

Historic District Commission
Town Hall, Room 121
Meeting Minutes, 8 March 2016

Meeting called to order at 7:33 PM. Attending: Ron Regan (RR), Anita Rogers (AR), David Honn (DH), David Shoemaker (DS); not present Chingsung Chang (CC, Selectmen Representative) David Foley (DF), Fran Arsenault (FA)

7:34 PM Citizens Questions: None

7:35 Move to approve Feb 23th Minutes; accepted unanimously.

7:40 Spreadsheet status update /potential use as violation tracker.
AR presents some draft stamp templates. HDC will stamp all documents which did not arrive with the application (and stored by the town), and will then store them in Docushare.

7:45 270-274 Central: Citizens present: T. Fridrichs, W. Fridrichs, R. Robins, R. Thatcher, B. Ingram. DH notes that there is no official application to date. HDC toured the houses on February 28th by invitation of the new owners. No plan was presented at the visit. Expressed a desire to demolish the current buildings and construct new buildings. HDC recommended that an architect should be engaged. DH describes the zoning – W. Acton Village zoning which can accommodate many different uses. 7:49:
Applicants join us. Aaron and Mickey Jeanson.
Informal visit again. Most likely scenario is condominiums. Wants the most possible units on the property, but wishes to work with the HDC to find the best design. HDC members summarized their observations from the property walk-through. Most of the structure looked good, as did the foundations. DHS, AR: indicated their opposition to demolitions. RR: noted that the smaller house was in rougher shape, DHS agreed. Small garage @ 270 looked less likely to preserve or in more need of attention. DH: larger house and garage contains original materials with all significant parts intact – floors, windows, woodwork, tile, pocket doors hardware, etc. Garage @ 270 is not apparently in the historic records, and the back section of the smaller house (270) looks more improvised and perhaps with a questionable foundation and maybe replaceable. Bigger house has multiple entries, porches, back stairs; could be broken into multiple units. Septic system may determine what can be done, and needs research. HDC consensus that the smaller garage and rear addition @ 270

could be removed if the replacement structure is compatible with the existing structures.

Applicants saw a study of a septic plan to accommodate 18 bedrooms. Percolation test may have supported that level of density. New owners hope to use the ground floor of # 270 as their construction company office. Would like to turn the large garage @ #274 90 degrees to help utilize the open space of the property a bit better. Duplicate the larger house or duplicate the garage to maintain the appropriate texture. Would probably leave it as two parcels, sharing the septic between Condominiums.

AR was intrigued to hear that an additional house was located next to 272 Central according to a citizen in attendance at the meeting; one historically interesting approach would be to replicate this lost building. AR notes that the play space needs some privacy. DH notes that uses could be mixed – ground floor offices (rather than retail) and residence upstairs potentially. Citizen comment: savvy builders sensitive to refurbishment and updating buildings could find a lot of clients.

R. Robins: One concern for maximum density is the need for parking, leading to a large quantity of blacktop.

TF: would rather have open, green, space. Packing in buildings will not make that possible. Low income housing could work. Should strive to maintain the green space. TF asks: wishes that the HDC think about massing well before details, materials, and the like. Avoid incremental approvals.

WF: Curious about number of units – but applicants not sure. Would like to see buildings improved, not neglected. The Historic District is for preservation, and that is what is desired. Queries about using #270 for a construction office – would be used for paperwork, no heavy trucks would be parked there

RT – nursery school is a priority to maintain. Children not there in summer. DH: stresses that we would like to have early visits with first ideas; otherwise may have wasted work, money, and time. AR: think of the property as part of a neighborhood – that is important to the HDC. Counsel against using a civil engineer as the site plan designer.

HDC noted that a letter was received from A. Locherie, expressing a strong desire not to have the buildings demolished.

On a separate West Acton Historic District matter:

R. Robins: chain link fence for train RoW is still objectionable. Request to HDC to take some action on this.

- 8:23 LaBelle Roofing: David LaBelle; #3 Spruce Street – Acton Ballet.
Backside (rear slope) without solar panels had some shingles blown off. That roof plane is not visible from the street and the entire roof plane will be replaced with an architectural shingle. The front roof plane (visible from the street) needs a repair in the upper left corner. Because that roof has solar panels, a full replacement is not likely to take place. Standard 3-tab shingles that match the current shingle as closely as possible will be used. D. LaBelle has identified the closest match to the faded current material. Roof planes will now be different on front and back. If a new ridge vent were to be added, the HDC needs to know; prefer low ridge vents over full length.
AR: if it is just a repair, it would be a CNA. If a replacement, or a change of materials, would be a COA. HDC encourages an application to get the process going. If more than a repair, notification of abutters required.
- 8:45 70 School Street Chimney Cap. AR describes the application. HDC approves of the choice.
Move that we approve the installation of a chimney cap at 70 School St. Black painted steel, per the documentation with the application ‘HY-C’ style. Seconded, unanimous. A hearing waiver notice to abutters is needed, FA to pursue.
- 8:50 Letters required:
 Homeowners Letters (FH)
 AWC CPC approval of funding (DH)
 Land Use Director invitation (DH)
 HDC Notification of projects in districts (DH)
 by other committees and departments
Violations discussions:
 12 School Street Roofing
 26 School Street Antennae Mast
 Various signage locations
- 9:15 Move to adjourn; seconded and voted unanimously