

DRAFT Minutes of the Cambridge Historical Commission—THIS DRAFT HAS NOT YET BEEN REVIEWED OR APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION

Minutes of the Cambridge Historical Commission

May 3, 2018 - 806 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge Senior Center - 6:00 P.M.

Members present: Bruce Irving, *Chair*; Susannah Tobin, *Vice Chair*; William Barry, Robert Crocker, *Members*; Gavin Kleespies, Paula Paris, Kyle Sheffield, *Alternate members*

Members absent: Joseph Ferrara, Chandra Harrington, Jo M. Solet,

Staff present: Charles Sullivan, *Executive Director*, Sarah Burks, *Preservation Planner*

Public present: See attached list.

Mr. Irving called the meeting to order at 6:05 P.M. and introduced the members present.

Mr. Irving allowed Daryl Janes to address the Commission. Mr. Janes stated that there had been too many changes recently in Harvard Square and the Commission should think hard before allowing any more demolition. He blamed Jews for putting profit before morality. At this point Mr. Irving interrupted and told Mr. Janes that he could not continue this line of commentary.

Mr. Irving called the meeting back to order and described the consent agenda.

Mr. Sheffield moved to place **Case 3923: 8 Follen Street, by Phillip T. Ragon** (replace wood fence with synthetic material to match existing) on the consent agenda. Mr. Crocker seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

Mr. Kleespies moved to place **Case 3934: 132 Brattle Street , by Philip Balboni and Betsy Houghteling** (replace front gate) on the consent agenda with ten-day's notice to abutters. Mr. Crocker seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

Public Hearing: Alterations to Designated Properties

Case 3678 (continued): 1-7 & 9-11 JFK St. and 18-20 Brattle St., by Harvard Collection LLC c/o James J. Rafferty, Esq. Renovate 1-7 JFK St. and 18-20 Brattle St. Demolish building at 9-11 JFK St. and construct new infill building. Alter storefronts and construct upper story addition.

Mr. Sullivan noted that the proponents had received a conditional Certificate of Appropriateness on May 25, 2017. They had obtained a Special Permit from the Planning Board and were back with updated plans to review the conditions on the Certificate. He showed slides comparing the plans approved in 2017 and those that had emerged from the Planning Board review. He noted that the Commission had anticipated that the plans would change and that the purpose of the hearing was to reconcile the differences and approve a final Certificate of Appropriateness. He said that only members who had approved the conditional certificate could vote on this occasion; these would be Messrs. Irving, Sheffield, Crocker, and Barry. Four votes were required for adoption; if the outcome was not unanimous the Law Department would review the record and confirm the decision.

James Rafferty, representing the proponents, reviewed the history of the case. He described a community engagement meeting in October 2017 that shaped their presentation to the Planning Board. He noted that the Board had applied the criteria in the Harvard Square Design Guidelines in approving the fourth floor pavilion, which would rise to 65.5' (in contrast to the 80' height limit). The Board suggested

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copper as a roofing material on the pavilion and preferred a different entrance design at the corner of the Abbot Building, but made both subject to CHC approval. He hoped there could be an ongoing design review process at the CDD and CHC staff level.

David Chilinski of Prellwitz Chilinski Associates, the architect, said they had also incorporated comments made at the May 25, 2017 hearing into their Planning Board presentation. He made the following comparison of the approved plans:

- The site plan remained the same.
- There would be less interior demolition of the Abbot Building.
- The reveals between the old and new buildings had been narrowed from 8' to 6' on the Brattle Street side.
- The notch in the center of the infill façade on JFK Street had been eliminated because it limited the number of demising options for the storefronts.
- The roof deck on the Abbot Building had been eliminated in favor of a green roof.
- The roof of the pavilion would be weathering (natural) copper and project further.
- The new building would have the same fenestration on both elevations. The solid panel between the double-height windows would be replaced by ironwork. The fourth floor windows would be a mixture of punched windows and larger openings.
- Bricked-up openings on the west elevation of 18 Brattle Street would become windows.
- In response to community input, the corner entry of the Abbot Building would remain open rather than enclosed as originally designed and as approved by the Commission.

Mr. Irving noted that only he and Messrs. Barry, Crocker, and Sheffield would participate in the ensuing discussion.

Mr. Irving asked about the copper roof. Mr. Chilinski replied that the Planning Board thought the pavilion was too bland; the gray metal seemed lifeless. The Board preferred weathering copper.

Mr. Sheffield asked for a description of changes at the office entry at 18 Brattle. Mr. Chilinski said these had to do with the configuration of the elevators and stairs. The Board hoped to see a restaurant on the fourth floor, and this would need a second elevator.

Mr. Sheffield said the JFK façade benefited from having three bays instead of four. Mr. Chilinski said the Board thought the reveals were too wide. They would stay the same depth to preserve the cornice returns of the Abbot Building.

Mr. Sheffield noted the projecting roof edges on the fourth floor. Mr. Chilinski said the Board wanted the fourth floor to have more character, and this was a subtle way of accomplishing it.

Mr. Barry asked about why some blocked-up windows remained on the west elevation. Mr. Chilinski said the wall was close to the property line so a certain percentage of glass had to be eliminated.

Mr. Barry asked about the distribution of punched openings on the fourth floor. Mr. Chilinski said they were meant to align with the bays below in an A-B-A rhythm.

Mr. Barry asked about using pre-patinated copper on the roof. Mr. Chilinski said he was open to

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that suggestion.

Mr. Irving asked about the railing around the pavilion. Mr. Chilinski said it would be frameless glass with no cap – as transparent as possible. The Abbot entrance would remain in its present configuration.

Mr. Irving opened the floor to questions of fact.

Marilee Meyer of 10 Dana Street asked about the Tess storefront and the entry next to it. Mr. Chilinski said they would move the entry about 2' closer to the sidewalk. That part of the Tess storefront would not be transparent. The windows would be aluminum, as on the Abbot Building, and Abbot's office entry on JFK Street would be restored.

Michael Brandon of Seven Pines Avenue asked if there would be outdoor seating on the roof. Mr. Chilinski told Mr. Brandon that that was a possibility; that windows on the west elevation of 18 Brattle would be double-hung and operable; that the sidewalk vaults would all be filled in; that there would be a transformer in the basement; that signs would conform to the code; and that there were no plans for exterior architectural lighting.

Mr. Irving opened the floor to comments.

Ms. Meyer complimented the design of the infill and the copper roof, but she was still worried about light spill from the two-story windows. She was uncertain about the best approach for the corner.

Mr. Brandon also complimented the design. He suggested that proposed signs and storefronts and rooftop lighting be brought back for review.

Mr. Sheffield said he supported restoration of the Abbot entrance; it was difficult to cut through the corner without being blindsided by people coming out of the store. He complimented the brickwork and the subtle cornice and belt course of the infill, as well as the reduction in the number of bays. The copper roof was an improvement, but he pressed for an unbroken eave line. He recommended non-reflective museum-quality glass for the railing.

Mr. Crocker supported the proposed changes as long as the staff could iron out the details.

Mr. Barry expressed concern about the glass railing, and suggested that it should have a simple continuous cap. The proportions of the infill were greatly improved.

Mr. Irving said he agreed with Mr. Sheffield about the cornice of the infill building. He had been educated by the Planning Board's decision to make the pavilion more declarative. He thought it better to restore the Abbott corner entrance; pedestrians would adapt.

Mr. Sullivan reviewed the conditions of the Certificate of Appropriateness. He said the value of restoring the entrance would outweigh the very marginal benefit to pedestrians of leaving it open. The entry of 18 Brattle seemed appropriate as proposed. Ordinarily conforming signs get staff approval, but they could be brought back for review if so desired. He supported naturally weathering copper, a straight roof

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edge, and a railing, and suggested these and details of the exterior restoration could be delegated to staff.

Mr. Sullivan suggested that the Commission find that the conditions of the Certificate had been satisfied and grant a new certificate incorporating all the proposed changes except that the entrance should be restored as originally approved, the roof of the pavilion should have a continuous eave, and the railing should have a cap, the details being delegated to staff. In addition, future changes to the storefronts at Abbott and 18 Brattle should require certificates of appropriateness as though they were among the specially designated storefronts in the district Order.

Mr. Irving suggested that the Order could be so amended.

Mr. Rafferty asked if the same jurisdiction should be expended to the infill storefronts. Mr. Sullivan said it would not.

Mr. Brandon suggested the conditions require signs and lighting to be submitted for Commission approval. Mr. Barry replied that the existing sign process worked well. Mr. Irving said he was not interested in putting conditions on architectural lighting.

Mr. Crocker moved to grant the project a Certificate of Appropriateness in accordance with the findings enumerated by Mr. Sullivan. Mr. Barry seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously by the four members voting.

[Mr. Crocker left the meeting.]

Case 3918: 31 Hawthorn Street, by Shikhar Ghosh. Replace peastone with unit pavers; replace stoop and steps with new granite landing, seatwall, and steps; replace fence.

Case 3919: 35 Hawthorn Street, by Hawthorn Clan Investments, LLC. Replace peastone with unit pavers; replace entry path with pavers.

Mr. Sullivan showed slides and described the premises, which consisted to two houses built in 1937 that shared parking and landscaping.

Elizabeth Gourley, the landscape architect, said her clients wished to improve their parking area and rebuild paths, steps, and fences. She showed two plans with either antique granite curbstones laid on their sides or brick or concrete unit pavers for walkways, a seat wall, and new steps, hedges and fences. She hoped the Commission would approve both options as her clients were still discussing them.

Mr. Irving opened the floor to public questions and comments.

Marilee Meyer opposed the modern materials and horizontal fence as incompatible with the setting.

Mr. Irving closed the public comment period.

Mr. Sheffield thought the materials and the fence were appropriate. He suggested that the landscape could be softened, and Ms. Gourley said she expected to add vines and potted plants.

Mr. Kleespies said that he liked both options, but preferred that the applicant choose one. Mr.

Sullivan suggested continuing the case until the owners made a decision.

Mr. Sheffield said brick would be more appropriate than concrete pavers. Mr. Barry said both were quality materials, but the pavers should be dark.

Ms. Tobin moved to approve the options as described and to delegate the details to the staff. Mr. Paris seconded, and the motion passed 4-2 with Messrs. Sheffield and Barry opposed.

Case 3920: 0 Garden Street, by Christ Church Cambridge. Reset pavers and add granite bench at entry for barrier-free access; repave driveway to accommodate accessible grades; alter parking.

Mr. Sullivan showed slides and introduced the case.

Rev. Joe Robinson, the rector, introduced Jeff Brown, Mark Howland, and Lisa Geersbacht of G2 Collaborative, the landscape designer. He recalled that the church had been denied a Certificate of Appropriateness for an accessible landscape plan about six years previously. It was a complex project and the Commission had been right to reject it. They were back with a simpler scheme.

Ms. Geersbacht listed the goals of providing front-door accessibility to the church and more parking for staff members. The grade of the half-circle driveway would be raised slightly for level access and bollards installed to restrict parking in front of the church. The existing granite slabs at the front of the church would be repositioned. Landscape materials would be kept away from the structure, which was very close to the existing grade; the peastone drainage beds would be maintained. Two trees in front of 1 Garden Street were unhealthy and would be removed to expand parking in front of the house.

Mr. Barry asked if they had explored other options for accessibility. Ms. Geersbacht replied that the church felt it was very important for everyone to be able to enter the front door. Mr. Barry replied that that was not necessary for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Mr. Irving opened the floor to questions from the public.

Michael Brandon asked if the access plan had been reviewed with the Commission for Persons with Disabilities. Ms. Geersbacht said it had not. He asked if there was any way to increase parking without taking down the two trees. Ms. Geersbacht said there was not, and that two large shade trees would be planted in their place. Beaver Spooner asked how old the trees were. Ms. Geersbacht said that they appeared in a photo from the 1930s to be already mature. Rev. Robinson said they had been cabled for over twenty years. The church had done all that it could for them and it was time to move on.

Mr. Irving closed the question period and opened the floor to public comments.

Mr. Brandon recommended that the accessibility plan be reviewed by the appropriate authorities. The trees should be maintained as long as possible, and they should be examined by an arborist. Ms. Spooner said the trees appeared to be very old, and that it would be a problem if they began to fail.

Marilee Meyer said she was troubled by the granite seating walls and that a flush entry would tend to diminish the height of the church. Could the bollards be lower? Ms. Geersbacht said the bollards

would be removable; the church could manage the space without curbs, which were not working now.

Mr. Irving closed the public comment period.

Mr. Kleespies stated that the church was sacred ground; George Washington had stepped up to enter the church. The side entrances accessed the same vestibule and would be a more direct route from the new accessible parking space. Rev. Robinson replied that four or five times a year the liturgy commenced with a procession from the forecourt into the sanctuary.

Mr. Sullivan said he was completely sympathetic with the need for accessibility, and that the current scheme was about as minimal an intervention as could be accomplished. Mr. Irving said that accessibility was not a necessary evil but an important thing to accomplish. He favored accessing the front door.

Mr. Barry said he respected the liturgical requirements. Why not make all three doors accessible? Ms. Geersbacht replied that they wanted to maintain existing grades as much as possible rather than lifting everything. Rev. Robinson said it would interfere with the water table, as it had in the earlier plan. Mr., Sheffield agreed and said the proposed plan would maintain the symmetry of the church. Rev. Robinson said that Mrs. Washington had entered through the vestry door from Farwell place and George Washington probably did too.

Mr. Irving moved to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the plan as proposed. Ms. Tobin seconded, and the motion failed by a vote of 3-2-1, with Ms. Tobin and Messrs Sheffield and Irving in favor, Messrs. Barry and Kleespies opposed, and Ms. Paris abstaining.

Ms. Paris said she was conflicted about the proposal, but on reflection said that if worship services started outside then she would be inclined to favor it.

Mr. Irving called for a new vote to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the plan as proposed. Ms. Tobin seconded, and the motion passed 4-2 with Messrs. Barry and Kleespies opposed.

Case 3921: 34 Mt. Auburn Street, by Cambridge Housing Authority. Construct enlarged elevator penthouse; replace wood windows with aluminum; repair lintels; replace copper flashing; replace membrane roofing.

Mr. Sullivan introduced the case in the Harvard Square Conservation District. The building was formerly the rectory of St. Paul's Church, but had been owned by the Cambridge Housing Authority for a number of years.

Neal Mangold, the architect, said the building contained 19 single units and two family units. It was last renovated in 1991. The renovations would be mostly on the interior, but included a significant amount of work on the roof, masonry and windows. As much of the existing slate as possible would be retained while replacing the flashing, refurbishing the copper on the dormers and the finials, repairing rain leaders and collector boxes, and replacing the membrane on the upper roof. The elevator needed to be rebuilt with a bigger cab; the new override structure would be lower but would have a bigger footprint.

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HVAC units on the roof would allow elimination of window air conditioners. Nine rusting lintels would be cut out and replaced, and the masonry would be cleaned and spot pointed. The 40-year-old non-original windows would be replaced and the parking area would be enlarged by 4'-5' for an accessible van.

Mr. Mangold told Ms. Paris that the chimneys would be repaired and repointed. Responding to Mr. Sheffield, he described the dormer repairs in greater detail.

Mr. Irving opened the floor to public questions and comments.

Mr. Brandon asked if the slate roof was being replaced. Mr. Mangold said some slates would be removed to replace the valley flashing and snow rails. Hip slates would be replaced with copper.

Mr. Irving closed the public comment period.

Mr. Mangold told Mr. Irving that the project would result in a cold roof. There would be no change of use.

Mr. Barry asked about the windows. Mr. Sullivan said the muntin profile and pattern would duplicate the originals, not the current windows. He asked about inappropriate old pointing, and Mr. Sullivan replied that it was the result of a 1990 preservation grant gone wrong. It wouldn't happen again.

Mr. Kleespies complimented the project and said it was good to have an SRO in Harvard Square.

Mr. Mangold said the rectory was a contributing structure in the Harvard Square National Register District. He hoped the Commission would support the Housing Authority's application for tax credits.

Ms. Paris moved to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the project as proposed, delegating details to the staff. Mr. Kleespies seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

Case 3922: 12 Farwell Place, by Henri van der Hyde. Replace 14 wood windows with aluminum; convert window on rear elevation to door; convert door on side elevation to window; new basement opening on side elevation with areaway and railing; replace 2 skylights and add one; remove chimney; construct bluestone or brick path at side of house.

Mr. Sullivan showed slides and introduced the case in the Old Cambridge Historic District. Number 12 was half of a double house constructed in 1860 that was also visible from Church Street. Interior demolition and excavation of the basement had been underway for many months and the owners had been warned repeatedly against proceeding without a building permit or a Certificate of Appropriateness

Nick Landry, the architect, said the building had original 6+6 sash with storms; he asked if they could install Marvin Ultimate aluminum clad windows like those used on Longfellow Hall nearby. He told Mr. Sheffield some had balances installed and weren't working well. They planned to move a door on the ell and create an areaway to access the basement.

Mr. Irving opened the floor to public questions and comments.

Elizabeth Bartholet, owner of 10 Farwell - the other side of the house - presented a letter signed by numerous neighbors objecting to the project and the way it was being carried out. She opposed the

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areaway on the back of the house and objected to the window replacement. Mr. Landry said that the area-way had been eliminated and he only wished to relocate a door.

Gary Chafitz of 18 Farwell Place preferred to see a brick path to the back rather than the pavers shown on the plans. He asked if the house would be used for an Airbnb. Mr. Landry said it would be a single-family second home for the new owner.

Mr. Sullivan recommended approving the project as proposed, except for the window replacement unless staff determined that the existing windows could not be repaired.

Mr. Sheffield so moved, adding a condition that the pathway be brick. Mr. Kleespies seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

Public Hearing: Demolition Review

Public Hearing: **Demolition Review Case D-1484: 114 Clay Street, by Daniel and Janice Stamos.**
Raze existing house (1865).

Sarah Burks showed slides and presented her memo on the proposed demolition.

Daniel Stamos, the owner, said he also owned 119-120 Cleary Street. He presented plans and elevations showing the replacement building on the site.

Mr. Irving opened the floor to questions.

Mr. Stamos told Michael Brandon that the development conformed to zoning. He wished to tear down the existing house because it was in disrepair and inadequate for modern living; the hall was about 2' wide. He lived at #122 but he planned to live in one of the new units.

Mr. Brandon spoke as clerk of the North Cambridge Stabilization Committee. The group was concerned about the continued demolition of worker's cottages. Wherever possible they should be found preferably preserved unless a careful examination showed the building could not be rehabilitated. CHC staff should be asked to report on the number of cottage demolitions in the Race Course neighborhood.

Ms. Tobin moved to find the house significant for the reasons stated in the staff report. Mr. Irving seconded, and the motion passed 6-0.

Mr. Irving questioned the Victorian features of the proposed elevation, especially an oval window. The owner said he would be pleased to delete it.

Mr. Sullivan said that, considering the fact that the owner is planning to live in the new house and the condition of the existing one, the Commission could find it in the public interest to allow the project to proceed without delay. The Commission had preserved more significant examples.

Mr. Barry moved to find the house not preferably preserved in the context of the replacement proposal. Mr. Sheffield seconded, and the motion passed 6-0.

Minutes

Ms. Tobin moved to accept the minutes of the April meeting. Ms. Paris seconded, and the motion

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passed 4-0 with Tobin, Paris, Barry and Irving in favor and Kleespies and Sheffield not voting because they had not attended.

Director's Report

Mr. Sullivan told Mr. Irving about 17 Fresh Pond Parkway, which had been placed with a realtor but which was so deteriorated as to possibly be beyond saving. A neighbor had executed a P&S for the St. John's Road properties, intending to subdivide for single-family occupancy. He also reported on *Caplan vs. Acton*, in which the SJC had offered a confusing ruling on use of CPA funds for churches.

Mr. Sheffield moved to adjourn. Mr. Barry seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah L. Burks
Preservation Planner

**Members of the Public
Who Signed the Attendance List on May 3, 2018**

David Chilinski	221 Hampshire St
Nidhi John	“
Marc Eclipse	“
Sam Stiebel	1919 Gallows Road, Vienna Va.
Krista DiIaroni	“
Jessica O’Steen	“
Lisa Howe	10 Langley Road, Newton
Pete Hutchinski	21 Hautevale St, Roslindale
John Hawkinson	Cambridge Day
Neal Mongold	12 Brattle Place, Arlington
Margaret Keaveny	362 Green Street
Marilee Meyer	10 Dana Street
Eltan Elferino	49 Monmouth St., Brookline
Daniel Stamos	122 Clay Street
Janice Stamos	“
Daryl Janes	45 Linnaean Street
Katherine Triantafillou	18 Brattle St
Nicholas Landry	546 East Broadway, South Boston
Joe Robinson	1 Garden Street
Ned VerPlanck	26 Brattle St
Donald K. McInnes	6 Bennett St
Elizabeth Gourley	1 Sherman Street, Belmont
Lisa Giersbach	282 Moody Street, Waltham
Jeffrey Brown	50 Stoneleigh Road, Watertown
Elizabeth Bartholet	10 Farwell Place
Gary Chafitz	12 Farwell Place
Mark Holland	15 Pleasant Avenue, Somerville
Shikhar Ghosh	31 Hawthorn St
Julie Fogel	“

Note: Town is Cambridge, unless otherwise indicated.