

SALEM HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MINUTES
November 6th, 2019

A meeting of the Salem Historical Commission was held on Wednesday, November 6th, 2019 at 7:00 pm at 98 Washington Street, Salem, MA. Present were Larry Spang, David Hart, Rebecca English, Reed Cutting, Mark Pattison, Erin Schaeffer, Stacey Norkum, Vijay Joyce and Milo Martinez.

4 Carpenter Street

David and Heidi Guarino submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for paint colors.

Documents & Exhibits

- Application: 10/21/19
- Photographs & Paint chips

David Guarino was present

Mr. Guarino presented the project for new paint colors and stated that the project would be completed by Osgood painters. He explained that the main body of the house would be painted in “Newburyport blue” which is applicable to historic homes. The trim would be “Winter Snow”, the front door Benjamin Moore “Caliente” and the porch ceiling “Greenhow Blu”. Ms. Norkum asked if the shutter color would remain black. Mr. Guarino said yes. Mr. Pattison asked about other colors of houses in the area, he said he found a similar color house at 16 Kosciusko Street.

There was no public comment.

Ms. Schafer asked what color the banisters and stairs would be, and Mr. Guarino answered they would remain the same. Mr. Martinez asked if the shutters were painted recently, and Mr. Guarino said no, but he realized that the shutters paint should be in the scope of work and they would be painted black.

VOTE: Mr. Cutting made a motion to approve the application as presented with the caveat that the shutters and window sash to remain as existing or painted a satin black finish. Ms. Norkum seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion so carried.

20 Beckford Street

Kirstin and Paul Bunker submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for new gutters and downspouts.

Documents & Exhibits

- Application: 09/20/19
- Photographs & Gutter specifications

Kirstin Bunker was present.

Mr. Hart excused himself as an abutter.

Ms. Bunker presented the application to fix the existing gutters and add a gutter to the back side.

Mr. Spang asked about the location of the existing gutters. Ms. Bunker explained the gutters are all over the house except the back side. Mr. Spang asked what material the existing gutters are and would they be replaced in kind. Ms. Bunker replied yes and that they are currently a combination of plastic and aluminum.

Ms. Kelleher noted that the current downspouts are aluminum and are painted to match the house color.

Ms. Bunker said they would need two more downspouts. Ms. Norkun asked if the downspouts would pour water out on the sidewalk. Ms. Bunker replied that she was not sure.

Mr. Pattison asked where the water from the downspout at the back corner of the house releases and if the owners have had any water issues in the past. Ms. Bunker replied no, but that she assumes she will have problems in the future if they do not replace the deteriorated gutters and downspouts.

Ms. Norkun expressed her opinion that if the Commission was going to approve a new downspout on the rear of the building, it should replicate the location of the downspout on the façade on corner board. Mr. Pattison expressed his opinion that aluminum gutters were not appropriate for historic homes

There was no public comment.

VOTE: Mr. Martinez made a motion to approve the in-kind replacement of existing aluminum gutters and downspouts to be painted to match the existing and to install a new aluminum gutter with two downspouts on rear (north) elevation. Downspout on NW corner to be installed behind fence and adjacent to cornerboard. All to be painted to match existing paint color. Mr. Cutting seconded the motion. Seven members were in favor and one member (Mr. Pattison) was opposed. The motion so carried.

9 Cambridge Street

Andrea and Colin Grant submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for architectural roof shingles.

Documents & Exhibits

- Application: 10/22/19
- Photographs & Shingle sample

Andrea and Colin Grant were present.

Mr. Grant presented the application to re-shingle the asphalt roof with an architectural shingle. His contractor strongly recommended the architectural shingle due to the presence of a large poplar tree next to the house which is causing lichen to grow on the roof. He presented a sample of the shingle and said this was a low contrast that would blend in with the neighborhood.

Mr. Spang asked if any additional work was being done. Mr. Grant replied that the trim along the roof line was going to be replaced as part of the project.

Ms. Kelleher reminded the Commission that the owners recently received approval to replace the gutters with fiberglass.

Mr. Hart asked what type of shingle was proposed. Mr. Grant replied that the contractor recommended 3tab shingles "CertainTeed Landmark Pro" in a charcoal black. Mr. Pattison asked if he were sure the shingles were actually 3tab. Ms. Norkun noted that the Commission did not approve this type of shingle because of the angled cut. She stated that the straight-edge Slateline shingle was more appropriate but noted that the

Commission should consider other products that may be available. Mr. Hart agreed, stating that he did not like the angled finish and much preferred the straight line. Mr. Grant said the angle cut helps with the water run-off. He noted that the owner of 6 Cambridge Street had recently received approved for the same architectural shingle that he is proposing. Ms. Kelleher reported that this was the case.

Mr. Spang asked for public comment.

Ms. Herbert asked for a list of shingles approved by the Commission. Ms. Kelleher reported that the Commission has approved three types of architectural shingles, but two models are no longer being manufactured. She also noted that there are composite shingles available that look similar to wood and slate shingles, noting that the Commission approved a composite wood shingle on Federal Street approximately one year ago as a test case to see how they would hold up.

Mr. Spang asked when they plan on doing the work. Mr. Grant said next Spring, he said he thought the Highland slate was the closest to the Certainteed. Mr. Pattison expressed concern that due to the height of this building's gambrel roof, the roof shingles will be very visible. Mr. Spang suggested the Board go out and look at examples of houses. Ms. Herbert said that past approvals were based on visibility. Mr. Spang suggested a site visit and Ms. Schafer suggested more time to research on different products.

VOTE: Mr. Reed made a motion to continue to the December 4th meeting. Mr. Hart seconded, all were in favor and the motion so carried.

6 Federal Court - continuation

In a continuation from a previous public hearing, Federal Court Realty Trust submitted an application for a Certificate of Hardship to demolish a carriage house.

Documents & Exhibits

- Application: 8/5/19
- Photographs
- Engineers Report

Mary Richards and Attorney John Fitzpatrick were present.

Mr. Hart recused himself as an abutter.

Ms. Kelleher provided an update on the project. She reported that Commissioners Martinez, Joyce and Norkun attended a site visit with a representative from the North Bennet Street School at the property to view the building's condition. She noted that they were able to view the inside of the building through an opened door. The North Bennet Street School representative stated that there was a significant amount of damage to the structure and felt that it was not an exceptional example of a carriage house design. He stated that he felt it was not structurally sound and there was not a lot that could be salvaged. Ms. Kelleher noted that Attorney Fitzpatrick distributed a flyer to garner interest in the building.

Mr. Martinez reported that it was too precarious for the attendees to walk around inside but they were able to see a significant amount of damage, the roof framing had collapsed and sunlight was visible through the roof and walls. Ms. Norkun agreed stating that due to the lack of a roof, the weather had created significant damage to the floor. She said the foundation is impressive, the four walls appeared to be in good condition, but the presence of a cable system was likely keeping the building from caving in. Mr. Fitzpatrick noted that the cable system was completed by a City-hired engineer as part of previous litigation. Ms. Norkun

said it was difficult to determine if the building could stand by itself without the cables. Ms. Norkum disagreed with the representative on his opinion that the building was an unremarkable stick frame carriage barn. Ms. Kelleher stated that it is one of a few remaining carriage houses in Salem and it is historically significant. Mr. Spang asked if it were a single span roof and Mr. Martinez replied that he believed it was. Mr. Joyce stated that it looks like there was space for a second floor and there may have been posts.

Mr. Cutting asked if Commission members felt that in its current condition, the building should be demolished. Mr. Spang asked if there were anything salvageable. Mr. Martinez replied that maybe the corbels and the foundation stones. Mr. Spang said he thought the North Bennet Rep had mentioned that some items could be salvaged. Attorney Fitzpatrick stated that the structure was dangerous, which was expressed by neighbors at the last meeting who recommended it be demolished due to safety concerns.

Mr. Spang asked for public comments.

Ms. Herbert said that the pictures from the site visit highlighted the building's condition and that there was little hope for saving it. Ms. Kelleher noted that the building would likely not qualify for historic tax credits since the majority of the building needed to be replaced.

Andrew Carr, River Street, stated that he had dreamed of fixing up the carriage house and had reached out to the owner in the past. He read a letter he sent to the owner asking her to consider selling it. He said two months later the roof collapsed. He said he hoped that there would be some preventative measures taken to ensure this does not happen again.

Ms. Herbert suggested that the Commission address landscaping of the lot after the building is removed.

Mr. Joyce said that the building is dangerous, but it is upsetting that the building will be lost. Ms. Norkun asked if the applicant would keep the foundation exposed and fill in the hole. Ms. Richards said she would do the landscaping and would recreate a vegetable and flower garden that was once located around the barn. Mr. Spang noted that moving the building was not possible and to restore it would require it to be rebuild from the ground up. He recommended salvaging what was possible and documenting the building. Ms. Norkun reported that she spoke with American Steeple who was interested in viewing it, and she would be more comfortable having them take a look. She said the Commission needs to do due diligence to try to save the barn. Attorney Fitzpatrick asked what would happen if American Steeple says it can be rebuilt and engineer says it must come down and a preservation specialist says it must come down. Where does that leave us? He said given the safety concerns, he believed that the engineers opinion should take precedence. Mr. Martinez agreed with Ms. Norkun that the Commission needs to do due diligence before approving the demolition. He suggested that a surveyor complete drawings of the building so that it can be rebuilt in the future. Attorney Fitzpatrick said he would confer with the trustees and get back to Ms. Kelleher.

Ms. Schaeffer stated that she would like a structural engineer to provide a recommendation on how to stabilize the foundation.

Mr. Jenkins, Historic Salem, Inc., expressed his concern that the building was an example of demolition by neglect. He asked the Commission to consider ways to make sure this situation does not happen again. Mr. Spang agreed.

Ms. Jane Arlander, an abutter asked the Commission to take a vote tonight because of safety and there are rodents.

Mr. Christian Bleidt of 4 Federal Court urged the Commission to approve the demolition for safety concerns.

Mr. Spang asked the Commission members if they were ready to vote on the request. Mr. Pattison said that he felt a survey needed to be completed. Ms. Norkun agreed that someone should survey the building. Ms. Schaeffer expressed her opinion that the building cannot be salvaged, and a full reconstruction would be required. She stated that she is comfortable with making a decision to demolish the building and have an evaluation of the building done with the saving the corbels etc. Mr. Cutting agreed. Attorney Fitzpatrick asked the Commission to consider the anxiety of the neighbors and the lack of action.

Mr. Spang said that the Commission appeared divided on the decision. The outstanding issues were getting photos, drawings and determining whether a fence should be put up before the removal of the building. Mr. Pattison asked if there was a plan for removal. Ms. Richards said that a contractor was in place to do the work. Ms. Schaeffer also asked for demolition and landscape plans and recommended keeping the foundation if possible. Attorney Fitzpatrick asked about the specific items to be kept and whether a landscaper should evaluate the foundation. Ms. Schaeffer replied that a mason should evaluate the foundation. Mr. Pattison stated that if the basement was filled in, the footprint of the foundation could be saved. Attorney Fitzpatrick stated that this may pose a delay in the removal. Ms. Schaeffer said that it could be incorporated into the demolition. Attorney Fitzpatrick expressed concern about the landscape plan and whether it would cause a delay. He stated that he would work with Ms. Kelleher to clarify any outstanding items. Ms. Kelleher said that typically the Commission requires documentation of a building to be submitted prior to demolition and she could work with the City Solicitor to get an agreement in writing that these plans be provided. Attorney Fitzpatrick said that he would reach out to the solicitor and report back in two weeks, for the Board to approve. He said he has 4 days of Army duty, and he will be returning on the 20th to present the report.

Mr. Spang said that a lot of the information already exists, and the City Solicitor will provide the wording. Ms. Kelleher said there are some files on this project.

VOTE: Mr. Cutting made a motion to continue until November 20th, Mr. Joyce seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion so carried.

337 Essex Street - continuation

In a continuation of a previous public hearing, the Proprietors of the Salem Athenaeum submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace signage.

Mr. Spang reported that the applicant a continuation until November 20th and asked for a motion to continue.

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

12 Mall Street - continuation

In a continuation from a previous meeting, North Ventures Inc. submitted an application for a Waiver of the Demolition Delay Ordinance to demolish a house.

Documents & Exhibits

- Application: 10/21/19
- Photographs & Engineer report – Webb Structural Services, Inc.

David Potter and Jessica Herbert were present.

Ms. Herbert reported that Mr. Joyce, Mr. Martinez, Mr. Hart and Mr. Pattison did a site visit at the property. Mr. Hart reviewed the engineer's report that stated the foundation was rotted and in very poor condition. Mr. Hart said he did not believe it as severe as what the structural engineer had stated. Mr. Pattison said the post and beam structure is in good condition, the sills need work but that can be easily remedied. He said it's a nice structure but there is no going back and he believed that the owner did not know what he was getting into with an antique home. Mr. Potter said there was nothing historic left existing in the home before he bought it, everything had been replaced with vinyl and that it had been converted into a multi-family home. He said he had talked with an engineer and had wanted to save the house, he was hoping to have the floorboards salvaged and he hoped to save the posts and beams, but the engineer said they were all undersized for the load needed. He said the rot was on the outside inside the vinyl siding. The previous owners replaced all the windows and took the original casings out, his idea was to keep most of the structure. The problem was that the 3rd floor is unwalkable and the engineer's opinion was that it was structurally impractical to reuse any section of the buildings frame. Mr. Pattison stated that this was how old homes were built and this house is a sound version of a Greek Revival style home. Mr. Potter said the engineer's report said there was no way to add anything on the 3rd floor.

The second floor is 7 feet and the first floor is 8 feet. Mr. Hart said many houses in Salem have the same structure. Mr. Martinez said the floor joists look really good on the 3rd floor.

Mr. Spang asked about the chimney stacks and fireplaces. Mr. Martinez said the fireplaces look solid, and from what he could see of the chimney stacks they were in good shape too. Mr. Spang said the existing windows and interiors were redone in the last 50 years. There is now nothing left but the framing and two chimneys. Mr. Potter said he would love to renovate the existing building, but he needs an engineer to sign off on the building in order to sell it. Mr. Hart asked what he meant by a sign off, owner said an engineer needs to sign off that the building is structurally sound. Mr. Joyce asked if he was familiar with the provision for historical homes, in that even if you were to alter the home to repair it is still exempt from the building code. He went on to say that the building inspector shall be authorized to accept the floors as constructed. Mr. Potter replied that he had spoken with the Building Inspector and he said he could not sign off on it. Mr. Martinez said he felt someone that is well versed with historic structures is worth speaking to for a second opinion. Mr. Spang asked if the building were demolished and rebuilt what height would the new structure be. The owner said he would need 8 feet. Mr. Spang asked the Board what it hoped to preserve, the framing or the floor to floor height or the chimneys. Mr. Joyce said that Salem is full of these types of houses in scale and he would like to protect the building's scale as part of the historic streetscape. Ms. Schaeffer agreed, she said the chimney is located on the outside and is important to keep.

Mr. Spang asked for comments from the Board members who visited the site. Mr. Martinez explained his report (a slide show) he provided photos of the floors and felt that it was in really good shape, he saw no rot, the posts that span to the 3rd floor were solid with maybe some shoring up required. Mr. Potter said there was only

Ms. Kerry Murphy, 10½ Mall Street, asked the owner how the building will be secured now that it is open to the elements. She stated that it is a safety concern.

Carline Watsofelt, resident and Historic Salem, Inc. member asked how the Commission usually handles this type of request to waive the demolition delay after much of the building has already been demolished.

Ms. Schaeffer replied that the Commission is considering strengthening the demolition delay regulations and can work more closely with the Building Inspector.

Mr. Joyce recommended the owner seek a second engineer report and to secure the building.

VOTE: Mr. Hart made a motion to continue until the November 20, 2019 meeting. Mr. Joyce seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion so carried.

Request for temporary marker to commemorate Boston Tea Party participant buried in Broad Street Cemetery

Ms. Kelleher presented the request to install a temporary marker at Broad Street Cemetery to commemorate a resident who participated in the Boston Tea Party.

The Commission was supportive of the concept but agreed that the final approval should be made by the Cemetery Commission. The Commission voted to approve sending a letter of support.

Request to install permanent plaque in Broad Street Cemetery for Colonel Pickering Tomb

Linda Jenkins of the Pickering Foundation presented the bronze plaque to be installed at the Pickering Tomb on behalf of the Daughters of American Revolution (DAR). The Commission asked how it would be installed – in the ground or on the tomb. Ms. Schaeffer expressed concerns about potential impacts of both installations. Ms. Jenkins replied that she was not sure about the installation process. The Commission agreed that this request should be made to the Cemetery Commission and they would submit a letter of support.

Request for new sign to commemorate cemetery on the site of the former Almshouse and Hospital for Contagious Diseases on Collins Cove

Jennifer Ratliff presented the proposal to install a commemorative sign to mark the site of the Almshouse cemetery on Collins Cove. She provided a history of the Almshouse and Hospital for Contagious Diseases and its associated burial ground.

Donna Seger, Salem State University, spoke in support of Ms. Ratliff's efforts to recognize this forgotten site.

Timothy Jenkins, Historic Salem, Inc. also spoke in support.

The Commission agreed that final approval should be made by the Cemetery Commission but agreed to submit a letter of support for the project.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Kelleher
Preservation Planner