

SALEM HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MINUTES
June 7, 2023

A meeting of the Salem Historical Commission was held on Wednesday, June 7, 2023 at 6:00PM via **Zoom Virtual Meeting**. Present were: Larry Spang (Chair), Milo Martinez, Mark Meche, Jamie Graham. Staff: Patti Kelleher Not present: Vijay Joyce, Rebecca English, Mark Pattison, Kelly Tyler-Lewis.

149 Federal Street—continuation

Joseph Archambault submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for paint colors, siding removal and fencing.

Ms. Kelleher reported that the applicants requested a continuation to June 21 meeting.

VOTE: Mr. Martinez motioned to continue application to June 21 meeting. Ms. Graham seconded the motion. Roll Call: Martinez, Graham, Meche, Spang were in favor and the motion so carried.

393 Essex Street—continuation

Old Fezziwig LLC submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to recreate front fence.

Documents & Exhibits

- Application: 3/7/23
- Slideshow/photographs

Julia Mooradian, Seger Architects, was present to present recreation of front fence. Applicants had been asked to provide more details for columns in the fence. Elevation of house was shown to include columns between fencing, as well as detail for columns, spickets, and base. Each section to left and right of front door is 18' 4", there are four columns, existing granite base, and the columns are 10x10 wood columns to be painted white, the base and spickets are to be painted black; the spacing between spickets will be 5" on center, 1.25" wide spokes, a 2" top rail, an 8" wood base above the granite. Column detail was also provided from woodworker. Additional measurements of column were described. Chair Spang clarified that only four posts total will feature in fence (at corners of front façade as well as left and right of front entranceway). Ms. Mooradian noted that previous historic pictures featured black fences with black columns. Ms. Mooradian noted that proposal is to paint wood fencing black. Mr. Martinez surmised that the original fence was likely iron if the posts were granite. Mr. Martinez questioned incorporation of a Gothic detail on the proposed posts/columns as a profile which would not fit a Georgian aesthetic; he suggested framing it out square instead. Mr. Meche agreed with Mr. Martinez. Mr. Meche also remarked on the length of the run, suggesting that the horizontal rail would need to be fairly stout or reinforced somehow. Historic photographs of property were shown, some of which showed more ornate columns. Chair Spang expressed partiality to having posts and fence in uniform color. Mr. Martinez stated that a black fence may be lost against the dark background of the house. Mr. Martinez said it would make sense to match fence color with trim of house. Mr. Meche expressed favor for cast iron, which is not typically painted white. Ms. Graham was not in favor of attempting – with paint – to make wood resemble or mimic another metal (i.e. cast iron). Ms. Mooradian was amenable to painting columns and fence white, based on input from Commission. Chair Spang asked if the group was comfortable with fence as drawn, with slight modification of square edge reveal for post rather than arched and painted to match trim.

There was no public comment.

VOTE: Mr. Meche motioned to approve application as shown with modification of square edge reveal for post rather than arched, painted to match trim. Ms. Graham seconded the motion. Roll Call: Martinez, Graham, Meche, Spang were in favor and the motion so carried.

275 Lafayette Street—continuation

MD Property Development LLC submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to renovate building and new construction.

Ms. Kelleher reported that the applicants requested a continuation to the next meeting on June 21.

VOTE: Ms. Graham motioned to continue the application to the June 21 meeting. Mr. Martinez seconded the motion. Roll Call: Martinez, Meche, Graham, Spang were in favor and the motion so carried.

12 Carpenter Street—continuation

William Grover submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to install solar panels.

Ms. Kelleher reported that the applicant requested a continuation to June 21 meeting.

VOTE: Mr. Meche motioned to continue application to June 21 meeting. Mr. Martinez seconded the motion. Roll Call: Martinez, Graham, Meche, Spang were in favor and the motion so carried.

1 Harrington Court—continuation

Deirdre Majeski submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for new roof, trim, and gutters.

The applicant was not present.

VOTE: Mr. Martinez to continue application to June 21 meeting. Mr. Meche seconded the motion. Roll Call: Martinez, Graham, Meche, Spang were in favor and the motion so carried.

24 Chestnut Street

Nathan Ritsko submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a new skylight.

Documents & Exhibits

- Application: 4/18/23
- Slideshow/photographs

Peter Pitman of Pitman & Wardley Associates was present on behalf of owner. Two-family house. Single unit on the first floor; with second floor and attic space a townhouse. The second floor was

finished as a series of bedrooms, keeping a similar configuration as currently existing. Property is at corner of Chestnut and Hamilton. Mr. Pitman showed an existing skylight on property which is copper-framed; used for natural light as well as to vent attic floor. The intent is to introduce a second skylight – 30” by 30” – with continuous copper flashing (which will patina). Mr. Pitman pointed out that no dormers exist; the only natural light is at extreme ends of two gables. Mr. Pitman indicated that the skylight would be meant to facilitate natural ventilation above staircase that comes up through the unit. An image of the Velux skylight product was shown, though Mr. Pitman noted that the proposed skylight would be smaller in dimension.

Mr. Martinez questioned if an aerial view or site plan were available to show what the roof looks like. Mr. Pitman pointed to a tax map to show the proposed installation location and indicated that the skylight would not be visible from Hamilton, though it would be visible from Chestnut. Mr. Martinez clarified that a skylight already exists, which Mr. Pitman affirmed and noted that existing would be staying. Mr. Martinez asked if the size of existing skylight was known, which Mr. Pitman said could be determined; noting that it was skinnier and longer than what was currently being proposed. Ms. Graham asked if the new skylight would be operable, which Mr. Pitman confirmed, adding that the skylight would be just off the landing of the stairwell and could be easily reached. The proposed skylight would raise up about 4” to vent, and the current skylight can go higher (it has a cast-iron extension rod with locking mechanism).

Chair Spang remarked on an odd feature of the existing roof above the stairway in question, in which the roof bumps upward from rest of roof. Mr. Pitman noted that the planned skylight would be in this area, somewhat in or near the shadow of existing chimney.

Mr. Martinez expressed favor towards matching existing skylight in size but was otherwise open to proposed skylight. Mr. Pitman noted that the size of the selected Velux skylight was attractive in terms of being most historically appropriate option.

There was no public comment.

VOTE: Ms. Graham motioned to approve application as submitted, with an amendment for applicant to submit roof plan/architectural drawing prior to final installation. Mr. Meche seconded the motion. Roll Call: Martinez, Graham, Meche, Spang were in favor and the motion so carried.

119 Federal Street

Fred and Linda Lipton submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for fencing.

Documents & Exhibits

- Application: 5/22/23
- Slideshow/photographs

Fred and Linda Lipton were present. Mr. Lipton noted having patio at end of driveway with 4’ fence. Would like to install fence and gate for privacy at end of driveway. The fence would match existing fence that exists between applicants’ and neighbor’s home. The colors intended would be White Dove (Benjamin Moore) for lattice and gate, and Colorado Gray (Benjamin Moore) for the body of the fence.

Chair Spang questioned if pictures were available showing the existing sideyard fence. Photo of a fence was shown featuring 4' board and 2' lattice fence.

Mr. Meche questioned whether the Commission had ever approved a lattice top to a fence. Chair Spang noted that diagonal lattice is modern, whereas more historic representation would be square (horizontal and vertical). Ms. Lipton cited section of historic guidelines that indicated acceptability of lattice tops, and spoke to the extent of diagonal design elements in the applicants' garden. Mr. Lipton noted that the planned lattice would be tighter in orientation, differentiating the proposed lattice versus those featuring more pronounced spaces/gaps.

Discussion shifted to the planned gate. Ms. Lipton noted that the ambition was to be graceful and polished. Mr. Lipton noted that carpenter(s) would be building the fence and gate to the applicants' design specifications.

Chair Spang was appreciative of the intention to match a diagonal lattice with diagonal features in the garden, though commented that the proposal appeared to be more of a modern artifice. Chair Spang recommended pushing the cross rail on the gate to align with horizontals on the fence to make consistent. Chair Spang also recommended a down arch rather than an up arch. The applicants were open to these recommendations. Chair Spang also inquired as to the applicants' openness to painting the lattice, fence, and gate all the same color, based on the sense that the white lattice reads as an afterthought which was added. Mr. Lipton noted that the intended "white" color would be the White Dove, which was creamier than the white-painted lattice shown in photographs.

Mr. Martinez remarked on the fact that many fencing and construction types are converging at this spot, thus making a site visit appropriate. The applicants cited time constraints with upcoming family events on property, indicating the desire to move application along. Mr. Martinez noted that plans featuring measurements are typically needed for Commission members to vote and/or approve projects. Mr. Meche agreed that more details need to be worked out before this project is built, let alone voted on for potential approval.

Chair Spang volunteered to visit the applicants' property.

Public comment:

Darleen Melis noted that the applicants have built a very elegant fence the entire length of their backyard which includes arch lattices, passageways, etc., all of which are diamond-shaped lattice work. Ms. Melis noted having lived next to the property since 1983. Ms. Melis also noted that the fence may be more stable if the gate is directly attached to a post which would be attached to the house.

VOTE: Mr. Martinez motioned to continue the application to June 21 meeting. Ms. Graham seconded the motion. Roll Call: Martinez, Graham, Meche, Spang were in favor and the motion so carried.

259 Washington Street

259 Washington St LLC submitted an application for a waiver of the Demolition Delay Ordinance to demolish a 1930 building.

Documents & Exhibits:

- Application: 5/18/23
- Slideshow/photographs

Mike Becker was present to represent 259 Washington St LLC. Images of the building were shown of one-story hip roof building, built approximately in the 1930s, and thus subject to 12-month delay, according to Ms. Kelleher. Mr. Becker noted that cracks in masonry exist approximately every 6' to 8'. Mr. Becker initially bought property as a redevelopment project with the intention of salvaging property, though has reconsidered upon further inspection of conditions. Mr. Meche clarified that the property in question was a separate parcel from the neighboring buildings, which Mr. Becker confirmed. Ms. Kelleher noted that this building is part of a proposed National Register district which includes this part of Washington St. The property's inclusion within such a proposed district was determined important context for assessing historical significance. Mr. Meche expressed desire to see the building in-person.

Mr. Becker shared additional space for parking as a reason to seek demolition. Zoning for the awkward-shaped lot was also onerous. Chair Spang determined the location of the property lot line. Chair Spang recommended a site visit to applicant and Commission members to observe the cracks in the building. Mr. Becker's concern about the compromised bricks stemmed from the intent to add weight on top of existing structure.

Public comment:

A letter of opposition was received from Historic Salem, citing unique characteristics of 259 Washington which are representative of 1930s Craftsman architecture, and represent a notable element of the post-Great Salem Fire reconstruction period. The builder, Alfred Audet, was a leader of Salem's French-Canadian community who undertook significant investment in the city both before and after the fire. He was also a well regarded community leader, who made significant contributions to the city's parks and as an officer of the credit union serving the French Canadian populace. The letter asked the Commission to consider that unique properties have historical value in the city and are deserving of preservation. HSI submitted a 13-page document on Alfred Audet, showing the builder's Salem projects, including a garage, tennis court, skating rink, and garden in one.

VOTE: Mr. Martinez motioned to continue application to the June 21, 2023 meeting. Ms. Graham seconded the motion. Roll Call: Martinez, Graham, Meche, Spang were in favor and the motion so carried.

Other Business**143 Derby St (Captain Dusty's Project)**

The applicants requested a meeting with appointed Commissioners Martinez, Joyce, and Meche to review final details.

Camp Naumkeag

Ms. Kelleher noted that the City was slated to return at June 21 meeting to present final presentation on Camp Naumkeag, given the expiration of the Demolition Delay waiver on July 19. The building

inspector made a determination that relocating would not constitute demolition (i.e. would not require a demolition permit).

Tree Removal

Darleen Melis was present and asked about the Commission's jurisdiction over landscape, specifically concerning the removal of trees from properties, to which Chair Spang responded that the Commission does not have much jurisdiction beyond advocacy. The question was also asked with regard to curb cuts, which Ms. Kelleher noted typically goes through the Engineering Department. Ms. Melis also asked if applicants are removing trees in favor of installing solar panels. Chair Spang noted that solar panel discussions do not typically include trees. Ms. Melis noted that many trees planted over the past 30 years have been buried too deeply for their survival, and that too much mulch at the base of the tree is to be avoided.

Adjournment

VOTE: Ms. Graham motioned to adjourn. Mr. Martinez seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion so carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:03PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Dan Graham, Historical Commission Clerk