



Historic District Commission

Meeting Minutes

09/14/2021

7:00 PM

Online, Town Hall, 472 Main St, Acton, MA 01720

Present: David Honn (DH), Art Leavens (AL), Anita Rogers (AR), Ron Regan (RR), Zach Taillefer (ZT), Fran Arsenault (FA) BOS liaison, David Shoemaker (DS).

Absent: all members present.

Opening:

Chair David Honn opened the meeting at 7:00 pm and read the “remote meeting notice” due to COVID-19.

1. Regular Business

- A. Citizen's Concerns – none. Renée Robins, Erik Hammar present at the opening of the meeting.
- B. Approval of Meeting Minutes – DS makes a motion to approve the minutes from August 10; RR second, DH takes a roll call vote: RR – Y, DS – Y, AL – Abstain; DH – Y, AR – Abstain; ZT – Y; the motion passes.
- C. Review Project Tracking Spreadsheet – Up to date. No mail of interest.

2. New/Special Business [or other applicable agenda items]

- A. 7:10 #2116 Close Public Hearing: Application withdrawal for 16 Mead Terrace New Dwelling. HDC had opened a discussion on this application of 25 June. Opened a public hearing on July 13. We had one brief discussion in the HDC. When contacted to schedule the next discussion, Mark Gallagher (MG) chose to withdraw the application without prejudice. In light of the applicant’s withdrawal, Art moves we close the public hearing for 16 Mead Terrace; AR seconds. DH takes a roll call vote: RR – Y, DS – Y, AL – Y; DH – Y, AR – Abstain; ZT – Y; the motion passes.
- B. 7:15 #2121 265-271 Arlington Street Roof Replacement. Erik Hammar present. DH: Straightforward two-family with a gable roof. DH asks about the kind of shingle. EH: Landmark Certainteed standard (not ‘extreme’) architectural shingle pewter color. Chimneys stays as they are; lead flashing as needed. Certainteed ridge vent as a replacement for the present one. Back roof is asphalt and probably not visible from Arlington St. No work on the trim or rake. DH: AL becomes the Liaison. Aluminum drip edge, color to match (white). Ridge vent to the ends of the gable. Lead or copper flashing. No vent boot; prefer black rather than Aluminum preferred. No HDC constraints on the support under the shingles. If soffit vents are needed, paint to match the soffit. DH asks the HDC for any questions. ZT – any gutter work? EH: none. AL will send the abutters’



notices; need to wait 10 days for the return. Total turnaround will be about 2 weeks. AL moves that we approve the application for Landmark Certainteed standard (not 'extreme') architectural shingle pewter color. Aluminum drip edge, color to match (white). Ridge vent to the ends of the gable. Lead or copper flashing. No vent boot; prefer black rather than Aluminum preferred. No HDC constraints on the support under the shingles. If soffit vents are needed, paint to match the soffit. AR seconds. DH takes a roll call vote: RR – Y, DS – Y, AL – Y; DH – Y, AR – Y ZT – Y; the motion passes.

- C. 7:30 #2122 491 Main Street Roof Replacement. DH: There were some delays in the application reaching the HDC. Jason Foley joins. Bathroom renovation in the house, and owners ask about re-roofing of leaky hip roof on the side. Certainteed shingles 'weathered wood' is a close match. Not a conditioned space. All the flashing and trim look fine; no changes in the windows. Some rot visible from the interior, but not structural. AR becomes the liaison. DH asks for questions from the HDC; none. AR makes a motion; approve the installation of Certainteed on the hipped roof of 491 Main St. No roof ridge, and white trim. RR Seconds. RR – Y, DS – Y, AL – Y; DH – Y, AR – Y ZT – Y; the motion passes.
- D. 7:45 HDC Review and Comments on HC Archeology Bylaw: Bill Dickenson joins. BD: Some years ago the Town had two maps made of historically sensitive areas. Pre-contact sites in particular are extensive; can be seen at the HC site. The intent of the Bylaw is to address proposals to build on previously undisturbed terrain in these domains. If something is seen, an expert will be engaged to dig and preserve. This will potentially lead to some delays in construction but avoid losing precious historical information. Work with the Planning department and other departments to check for compatibility. The target is not homeowners; it is rather developers or other larger multi-acre developments in previously undeveloped areas that would be impacted. Welcomes comments from the HDC. Targeting April Town meeting. DH: Are there any overlaps with Historic Districts? RR: As an example, yes for Windsor Ave. DH: are the dates of the map static or are they dynamic? BD: Static. Acton was thoroughly studied. DH: 2.3 100 Years – perhaps better to call out a date. BD: may have legal consequences, but will consider it. 2.7, permit granting authority: Should the HDC be named? BD: Yes. 3: Site plans and permits; may want to add a Certificate of Appropriateness from the HDC as another implement. BD: Yes. DH: wished for definitions of 'adverse effect' and 'undeveloped land'. BD: Yes, will define. DH: All mentions of intervals – has someone checked the timing? BD: Yes. DH: Asks as an example about digging in one's back yard. Is there a mechanism for a homeowner to support the spirit of this Bylaw (even if not legally required to)? BD: The focus is land, rather than parcels. Don't want to overly burden the average homeowner, so choose not to put any language impacting those owners. A lot of resources already available for those instances. DH: Does not impact private owners receiving State funding or licensing. What is this? BD: Not sure about this. Will pursue. AL: Might help if defined terms in the text were in ALL CAPS to indicate such defined items. RR: Confused by legalese but clearer now. AR: Good to address. ZT: nothing. DS: nothing. FA: no comments. DH: We appreciate the initiative! BD: important that most people are not



impacted. There will be outreach to prepare for the vote.

E. 8:15 HDC Support Letter to Select Board for 9 School Street: DH: 1) DRB meeting; no point in commenting on the HDC thoughts. The DRB focused on the back and the landscaping; good ideas on the deck supports. John Perkins said that the heat pumps will probably move into the (open-air) garage. Was reminded that the HDC needs to see the detail of the window implementation. The project will need to get permission from the SB for the size of the project. Important that the SB understand why the HDC supports this large project, and a special permit for the current design. FA: on the Agenda for the 20 September.

3. 8:30 Miscellaneous HDC Business

- A. House Proposed Outdoor Space at Town Hall: DH: No updates.
- B. Asa Parlin House: DH: Drawings went to SB and DRB. Chair of DRB agreed that it should not get ahead of the HDC, so the applicant should come to the HDC for that meeting. AR: we have not met with an architect in about the last decade. Red Hawk Studios from Concord has not been in touch. DH: Unfortunate that so much work has been done without contact with the HDC. FA: Has been in touch with the Town Manager; the work to date is just a start. FA encourages the HDC to get in touch with the SB on the HDC sense of prioritization.
- C. 53 River Street: DH: Future park. Committee meets regularly. The Dam is in poor condition, and much needs to be dismantled. Many different groups involved. DH signaled to the Town Manager that we have not seen a demolition application for the two buildings planned for removal. DH and Historic Commission recommended in a joint letter to the Town Manager that a manager for the project be hired.
- D. Christian Science Building Support Letter to SB (Select Board): AR and DH met Dan Barton (Architect/owner). He wishes to develop the site. Barton will join the next HDC meeting informally.
- E. 85 School Street Shed: House in the district, and were building a second shed but without an application to the HDC. The framing is up and with some Tyvek and windows in place. DH contacted the Building Department to indicate that there was no application; the HDC would welcome an application. There is also a fence that is not approved and should be discussed.
- F. By-law change for Planning Board and ZBA consideration: DH: We wrote up the By-law for the problem of buildings historically in violation of code, and when reconstructing being forced to comply with code and deviate from the historical placement. AL developed language for the change. RR: Good to ask Barbara Rhines to help out with this. DH: We should attempt to put it in the form of a Warrant article to smooth the path onto meeting Agenda. AL: The official route is to SB, Planning Board hearing and report with a recommendation, then to the meeting. We should informally start with the Planning Board and the ZBA. FA will ask that this be put on the Planning Board and ZBA Agenda; AL to send an email to the Planning



Board with the thrust of the concept. Already drafted.

- G. Mass Preservation Meeting 23-24 September: DH: Barbara Rhines sent around a notice encouraging Town Committee members to participate. HDC members are encouraged to look at the Agenda and participate if interested; good to report back at an HDC meeting.
- H. Meeting mode: Discussion of the virtues and drawbacks of remote/online meetings; the consensus of the HDC members is that given the small room at Town Hall and the current state of COVID is that we should continue for now with remote/online meetings.
- I. Discussion of Barbara Rhines and roles she can play. New and expanded Districts are a target. AR: there are a number of things of process that are really much easier for someone who works in Town Hall – abutters' notices are an example; posting in Docushare another. Quality review of notes to avoid confusion and landmines would be of value. All this can add insights to the HDC activities. DH: Next meeting we should discuss the list of possible activities, and invite Barbara to join us.

4. Adjournment

At 20:25, ZT makes a motion to adjourn the meeting, RR seconds. DH takes a roll call vote: DS – Y, RR – Y, ZT – Y, AR – Y, DH – Y, AL - Y; the motion passes.

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting

- Application 2116
- Application 2121
- Application 2122
- HC Archeology Bylaw draft
- HDC Support Letter to the Select Board for 9 School Street