



Historic District Commission

Meeting Minutes

2023-08-08

7:00 PM

Online, Town Hall, 472 Main St, Acton, MA 01720

Present: David Honn (DH), Art Leavens (AL), Zach Taillefer (ZT), Anita Rogers (AR), David Shoemaker (DS), Barbara Rhines (BR) (Acton Cultural Resources Coordinator), Fran Arsenault (FA) (Select Board Liaison)

Absent:

Opening:

David Honn opened the meeting at 7:03 pm. DH read the “remote meeting notice” due to COVID-19.

1. Regular Business

- A. Citizen's Concerns – David Shoemaker recuses himself and asks about an electrical generator. DH: Significant foliage suffices to hide the generator, or a fence.
- B. Approval of Meeting Minutes – July 25, 2023: AL moved their adoption, seconded by AL. AL, AR, ZT, DS, DH, and voted to approve. Minutes approved.
- C. Review Project Tracking Spreadsheet / Chair Updates:

Outstanding and Completed COAs/CNAs/Denials

- 472 Main Street Garden COA (Anita) – AR took photos; will attach and submit the application. There shall be a mockup. BR: 27 August deadline.
- 525 Mass Ave Signage COA (Zach). BR: an email came in with an addition of a word to the text on the sign. ZT: question of the light fixtures – not yet seen. In addition, the recent email may have shown a change in dimensions. BR: 20 August deadline. DH: could write it in that an amendment for later is possible for the light fixtures – but important to note that the light fixtures must be approved and must not conflict with the other fixtures on the building.
- 508 Main Street Roof CNA (David H) – sent.
- 37 Windsor Fence CNA (David H) – sent.
- 461 Main Street, 481 Main Street and 37 Windsor Avenue Window Review Visits. BR: Still no applications. DH and AR (and any others) will



visit. Should check on 481 Main – was any change made? No application.

2. New/Special Business or other applicable agenda items

- A. 7:15 Application # 2326 9 School Street 6 Family New Construction. DH: Past history in past notes from HDC meetings. DH received drawings from Stamski which match Dallmus' site plan which the HDC found acceptable. Applicant John Perkins (JP) joins. DH: Purpose would be to vote if possible on the COA. JP: all-electric building; still may have gas coming to the meeting, but out of sight. AL, AR, ZT, DS, DH have no further comments. DH: a COA has a 1-year lifetime. DH wrote the last one – can amend with the current package for engineering and architectural changes. DH moves to approve the project based on the drawings attached to the application. Approved windows are Windsor Legend Hybrid. Will note the need to screen electrical and gas equipment. AL seconds. AL, AR, ZT, DS, DH approve.
- B. 7:45 Application # 2327 53 River Street Park Components. DH recuses; AR takes over the chair. Natural Resources (Mike Gendron) joins. MG: presented as a pre-application earlier. Shares slides. Discussing the elements of the park. West overlook railing. Safety is key – it is a tall overlook; but desire to make as discreet as feasible. Walls may be 1 foot high, using recycled stones. Realizes that screening of the parking lot is desired. Not in phase 1 but in final design. Timber safety bollards are planned. Additional items will be added later. Funding bids were far higher than anticipated. A careful prioritization was made. But the full project will be realized. Wishes a permit for exactly the items currently proposed; will return for any changes and further evolution of the project. Bike rack and benches are not part of this application (due to cost limitations). The proposers will return to the HDC for all changes. AR is authoring the COAs. Can vote on Echo Wall, and the Overlook Railing (do not want to vote on insufficiently definite elements). AR moves that we approve the drawings of the west overlook railing and the echo walls; other elements to be considered at a future time. David Martin joins: Requests that all elements be approved (although some are not funded). The iteration makes things more difficult. Funding can appear with a short timeline. Bench positions and their pads are not yet defined, and there are difficulties in finding good bike accommodations which do not conflict with pedestrian paths. AL: Would like to see the design for the screening of the parking lot. MG: will return in two weeks with specifics for the remaining items. Can make an amendment for the remaining items. AR moves for the Echo Wall and overlook; AL seconds. DS, ZT, AL, AR approve. DH rejoins.
- C. 8:15 Application # 2135 Gardner Field Discussion (Continued). DH had email exchanges with Corey York; architects engaged and listening to the HDC meeting of 25 July. Would like the DRB to engage – recommends to visit in person. The DRB (which has two landscape architects) would need to be referred to the project by the Select Board. Project Drawings did not show the current configuration; no sections were provided so that not all design elements were unambiguously defined. Corey York joins; he was brought up to speed on the earlier discussion. Curved sections of block were hard to source. CY looking at possibility of adding shade trees; neighbors are being informed. DH: We will continue this discussion.



- D. 8:20 Spontaneous discussion on the Quorum. David Martin joins. Need to see if the wording is by the number allowed, or the number realized. AL: Our bylaws says explicitly four members must vote to approve or to disapprove an application for a COA, without regard to how many members there are on the HDC. With only five members, that's a very tight margin. DS: We should prioritize finding additional members for the HDC, for several reasons!

3. Consent Items

None

1. Adjournment

At 8:22 DH moves to adjourn the meeting, AR seconds. DH takes a roll call vote: AL, AR, DS, ZT, DH all approve.

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting.

- All relevant Applications and Documents, in Docushare