



Historic District Commission

Meeting minutes, 5/28/13

TOWN CLERK, ACTON

Town hall room 126

Anita Rogers, Pam Lynn, David Honn, Michaela Moran, and Kathy Acerbo-Bachmann in attendance. Mike Gowing, selectmen liaison. Meeting called to order at 7:30PM.

Citizen's concern: David Shoemaker asked after his lost application. It was resubmitted and has been entered into Docushare.

Corey York, town engineer, to speak on the Traffic study funded by town meeting. Newtown Road and Hayward road to be looked at to determine the overall traffic conditions for the area. Future traffic conditions to be projected. Traffic counters to be placed after school reconvenes. Earliest study time this fall. Study will include several public forums for comment. KAB asked how the permitting and permissions are provided for such changes. Design the scope of change and then look at permits necessary. What criteria -Speed, safety, esthetics? Corey York- will look at safety as a whole. Will study what the dangerous parts of the traffic are. DH- Acton Center is the heart of the town. Has concerns that a rotary would make the common an isolated bit of real estate which becomes overlooked. RFP should include a landscape architect who has traffic and historic preservation experience. PL-if accidents are results of left turns, wants public discussion of the reason for the studies. AR is not interested in increasing traffic speed but would like to improve the turning safety. MG thought about perhaps a four way stop.

3 Spruce Street, Application #1306, Solar panel installaation. AR, liaison, read the proposed Certificate of Applicability. Findings: 1. Any part of this project visible from Spruce Street is within the jurisdiction of the HDC. 2. The HDC rarely approves PV panels because they inherently detract and distract from the architecture of the districts. Each project is considered on its merits. 3. This building fronts on a parking lot, not directly on Spruce Street. 4. The building has minimal character or detail. 5. The existing roof material is modest and must be replaced at certain intervals. 6. This PV panel installation is inherently reversible. 7. This technology is evolving and has a lifespan that will likely result in its removal in the future. On condition: 1. The installation will be limited to 2 rows of PV panels with 18 panels per row with the installation to be centered on the roof plane. Array to be centered left to right on roof per attached drawing. 2. All conduit and metering related to this installation must be hidden from view of the public way. 3. All materials of the installation are assumed to be a dark color and consistent with each other. 4. Array to be placed parallel with the roof plane. AR moved, DH seconded and motion carried unanimously.

62 Windsor Street discussion of density. Steve Steinberg, developer. SS-Moratorium not a good idea. If does not pass will be willing to build fewer homes, and not duplexes. SS says will build 2 single family homes on the 64 and 66 Windsor which will share one driveway between them. Behind the Sussman house (62 Windsor) SS would only build one, accessed through existing driveway. Don't know who is the "other side" but feels honor bound to do the right thing and keep to his promises. Asked for guidance on what the HDC would approve as a new construction project for the single family homes. Has photographed all the homes on the odd numbered side of the street and provided them for the commission as possible starting points for suggested house types.

Neighbors: Renee Robbins asked where homes would be sited. Would be a deed restriction on the property to prevent further subdivision? Would be interested to see site plan. Joe Donahue: Rather see three houses in back of Sussman's house rather than homes along the street with small frontage. PL comment that SS has been willing to listen since the beginning. KAB advisory role of HDC may fit into what Mr. Steinberg wants to do on the parcels outside the district. DH asked what is more advantageous a single family home which actually houses multiple units or two single family homes which might be offset from each other. For the back lot building, think of it as a building rather than a house which the lot might absorb more easily than a house. Gable to the street varying the setbacks might be able to be done but SS has invested in two different designs and cannot do another redesign. SS will return June 11, 2013.

Application #1317 -Sign for 541 Mass Ave. "Studio @ Stewart Design Group" AR, liaison, increased border improves, fine with design. PL changes good. "Studio" jumps out with the subtle color of the S. KAB fine with design, much stronger with letter outside the lines. DH finds the yellow too "peachy" but maybe the printers' idiosyncracies. AR to send abutter notifications, any voting on a motion would be pending abutter notification. AR moved to accept design per attached art work, #1317. Sign to be wood with painted letters, attached art work, mounted to the existing stair enclosure per previous certificates, pending abutter notification. DH seconded. Unanimously approved.

511 Main St. #1314 Jason O'Connor-lighting fixtures, steps, and repairs. Applicant did not attend.

103 Main St. Chris Depew, have appointment for June 11 meeting. DH, liaison, HVAC condenser to be placed at north side of house and screened with holly bushes. AR fine with the drawing as it is. DH noted that the steps should be placed so that the drips from the roof do not cause ice on the steps. Low retaining wall along driveway is very tight for pulling into drive. The proposal is to move the wall to the north about 1 foot to ease the entry.

Moratorium -neighbors in negotiation with developer. KAB suggested that the HDC take a wait and see approach since discussions are ongoing. KAB-update from town counsel which will be written up by Nina Pickering Cook per Steve Ledoux. HDC cannot limit FAR or height restrictions but HDC can decide if a project is incongruous with the district can deny a project on the basis of density as long as reasons articulated clearly.

KAB announced party for HDC members July 20. June meetings will include the election of officers for the coming year.

Meeting adjourned 10:37PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary Michaela Moran", with a stylized, cursive script.

Mary Michaela Moran

Michaela Moran