Renewal by Anderson windows, which were similar to the Sequel units described in the Maple Avenue case. The Fibrex exterior of the Renewal windows was a product that consisted of wood in a binder and that was paintable. The exterior finish looked like wood. Fibrex had been tested since 1972 and started production in 1991. The windows would have a 20 year warranty. Only 13, not 14, windows were to be replaced. The diamond paned window would remain. He explained that the owners had proposed an interior only grid, but the windows were also available with exterior grids.

Mr. Hsiao agreed that interior and exterior muntins were strongly preferred.

Mr. Grifkin said the replacement units would not affect the exterior casings. They would be custom sized to the 1/16<sup>th</sup> of an inch to fit in the existing openings.

Mr. Hsiao said the Commission had to keep up with knowledge of the changing technology and window products. He moved to approve the application, as submitted, with the recommendation that the windows have both interior and exterior muntin grids. Mr. Redmon seconded the motion, which passed 5-0.

Minutes

Mr. Redmon moved to approve the July minutes as submitted. Mr. Hsiao seconded. Ms. Litchfield said she would not vote because she had not been present. Ms. Goodwin designated Ms. Pauli to vote, and the motion passed 5-0.

Ms. Pauli moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Litchfield seconded, and the motion passed 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:20 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah L. Burks  
Preservation Planner

Members of the Public  
Who Signed Attendance Sheet 8/3/09

Larry Deyab	23 Maple Ave
Eddie Cacciola	P. O. Box 1527, Arlington 02474
Harriet Trapani	80 Kirkland St
Giorgio Trapani	80 Kirkland St
Joseph Tatone	178 Park St, N. Reading 01864
Lauren Curry	Just A Start, P. O. Box 410310, Cambridge 02141
Stu Grifkin	20 Brattle St, Arlington 02476
Derek Brown	Home Depot
Bruce Dike	677 Temple St, Duxbury 02332
Hanan Cofel?	14 Highland Ave
Francis Donovan	42 Irving St
Andrew Shinn	117 Amory St
Greg Hyde	117 Amory St
Rachael Solem	24 Irving St
Bhupesh Patel	3 Bowdoin St