

Minutes of the Mid Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District Commission

Monday, July 7, 2014, 6:00 PM, McCusker Center, 2nd Fl., 344 Broadway, Cambridge

Commission Members present: Nancy Goodwin, *Chair*; Charles Redmon, *Member*; Sue-Ellen Myers and Margaret McMahon, *Alternates*

Commission Members absent: Tony Hsiao, *Vice Chair*; Lestra Litchfield, *Member*; Monkia Pauli, *Alternate*

Staff present: Sarah Burks, Samantha Paull

Members of the Public: See attached list.

Ms. Nancy Goodwin, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. A quorum was present. Ms. Goodwin reviewed the meeting procedures and read the agenda for the public. She designated both alternates to vote.

MC-4516: 430 Broadway, Unit #3, by Reem Properties, LLC. Window replacement.

Ms. Samantha Paull, staff, presented slides to the Commission. She outlined that the application proposed to replace the non-original windows in unit 3 that comprised the third floor. She noted that the first and second floor unit windows have been previously replaced with vinyl one over one windows. She further stated that the applicant proposed to use a vinyl one over one product.

Ms. Paull also gave a background on the property, noting that the subject property is a triple decker, originally constructed in 1889 under permit 1743. The structure has maintained much of its character reflecting elements of the Queen Anne style with its three-story bay window, wood clapboards, bracketed stoop, original double entry half light wood doors, brackets on the cornice, and sunburst detail over the entry.

An applicant and owner, Mr. Mohammed Abouchleih, provided the Commission with additional photos of the property, showing the existing windows. He confirmed that in his unit, which comprises the third floor, all but two of the original wood windows have been replaced about 25-30 years ago. The two historic windows are in the alley not on the front façade.

Ms. Goodwin asked if the proposal included replacing only the sash or if it was the whole window. Ms. Margaret McMahon, a Commissioner, asked if he was replacing the exterior trim as part of this project. Mr. Abouchleih responded that the product was an insert and the exterior trim was to remain. He continued that he also wanted to propose to enlarge a window in the kitchen on the left side of the structure. It is close to the neighboring property. He proposed to drop the sill approximately four or five inches (4-5") as it appeared to be framed out as originally within the wall. The window is a double casement above the sink. He proposed to install a double hung sash style window. Ms. Sarah Burks, a staff member, told Mr. Abouchleih that he may want to follow up with Inspectional Services Division (ISD) to make sure there is not a zoning issue with enlarging the window in the non-compliant setback.

Mr. Charles Redmon, a Commissioner, asked if the two (2) original windows were salvageable. Mr. John Durkin, the applicant's contractor, responded that no the original windows were rotted and the weights were gone. Mr. Durkin continued that the windows had been screwed into place to stay together.

Mr. Redmon stated that while vinyl was not a product normally supported by the Commission, the proposed replacement product seems to be the logical course of action for this particular case. He made a motion to approve the application as submitted. Ms. Sue-Ellen Myers, a Commissioner, seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

Ms. McMahon mentioned to the owner a concern over the peeling and flaking paint on the side elevation. Mr. Abouchleih stated that he has approached the other owners and hoped to work with them to get that addressed.

MC-4517: 80 Trowbridge St., by Cambridge Ellis School. Alterations to door openings and school grounds.

Ms. Paull showed slides of the property at 80 Trowbridge Street and summarized the application. The subject property was originally constructed as a stable for the property at 1643 Cambridge Street. Constructed in 1896 by W.E. Clark under permit 6229, it was converted into a garage in 1908 under permit 12542 with a workshop addition in 1916 under permit 17267. The structure was home to Ernest Flentje of Shock Preventer Manufacturing. According to the History of Massachusetts Industries: Their Inception, Growth and Success by Orra L. Stone, published in 1930, Flentje invented a shock absorber. His business steadily grew until it outgrew the factory on Trowbridge and moved to Brooklyn, NY. Flentje obtained a patent for his hydraulic shock preventer in 1908 and began manufacturing them in Cambridge shortly after. By 1914, his shock preventer could “be found in all cities where there are automobile agencies, from Maine to California.” Permits show the factory was converted to an office in 1979 and modified again in 1981. Cambridge-Ellis School first moved into the building in the 1980s.

She summarized that the applicant proposed to remove the old stable and garage bay doors and convert them into a combination of windows and/or pedestrian doors that fill the existing openings. The application includes alterations to the playground area as well. She noted that none of the existing, historic doors are operable at this time.

Mr. Redmon asked what the materials the doors were. Mr. Constantin von Wentzel, an applicant, responded that the doors are painted wood. Mr. von Wentzel continued to describe the different doors by room; the Blue room had a pair of oversized double French doors that swing in. The Orange room had an old sliding garage door, however, permanently installed furniture did not allow the door to open. The door was painted and screwed shut. The Red room door slid to the right but an interior wall and sink prevented it from being utilized. Mr. von Wentzel further expounded that some of the doors had panels that were replaced with plexiglass or particle board when it was converted. A second layer of plexiglass had been added later. He stated that the second floor windows appear to be original but the first floor windows, the space that the school occupies, were replaced with one over one windows. The tenant spaces had the original multi-light over one wood windows. The windows in the school space may have been replaced due to concerns with lead and the desire for tempered glass.

Ms. McMahon asked if the Blue room door was partly particle board and if other doors have replacement parts. Mr. von Wentzel stated it is hard to tell as all the doors are painted.

Mr. Redmon noted that the proposal to infill the space with a combination of windows and doors is a very logical approach. Mr. Redmon asked how many students were enrolled. Ms. Gerlinde Hossian-Endl, an applicant, stated 100 students.

Mr. Redmon asked what the material of the new outside wall would be. Mr. von Wentzel responded wood, and may be paneled below the windows.

Mr. Redmon asked if they had found a contractor yet. Mr. von Wentzel replied no, but three would be invited to bid. Mr. Redmon suggested asking the architect tenant to help with the drawings.

Ms. Goodwin asked what kind of windows were proposed. Mr. von Wentzel responded Marvin Ultimate Double Hung painted to match the other windows in the school, a deep red. He stated that the windows will help get ventilation into the rooms in addition to the added egress with functioning doors. Ms. Goodwin stated it sounded like a good idea.

Mr. von Wentzel mentioned that the granite bollards at the doors will be relocated to the landscape.

Mr. Redmon stated that the modifications would improve the character and life of the building. He made a motion to approve the application as submitted. Ms. Myers seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

Mr. von Wentzel asked the Commission for clarification on the panels under the windows. Mr. Redmon indicated that the applicant should follow up with staff on the details of the project.

Minutes

Mr. Redmon made a motion to approve the June 2, 2014 minutes as submitted. Ms. Myers seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

Ms. Myers then moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 pm. Ms. McMahon seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Samantha Paull
Preservation Administrator

Members of the Public (who signed the Attendance list)

Gerlinde Hossain-Endl	105 Kerrick Street, Brighton, MA
Constantin von Wentzel	101 Washington Avenue
Edward Saad	34 Lancaster Street
John Durkan	22 Raven St, Apt 2, Boston, MA
Mohammad Abouchleih	291 Main Street, Northborough, MA

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