

## MINUTES OF THE MID CAMBRIDGE NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICT COMMISSION

Tuesday, January 3, 2023, 6:00 PM, online Zoom meeting

Commission Members present: Lestra Litchfield, *Vice Chair*, Charles Redmon, Katinka Hakuta, *Members*

Absent: Tony Hsiao, *Chair*, Monika Pauli, *Member*

Staff present: Allison A. Crosbie, Preservation Administrator, Sarah Burks, Preservation Planner

Members of the Public: See attached list

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Meeting held via online zoom webinar <https://tinyurl.com/MCjan2023>. Due to statewide emergency actions limiting the size of public gatherings in response to COVID-19, this meeting was held online with remote participation and was closed to in-person attendance. The public was able to participate online via the Zoom webinar platform. The meeting ID was 898 3905 2168.

Commission Vice Chair Lestra Litchfield made introductions, explained the process, and called the meeting to order at 6:02.

**Case MC-6627: 42 Roberts Road, by Marilyn Ranker.** Demolish garage and construct office/studio.

Ms. Allison Crosbie, preservation administrator, presented a brief history of the property.

Ms. Marilyn Ranker, the applicant, explained she would like to construct a home office or studio with plumbing and insulation and mentioned that the existing garage is a metal structure.

### Commission Questions

Ms. Litchfield asked if the new structure will enlarge the existing building footprint. Ms. Ranker replied that it will not, it will be on the existing footprint. Ms. Litchfield also asked how high the new structure will be. Ms. Ranker answered that the building will have a slant roof with the highest side at 15 feet.

Commissioner Charles Redmon asked about the exterior materials. Ms. Ranker responded that the exterior siding will be fiber cement that will match the color of the main building.

Commissioner Katinka Hakuta asked about the front façade. Ms. Ranker clarified what the front façade will look like. Ms. Hakuta asked if the applicant considered incorporating details reminiscent of the original structure or the main house. Ms. Ranker replied that she hadn't thought that the aesthetics of the existing garage merited replication, she had been looking to streamline the design.

Mr. Redmon asked to see the 3-d view again of the proposed structure. Ms. Crosbie showed the slide.

Ms. Litchfield asked if the windows will be operable. Ms. Ranker answered that the bottom windows will open, but not the ones on top. Ms. Litchfield suggested adding a transom to the front entrance door to help break up the façade. Ms. Ranker said she would consider a window in the door, similar to the entry door on the main building.

#### Public Questions

Ms. Crosbie summarized a phone call received from Cheryl Levenson of 14 Magnolia Avenue who is an abutter. She asked if there will be a stove in the proposed structure and asked about the light levels late at night. Ms. Ranker responded there will be no stove and that she didn't think that light at night will be an issue for abutters.

#### Public Comments

Ms. Crosbie read an email from Alexandra Hallowell of 44 Roberts Road who supported the proposal to construct a studio space.

Ms. Crosbie also relayed Ms. Levenson's concerns about potential noise levels.

#### Commission Comments

Mr. Redmon stated that the size and scale of the proposal was appropriate but suggested adding details to the exterior, such as cornerboards, to provide a transition where the boards meet. He also suggested adding an awning over the main entrance to provide some protection from rain and snow.

Ms. Litchfield concurred with Mr. Redmon, stating the corners need to be mitered and that the articulation of the doorway would improve the front facade. She also said that although the Commission does not typically approve of fiber cement siding, this is new construction and therefore suitable.

Ms. Hakuta agreed with Mr. Redmon and Ms. Litchfield and remarked that adding more details that echo the house would make a big difference.

Mr. Redmon motioned to approve the proposal with recommendations as discussed, specifically consider adding cornerboards to resolve how the edges of the siding meet at the corners; articulate the front entrance with a window in the door or a transom; consider adding an awning for protection from rain and snow; and add exterior architectural details that echo the detailing of the main residence. Mr. Redmon also recommended consulting with CHC staff on any revisions to the design. Ms. Hakuta seconded, and the motion passed 3-0.

Ms. Sarah Burks, preservation planner, advised the applicant to avoid the fiber cement siding from meeting the ground to avoid water penetration into the structure.

The December 5 minutes were approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Allison A. Crosbie, Preservation Administrator

**Members of the Public Present on January 3, 2023**

Panelists:

Marilyn Ranker, applicant

42 Roberts Road

Attendees:

None