

Historic District Commission

Meeting, April 10, 2013

Public Safety building, 371 Main St.

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TOWN CLERK, ACTON

Anita Rogers, Kathy Acerbo-Bachmann, David Honn, Pamela Lynn, Michaela Moran in attendance. Meeting called to order at 7:30PM.

Citizen questions: Ron Regan, 30 Windsor Ave., asked what qualifications are needed for commission members? KAB mentioned Acton residency, a strong interest in architecture, and a willingness to meet in the evenings are primary qualifications. She pointed out that each commission member brings a different skill set to the work of the commission. She also outlined the application process to the VCC for commission members.

Minutes for 3/12 and 3/27 will be on the agenda for approval at the next HDC meeting.

KAB outlined the rules under which preliminary discussion of proposed development at 62 Windsor Ave. will be conducted this evening.

Housekeeping:

Pitta household heating installation may not match the approved installation. MM will contact the homeowner with the actual COA and discover the problem with the installation.

Stonewall lecture-lecturer will actually build a miniature stone wall for the audience. Commission members shall bring refreshments. All commission members to utilize sister organizations "blast" lists for publicity.

Next HDC meeting focused on the PH for the Acton School of Ballet application for solar panels. AR to send abutter notices. Members to visit the site individually. PL will go to Marty Abbott of the assessor's office to request a 300' abutters list.

KAB will ask for place holder for bylaws for signage. MM to produce a rough draft of revised signage bylaws for 4/27 meeting.

PL is in the process of Docushare revision and reconciliation.

8:00PM 62 Windsor Ave Proposed development. Peter Conant , Architect, for Steve Steinberg, developer. 2600 SF (without cellar or attic) duplexes 3br, 2.5 baths. 2 asymmetrical masses joined with garages in the middle. Pg 4 perspective drawing . push pull for stairs, p. 5 same building perspective view but other end, craftsman'-style details. Pg. 6 is land/site plan. Existing home will remain along with its garage without carport. Lots E, F, D, C and portions of B are within the Historic District.

PL would like to see the evidence of the screening and a rendering of the street scape. DH discussion and explanation of zoning what it is and what it means: VR zoning 15000 sf lot area, frontage 50', no minimum set back, min open space 20%, no FAR, 36' height limit. 2600sf house will make after calculations, a FAR of approximately .5. 6 lots created,

DH: land area within the district used to add to a lot outside the district, frontage from outside the district and applied it to create building lots. How the buildings fit together and how they relate to each other is what we review. In effect, the density of the project is about 5 times greater than the current density. 1994 change in Zoning should have made an evaluation of every property in the West Acton with regard to the density. It did not. Suggestion that that study be completed now.

KAB: materials question. No discussions with the contractor/developer. Standing seam metal roof, returns. Are buildings in the district identical to those outside the district? PC does not know if the materials will be the same but building.

PC- Massing not significantly different from the home currently on the site if the garage were added to the current home.

KAB design guidelines require traditional materials.

DH how tall is the existing house. ? About 24-26'. Is it your intent to have lots C and D filled or build in the gully? AR- Grade to ridge height of existing house will be critical. 1.5 story house which is being compared to a 2.5 story. Eave plan make the garages seem even more vast. AR- different vocabularies of style seem to be too busy.

DH- called for a site section of the property through the house and back to the back of the property.

Jerry Burke 49 Windsor Ave. – lot outside the district. Suggest the lot to the south, if borrows land from within the district seems to be strange that it not be governed by the HDC bylaw .

Terra Friedrichs- relative to rights and limits of rights is most important to determine before discussion of details. Duty to approve only things which are not detrimental to the district. Concerned about the size of the proposed buildings. Donna Miller 84 Windsor Ave. feels that both lots A and B have taken land from the districts.

Can see the barn from Windsor Ave therefore will be able to see the buildings which might take the place of it. Renee Robins 53 Windsor Ave. Vicinity of the context, physical features, topography, set back landscape, scale, proportion, - with respect to all of these fails to comply with all. This decision will set a precedent for the whole town. Perhaps this should be discussed with boards in other towns to determine their precedents. Notes that the train is visible from every where on Windsor Ave so the idea that the houses would not be visible is invalid.

Eleanor Chenevert- will the garage be torn down?

KAB –demolition is proposed, or building may be moved to another location on the site.

Steve Steinberg, garage to remain.

Blake Lochrie 57 Windsor Ave.- buildings to be built in the rear-grade filled or stepped down? Combination of cut and fill. Will the HDC rule on septic systems, other structures? No, board of health will be involved in that permitting. Donna Miller 84 Windsor Ave. ground water is a problem, could be ground water will be disturbed and run off could be a serious problem .

Annette Lochrie, 57 Windsor-crucial how this decision is made because it is unique in the town and the development of the two properties may change the whole atmosphere of the district .

Pattern of development is clear along the street- One house per lot some with separate garages.

Historic section has no homes with attached garages.

Windsor Green resident, Virginia Loftus, no blending with the current building, no integration, like pulling the whole of the neighborhood into the backyard of #62 Windsor. Fill in will stress Windsor Green beyond its limits- space wise and psychologically.

RR-comment re street and district. No two houses alike on the whole of Windsor Ave. Having 5 identical buildings inappropriate for the district. Question if there is another district in the commonwealth which has approved building another structure in the backyard of existing structures.

Challenge the HDC is up against is that HDC must follow zoning bylaws and its own bylaws.

Premature to discuss the project before all the parameters under which the HDC will make such an important decision are outlined and vetted by town counsel.

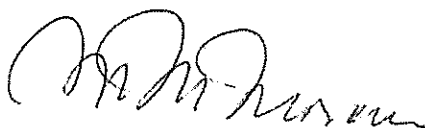
Steve Steinberg, developer, not profit making proposal, do not wish to make a development which is not to the liking of the residents. Would like to know what the neighbors want. Please write to the commission about what is wanted, wish to come up with a solution for the parcels.

Reed Botkin, 53 Windsor-What features do you need to keep for your development? Houses may be somewhat smaller some of them will be sold for about \$175K affordable. Allowed by zoning but not a 40B. Prospective purchasers have to qualify for the affordable units.

KAB asks comments to be sent to the HDC email. All comments will be collected and delivered to the applicant.

Meeting adjourned at 9:36PM.

Respectively submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary Michaela Moran", written in a cursive style.

Mary Michaela Moran

Michaela Moran, Secretary