

DRAFT
SALEM HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MINUTES
March 2, 2016

A meeting of the Salem Historical Commission was held on Wednesday, March 2, 2016 at 7:00 pm at 120 Washington Street, Salem, MA. Present were Jessica Herbert (Chair), Laurie Bellin, Reed Cutting, Kathryn Harper, David Hart, Susan Keenan, Joanne McCrae, Jane Turiel. Staff: Patti Kelleher.

18 Washington Square West (continued)

The Hawthorne Hotel submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace 40 existing wood windows with Marvin Ultimate insulated/double pane wood window units.

Documents & Exhibits

- Application: 12/31/15
- Photographs

Ms. Kelleher reported that the Applicant has requested a continuance.

82 Derby Street

Debra Lewis Hogan and Lawrence Hogan submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to remove the Derby Street entry door and transom window and install a new fiberglass six-panel door with glazing in upper panels and a new entablature trim.

Documents & Exhibits

- Application: 2/10/16
- Photographs

The applicants Debra Hogan and Larry Hogan were present. Their builder Bob Irvine was also present.

Ms. Bellin asked what the trim is presently.

Mr. Irvine stated that the trim is 1"x5" plywood.

There was no public comment.

Ms. Harper asked about the design of the new panel above the door.

Mr. Irvine showed a photo of a paneled door located at 85 Derby Street, which is similar to what the applicant is proposing. He stated that the entablature would go over the transom window but would not be triangular like at #85 since a fire box is in the way at 82 Derby Street.

Ms. Bellin questioned where the panel will be placed.

Mr. Irvine stated that the solid panel will go above the space where the transom is now located.

Ms. Harper noted that the doorway was very unusual with a tall narrow door with no trim and a tall transom window above.

Ms. Herbert asked if it was possible to put a dark board behind the transom window, which would hide the dropped ceiling behind the transom but would allow the transom window to remain in place.

Mr. Irvine expressed concern about the energy efficiency of the existing single-paned transom window and asked if the applicant could install a double-glazed transom window with applied muntins.

Ms. Herbert asked about the material of the door header.

Mr. Irvine responded that it was either granite or concrete.

Ms. Herbert questioned whether the header should be painted to reveal it or cover it in wood if the transom is retained with backing behind it.

Ms. Bellin noted that this scenario would result in two sets of windows – one in the door and a blind one in the transom.

Mr. Irvine responded that if the transom was kept, then there was no need for lights in the door.

Ms. Harper stated that she didn't believe the door looked historic as existing. She asked if the decorative entablature could go over the space where the existing transom is now located.

Ms. Kelleher stated that her initial understanding of the proposed design included the placement of the entablature where the transom is now located, but she was incorrect.

Ms. Hogan expressed the need to have lights in the door to light the interior hall and stair.

Ms. Herbert asked Mr. Irvine if he intended to enlarge the molding on the sides of the door.

Mr. Irvine responded in the affirmative, stating that he could use a 1"x6" board but couldn't go too wide due to the proximity of an existing downspout and firebox.

Ms. Herbert expressed her belief that the door trim needed to be heavier than existing.

Ms. Bellin stated that she was still concerned about the exaggerated height of the door.

Mr. Irvine responded that the pediment is proposed to be 10" high.

The Commission asked if the applicant has selected paint colors for the door.

Ms. Hogan said that they had not yet selected colors.

Mr. Hart arrived at this point in the meeting

Ms. Harper noted that there was another building at the corner of Derby and Carlton Streets with a plain door that could serve as a design example. She said that this door may be more appropriate for 92 Derby Street, which is brick and industrial in appearance. She noted that there may be other examples in the neighborhood where doors are treated plainly and recommended that the door at #92 be simple in scale and design.

Mr. Irvine stated that he could enlarge molding from 4" to 6" and would keep it plain and simple with no detail.

The Commission agreed that a simpler surround was more appropriate.

Ms. Bellin asked the applicants if there was an urgency for the project. She asked if it was possible for them to provide a mockup or drawing for the Commission to review at the next meeting since there was such a variety of alternatives being discussed.

The Applicants reiterated their need for windows to allow light into the building.

Ms. Bellin recommended that the side molding around the door be wider than the center vertical stile of the door.

Mr. Irvine responded that a 4" wide molding was standard but he could add a 6" or 8" wide molding and he could alter the molding of the pediment to make it more appealing.

Ms. Herbert agreed with Ms. Bellin's request to have a drawing depicting actual dimensions of the door, surround and pediment.

Ms. Harper recommended that the applicant look at other examples of doorways in the Derby Street neighborhood.

Ms. Harper asked the applicant if they were proposing a fiberglass or wood door.

Mr. Irvine stated that the owners proposed a fiberglass door due to concerns that a wood door would deteriorate quickly since it would be located directly on the ground.

Ms. Herbert stated that she normally preferred wood but noted that this is a commercial building.

Ms. Harper noted that the Carlton Street property she referenced earlier is a wood door with a kick plate.

Mr. Cutting expressed his feeling that a wood door and surround was preferable and Commission members agreed

VOTE: Mr. Cutting made a motion to continue the hearing. Ms. Turiel seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the motion so carried.

Ms. Keenan arrived at this point in the meeting

287-291 Lafayette Street

Renewal Ventures LLC submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to install a freestanding aluminum post-and-panel sign measuring 36" x 48" with top panel set 72" above ground.

Documents & Exhibits

- Application: 2/12/16
- Photographs
- Sign specifications dated 3/5/15

The Applicants representatives Ben Szalewicz and Phillip Merkle were present.

Ms. Herbert asked the applicants to explain the process of the sign, which is already installed.

Mr. Merkle also questioned the process, noting that the University had received approval for the sign from the City. He noted that the University was a tenant in the building, not the owner.

Ms. Herbert asked if the sign's design was a standard design for the University.

Mr. Merkle answered in the affirmative but stated that the sign at this property was intentionally made smaller and positioned closer to the building to respect the appearance of the historic building. He presented images of other signs on the University campus.

Ms. Herbert noted the challenge of balancing an historic neighborhood with commercial uses.

Ms. Bellin noted that the sign was already installed and the application was prompted by a complaint filed with the Commission. She asked if the safety pole required review by the Commission. She stated that this pole was more distracting than the sign.

Mr. Merkle stated that the University tried to locate in the safety pole in the least obtrusive place but it needs to be visible.

Mr. Szalewicz stated that the safety pole is consistent with other safety poles on campus.

Ms. Harper asked if the pole was lit all the time and if it had to be orange.

Mr. Szalewicz stated that the University prefers orange for consistency purposes but could consider other colors.

Ms. Bellin noted that the post was not located on the actual campus and could perhaps be a different color.

Mr. Hart asked about the purpose of emergency pole.

Mr. Merkle stated that the emergency device connects directly to University police and can serve as a broadcast feature.

Mr. Hart noted that there were examples of other call boxes in historic districts in the city but they were connected to the fire department.

Mr. Cutting asked if there a requirement that safety call boxes be installed.

Mr. Merkle expressed the University's desire to have call boxes in clear visibility of all students at all locations of campus.

Ms. Harper expressed her preference that the sign be designed more in keeping with the classical nature of the building. She stated that it would be better to have the post of the safety pole be painted black since students are familiar with safety pole.

Ms. McCrae stated her belief that the sign was visually obtrusive in the historic district.

Ms. Herbert asked for public comment.

Joyce Kenney, who lives diagonally from the subject property, commented that the blue light on the safety pole reflects directly into her bedroom creating a nuisance.

Ms. Herbert read letters from Councillor Josh Turiel and residents Polly Wilbert and Pat Markunas into the record. Ms. Markunas wrote in support of the proposal. Councillor Turiel and Ms. Wilbert expressed concern that the sign design was not appropriate for the historic district. Ms. Wilbert also requested that the Commission consider the inappropriateness of the safety pole in the district and ask for alternative signage and emergency public safety stanchion.

There were no other public comments.

VOTE: Ms. Bellin made motion to continue the application. Ms. Turiel seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the motion so carried.

Mr. Szalewicz asked if the City has sign guidelines.

The Commission responded that the Salem Redevelopment Authority/Design Review Board has sign guidelines.

Mr. Hart asked if the Commission has jurisdiction to review the light pole.

Ms. Herbert responded in the affirmative and asked the applicant if the University would consider alternatives to the light pole as designed.

Ms. Bellin expressed her concern about the vertical posts painted in orange.

Ms. Harper stated that she would prefer a sign that was more appropriate for the historic district.

Ms. Herbert suggested that she and Ms. Kelleher assist the applicant with identifying other solutions and examples of appropriate sign designs elsewhere in the city.

Ms. Bellin stated that she would like to see sign examples from other schools.

Mr. Szalewicz stated that most schools like to keep their signs consistent.

Mr. Cutting stated that he was most concerned about the use of orange for the posts.

Mr. Merkle stated that the University had first placed the sign perpendicular to the street but determined that it was too visible, so moved the sign back and turned it to face the street.

40 Summer Street

The applicant, Patrick Schulte and Michelle Stuler submitted an application to add a deck and railing on roof of existing one-story rear addition.

The applicant's architect Gary Canner was present.

Documents & Exhibits

- Application: 2/16/16
- Photographs
- Drawings by Architectural Designworks dated 2/14/16
- Paint color sample – C2-330 “Cappuccino Frost”

Mr. Canner presented drawings of the proposed deck and railing. He noted that the proposed design matches a railing already on the building and colors proposed match the color of the existing house trim.

Ms. Herbert asked if there was to be a door to the deck, although she noted that if so, it would probably not be visible.

Mr. Canner responded that the owner has decided to keep the existing window in place and will it as an egress to the deck.

Ms. Herbert praised the work already done on the house, noting that the painting and windows are superb.

Mr. Canner noted that project included relocating a non-visible exhaust vent in the roof of the addition.

Ms. Herbert asked if the only view of the proposed deck and railing is from Summer Street.

Mr. Canner responded that there are also limited views from Broad Street.

Mr. Canner directed the Commission to see page 5 of the proposed drawings which shows the details of the decking, which will be easily removable for cleaning and accessing roof of addition.

Ms. Bellin noted that several views in the drawings don't correlate, specifically a dormer is missing in the drawing.

Mr. Canner responded that was correct and he inadvertently left out the dormer in the drawing.

Ms. Bellin questioned the visibility of the finished deck and expressed her opinion that the deck would not be highly visible.

Ms. Harper and Ms. Keenan asked about the use of using deck tiles for the floor of the roof.

Mr. Canner responded that the roof of the underlying addition is sloped. He also stated that the use of deck tiles allows easier access to the roof than traditional decking, which would be fully secured to the roof.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Canner asked the Commission if a review would be required if the owners decided to change the window to a door.

Ms. Kelleher responded that if the door was not visible it could be considered for a Certificate of Non-Applicability.

Ms. Bellin noted that the door would be visible if it was left open.

VOTE: Mr. Hart made a motion to approve the application as submitted. Ms. Bellin seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the motion so carried.

331 Lafayette Street, 335 Lafayette Street and 5-7 West Avenue

The applicant, Lee Family Enterprises, submitted an application for a waiver of the demolition delay ordinance to demolish all buildings on the subject properties.

Ms. Herbert read into the record the Applicant's request for a continuance.

VOTE: Ms. Bellin made a motion to continue. Ms. McCrea seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the motion so carried.

Other Business

33 Warren Street

The owner Joseph Kaye was present.

Ms. Herbert provided a history of the owner's request for approval to construct a rear deck and the Commission's approval of a Certificate of Non-Applicability and the issuance of violation notice for the project.

Ms. Herbert also questioned whether a door hood at 35 Warren Street was removed without approval.

Mr. Kaye discussed his deck and its similarity to another deck at the property. He also noted that when he submitted the application, the rear of his property was not visible.

Ms. Herbert asked if the deck railings are to remain a natural finish.

Mr. Kaye responded that the railings will be painted to match rest of deck.

Mr. Hart asked for clarification on the process of approval.

Ms. Kelleher provided information on the process of the Applicant's application, which began as a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness and was changed to a Certificate for Non-Applicability by staff.

Mr. Hart questioned the use of the term "reconstruct" on the Applicant's application.

Mr. Kaye stated that he intended to "reconstruct" a deck that was on the property in 1910 based on the dimensions of the concrete pad that remains at his property and that is identical to the deck at 35 Warren Street.

Ms. Harper provided history on the construction of the property and its rear decks, which were originally a small landing with stairs.

Mr. Kaye presented photographs of his previous deck and the new deck as well as photographs of the deck at 35 Warren Street and the atrium at 31 Warren Street.

The Commission considered the process for approval of the deck and whether or not it required a public hearing process.

The owner of 5 Flint Street expressed his concern about the lack of a public hearing process for the deck.

The Commission discussed the seasonal visibility of the deck.

Ms. Herbert asked if the Commission could discuss the appropriateness of the deck as built.

Mr. Hart and Ms. Bellin expressed their concerns about discussing the deck without proper procedure through the public hearing process.

The Commission requested staff to seek an opinion from the City Solicitor regarding the validity of the Commission's approval and whether or not the deck is in violation.

The Commission discussed whether the applicant needed to attend the next meeting for his pending application for new planting beds.

VOTE: *Mr. Hart made a motion to seek a legal opinion from the City Solicitor. Ms. Turiel seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion so carried.*

Mr. Kaye asked to continue his pending application for raised planting beds to April 6, 2016.

Universal Steel/FW Webb

Mr. Hart recused himself from the discussion as an abutter to an abutter.

Ms. Herbert reported that Historic Salem, Inc. has requested the Commission to submit an opinion on the project. She noted that the neighborhood has expressed concerns about health issues, which is not within the Commission's purview, and the design of the new building. The Commission will review the demolition of Alpha Auto under the waiver of the demolition delay ordinance but does not have any other specific review authority.

The Commission agreed that it would like to be involved in the design of any new development on the site to ensure that it does not impact the adjacent historic district.

Ms. Herbert also recommended that the Commission seek involvement in the future use of the historic brick building.

The Commission agreed to send a letter to the Mayor and the City Councilor to state that the property abuts an historic district and could have an impact on the visual integrity of the district and that it would like to be involved in discussion regarding the future use of the historic brick building.

VOTE: *Mr. Cutting made a motion to submit a letter to the Mayor and the City Council seeking involvement in the future development of the property. Ms. Turiel seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the motion so carried.*

Updates

Proctor's Ledge

Ms. Kelleher reported that a public meeting was held to discuss the proposed design of a memorial at Proctor's Ledge. The landscape architect Martha Lyons will incorporate comments from the meeting to develop three design scenarios for consideration. She noted that the City originally purchased the site in the 1930s for a memorial but did not pursue construction.

Salem Jail – new restaurant

Ms. Kelleher reported that a new restaurant will be going into the restaurant space at the Jail. The owner is considering opportunities to incorporate the history of the Parker Brothers into the space. Ms. McCrea reported that there is public concern about the loss of public land for parking spaces and that the Parker Brothers label is now owned by Hasbro and is difficult to utilize.

City Hall paintings

Ms. Kelleher reported that the conservator hired by the City with CPA grant funds is in the process of restoring the paintings and city staff recently visited the workshop to see the efforts. She asked if any commission members were interested in visiting the conservator to see the progress. Ms. Keenan and Ms. Herbert both expressed interest.

Meeting Minutes

VOTE: *Mr. Cutting made a motion to approve the minutes of February 3, 2016. Ms. Keenan seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the motion so carried.*

VOTE: *Ms. Bellin made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Cutting seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the motion so carried.*

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Kelleher
Community Development Planner