

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MID CAMBRIDGE NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICT COMMISSION

Monday, July 1, 2019, 6:00 PM, 2nd Fl. Meeting Room, City Hall Annex, 344 Broadway, Cambridge

Commission Members present: Lestra Litchfield, Charles Redmon, *Members*;
Margaret McMahon, *Alternate*

Commission Members absent: Tony Hsiao, Monika Pauli

Staff present: Allison A. Crosbie, Preservation Administrator

Members of the Public: See attached list.

Ms. Lestra Litchfield called the meeting to order at 6:14 P.M. Ms. Litchfield made introductions and described the hearing proceedings.

Public Hearing: Alterations to Designated Properties

Case MC-5653 (continued): 75-77 Inman Street, by 77 Inman Street LLC c/o Robert Purdy. Construct new addition in rear, renovate exterior of existing building.

Ms. Crosbie presented slides of the property.

The applicant Robert Purdy stated as per the request of the neighbors, he consulted with an arborist, Jack Kelly, (formerly with the City of Cambridge and now with Bartlett). Mr. Kelly inspected the maple tree in the back of the property and made several recommendations for protecting the tree, including the use of an air spade, which uses compressed air, during excavation. Mr. Purdy also said that the arborist noted that the tree has a slow growth rate due to lack of nutrients and recommended removing the topsoil around the tree and replacing with new soil to restore nutrients. The arborist also suggested weak branches be cabled to strong branches in 4 places total, and prune branches hanging over the garages.

The architect, Steve Hiserodt, explained that due to the neighbors' concerns at the previous hearing he looked at staying further away from the maple tree and looked at adjusting the back ell and constructing an additional 27 feet away from the center line of the tree. The total FAR is .75, the same as before. Mr. Hiserodt went to explain that he proposes the existing house have egress windows on the lower level, additional windows on the left side and new dormers. The back of the existing house would have a gabled roof with deck, and parking located in the back. One parking space does not comply with City of Cambridge standards, but stated that the property has one parking space grandfathered in. Mr. Hiserodt noted the existing building is one foot over the required setback, and that in order to build 25% more in volume, a special permit is required. Mr. Hiserodt suggested that to avoid a special permit, they could move the house one foot or cut off the front façade one foot in depth. He also mentioned that he is using permeable paving to mitigate impact to adjacent trees. The siding on the house has not been removed, but once he knows what the underlying material is, he will replace in kind. He is also proposing to replace the windows.

Ms. Litchfield asked about window wells. Mr. Hiserodt answered that there are two proposed for the front, but he can relocate them. Ms. Litchfield also asked about replacement windows. Mr. Hiserodt replied that they will be simulated divided light and the front windows would also have shutters. Ms. Litchfield asked if he is proposing to remove the chimneys. Mr. Hiserodt replied yes. Ms. Litchfield suggested they save the chimneys, even if non-functional.

Mr. Nathan Nunn of 136 Antrim Street asked where is the existing back ell and if the height is changing. Mr. Hiserodt answered that the height is staying the same.

Mr. George Oleson of 73 Inman Street Trust asked about the back shed and how many stories is the new building. Mr. Hiserodt answered 2 ½ stories. Mr. Oleson asked the architect to check on requirements for a fire lane. Mr. Oleson went to say that the neighborhood is unusual in that historically white and black residents lived side by side on the street, there were no segregation issues. He also stated that 80 Inman Street was the residence of Merriman who died serving in World War 1 and is honored at the Central Square Post Office.

Mr. Jason Vagliano of 30 Antrim Street asked if the applicant is willing to get a second arborist opinion and will there be oversight of the excavation. Mr. Purdy replied that he is willing to alert interested neighbors when the excavation takes place. Mr. Hiserodt said he can contact the City arborist for additional technical advice.

Ms. Deborah Allen of 83 Inman Street stated that the proposed trenching is still a concern and would like to see it minimized. Mr. Purdy responded that the trenching will not extend beyond the foundation line itself.

Mr. Scott Cohen of 79 Inman Street stated that post-and-beam construction would solve the trenching problem. Mr. Purdy responded that a basement would still be needed. Mr. Cohen wondered whether a basement is worth it, that post-and-beam would minimize impact to the tree.

Ms. Allen stated that she is not in favor of the driveway and would support one parking space only. She thanked Mr. Purdy for reaching out to the neighbors but said that the proposed dormers are a bit of a shock. Mr. Purdy replied that he is not in favor of the dormers and they can be removed from the proposed design. Ms. Allen also noted that Mr. Purdy should be willing to go through the Variance process but appreciates his effort.

Mr. Hiserodt presented a model of the proposed addition within the context of the neighborhood.

Mr. Cohen asked what kind of windows are proposed. Mr. Purdy replied most likely Jeld-wen, 2 over 2 simulated divided light. Mr. Cohen asked about siding. Mr. Purdy answered clapboard. Mr. Cohen said that would be an improvement. Mr. Cohen asked about exterior lighting explaining that there is currently a light that shines right into his home. He also stated that he still didn't like the addition.

Mr. Paul Breneman of Inman Square asked about paving.

Mr. Santino Ferrante of 78 Inman Street asked hearing procedures. Ms. Litchfield filled him in. Mr. Ferrante asked how big is the addition. Mr. Hiserodt answered approximately 1300 square feet. Mr. Ferrante asked to see the elevations with the windows.

Ms. Carly Taylor of 36 Antrim Street asked about property lines.

Ms. Litchfield asked neighbors in attendance to come to the front to look at the model so they can get a better sense of the site, and the massing of the building, and its relationship to the surrounding buildings.

Mr. Ferrante stated that he does not think the proposed building is similar enough to the existing neighborhood, and the proposed third level is a major concern.

Mr. Vagliano expressed concern that not enough details have been provided in the proposal.

Mr. Oleson asked about a fire lane. Mr. Hiserodt replied it is not required.

Ms. Litchfield explained that the Commission is not prepared to approve any kind of demolition. Mr. Redmon noted that more finished interior details help to understand the exterior and reiterated that the Commission would never approve of cutting off a part of the house.

Ms. Litchfield noted that the neighbors appreciate the applicant's efforts to reach out and address their concerns. She then asked how much square footage can be added by right. Mr. Hiserodt replied 800 square feet by right. Ms. Litchfield asked if the applicant will replace the proposed dormers with skylights. Mr. Hiserodt answered yes.

Mr. Redmon made a motion to approve the application as presented with the following conditions: the two proposed dormers are removed and replaced with skylights; the applicant is to submit a landscape plan to CHC staff; the chimney is to remain; the applicant will address concerns with the foundation's impact on the tree; the proposed window wells are to be moved to the side of the building; the applicant is to consult with CHC staff on trim and other exterior details. It is also recommended that the applicant seek a second arborist opinion regarding tree protection. Ms. McMahon seconded, the motion passes 3-0.

Case MC-5717: 3.5 Irving Terrace, by Vivian Alexa Kao. Exterior alterations including windows and doors, deck, railings, stairs, fencing, and guardrail.

Ms. Crosbie presented slides of the townhouse.

Ms. Bridget MacKean, the architect for the applicant, presented drawings of the proposed alterations to the building. Ms. MacKean explained the design intends to create more function, bring in additional light into the interior, and make the exterior more consistent with the original design intent.

Alterations include restoring color panels, installing a guardrail, replacing the existing fence, altering the wing wall, stairway, doors and several windows, and roof. The project also proposes to replace exterior light fixtures and install new windows consisting of Marvin Integrity with a wood interior and fiberglass exterior. The design also proposes to remove air conditioners on the west façade as well as the chimney. Ms. MacKean presented a sample of the color panels and the glass guardrail.

Ms. McMahon asked what the finish is on the fence. Ms. MacKean replied clear stain on the red cedar wood. Ms. Litchfield questioned the need for a stain, stating that the wood silvers over time without a stain. Ms. Litchfield also asked about the proposed 5-door sliders and security. Ms. MacKean replied that they will be on a track.

Mr. Redmon asked if the glass was only for the front and back. Ms. MacKean replied yes. Mr. Redmon suggesting using a glass that is very lightly colored.

Ms. McMahon stated she liked the use of color glass. Ms. Litchfield appreciated that the whole design is a clean look. Mr. Redmon noted the variety of railings currently on the whole building.

Mr. George of 36 Antrim asked if solar roof shingles had been considered. Ms. MacKean replied no but that she could look into it.

Ms. Martha Osler of 4 Irving Terrace asked about the depth of the foundation for the fence. Ms. MacKean answered 18 to 24 inches. Ms. Osler brought to their attention the existing adjacent tree that

is now listing precariously at a 45-degree angle. Ms. Osler is concerned that if something happened, the tree would land on her home. She asked if an arborist could be consulted to determine best mitigation methods during construction of the new fence. Ms. MacKean answered that she would work with an arborist. Ms. Osler also stated that she likes the new features proposed for the building. Mr. David Osler of 4 Irving Terrace concurred.

Mr. Redmon motioned to approve the application as presented. Ms. McMahon seconded, and the motion passed, 3-0. The Commission also recommended that the applicant consult with an arborist when constructing the fence foundation.

Minutes

The Minutes for June 6, 2019 were approved, 3-0.

Ms. Litchfield adjourned the meeting at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Allison A. Crosbie
Preservation Administrator

**Members of the Public Present on June 3, 2019
(who signed the attendance list)**

Deborah Allen	83 Inman Street
George Despostes	36 Antrim Street
Mary Jane Rupert	36 Antrim Street
Carly Taylor	36 Antrim Street
Nathan Nunn	36 Antrim Street
George F. Oleson	2 Joseph St., Andover, MA
Preston Cohen	79 Inman Street
Courtney Pope	1 ½ Irving Terrace
Bridget MacKean	Somerville, MA
Agnes Murphy Criss	76 Antrim Street
Martha Osler	4 Irving Terrace
David Osler	4 Irving Terrace
Jed Hubbs	32 Antrim Street

Note: All addresses are located in Cambridge and/or Massachusetts unless otherwise noted.