

Historic District Commission  
Town Hall, Room 126  
Meeting Minutes, 11 August 2015

Meeting called to order at 7:10 PM. Attending: Ron Regan (RR), Anita Rogers (AR), David Foley (DF), David Honn (DH; from 7:25 onward) and David Shoemaker (DS; note-taker), Chingsung Chang (CC, Selectmen Representative)

Citizens: Fran Arsenault, applicants as noted below.

Move to approve June 16 minutes by consent, and approved by vote.

7:10pm      **Citizen's questions** - none

7:12      **Acton Congregational Church.** Paul Bruschetta SPELLING and Dave Clough, Board of Trustees. Significant damage to roof and interior of church. Flat membrane roof; replacement in kind, no changes from the fascia as currently detailed. HDC asks to maintain minimal drip edge, matching trim in color. Surface of roof is not visible. Replicating all visible details.

In addition, there is a problem with the pitched roof. Best solution is a metal panel system on the entire roof. It is said that it is not visible from Concord Road, the road of reference. AR: asks why this particular section needs that attention; it is said it gets shade, cathedral ceiling under insulated, a spot of frequent difficulty of icing. AR recommends putting in insulation while the roof is off; could put rigid insulation – or it could be placed on the ceiling with rework of lighting. Church looking into CPC funding for this. DHS suggests the sum of insulation plus conventional roof may be a good alternative to the metal roof. HDC to take a look from the street to ensure that the roof is in fact not visible.

Request that the applicant amend the present application to add the second, pitched roof. RR gives instruction on the amendment of the application; anticipate a CNA will be appropriate.

- 7:30      **24-26 River Street – Deck** DH: did not hear back from Frank Ramsbottom despite a few requests; FR is on vacation. The deck is on the east side; base is PT, with wood decking , and vinyl railing and fittings. (Satellite Dish on back is still in violation.) HDC (DF) will visit the Building Department to check on a permit.
- 7:36      **590 Mass Ave/Central St. – Chimney and Stairs.** RR: moving slowly. Chimney should be straightforward; recommended molded brick, and owner/contractor is looking into it. Hard to recover the old brick. Windows: HDC previously had an application, #918 and #919, which were not acted upon by owner. RR has requested the specifications of the windows and doors and hardware that are envisioned. There are side vents for defunct heating they wish to remove. Present windows are old – DHS asks if they can be repaired, RR will ask. Back Stairway: not currently enclosed, and code requires it. Proposed replacement is intended to minimize the visual impact; visible face would be roofing with 3-tab shingles plus a door. Wishes to use a 6-panel door; RR has requested image of proposed door. AR would also consider a door with glazing as an appropriate choice – a 9-lite door, for example. AR notes that we must also specify the exterior sills and casings in addition to the windows. A sash replacement may be workable, but repair possibly with addition of a triple track storm window may be both most cost effective and the best preservation approach. RR interacted with owner, and DF with FR and the owner; there are multiple signage violations, and the owner is aware and will respond to a notice from the town. RR will speak to the owner and communicate that the HDC wants the signs removed as a necessary element of carrying through with the application process.
- 7:45      **65 River Street – Deck. DH is recused.** DF picked up application from in-box. Spoke with applicant; replacing upper part of deck and railings with mahogany, with footings unchanged (need to check with to Application). AR If current railings are stained pressure treated wood, would replacing them with unpainted mahogany railings be a replacement in kind? Is it possible to have a replacement in kind with a change in materials? If this was a new deck railing, we might require that it be painted. Will discuss with the owner.

7:50        **Acton Town Hall/Memorial Library Shingle Replacement.** Will be addressed at a later time

8:00        RR recuses (and departs)

8:03        **Public Hearing: Application 1506- 29 Windsor Ave., New Addition.** Tom Peterman presents drawings; Judy Kotanchik . Proposed amendment to, and re-design of, the approved application for the Kotanchik Residence. The owner was sensitive to neighbors' concerns. The architect and owner made modifications to the design to accommodate the neighbors' concerns.

Existing plan shown; request was to add 2-car garage, office, etc. to the plan. House of neighbor on left is very close to the property line. Existing garage is placed such that demolition is effectively the only option to meet the program goals. New construction is principally in the back of the house although with 8' extension to left, and a 2-car garage as far as possible to the back of the property, with no turns leading to headlights straying. The plan includes an exterior access ramp from the garage to the house. Plan to simplify walkways, handrails, and stoop/stairs. New windows are wood units with SDL muntin pattern to match existing windows. Ramp from house to garage is hidden behind skirt and railing. Garage doors are asymmetrically placed on the gable end. For comparison, also presented is an alternate elevation with the garage roof turned perpendicular (stimulated by query from AR) with the ridge parallel to the street.

AR: Requests to look at multiple elevations – Garage roof pitch in both orientations

DHS: likes the modified design, and with Garage roof as first proposed. DH: a stronger design, also like the ramp approach. Over the ramp some alternative to downlights? TP: Downlights are the least visible approach taken. DH: Is there a side door on the garage? No. Street elevation very close to existing house elevation–garage slab elevation will actually will be lower than the street. AR: Surface lights can be broader illumination, but also (DHS) more

visible to neighbors. Prefers the original Garage roof orientation. On 'farmer's porch' would prefer if the railing could be lower? No, code won't allow – unless the height of the porch deck is 30" or less to grade. Certificate will suggest a lower railing/ higher grade approach as a recommendation. Applicant will pursue grade modification approach if possible.

DF: Demolition requires discussion. Existing garage will be demolished. Not mentioned in the history. What's its history? TP: no real information. Looks to be 1920's or so. Not in same style as house. DHS: is it sound? TP: yes, basically. DF: demolition is frowned on, discouraged. TP: not contributing to the historical record. DHS: is there any part that can be reused? TP: windows, maybe? DH: possible to give it away? ? Small enough to transport on a flatbed truck. TP: No room to place on existing terrain. DH: There is an extensive write up on the existing house but the existing garage is not mentioned in the MACRIS history summary.

Public: Andrew Towell (38 Windsor), Renee Robins (53 Windsor), Fran Arsenault (7 Mohegan)

A. Towell: asks about the ramp skirt and railing. Thinks the overall result is quite satisfactory.

R. Robins: Great appreciation for reworking the design. Finds design creative, responds to needs of the owner and the concerns of the neighbors. Notes that the HDC gave input without the neighbors; might have hoped for a broader announcement. HDC encourages all to be pro-active, watching the town web site for activities of interest. Discussion with owner of the flexibility of the design; owner notes that compromises were made. Notes that the approval of demolition had been made for the previous design. But notes that it is important that the specific grounds for this weighty decision be recorded accurately.

AR: makes a motion:

- 1) Move to approve the removal of the attached garage at 29 Windsor Ave., noting that it is not mentioned on the MACRIS list, and that it does not share any details of the other structures on the property and is non-contributing as such. Not

contemporary to the main building. Components, such as door, roofing, etc. are clearly modern. Seconding, voted; motion is passed.

- 2) Motion to approve an amendment to application #1506 now referenced as application #1506 A for 29 Windsor Ave. The new garage is now pushed to the back of the property and connected to the house with an open-sided covered ramp. The garage doors now face the street and are consistent with the similar precedent in the district. Additions of master bed, bath, office as drawn. Roof shingles are 3-tab to match. The reference drawings for this application are dated 20 July 2015. Drawing numbers A100, A101, A300, A301, A350, A320.

Requirement: cut sheets for exterior lighting be submitted before **purchase for HDC approval as an amendment to the application.**

Recommendation: if possible, the grade alongside the new ramp should be held to less than 30" from the highest point of the ramp so that the railing details need not meet code and be adjusted to be lower in height and more open.

Recommendation: Use a low profile surface mounted porch ceiling fixture instead of recessed lighting.

Voted unanimously in favor.

9:05 free discussion with the HDC, applicant, and Citizens about the desirability of 'pushing' information to abutters, and other means of engaging citizens in timely ways. Could add to our homeowner letter how to subscribe to email

9:08 Move to adjourn; seconded and voted unanimously