

Harvard Square Conservation District

Guidelines for Demolition, New Construction, and Alterations

Chapter 2.78, Article III, Section 220 describes the factors to be considered by neighborhood conservation district commissions:

In passing upon matters before it, the Historical Commission or neighborhood conservation district commission shall consider, among other things, the historic and architectural value and significance of the site or structure, the general design, arrangement, texture and material of the features involved, and the relation of such features to similar features of structures in the surrounding area.

In the case of new construction or additions to existing structures a commission shall consider the appropriateness of the size and shape of the structure both in relation to the land area upon which the structure is situated and to structures in the vicinity ...

Demolition

The Cambridge Historical Commission will issue a Certificate of Appropriateness to an applicant seeking to demolish a structure in the Conservation District if the project, including both the demolished and the replacement buildings, is determined to be "appropriate for or compatible with the preservation or protection of the . . . district."

Approval of demolition will be dependent on a finding by the Commission that a) the demolition of the structure will not adversely impact the district, subdistrict, or abutting properties in the sense described in secondary goal #1, and b) the replacement project meets the purposes of the Conservation District with respect to secondary goals #3 through #9, where these are applicable.

New Construction/Additions to Existing Buildings

In reviewing new construction or additions to existing buildings, the Commission "shall consider the appropriateness of the size and shape of the structure both in relation to the land area upon which the structure is situated and to structures in the vicinity." Review of new buildings will be guided by considerations such as the appropriateness of the structure's height, scale, mass, proportions, orientation, and lot coverage; the vertical and horizontal emphasis, rhythm of openings, transparency, texture, and materials of the publicly-visible facades; sunlight and shadow effects; relationship to public open space; and landscaping.

New Construction/Additions to Existing Buildings (cont.)

Under the City Code, the Historical Commission acting as a neighborhood conservation district commission "may in appropriate cases impose dimensional and setback requirements in addition to those required by the applicable provision of the zoning ordinance." Implementing such a measure could result in a reduction of the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) allowed by zoning. The appropriate circumstances for imposing dimensional and set-back reductions could include a wide disparity of scale and density between the proposed project and its surroundings, or a situation in which the proposed project would destroy or diminish the historical resources of the site.

Alterations to Existing Buildings

Alterations to exterior architectural features visible from a public way will be subject to binding review by the Cambridge Historical Commission, guided by secondary goals #1, #2, and #4. Storefronts will be treated more flexibly than building facades or upper stories. The goals of the district favor retention and repair, rather than replacement, of original or significant exterior fabric.

Alterations to Existing Buildings (cont.)

A Certificate of Nonapplicability will be issued by the staff for some alterations if Conservation District guidelines are followed. These categories will include:

- Ordinary repairs or maintenance using similar materials and construction details.
- Reconstruction replicating the exterior design of a building, structure, or exterior architectural feature damaged or destroyed by fire, storm, or other disaster.
- Roof repairs and HVAC equipment not visible from a public way.
- Window replacement in conformity with guidelines adopted by the Commission.

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. (with frontage also on Brattle St.)
and construct new infill building. Alter storefronts and construct upper story addition..



Abbot Building, 5 Kennedy Street
(1909, Newhall & Blevins, architects)
Photo ca. 1910











PROPOSED BRATTLE ST. ELEVATION



PROPOSED BRATTLE STREET ELEVATION

POTENTIAL STOREFRONTS WITH INDIVIDUAL EXPRESSION FIT INTO BUILDING FRAMEWORK





HARVARD
↓ ↑ 🚗 TRAINS/BUSES

DICKSON
HOUSEWARE

True Value
SWISS ARMY

metro
recycling bins



PROPOSED JFK ST. ELEVATION

