



Historic District Commission

Meeting Minutes

2022-10-11

7:00 PM

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

Present: David Honn (DH), David Shoemaker (DS; joined at 19:24), Anita Rogers (AR; joined at 19:15), Art Leavens (AL), Zach Taillefer (ZT), Kristin Guichard (Town)

Absent: Barbara Rhines (BR) (Cultural Resource Planner), Fran Arsenault (FA)

Opening:

Chair David Honn opened the meeting at 7:03 pm and read the “remote meeting notice” due to COVID-19.

1. Regular Business

- A. Citizen's Concerns – John Quimby, 12 Woodbury Lane. JQ: Wish to clarify the applications which will serve best. Front portico and 1950’s garage. 1: Garage is in a poor state; the large black walnut owned by the town has menaced the property recently, and it will soon be removed. A procedure to replace the slab has been established. The siding is inappropriate and in poor condition. There is a proposal to replace with siding matching the house. 2: The portico of the house is poorly designed for New England weather. It is fragile and needs to be reconstructed. The goal is to replace it in kind. What does the HDC need? And: the storm door is not attractive. An alternative is invited. DH: Two projects. The portico is a simple Certificate of non-applicability. Please submit an application for this alone. AR: EDPM; DH: Copper. The storm door is outside of the HDC purview; some look at historical examples would be good. JQ: the garage door needs replacement; the roof is ok. DH: Application needed. If no change in the footprint, there are no problems with setback and zoning. Siding: it is not ‘wrong’, but it speaks to a specific aesthetic. AL: need a CNA for the portico? DH: yes, but would like an application to establish the history of changes. Liaison to be assigned when the application comes in. Brian Murphy: Storm took out a mailbox. Resurrected, but it needs to be properly remade. DH: we have no jurisdiction. AL: do not see in the regulations. BM: just want to restore to a previous condition. DH: it is a repair; a CNA is probably not needed.
- B. Approval of Meeting Minutes – September 27 meeting minutes. DS makes a Motion to accept; AL Seconds. AR DS AL DH, ZT approve.
- C. Review Project Tracking Spreadsheet – DH: 615 Mass Ave request on windows; there is a plan to restore old windows, with plywood as a temporary solution during the repair. KG to add to the spreadsheet.
- D. Chair Update: None



1. Outstanding COA updates: Those COAs up against a deadline were timely filed..

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

- A. 7:15 Continuation of Public Hearing for 267 Central Street: Demolition of a house and garage to build a new 4-unit structure. No representation from the application. DH Opens the hearing. Marc Foster and Dan Barton did not attend the previous meeting. Notes from the previous meeting were sent to the applicants, with a summary of the discussion. A justification for the inability to re-use the building was requested. An extension of the paperwork is needed. AL: May wish to select a date in early 2023 for the next extension. Needs to be a specific date. KG: ok to extend the hearing. DH: looking at dates.
- B. 8:15 #2226 438 Main Street Windows: DH: A visit was made. Windows out of the public view could be replaced with modern windows. The visible windows did not appear to be older than 1950 (i.e., not original to the house) after careful inspection. Catherine (CB) and John Barry (JB) join. Submitted an application to replace the current windows to remove lead with a concern for a child. Would like to replace the windows with an Andersen window. Some 27 windows are in question. DH: 6 over 6, windows probably ~1960 epoch. All the windows are the same. JB: would also de-leading doors. This would be a replacement sash. All lead at all friction points would be removed. AR: The HDC has never approved an Andersen window. It is important to have the literature on the windows to allow HDC approval. A sample should be possible to acquire. DH: how did you choose the window? JB: Sought high-quality windows which replicated the appropriate look. The contractor also thought this to be appropriate. In addition, there is a desire to move quickly – availability is important. The contractor has experience in lead abatement. DH: Are there examples of these windows in the area? We have seen Jeld-Win windows be successfully used on River St., Marvin windows as well. Just need to see the window that is recommended. JB: the Jeld-Win, Marvin, and Pella have very long lead times. Will supply more information on the preferred Andersen windows and seek a sample installation. CB: since the windows have been replaced, how to know what would be appropriate? Current windows are 6/6 DH: The MACRIS listing might have older photos. Many houses from this time are 2/2. AR: The width of the muntin may be the key thing. We would like to have a way to get a sense of the appearance; best both in a real house, and a sample. It is important to have a ‘sash replacement’ example if that is the approach. DH: invited back two weeks for now. CB: Eager to move forward as quickly as possible. AL: can move as soon as we meet if the sample is suitable. AR will be liaison. Terra Friedrichs joins. Expresses concern that there not be a fast path for windows even if lead is present. Wanted to speak to 267 Central St., but continued so no comment. DH: Resolves to establish a more streamlined approach to applications involving windows to reduce additional delay.
- C. 8:45 # 2225 544 Mass Ave Roof: Eric Kaye joins us. Submitted application for a new roof on house and garage. It is urgent to replace the roof to minimize future damage. Wish to use a GAF Asphalt Shingle Timberline Architectural shingle. DH: no jurisdiction on color. Know the shingle; it is fine. Chimney flashing must be lead or lead-coated copper. The boot on the vent pipe needs to be lead or copper, or black neoprene. If there is a roof vent, it should run to the gable end to gable end. At the eave edge, the drip edge must be



painted the current trim color. No gutters planned. AL to be Liaison. Governing way Mass Ave. Move that we approve the application for a roof replacement; shingles must be not ultra high-def. Drip edge to match color of trim. A roof vent must be end to end. Flashing to be copper or lead. Boots to be dark. AR DS AL DH ZT approve.

- D. 9:00 #XXXX 284 Arlington Street Window. DH: request to replace one window, front façade, top floor. Will be addressed at the next meeting. An executive session will be needed, and the logistics will be very explicit and clear for that meeting given the zoom environment. Any public Minutes on the topic will be very brief, with a separate minutes for the executive session.
- E. 9:15 # 2222 Main Library Signage. DH: The town is not ready yet for discussion. Miriam Lezak, library trustee, joined from the public for the discussion. October 25 likely to be addressed.
- F. 9:30 Historic Plaque process: DH received an email from KG to smooth the process for historic plaques. Currently permission is requested of the Historic Commission, which checks dates and finds the craftsperson to make the sign. Then, the HDC chooses a location for the plaque if in the Historic Districts. KG suggested to simplify. HC proposed either to take over the entire process, or that the HC might ask an opinion for where it would be best placed. DH thinks it is important to have an informed discussion on the topic. DH thinks we could just have an approval or a discussion between the two commissions. AR, DS thinks this is workable. AL: A sign is an exterior feature and our bylaws require that we approve it. AR: the HC could be the applicant from the HDC perspective. KG: Could just have the HDC supersede the HC for any house in a district. DH: HC knows what date is appropriate. DS: The date is the unique thing that comes from the HC. DH: HC becomes the applicant for signs from the perspective of the HDC
- G. 9:45 CPC Long Range Plan for Historic Preservation: DH: talked with the CPC chair with several ideas. Tree planting as an option – order of \$15k every 3 years. 53 River St historic park is underfunded, and the CPC could offer some support for exhibit design, order of \$20k; and additional funds of over \$50k/year to address discoveries. Attending a meeting on restoring historic windows led to the idea of having a visit to properties to date and characterize windows by an expert; this would be a modest cost. AR: agrees. DS: it would be good to be able to offer a greater service than simply dating windows. Maybe have someone who could educate owners on the value of restoration and the fact that this can be also from the perspective of energy conservation of value. DH: Indeed, and discussion with the CPC continues on larger contributions to a house – this leads to preservation restrictions on the house. But the visit approach seems to be a good value for the investment. ~1.75M\$ is available each year, with 10% available to preservation. AL: The Exchange Hall process showed that it is not simple to use those funds. KG: One should allocate funds for the legal funds needed to realize the use of CPC resources. A discussion with Town Counsel would be valuable, and DH is invited to draft something. Note that projects to date must be ‘seen from the public way’. DH: The definition of ‘value to the public’ needs more discussion. invited to pitch the idea; will circulate a document to the HDC to start the process. AL: the independent expert is a wonderful addition to the process.



3. Consent Items

None

1. Adjournment

At 21:16 AL makes a motion to adjourn the meeting, AR seconds. DH takes a roll call vote: AL, AR, DH, DS, ZT all approve.

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting

- 75 River Street
- 438 Main Street
- 544 Mass Ave
- Additional materials can be found here: [Docushare HDC Folder](#)