

Historic District Commission
Meeting Minutes January 26, 2010

Meeting called to order at 7:30 p.m. Scott Kutil (SK), Michaela Moran (MM), Kathy Acerbo-Bachman (KAB), David Honn (DH) and Terra Friedrichs (TF) were present. David Barrat and Maya Minkin were absent. The meeting was held in Room 121 in Town Hall. Ron Rose was present as a prospective HDC member.

Jessica Dissiny and Robert Ganong from 65 River St. had an 8:30 p.m. appointment time reserved for them in the agenda, but instead they spoke at the Citizen's Concerns portion of the meeting. KAB and DH were recused from this discussion because they are abutters to 300 feet. They told the commission that the front walkway and front door at their property at 65 River St are deteriorating and they want to replace them with granite steps and a wood door. They also mentioned that they plan to use mortise hardware with the new door. MM said that these changes look good and she explained how to make an HDC application.

The December 8, 2009 and December 22, 2009 meeting minutes were approved as corrected.

MM announced that the 9 p.m. appointment for 14 Newtown Road has been rescheduled for the next HDC meeting.

At 8 p.m. the Public Hearing on application #0940 at 10 Wood Lane was opened. MM read the notice that was published in the Beacon. The applicants, Nigel and Vera Godley, were present along with their architect, Tom Peterman. John Benkert from 23 Concord Road attended as a member of the public. Tom Peterman gave the project presentation and opened by saying that the proposal to demolish the shed had been removed from the application and that the applicants have decided to take down the shed, save what can be salvaged, and rebuild the shed. Instead of a demolition the work on the shed will be replacement in kind. Tom mentioned that the Godley's will submit archival photographs of the shed.

At this point in the Public Hearing MM invited comments from members of the public. John Benkert said that the Godley's have improved their property. He asked the Commission to comment on the fact that the Godley's are increasing the size of the garage. DH said that the increase is just a small percent of the total building size and with the change in the garage's roof pitch it will actually soften the look of the garage and it will not even appear as large as the original garage. John then asked about the increase in the driveway size, the ambient lighting levels, the overflow of light into his property, and whether there were any skylights on the new garage. Tom Peterman said that the light fixture on the old garage will be used on the new garage. John asked the Commission why the lighting is not within its jurisdiction and MM explained our jurisdictional view. She also said that driveways are not in our jurisdiction and answered John's question about the size of the new garage by saying that it does not significantly increase the size of the structure. In a closing comment, John Benkert said that he thought the new structure was well done.

TF motioned to approve the application with the condition that the shed will be taken down and any salvageable parts reused. She added the following findings to the motion: the new garage

does not increase the size of the building; the new roof pitch on the garage integrates it more closely with the existing building; the garage is primarily viewed from Concord Road; and no additional lighting will be used on the shed. DH seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

At 9 p.m. Frank Mellon arrived to discuss application #1001 for a small addition to the rear of 11 Chadwick. Frank brought pictures of the existing house in order to show the trim, siding, and roofing. DH asked about the grade. Frank said he would put a concrete foundation on top of sonitubes. He said that the foundation would be lower than the existing house because of plumbing issues. TF moved to approve the application with the following findings: the addition is minimally visible from the public way; the addition will have a concrete foundation; all trim and clapboard on the addition will match the existing house; and the roofing will be 3-tab to match the existing house. The motion was seconded by KAB and was unanimously approved by the Commission.

DH said he has scheduled a meeting with Steve Su, the owner of 14-20 School St., at the property in order to examine the window violation.

MM reported on the recent Action Community Housing Corporation meeting where the 40B at 111 School St. was discussed. Glen Kaufman is the developer of this project and he will not be electing the local option but will apply directly to the state. This option bypasses some of the local review of the project. MM said that Glen plans to construct buildings that look just like the 40B development on the abutting property on School Street. TF said that she would check into the sewer requirements for the proposed 40B and also find out what rights the existing property has.

MM put a question to the Listserv about demolition in a Historic District and 40B development. She received several replies.

TF mentioned that the Acton Design Review Board (DRB) wants to increase its charter to 40B development. TF asked if the Commission would send a letter to the DRB in support of this.

MM said that the recent changes to our Rules and Regulations as discussed in the long running Public Hearing have been approved by Town Counsel. The changes will also be sent to the Board of Selectmen for review.

The meeting was adjourned at 10 p.m.