

## Minutes of the Cambridge Historical Commission

September 8, 2016 - 806 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge Senior Center - 6:00 P.M.

Members present: William King, *Chair*; Bruce Irving, *Vice Chair*; Robert Crocker, Chandra Harrington, Jo Solet, *Members*; Kyle Sheffield, *Alternate*

Members absent: William Barry, Shary Berg, *Members*; Joseph Ferrara, Susannah Tobin, *Alternates*

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

Public present: See attached list.

With a quorum present, Chair King called the meeting to order at 6:08 P.M. He made introductions and described the hearing procedures. He explained the consent agenda procedure, reviewed the agenda, and suggested Cases D-1384, D-1385, Case 3676 and Case 3677 for approval per the consent agenda. Kenneth Taylor expressed interest in Case 3677 and it was removed from the consent agenda. [Mr. Irving arrived]. Dr. Solet moved to approve the following cases per the consent agenda procedure, delegating construction details to staff. Mr. Crocker seconded.

**Cases D-1384 and D-1385 (amendment): 207 and 227 Cambridge St.** Consider request to extend the demolition delay period at the request of the owner. Consider whether to initiate a landmark designation study of the preferably preserved buildings.

**Case 3676: 2 Highland St., by Amy Woods.** Replace select windows; replace clapboards and trim; alter design details at gable and rear entry porch to match existing elsewhere on house.

The motion passed 5-0.

### Public Hearings: Alterations to Designated Properties

**Case 3444 (Amendment): 14 Craigie St., by Carol S. Green.** Review modified plans for new construction at rear of property to include a detached conservatory.

Mr. Sullivan showed slides and summarized the action of the Commission at the previous hearings to approve the construction of a new free-standing garage and attached conservatory.

Matthew Simitis, the architect, displayed a digital presentation. He showed the location of the proposed conservatory/orangerie at the opposite back corner of the lot. The orangerie was smaller than proposed in an earlier application. It would be painted white to match the house trim and the glass would be clear. It would be used as a three-season space for the family and for winter storage of plants.

Mr. King asked about the slope of the lot from front to back. Mr. Simitis confirmed that the lot sloped down from the street to the rear of the lot. The orangerie would be 12' high but only 5.5' would be visible over the fence.

Dr. Solet asked if the structure would be pre-fabricated or built on site. Mr. Simitis said it would be a combination, with pre-made glass units assembled on site.

Marilee Meyer of 10 Dana Street asked how the proposal differed from prior proposals. Mr. Simitis showed the July 2015 and May 2016 proposals and explained how this one differed. It would meet the required setbacks for an accessory structure being 5' from the rear lot line and 5.5' from the side.

Virginia Coleman of 2 Berkeley Place said she did not remember receiving notice of the original application. The noise of the construction was unbearable. She read a letter from Hillary Wodlinger who

had been unable to attend but objected to the new structure. The orangerie had no stylistic relationship to either the house or the garage.

Ms. Meyer said the structure would be better suited to a grand estate. The neighbors should be taken into consideration.

Mr. King closed the public comment period.

Dr. Solet asked how the combination of the garage and orangerie square footage compared to the original proposal for an attached building. Mr. Simitis said the original garage was 25' square, but as revised and approved would be 27' square. The new orangerie was smaller than the originally proposed conservatory. It would be a net subtraction of square footage.

Ms. Harrington recalled that in the original proposal, the conservatory was behind the house and would not have been visible from the public way.

Mr. King asked the age of the house. Mr. Simitis answered that it dated to the 1860s.

Dr. Solet asked about the landscaping work and whether the oak tree was still standing. Mr. Simitis replied that the oak remained, but other trees had been removed because their root structure had been affected by the construction. He described work that had already been done and agreed it was very noisy. Mr. King asked how long construction would continue. Mr. Simitis estimated that the drainage system would take another week to complete. Excavation and concrete work for the foundation of the orangerie might take about a week.

Mr. Sullivan commented that he did not find the proposed orangerie to be incongruous to the district. It was a Victorian type structure and not inappropriate to the period of the house.

Dr. Solet asked if the orangerie could be constructed in a way that would be less obtrusive to the neighbors' experience. Mr. Simitis said he could look into that.

Mr. Irving moved to find the proposed amendment to the proposal to be not incongruous to the site or the neighborhood for the reasons stated by the Executive Director and to issue an amendment to the Certificate of Appropriateness. Mr. Crocker seconded the motion. Mr. King, Mr. Irving, and Mr. Crocker voted in favor of the motion. Dr. Solet and Ms. Harrington voted against. Because the motion failed to garner positive votes from at least four members of the commission (four being a majority of the membership of seven), the motion failed. Mr. Irving noted that the applicant could reapply.

**Case 3675: 43 Reservoir St., by Daniel Sterner & Elizabeth Clark Libert.** Exterior renovations and repairs including replacement of select windows, removal of trellis, and installation of shutters.

Mr. Sullivan showed slides and described the 1909 stucco house designed by Hartley Dennett, who had also designed 50 Fayerweather Street. He explained which elements of the application were visible from the public way.

Julieta Cordeiro of LDa Architects & Interiors reported that the house was in generally good condition. It had only had two previous owners and the last owner had been there since 1948. The interior

had not been changed much, except for the kitchen that was renovated in the 1970s. The exterior had some deferred maintenance issues that would be addressed by the new owners. Already approved by staff were repairs to the stucco, trim, gutters, and replacing the non-original asphalt roof with slate to match the original slate still present on the garage. She described the remaining work for the Commission's consideration including replacement windows, new shutters, and rebuilding the pergola at the back. The interior casings would be removed so that Marvin Ultimate wood windows could be installed from the inside, maintaining the glazing size and leaving the exterior trim unchanged. The weight pockets would be insulated. The existing wood storms did not fit properly. Several storm window contractors were consulted but they had difficulty proposing a good solution given the existing exterior trim conditions. The leaded glass windows would be restored, not replaced. The original elevation drawings showed shutters, and were the basis for that work. Only the corner of the pergola was visible from the street. The sleeping porch was not visible and would be demolished. She submitted letters of support from several additional letters to be added to those already sent to the Commission.

Dr. Solet recommended Allied storm windows.

Ms. Harrington asked how many windows there were on the house. Had interior storms been considered? Ms. Cordeiro said there were 100 windows total and 80 were proposed for replacement. Interior storms had been discussed but were not the client's first preference.

Mr. King opened public comment.

Elizabeth Libert, an owner, expressed her excitement to move into the house and her experience meeting with the neighbors to explain the project. She said that the cost of window restoration was very high. They would rather put money into restoring slates to the roof but it was not possible to do both within their budget. She said the roof would have a bigger visual impact.

Daniel Sterner, an owner, indicated that lead paint was a concern because they had two young children. Energy efficiency was another goal. He said they wanted to maintain the beauty of the home.

Mr. King closed the public comment period. He said all the letters of support from the following would be incorporated into the record: Carly Berk, 26 Reservoir St; Philip and Yuniko Anton, 33 Reservoir St.; Elizabeth and John Gilmore, 47 Reservoir St.; Carol Collura, 46 Reservoir St.; Mary Finnegan, 53 Reservoir St.; Jamie Porreco, 57 Reservoir St.; Lori Lander, 74R Fayerweather St.; and Georgianna Bishop and David Keeler, 58 Fayerweather St.

Mr. Sullivan reported that he had visited the site with the architects. He regretted loss of the original windows, but said the project was overall a very positive one for the house and the neighborhood. He noted that the Commission had been reviewing applications for the Reservoir Hill study area as if it was a neighborhood conservation district, not as if it were part of the Old Cambridge Historic District. In general, NCDs looked more at the overall impact of alterations to the character of a district than to the details of a specific building.

Dr. Solet moved to approve the project as submitted. Ms. Harrington seconded the motion.

Mr. Iving asked about the cost of restoring the windows and adding storms compared to new replacement windows. Ms. Cordiero said the restoration and storm combo would cost between \$1,200-\$1,500 per window and the replacement units would cost between \$700-\$800 each. Mr. Irving said the windows were such an important part of the architecture of the house that he could not support removing that many original windows. He complimented the other aspects of the application. He suggested repairing the windows rather than putting slate on the roof.

Dr. Solet asked if the roof was leaking. Ms. Cordiero said that in order to insulate the roof, the dentils would need to be replaced, as they believed they were currently venting the attic through the soffit. They would prefer to do the insulation, dentils, and new roofing all at once.

The Commission voted on the motion made by Dr. Solet and seconded by Ms. Harrington. The motion passed 4-1, with Mr. Irving opposed.

**Case 3677: Harvard Yard, by President & Fellows of Harvard College.** Install wireless access points and antennas to enable service in Yard.

[Mr. Sheffield arrived].

Mr. Sullivan summarized the application to install wi-fi antennas in multiple locations in the Yard. He showed slides of the proposed locations. He explained that the emergency lights (blue) were permitted by the Commission about 6-7 years ago. The wi-fi antennas would make use of the same internal wiring as the lights.

Mark Verkennis, Senior Campus Planner, explained that the Yard had become an extension of the classrooms and offices during good weather. There were many requests to improve the wi-fi access in the Yard. Eleven of the light poles in the Yard had blue emergency lights with data lines installed already. The wi-fi antennas would be painted out to match the adjacent material color, whether it was pole- or building-mounted. He displayed a vertical pole mount detail. He described the proposed locations.

Dr. Solet asked if the antenna would work as well if it were attached to the back side of the balustrade on Harvard Hall. Ed Caron, Director of Network Operations at Harvard, said it would not. Dr. Solet asked if the public could use the wi-fi also. Mr. Caron said there was a guest wi-fi network for visitors.

Mr. King asked for public comment.

Kenneth Taylor of 25 Berkeley Street noted that there were a variety of these devices available and this model was the most benign he had seen. He asked about life expectancy and future technology. John Reardon, Director of Infrastructure Operations for the university, indicated that the antennas had a 3-5 year life expectancy. New units would be no larger and would fit in the same container. Mr. Taylor asked if the building mounted units could be installed in the mortar joint rather than in the masonry unit. Mr. Verkennis agreed that penetrations of the masonry would be kept to a minimum.

James Williamson of 1000 Jackson Place asked about faux rocks he had noticed in the Yard. Mr. Reardon said they were related to pest control operations.

Mr. King closed the public comment period.

Mr. Sullivan recommended approving a temporary Certificate of Appropriateness for a period of five years to insure that the hardware would be removed if and when the technology became obsolete. The antennas were not incongruous to the district because of their small size and ability to be painted out. Dr. Solet so moved for the reasons stated. Mr. Crocker seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.

**Case 3678: 1-7 & 9-11 JFK St. and 18-20 Brattle St., by Harvard Collection LLC c/o James J. Rafferty, Esq.** Renovate buildings, alter storefronts, and construct upper story additions.

Mr. King introduced the case and explained that the site was located in the Harvard Square Conservation District.

Mr. Sullivan showed slides and provided a history of the site and the three subject buildings, the Abbott Building, retail and office at the corner (1909, Newhall & Blevins, architects), the former Corcoran's department store at the center of the block with frontage on both JFK and Brattle streets (1871 stable, 1948 conversion to stores and offices, Richard J. Shaw, architect), and the four story retail and office building at 18-24 Brattle Street (1922, Newhall & Blevins, architects). He showed the evolution of buildings on the site and described a variety of houses, stores, taverns and restaurants, and other businesses that had occupied the block over the years. He explained that JFK Street had been widened a couple of times, necessitating alterations to the buildings on that side. He showed photos from different time periods and recent aerial photos.

James Rafferty, attorney representing the applicant Harvard Collections LLC / Equity One, introduced William Brown, Senior Vice President of Equity One and architect David Chilinski. The application was to renovate the facades and storefronts and to build an addition on top of the buildings.

Mr. Brown said Equity One had purchased the property with a full understanding of the important history of the buildings. The buildings had seen little investment by the owners over the last forty years. The description of the proposal in the press as a mall was inaccurate; the intent was to activate the street and enhance the pedestrian experience. Businesses would be disrupted during construction, but the project would ready the building for the next thirty years. Equity One was working to improve its communication with its tenants. They would try to find them other spaces and would welcome them back post-renovation.

David Chilinski of Prellwitz Chilinski Architects (PCA) displayed a digital presentation with the architectural plans and renderings for the proposal. He noted that the existing buildings would be repaired, restored to earlier appearance, and the storefront glazing updated. The vaults under the sidewalks on Brattle Street would be filled in and the sidewalks rebuilt. A new central plant would be located at the center of the block to provide systems for all three buildings. The top floor addition would be set considerably back from the corner. He described the different existing floor heights among the three buildings.

The division of the first floor spaces for retail was flexible and as yet undecided. The corner would be the main entrance for the second floor space. The 18-24 Brattle building would remain largely independent of the other buildings for circulation and floors. The roof of the addition would be metal and sloped with a skylight. The peak would be at 74' high and 61' at the eave. The addition was intended to be glassy and minimalist so that the historic buildings would retain their prominence. The additions would be pushed back from the facades of the historic buildings to retain the detail at the corners. The storefront glazing at the Abbott Building would be returned to its original full height. The top floor addition would be set back a further 10' from JFK and Brattle streets. A recessed service doorway would be added on JFK Street to access the service section of the property. He described materials of glass walls and standing seam metal roofing. The fenestration was minimized so as not to compete with the existing fenestration patterns on the buildings. The glazing joints would be silicone. He explained the shadow studies.

Mr. King asked Mr. Sullivan to describe the Harvard Square Conservation District goals and guidelines, as pertained to the project. Mr. Sullivan read from the district report and the NCD ordinance. He noted that the Commission could impose dimensional restrictions beyond what was required by zoning. The site fell between subdistricts A (Harvard Square) and D (Brattle Square) as described in the report. Mr. King asked Mr. Rafferty what other permits would be required and what other boards would be reviewing the project. Mr. Rafferty indicated that the project needed a Planning Board special permit for parking relief (no parking proposed) and for height over 60' in the Harvard Square Overlay District. Mr. King noted that the district order recommended coordination of the Historical Commission's hearing with that of the Harvard Square Advisory Committee. He asked when the Advisory Committee would meet. Mr. Rafferty answered that they were many months away from the special permit application filing. Once filed, the Community Development Department would schedule the Advisory Committee meeting.

Dr. Solet asked about the relative heights of other nearby buildings. Mr. Chilinski showed an aerial photo with buildings over 60' highlighted in yellow. He showed the perspective views and roof plan to indicate the proposed heights—69' at the mechanical screen, 74' at the peak of the top skylight.

Mr. King asked about the visibility of mechanical equipment. Mr. Chilinski said the equipment would be completely screened by the mechanical enclosure. The rooftop would be vegetated (green) except at the two roof decks (one at the corner and one at 18-24 Brattle Street).

Dr. Solet asked if the roof deck was for a restaurant. Mr. Brown answered that there could be a restaurant or office space on the top floor.

Mr. King opened the floor to questions of fact from members of the public.

Carole Perrault of 9 Dana Street asked about the ability to impose dimensional restrictions more stringent than zoning. Could the Commission give an example of when they had done that? Mr. Sullivan answered that there was not a specific guideline indicating when to impose that, but the Commission could do so if it was necessary to finding a project appropriate or not incongruous. He could not recall a

specific instance when it had been imposed. Ms. Perrault asked if the applicant had explored other design solutions for the additions. Were other materials considered other than glass? She noted that the JFK elevation did not show the new glazing at the corner storefront. Mr. Chilinski stated that early in the design discussions, they had studied whether to complete the street wall in masonry above the Corcoran's building. But that created the question of what fenestration pattern to use, one of the existing, or a new, fourth pattern. Different massing options were also studied, setting the additions further back, but going up an extra floor, for example.

Suzanne Blier, a professor of art and architectural history and African American studies at Harvard and resident at 5 Fuller Place, asked if the glass addition would negatively impact the copper cornice. She asked what kind of stores would go in the spaces because the entrances were not visible in the renderings. Had they considered re-using the marble staircases or another location for the elevator? Mr. Chilinski said the leasing program was undetermined at present. The first floor was shown as neutral because it was flexible and could be divided up in different ways. The location of egress stairs would depend on the interior program.

Siobhan McMahon of 57 Dana Street asked if the Dewey, Cheatem & Howe sign would stay. Mr. Brown's affirmative answer elicited applause from the public.

Susan Miller-Havens of 221 Mt. Auburn Street noted that Equity One had previously posted on its website a three dimensional aerial rendering of a development proposal. She asked if the current proposal could be so rendered and that graphic submitted to the Commission. She commented that the fourth floor, when lit would look like an arrow. Mr. Rafferty answered that the applicant would provide supplemental information as directed by the chair.

Michael Brandon of 27 Seven Pines Avenue asked if the existing buildings were in the public way. Mr. Rafferty answered that the vaults under the sidewalks extended below the public way. Those vaults would be filled and the sidewalks fixed. Mr. Brandon asked if there was a sign plan. Mr. Rafferty said the only signage commitment at the current time was to retain the Dewey, Cheatem & Howe sign. In the Harvard Square Conservation District, signs that conform to zoning regulations could be approved by CHC staff administratively. Anything that did not meet zoning would have to come back before the Historical Commission members.

James Williamson asked if mechanicals were exempt from special permit review. He asked if other cornice treatments for the addition had been considered that might be more consistent with the existing buildings. Mr. Chilinski said the additions were meant to be modern and compatible without trying to mimic the historic building elements. Mr. Williamson noted that guideline #4 was to encourage ground level small scale storefronts. Mr. Brown said the corner entrance would be an entrance to a business, not

to the building as a whole. The leasing program would develop over time. Mr. Williamson asked for clarification as to whether it would be a mall. Mr. Rafferty said there had been no statement from any representative of the owner describing the project as a mall.

Harvey Baumann of 19 Bay Street asked how many square feet would be added. Mr. Brown replied that it would add around 10,000 square feet. Mr. Baumann asked how long the site would be under construction. Mr. Brown replied that it would take 18-24 months.

Kenneth Taylor asked about the level of reflectivity of the glass walls. Mr. Chilinski answered that light would be reflected high in the sky, not down to the sidewalk. The orientation of the glass wall planes were such that they would not be problematic. The exact glass type had not been selected.

Marilee Meyer asked if the floor levels would be seen through the glass façade. Mr. Chilinski indicated the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor levels on the drawings. Ms. Meyer asked if they had looked at other materials and other fenestration patterns. Mr. Chilinski replied in the affirmative.

Adam Hirsch, owner of the Curious George Store, asked about the timeline of the permitting project and the type of communications the community could expect. Mr. Rafferty explained that there was no Board of Zoning Appeal hearing anticipated. The permitting would also include the Harvard Square Advisory Committee and the Planning Board. There were different notice requirements for each board. Early interaction with the community was a requirement of the Planning Board application. Businesses in the subject buildings would not need to relocate until the end of 2017.

Constanza Eggers of 47 Porter Road asked if the applicant had met with other members of the community. Mr. Brown said he had local representatives such as Mr. Rafferty who had met with members of the Harvard Square community. Ms. Eggers asked if it was appropriate to have plans already designed prior to seeking public input. How would diversity and human scale be possible when there was only one owner for the three buildings?

Olga Pelensky of 108 Kinnaird Street asked if the current retail tenants could return to the building at the same rents.

Heather Hoffman of 213 Hurley Street asked if the service entrance would impact street parking or be otherwise obtrusive. Mr. Chilinski answered that the doorway was recessed so the doors would not swing out into the public way. The intent was to limit the service functions of the building to one area. Ms. Hoffman asked if the corner space would be a retail use or a lobby. Mr. Chilinski said a retail tenant could put merchandise on the first floor in that space even if the majority of that store's floor space was on the second floor. Ms. Hoffman asked how bright the light would be in the glass additions, noting that people do live in the square. Mr. Chilinski said the indirect lighting could mask the glare from looking up into the spaces. Office light would be different from retail light. Ms. Hoffman asked how the public realm would be enhanced.

Rachel Martin of 12 Arlington Street asked if the fourth floor was in mind at the time of purchase. Mr. Brown said no, the design discussions did not start for several months.

Brad Bellows of 87 Howard Street asked why the stair and elevator on Brattle Street had been located near an outside wall. Mr. Chilinski explained it had to do with the walls of the Abbott Building but perhaps he would use spandrel glass there instead of vision glass.

Judith Clapp of 221 Mt. Auburn Street asked if the entrance to a store would be on the first floor. Mr. Brown said the corner entry on the first floor was to be a point of entry for a single tenant on the second floor. It would not be a mall.

Mr. King opened the public comment period and imposed a three-minute time limit.

Fred Meyer of 83 Hammond Street noted that his office was in the Abbott Building for 25 years and he had the three corner windows on the second floor. He said it would make him happy if that space was a store because then people would see the wonderful view out those windows. He complimented the architect on a creative design that united the buildings but retained the diversity of the three structures.

City Councilor Dennis Carlone spoke in favor of a mixture of small local stores. He commented that the Urban Outfitters building was not very architecturally interesting but neither was the proposed glass addition. Glass buildings could appear black during the day. The good retail lighting at the Design Research building made it successful. He suggested using other materials for the addition such as copper or limestone. The Harvard Libraries building at 90 Mt. Auburn Street was also glass, but it was more interesting in its detailing.

Ms. Miller-Havens said she owned a small business at 18 Brattle Street. None of the 24 tenants of that building had been told about the meeting until a message was hand delivered on September 2 on the Friday of Labor Day weekend. The owner did not have good communication with the tenants. The Dow family (former owners) had kept rents low, allowing for a diverse group of tenants. The current tenants would not be able to afford to come back after renovations.

Laura Donahue, the owner of Bob Slate Stationer, said her business was on the other end of the block. The impact of construction on her business would probably be substantial. Communications should include everyone nearby.

Mr. Bellows said variety was a good characteristic of Harvard Square. He spoke in favor of dropping the storefront glazing at the corner, four story massing, and glass for the additions. He commented that the rhythm of the Corcoran's Building was monotonous. The addition should be more lively with a denser rhythm and without mimicking historic detail. The lack of rhythm looked Darth Vaderish. The loading door could become a vitrine.

Mr. Brandon said the curtain wall was terrible and out of character with the brick buildings. He said he would like to see other options. Could every ground floor space have a separate entrance? Would there be a coordinated sign system?

Hugh Russell said he had been an occupant at 18 Brattle Street for 43 years. He encouraged the proponents to look at each building separately so that they would retain their integrity. He said gutting an important building such as 5 JFK Street was not appropriate. The structural elements should be retained. He recommended leaving the Tess storefront intact; the Historical Commission cited it as an example of creative storefront design. The floor heights in the Corcoran's Building should be adjusted.

Professor Blier expressed concern that the appearance of the buildings at night would change the whole character of Harvard Square, especially from the kiosk.

Catherine Flaherty of 62 Fayette Street said she was a resident and street performer. She said the proposal was horrifying to her. She didn't like the glass material, though it was the fashion these days. She had seen new retail developments elsewhere that start looking okay but five or ten years later they were a terrible blight.

Mr. Williamson said the enormity of the glass curtain wall and atria was troubling. He said it resembled Copley Place and the Cambridgeside Galleria and was incompatible with the Harvard Square context. He asked for outreach to the community. He referred to the recently deceased Jane Thompson and the importance of unique storefronts. The DR building could be instructive. Why or how did that work and this did not? The kiosk should be landmarked.

Mr. King noted the Commission's long agenda and asked if the applicant would be willing to continue the hearing and waive the 45 day period for commission action on the application. Mr. Brown agreed to a continuance and to waive the 45 day period.

Dr. Solet said the public process had offered a lot for the proponents to consider. She summarized that people were interested in the experience of the site both in day and night, that there was a concern for the transformation process, a desire for more communication, and opposition to homogeneity. She treasured what was funky about the Square. She moved to continue the hearing to October 6. Mr. Irving seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.

#### Public Hearings: Landmark Designation Proceedings and Demolition Review

**Case L-120: 851 & 855 Cambridge St.** Consider petition received requesting initiation of a landmark designation study for the Sunset Café building.

Mr. Sullivan showed slides and explained the history of the two buildings, which had been combined behind a single brick façade in 1989. He showed photos of the previous appearance of the buildings. The Sunset Café was opened by 1937 and the proprietor had lived upstairs. The Café had been closed for several months. A petition requesting landmark study of the property, now under common ownership, was received on August 8.

Lisa Salvi, representing the petitioners, related the story of Fernando J. Castiniera, an immigrant from Portugal who had operated the Sunset Café, and his two sons David and Fernando. The restaurant served pizza and Portuguese cuisine. Fernando (senior) had been very important to the community. He

died in 1992. His two sons had recently passed away. She said the family had been to court with regard to the settlement of the estate and she believed there was an imminent threat to the building.

Mr. Williamson said there was an important social history associated with the buildings and a plausible case for a landmark study.

Dr. Solet agreed that the case for social significance was very strong. She explained that landmark designation couldn't guarantee that the building wouldn't undergo changes.

Mr. King commented that there might be a way other than landmark designation to commemorate the social significance of the father and his sons to the community.

Ms. Harrington asked if the corner had a memorial square sign to the family. Ms. Salvi answered that there was a sign in honor of the father but not the sons. Ms. Harrington suggested that would be another step she could pursue and the Commission could offer support.

Mr. Sullivan said there was some significance to the buildings and their contemporary façade. He supported initiating a study to protect them temporarily and allow the staff time to find out information.

Dr. Solet moved to accept the petition and initiate a landmark study process. Ms. Harrington seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.

**Case D-1410: 54-56 Reed St., by James Renzi, current owner o/b/o Joseph Glenmullen, buyer.** Demolish house (1875).

Ms. Burks showed slides of the 1875 double house and described its history as outlined in the staff report. The condition was average. She noted that the side lot had never been built on, a rarity in the racecourse neighborhood. She said the building was an intact example of a double Bracketed Italianate house that retained its period detailing and contributed positively to the streetscape. She recommended finding the house significant as defined in the ordinance and for its associations with the broad architectural, economic and social history of the City and the racecourse neighborhood. Mr. Irving so moved. Dr. Solet seconded.

Mr. Brandon, the clerk of the North Cambridge Stabilization Committee, said the house was an example of the type of building that had served the neighborhood well for a long time. Its double house form was not the typical style for the neighborhood, but maybe that made it more significant. He noted the location of a large conifer at the back corner of the house.

On the motion, the commission voted 6-0 to find the building significant.

Mr. Rafferty, representing the property owner Joseph Glenmullen, submitted an engineer's report regarding the condition of the building.

Blake Allison of Dingman Allison Architects presented the proposed replacement project, which consisted of a new double house and a single family house, both with Mansard roofs. He noted that the existing building was not up to current structural standards and did not meet zoning setbacks or building codes. The intent was to build something attractive to the neighborhood and conducive to family living.

Dr. Solet asked about the front setbacks and other Mansards in the neighborhood. Mr. Allison said they varied. Nancy Dingman indicated there were other Mansards on Reed Street.

Mr. Irving asked if the subject property was built as a pair with the double house next door. Ms. Burks answered that the same carpenter had built both and they were very similar in their design.

Mr. Sheffield asked if the new double house would occupy a similar footprint to the existing. Dr. Glenmullen explained that it was a deliberate choice to keep the new volume similar to the old.

Mr. Allison reported that both trees could be preserved.

Judy Silvan of 66 Reed Street #1 said her house overlooked the back yards of 54-56 Reed Street. The existing building was an eyesore and was in complete disrepair. It was too close to the street and was structurally questionable. She spoke in support of the proposed replacement buildings. She hoped to give input about the landscaping and wanted to preserve as much green space as possible. She said the existing tiny barn was charming and she hoped to have input on the new garages.

Dr. Glenmullen said he had delivered his project plans to his neighbors. He was happy that the tree was not in the footprint of the new house and could likely be saved. He explained the turnaround requirements of the Traffic and Parking Department.

Bonnie Walters of Reed Street Court noted that all the houses on Reed Street were close to the street. North Cambridge was very dense. She supported keeping the back yards as open as possible and preserving the trees.

Sarah Putnam of 64 Reed Street said the barn was historical. She hoped the garages could resemble the barn. She said she would prefer the development have only one house and one garage.

Mr. Brandon agreed the shed was unusual and he did not know what its original use had been. He suggested a continuance and consideration of garages on the ground level with houses above. Perhaps exterior elements of the existing house could be re-used.

Mr. King asked if the lot was to be subdivided. Mr. Rafferty replied in the negative. He added that there were four units in the existing building. The proposal was for three 3-bedroom homes. The existing driveway would be retained. The project would conform to Residence B zoning regulations.

Mr. Sheffield asked if the applicant had considered preserving the existing building and adding the single family next to it. Dr. Glenmullen replied in the affirmative. He explained that a Mansard roof would allow for the 3-bedroom plan within an allowable FAR. Mr. Sheffield cautioned that full basements could hurt the roots of the tree. He applauded the applicant for not proposing a triple row house.

Mr. King said the proposed design was attractive and would complement the street. The shed was not significant.

Mr. Irving spoke strongly against demolition of the existing house. It was part of a pair and reflected an important era of the neighborhood. The proposed new building was of a similar volume and was a historical style. He had heard no convincing reason why the building couldn't be given a new life.

Ms. Harrington agreed. It was actually a beautiful building. She remarked on the design of the cornice and wide window casings. She saw no reason to tear it down.

Mr. Irving moved to find the building preferably preserved in the context of the proposed replacement buildings. Ms. Harrington seconded the motion.

Mr. Rafferty explained that it would not be possible to build a free standing single family if the existing non-conforming building remained. The neighbors preferred the replacement buildings. He asked the Commission to consider waiving a demolition delay.

Dr. Solet said the engineer's report was not convincing. Mr. Rafferty agreed the building was not in danger of collapse.

Ms. Silvan said she loved the proposed design and did not want to risk another developer proposing something she did not like.

The motion failed 2-3 with Mr. Irving and Ms. Harrington voting in the affirmative and Mr. King, Mr. Crocker, and Dr. Solet in the negative and Mr. Sheffield abstaining.

#### Director's Report

Mr. Williamson asked for his letter to be considered by the Commission. His letter requested a report by the Director about the status of the Harvard Square Kiosk project.

Mr. Sullivan recommended dispensing with the Director's Report given the late hour. The chair agreed.

Dr. Solet moved to adjourn, Ms. Harrington seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 12:35 A.M., September 9, 2016.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah L. Burks  
Preservation Planner

**Members of the Public  
Who Signed the Attendance List on September 8, 2016**

Suzanne Blier	5 Fuller Pl	James Williamson	1000 Jackson Pl
Rudolph Blier	5 Fuller Pl	Lawrence Lopez	49 Fayette St
Adam Hirsch	1 JFK St	Dan Hogan	35A Trowbridge St
Susan Miller-Havens	221 Mt Auburn St	Costanza Eggers	47 Porter Rd
Harlon Lieberman Bey	66 Adams St, Som. 02145	Ken Diesenhof	585 Main St #306, Melrose 02176
Marilee Meyer	10 Dana Street	Elena Saporta	102 Ellery St
Nancy Turner	7 JFK St	John Hawkinson	cambridgeday.com
Brad Bellows	87 Howard St	Joe Klompus	70 Putnam Ave
Bryan Long	2 Highland St	Sarah Hill	595 Franklin St
Carol O'Hare	172 Magazine St	Dennis Covener	50 Washburn Ave
Bonnie J. Walters	3-4 Reed St Ct #2	Fred Meyer	83 Hammond St
Catherine Flaherty	62 Fayette St	Heather Hoffman	213 Hurley St
Virginia Coleman	2 Berkeley Pl	Glenna Lang	43 Stearns St
Amy Woods	2 Highland St	Carole Perrault	9 Dana St
Elizabeth Libert	43 Reservoir St	Lance Greene	2285 Mass Ave
Daniel Sterner	43 Reservoir St	Peggy Wang	8 Chatham St #3
Charles Bahne	78 Reservoir St	Laura Donohue	90 Putnam Ave #1
Jan Devereaux	255 Lakeview Ave	E A Vargas	11 Old Dee Rd
Betsy Groban	1462 Cambridge St	Olga Pelensky	108 Kinnaird St
Siobhan McMahan	57 Dana St	Joe Viglione	59 Garfield Ave Medford 02155
Abra Berkowitz	253½ Broadway	Rachel Martin	12 Arlington St
Susan Corcoran	356 Broadway	Julie Vargas	11 Old Dee Rd/18 Brattle St
Michael Brandon	27 Seven Pines Ave	David Hawthorne	5 JFK St #301

Note: Town is Cambridge, unless otherwise indicated.