

## MINUTES OF THE MID CAMBRIDGE NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICT COMMISSION

Monday, April 4, 2016, 6:00 PM, McCusker Center, 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl. Meeting Room, 344 Broadway, Cambridge

Commission Members present: Nancy Goodwin, *Chair*; Tony Hsiao, *Vice Chair*; Lestra Litchfield, Sue-Ellen Myers, and Monika Pauli, *Members*; Margaret McMahon and Charles Redmon, *Alternates*

Commission Members absent: *none*

Staff present: Samantha Paull and Sarah Burks

Members of the Public: See attached list.

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Ms. Nancy Goodwin, Commission Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:04pm. She reviewed the agenda as well as meeting procedures. She designated all alternates present would be voting.

### **MC-4844: 344 Broadway, by City of Cambridge. Amend plans for covered bike parking.**

Ms. Goodwin designated Mr. Charles Redmon and herself to be the voting alternates.

Ms. Samantha Paull, staff, showed slides, gave an overview of the structure and application. She said this was an amendment to the previously approved certificate, MC-4844. She noted that the review was binding.

Mr. Justin Schreiber, applicant and transportation planner for Cambridge, gave an overview of the amended plans. He said he had met with the departments in the building to discuss parking removal and determined that was truly not an option. Mr. Schreiber noted that he met with the Historical Commission staff on site to review all the potential locations. Mr. Charles Sullivan, Executive Director of the Historical Commission, asked if the bike racks could be angled to allow for additional planting space. After researching the possibility, Mr. Schreiber updated the plans to include both a small landscaped area and the angled parking for the bicycles. He noted that the shelter was also reduced in height from eight (8) feet to seven (7) feet at the edge along the sidewalk. He also noted they were proposing to add an additional canopy tree between the covered bicycle parking area and the existing open bicycle racks.

Mr. Schreiber continued that after talking to Public Works they were considering either ornamental grasses or a green vine wall between the vehicular parking lot and the covered bicycle parking. He said that if the vine wall was done, they could not have a fence between the vehicular and sheltered parking areas.

Ms. Goodwin asked if the fence would limit maintenance to the shelter. Mr. Schreiber responded that the fence wouldn't prohibit maintenance but it would make it more difficult. Ms. Goodwin asked if the granite curbing would be eliminated as well. Mr. Schreiber replied that the curbing was needed to act as a retaining wall.

Mr. Redmon asked if the vine wall was done would the glass still be needed. Mr. Schreiber responded yes. Ms. Goodwin asked if the city had any experience with vine walls. Mr. Schreiber replied that Public Works did not clarify their experience with them but they brought up wanting to create one in this location. Ms.

Goodwin expressed concern that the vine wall might be an obstruction rather than a feature. Mr. Bill Deignan, Transportation Manager for the city, clarified they were presenting both options and were open to whichever the Commission preferred.

Ms. Sue Ellen Myers was concerned about the proximity of a canopy tree to an area where people would walk as it could damage the roots and stunt the growth of the tree. Mr. Schreiber said that they would be happy to work with the Commission to deter that. Mr. Deignan added that Public Works mentioned they wanted to rework the landscaping. Ms. Myers reiterated her concern about the roots of the tree.

*Ms. Monika Pauli, Commissioner, arrived at 6:15pm.*

Mr. Tony Hsiao, Vice Chair, asked if the curb was being relocated or shortened and if there was a possibility to create a barrier around the tree. Mr. Schreiber responded that he would be happy to look into it.

Ms. Goodwin called for questions from the public.

Mr. John Harmon, West Place resident, asked how it would affect pedestrians coming from West Place. Mr. Schreiber responded that it would increase visibility as proposed. Mr. Harmon said that eliminating the grass might help.

Ms. Emily Talcott, resident of West Place, asked if the applicant could outline the other change that comes along with this project. Mr. Schreiber described the bicycle lockers that were approved when the application was previously reviewed.

Ms. Goodwin asked if there were more questions from the public. There were none. She asked if there were comments from the public.

Ms. Talcott expressed her preference for additional street trees on Broadway and concern with the previously approved bicycle lockers and the subsequent loss of greenspace. Ms. Goodwin stated that the discussion was limited to the bicycle shelter.

Mr. Harmon asked what area was designated for snow removal. Mr. Schreiber said that DPW stated they would be removing it from the property.

Ms. Goodwin asked if there were any more comments from the public. There were none. She closed the public hearing.

Mr. Hsiao praised the applicant for taking the Commission's feedback and working so diligently on finding a solution. He expressed concern with the long term appearance and maintenance of a vine wall. Mr. Hsiao asked if there was a way to preserve curbing to help keep the public off the tree roots and out of the landscaped area. Mr. Schreiber replied he would look at it. Ms. Goodwin said she felt that it would look nicer without the fence and added that they could look at swapping the location of grass and curbing. Ms. Litchfield and Mr. Hsiao agreed with Ms. Goodwin about the fence.

Mr. Redmon asked if the angle of the racks could be continued across the entire bicycle parking area, both covered and uncovered to create continuity. Mr. Schreiber said he could look at it. Ms. Pauli agreed with Mr. Redmon about creating continuity.

Mr. Hsiao made a motion to approve the amended application as submitted with the recommendation to reexamine the parking and landscape area, remove the fence, study further extending the granite curbing, and explore the option of angling all bicycle parking in the area to create a consistent look. Ms. Myers seconded the application. The application was approved 5-0.

**MC-4940: 2 Hancock Park, by The John Bunevich 2001 Trust. Replace historic windows.**

Ms. Paull showed slides, gave an overview of the structure and application. She said that the review was non-binding.

Mr. Anthony Griseto, representative from Pella, gave an overview of the proposal, which included removal of the historic wood windows and installing vinyl windows with a two over one interior grid. He added that the main motivation was minimal maintenance as the property is occupied by a disabled woman on the second and third floors as well as a long term tenant on the first floor who has lived there for over 30 years.

Ms. Goodwin called for questions from the Commission. Mr. Redmon asked if the applicant had looked into exterior muntins. Mr. Griseto replied yes but they were not available on the product they selected.

Ms. Goodwin asked for questions from the public. There were none. She asked for comments from the public. There were none.

Ms. Goodwin responded that the proposed product could impact the property value and is not supported by the Commission. Mr. Griseto replied that the proposal was for lower maintenance, lockable and easier to operate. Mr. Hsiao replied that Pella had a wide range of products and this seemed like more of a cost issue. Mr. Griseto responded yes, it was part of the MassSave program.

Ms. Litchfield made a motion to reject the application as submitted as it was not established that the windows were beyond repair and the proposed product was not a historic material thus presenting a loss of character and historic fabric. Mr. Hsiao seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5-0 with Mr. Redmon, Ms. Myers, Mr. Hsiao, Ms. Litchfield, and Ms. Pauli voting.

**MC-4941: 38 Ellery Street, by Fred and Danyel Logevall. Alter window openings, alter front entrance, and remove chimney.**

Ms. Paull showed slides, gave an overview of the structure and application. She said that the review was non-binding.

Ms. Maggie Booz, architect, gave an overview of the proposal. She noted that they were hoping to convert the two family dwelling into a single family dwelling with a single entrance door, remove the chimney, install a new railing on the porches, replace the windows and alter some window openings which would allow for the kitchen renovation, the installation of a fireplace in the living room, and the addition of an entrance to the porch off the second bedroom's bay window.

Mr. Redmon asked if there were plans to paint the house. Ms. Booz responded yes and that they were happy to work with Susan on colors.

Mr. Redmon asked if they had to add a secondary hand rail on the first floor porch. Ms. Booz replied no, it was currently 32 inches but as it was a historic structure, she felt she could work with the inspectional

services department to maintain the historic height. She added that they were going to increase the height of the second floor for safety reasons.

Ms. Litchfield asked why they were removing the chimney. Ms. Booz replied that it was not needed and they were hoping to capture the interior space in the kitchen.

Mr. Hsiao asked if the fireplace had to protrude from the bay window as proposed rather than be located within the bay to preserve the historic bay lines. Ms. Booz said it would be possible, however it would be tight inside against the two windows on the bay. She clarified that the idea was to divide the impact between the interior and the exterior. She noted that they had not discussed alternate locations. Ms. Pauli asked if it could be shallower. Ms. Booz replied that they weren't certain of the specific unit they would use yet and noted that it was possible that the depth would change. Ms. Goodwin asked if it was gas or wood burning. Ms. Booz replied gas. Ms. Goodwin replied that the depth could be much smaller.

Ms. Goodwin asked why they were proposing windows on the sides of the front entry door instead of fixed sidelights. Ms. Booz said that they were not set on using windows but had proposed them with the idea that you could open them. Ms. Goodwin asked for staff to clarify. Ms. Burks said that staff could look into what's traditionally used. Ms. Booz noted that she would be happy to work with staff on it.

Mr. Hsiao commended them on sensitively converting from a two family to a single family. He noted that he felt with the twin next door, sensitivity should be taken with the porch renovation. He also expressed concern with the fireplace element's impact on the bay, as it looked like an appendage not integrated into the house and asked the applicant to work with staff on the sidelights.

Ms. Litchfield bemoaned the loss of a historic chimney, and stated that preserving above the roofline would help to preserve the character.

Ms. Pauli requested that the applicant redesign the porch to better relate to the front porch.

Mr. Redmon asked if the windows on the south elevation could be aligned with those on the second floor. Ms. Booz replied that the interior plan had determined where the windows were located.

Ms. Litchfield made a motion to approve the application with the recommendations that the bay window alterations be revisited to retain the original bay outline more closely, that the applicant consult with staff on whether fixed panes or functional sashes for the sidelights of the front door are historically appropriate, explore retaining the chimney, and that the rear porch is designed to reflect the proportions of the front porch. Mr. Hsiao seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5-0 with Mr. Redmon voting.

**MC-4942: 110 Hancock Street, by 110 Hancock Realty Trust. Alter exterior and construct new addition.**

Ms. Sarah Burks, Preservation Planner, showed slides, gave an overview of the structure and application. She said that the review was non-binding.

Mr. Frank Shirley, the architect, introduced Jim Rafferty, the attorney representing the homeowners, and gave an overview of the project. Mr. Shirley noted that the owners were hoping to retire and live out their lives in this home, which needed an interior rework to allow for an elevation and access to all bedrooms without having to walk through them on the second floor. He showed photos that reflected the areas that would be affected by the proposed changes and said they were hoping to construct an addition on the

1980s addition to allow for a hallway on the second floor. Mr. Shirley pointed out that the proposal included removing a chimney and adding dormers as well.

Ms. Goodwin asked for questions from the Commission.

Mr. Redmon asked if the trellis was gone. Mr. Shirley said he didn't remember but could check. Mr. Redmon replied that he was not sure if the trellis was original and noted that other houses from a similar time frame had them. Ms. Sarah Burks, staff, said that she didn't think they were original but the neighboring house at 104 Hancock Street had them.

Mr. Redmon asked what material the roof was. Mr. Shirley replied it was asphalt.

She asked for questions from the public.

Mr. Steve Alante, resident at 107 Amory Street, asked if he should show the rear plan. Mr. Shirley showed him the rear elevation. Mr. Alante asked if the roof of the new addition was continuous from the original house. Mr. Shirley replied that it was being broken up so as to not seem continuous.

Mr. Redmon asked if there was a final landscape plan developed. Mr. Shirley responded that there was plenty of opportunity but they had not worked out the details yet.

Ms. Goodwin asked if the rest of the house was being upgraded to be accessible since they were adding in an elevation. Mr. Shirley replied that no, the entire house would not be accessible, just allowing the access from the basement to the second floor. He added that they were not looking at constructing any ramps at this point in time.

Mr. Hsiao said the addition appeared to be skillfully thought of and the effort to keep the main house dominant.

Mr. Hsiao made a motion to approve the application as submitted. Ms. Myers seconded the motion. It was approved 5-0 with Ms. Goodwin voting.

*The Commission took a brief recess from 7:28pm to 7:32pm.*

**MC-4943: 318 Harvard Street, by Christopher Willis. Amend plans to include demolition of rear ell and construction of new addition.**

Ms. Paull showed slides, gave an overview of the structure, project's progress, and respond for recommending the applicant return to the Commission with a new application. She said that the review was binding as they were proposing to demolish the rear ell.

Mr. Fred Gutierrez, site manager, stated that the application was previously non-binding and now will be binding. He continued that after interior, exploratory demolition, they discovered numerous of compromised situations. He said Ms. Paull met us on-site and we discussed having the opportunity to demolish this wall and rebuild the entire thing and she advised we return to the Commission to apply for the demolition. He added that their structural engineer and building inspector supported the demolition.

Mr. Redmon asked if the main house was going to be demolished. Mr. Gutierrez replied no. Mr. Redmon said so the proposal is really the same as the previous approval. Mr. Gutierrez replied yes. Ms. Goodwin

asked if the entire addition was being removed. Mr. Gutierrez replied not necessarily. Ms. Paull stated that as discussed with the applicant on site, there are a few courses of action they could take, either partial or full demolition. She continued that she advised them to apply for demolition if they wanted the opportunity to demolish the entire ell if during partial demolition they realized it was entirely beyond repair.

Ms. Goodwin called for public questions, there were none. She called for public comment, there were none.

Mr. Hsiao made a motion to approve the application as amended. Ms. Litchfield seconded the motion with Mr. Redmon voting.

**MC-4944: 104-106 Amory Street, by 104-106 Amory Road LLC. Alter exterior, construct third story addition, and construct new 3-story dwelling in rear.**

Ms. Paull showed slides, gave an overview of the structure and application. She said that the review was binding due to the square footage of the proposed mid-block dwelling.

Mr. Mark Boyes-Watson, architect for the project, introduced the owner, Mr. Ara Barsoumia, and outlined the proposal, which included renovating the existing structure, removing a portion of the ell and constructing a new dwelling in the rear. He stated the goal was to help the lot relate more to the surrounding larger structures. He noted that the proposed new dwelling was one (1) foot lower than the existing historic structure.

Ms. Goodwin asked if the applicant needed all of the proposed parking area. Mr. Boyes-Watson clarified that the parking and backup space were required but they were hoping to use nicer paving materials. Ms. Goodwin asked what plantings were proposed. Mr. Boyes-Watson said that they didn't have a landscape plan yet. Ms. Goodwin asked if they were proposing a pervious paving. Mr. Boyes-Watson replied yes and they were proposing hedges in the front to shield the window wells as well as to shield the back parking area.

Ms. Litchfield asked if the basement was livable space in both buildings. Mr. Boyes-Watson replied yes.

Mr. Redmon asked if a car would be parked in front of the rear unit. Mr. Boyes-Watson replied that the parking area was in front of the building but the units were being faced toward the rear and the front elevation's fenestration was broken up to help mitigate the potential impact of the parked cars.

Ms. Litchfield asked if that was living room space. Mr. Boyes-Watson replied yes, but it was only about 500 square feet per floor per unit.

Mr. Hsiao asked why they were retaining a portion of the ell rather than the entire thing. Mr. Boyes-Watson replied that it was because the interior space was tight. Mr. Hsiao asked if Mr. Boyes-Watson could clarify the architectural relationship between the proposed new structure and the existing historic structure. Mr. Boyes-Watson said that he took some of the architectural cues from the existing triple deckers in the area and relate the main house better with the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor roof deck additions. He continued that the new structure was very contemporary, but aimed to get good setbacks to mitigate the impact on the surrounding properties.

Ms. Goodwin asked what the proposed materials were. Mr. Boyes-Watson replied that they were thinking just clapboards.

Ms. Goodwin called for questions from the public.

Mr. Peter Hawkins, abutter at 112 Amory St, asked what was happening to the windows as some looked like they were moving on the left elevation. Mr. Levi Tofias, architect at Mark Boyes-Watson's office, replied that there appeared to be an error in the plans and the windows were not moving.

Ms. Laura Dayak, abutter at 110 Amory Street, asked about the shadow impact of the third floor story. Mr. Boyes-Watson showed the shadow studies.

Mr. Steve Galantine, abutter at 101 Amory Street, asked if the eaves were larger. Mr. Boyes-Watson clarified that the size of the eaves was the same as the front building. Mr. Galantine stated he liked them larger and asked what was proposed for the stoop. Mr. Boyes-Watson said they were working on details for the rail still but they were proposing to use wood for the stoop and iron for the railing. Mr. Galantine asked if they were removing the chain-link fence. Mr. Boyes-Watson replied yes. Mr. Galantine asked if there were four (4) spaces being provided. Mr. Boyes-Watson responded yes. Mr. Galantine asked if wood was being used for the exterior. Mr. Boyes-Watson clarified either wood or cementitious plank.

Mr. Daniel Lieber, abutter at 108 Amory Street, asked if the back building would be visible from Amory Street. Mr. Boyes-Watson responded that they would be visible and showed the abutter the 3D model. Mr. Lieber asked if Mr. Boyes-Watson could elaborate on how he felt the two buildings tied together architecturally. Mr. Boyes-Watson responded that the use of materials and windows would help to echo the architectural elements and tie them together. Mr. Lieber asked if the existing landscaping was being removed. Mr. Boyes-Watson said yes and new would be added in after construction. Mr. Lieber asked how tall the neighboring structures were. Mr. Boyes-Watson replied that they were three-story three (3) families, which will all be taller than the proposed structure. Mr. Lieber asked if people could look into the neighboring structure from the deck. Mr. Boyes-Watson replied that they would be able to stand up on the deck as it was the third floor and noted that this area was full of three-story condos that also had porches. Mr. Lieber asked about the noise impact. Mr. Boyes-Watson responded that it would be comparable to other decks in the area, but noted that the decks were only ten (10) feet by ten (10) feet. Ms. Goodwin asked if the decks could be made smaller. Mr. Boyes-Watson replied yes and noted that he had recently completed a project where the deck had walls so the residents couldn't see out. Mr. Hawkins asked if that would block more light. Mr. Boyes-Watson said yes, but it was a tradeoff to provide privacy to abutters.

Mr. Hawkins said that the existing condition of the property and dumpsters has created a problem with rats. Mr. Barsoumia replied that he has been trying to sort out the dumpster issue which was caused by a car blocking the dumpster so that it couldn't be removed by the dumpster company. He added that he had been working with the residents in the area to help keep the area clear so he could get a new dumpster for the site.

Ms. Goodwin read the emailed letter from Benjamin Walker, a neighbor of the project.

Mr. Andrew Shin, abutter at 117 Amory Street, shared his concerns about adding a third story on the front building.

Ms. Litchfield expressed her concern about the mid-block construction in the neighborhood. She also stated that the amendment to the window height of the second floor windows negatively impacted the character of the structure which lost its Italianate style. She noted that you do see cupolas and other smaller third story additions on Italianate style structures historically, so she did not oppose that addition.

Mr. Hsiao stated that it appeared the project was challenging. He expressed concern with the scale and massing of the mid-block structure, as mid-block structures needed to appear subservient. He agreed with Ms. Litchfield's comment regarding the impacts to the Italianate character of the structure.

Mr. Redmon asked if the applicant had looked at adding on to the main structure to create a single, four-unit building versus the separate mid-block house. Mr. Boyes-Watson responded that they did not because it was an existing non-conforming building.

Ms. Litchfield expressed concern over the loss of shared greenspace for the entire parcel and the focus on private outdoor space, which isn't always possible in urban areas.

Ms. Goodwin expressed concern with the back house appearing larger than the primary, historic front house. Ms. Goodwin noted that the applicant can amend the plans and return to the Commission at a later date. She recommended that they look at one unit in the back and seeing if the ell could be reworked to help keep the mid-block dwelling secondary. Mr. Boyes-Watson expressed concern that it would look monolithic.

Mr. Hsiao added that the shadow study was very helpful and suggested they look to further mitigate shadows on the neighboring properties, as well as looking to use landscaping to mitigate the impact and create a courtyard space between the buildings. Ms. Litchfield suggested adding greenspace in the front. Mr. Hsiao recommended that they lighten the mass, add more fenestration to help the secondary structure not dominate the lot but appear subservient.

Ms. McMahon expressed concern about the project pushing the edge of excessive infill. She added that she was not opposed to the roof deck design.

Mr. Redmon made a motion to continue the hearing until May 2<sup>nd</sup>. Mr. Hsiao seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5-0.

**MC-4945: 330 Harvard Street, by 330 Harvard Street LLC o/b/o Estate of Irene Rasys. Renovate exterior, construct addition, and construct new dwelling in rear.**

Ms. Paull showed slides, gave an overview of the structure and application. She shared the construction history of the property that she had researched and showed maps reflecting the various outbuildings. She said that the review was binding due to the partial demolition of the existing ells and the proposed mid-block dwelling.

Mr. Boyes-Watson, architect for the project, noted that the focus of the project was on restoring the main house, which had deferred maintenance issues. He continued that the project included the addition of a two family dwelling, designed with a carriage house in mind, on the rear of the lot.



Ms. Goodwin asked if the carriage house had a square or arched entrance. Mr. Boyes-Watson replied arched, the square was a previous iteration. Ms. Goodwin commended him on the carriage house feel as it helped to make the structure feel ancillary to the historic house.

Ms. Diane Rubin, resident at 328 Harvard St, noted that three of the four trustees for her condo associated at 328 Harvard Street were present. She said that the residents were looking forward to the renovation and were supportive of the project. She added that the developer has been working with them on the renovation details, construction timeline, landscaping and lighting.

Ms. Myers noted that the dormers on the carriage house seemed out of character with the structure. Mr. Boyes-Watson replied they added them to allow for bathrooms and to keep the structure from exceeding two stories for the main roofline.

Ms. McMahon stated she liked the simplicity of the carriage house design but hoped it could be smaller to leave some open space. Ms. Goodwin added that it appeared that the project was in scale with the historic structure. Ms. Litchfield and Mr. Hsiao agreed with Ms. Goodwin.

Ms. Litchfield asked if they were removing the chimneys. Mr. Boyes-Watson responded that the chimneys need extensive repair and they're happy to repair them but would like to consider their removal. Ms. Carolyn Woolentucker, 328 Harvard, said she thought the chimneys impeded the view of the cupola.

Ms. Litchfield asked if the applicant was open to preserving the first two windows on the porch and only altering the last two into a door. Mr. Boyes-Watson replied that they would agree to that. Ms. Litchfield asked if they were preserving the historic columns or if they were proposing to replace them. Mr. Boyes-Watson clarified that they were hoping to preserve them as they match perfectly and were designed for the house. Ms. Litchfield asked if the applicant was proposing to use wood clapboard, wood trim, and wood windows. Mr. Boyes-Watson replied yes.

Mr. Hsiao made a motion to approve the application as submitted as the rear carriage house was subservient to the historic house and maintained the character of the area. Mr. Redmon seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5-0 with Ms. McMahon and Mr. Redmon voting.

## **Minutes**

Mr. Redmon made a motion to approve the March 7, 2016 minutes as submitted. Mr. Hsiao seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Hsiao made a motion to adjourn the hearing. Ms. Litchfield seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0 at 9:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Samantha Paull  
Preservation Administrator

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

Stephen Lewontin	Abutter	107B Amory St
Levi Tofias	Architect	30 Bow St, Somerville
Anthony Griseto	Pella Representative	45 Fowdi Rd, Haverhill
Justin Schreiber	City Representative	344 Broadway
Fred Gutierrez	Shepherd PMC/318 Harvard St	358 Revere St, Winthrop
Emily Talcott	Abutter	3 West Place
L & Peter Hawkins	Abutter	112 Amory St, #2
Bill Deignan	City Representative	344 Broadway
Fred and Danyel Logevall [illegible]	Owner	38-40 Ellery St
Daniel and Rachel Lieber	Shepherd PMC/318 Harvard St	7 Pickard St, Amesbury
Andrew Shinn	Abutters	108 Amory St
Jon Penferman	Abutter	117 Amory St
Alyssa R. Letovsmac [illegible]	Abutter	5 West Pl
Christopher Willis	Abutter	112 Amory St, #3
Maryann Thompson	Owner	318 Harvard St
Frank Shirley	Architect for 318 Harvard St	741 Mt. Auburn St
Diane Rubin	Architect for 110 Hancock St	40 Pearl St
Laura Dayal	Abutter	328 Harvard St, #4
Ara Barsoumia	Abutter	110 Amory St
	Owner	104 Amory St & 330 Harvard St

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