

Minutes
Historic District Commission
Wednesday, May 23, 2012
7:00pm
Lower Hearing Room
Adopted June 25, 2012

Members Present: Kenneth Sheytanian, Carolyn Famiglietti, John Hecker, Robert Childs, Harvey Steiner,

Members Absent: Linda Sternberg

Staff Present: Christopher Hayward, Daphne Collins

Public Present: (See Sign-In Form)

Steiner chaired.

1. Public Hearing – Certificate of Appropriateness – 113 Mt. Auburn Street – Installation of an Awning. Grant Gao, Applicant. Fayza Soryal Trust, Property Owner.

Fayza Soryal, owner of the property, stated that she had no issue with the awning proposed.

Sheytanian wanted the color of the awnings for the block businesses to be the same.

Sheytanian and Hecker thought the design and scale of the lettering was satisfactory. However, they preferred that the awning be green.

Hayward noted that the applicant was proposing a change to the fabric of the awning and not to the existing supporting structure.

There was discussion whether color was within the HDC prevue. The Design Review Guidelines were reviewed. Under Chapter 4 – Awnings- there was no reference to color. Under Chapter 18.0 – Signs - color was subject to HDC reviewed. Since the awning proposed included business identification graphics, the HDC felt the review for color was appropriate.

Grant Gao, applicant and sign manufacturer, stated that he had warned the business owner that the color could be problematic with the HDC and that he was agreeable to changing it. Gao noted that the consistent awning color for the block was “Sunbrella Forest Green”

Vote: Sheytakian moved to approve the sign/awning as presented and that the color be changed to be consistent with the block awnings understood as “Sunbrella Forest Green.” Famiglietti seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

2. Public Hearing – Certificate of Appropriateness – 271 Mt. Auburn Street – Replacement of shingles and dormer siding. Dorothy Aufiero, owner applicant.

Tom Quinn, contractor for the applicant, informed that the applicant was proposing to install a new roof, and vinyl clapboard siding to the gables with ASEK corner boards.

Hecker inquired why the side walls of the gables weren't shingled. Quinn responded that shingles were not manufactured to be installed for side walls and that over time they would malfunction. Hecker noted that the Design Review Guidelines did not allow vinyl clapboards. Quinn proposed Hardiplak instead.

Collins informed that the proposed wrought iron railing replacements, included in the application, was a maintenance project with in-kind replacement materials approved by a Certificate of Non-Applicability

Vote: Hecker moved that the proposed Certificate of Appropriateness be approved with the revision of the materials used for the gable replacement to Hardiplak clapboards and ASEK corner boards. Sheytakian seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

3. Informational/Discussion – Consideration of enlarging the Mt. Auburn Historic District for the purpose of including 270 Mt. Auburn Street

Steiner suggested that more properties should be considered to be included in the HD. Steiner reported that Chris Skelly, MHC, informed him that a new application/study would have to be filed to include 270 Mt. Auburn Street in the HD and that the same application could not be resubmitted. Steiner noted that more research with input from the HC would be required. Steiner stated that he was inclined to include 270 Mt. Auburn in the HD.

Evelyn Mazmanian, 270 Mt. Auburn Street, opposed the inclusion of her property in the HD.

Famiglietti agreed with Steiner that more properties should be considered when expanding the HD and not single out one property for inclusion.

Councilor Cecilia Lenk cautioned the consideration of one house into the HD and the singling out of a property. She noted that a one-house inclusion into the HD would not be supported by Town Council. She advised that any expansion effort should be part of a bigger plan. She did not think it was a wise approach and was not supportive of a HD in the area.

Childs thought extending the district by one house was not fair. He thought an expansion should be limited for a serious change or the consideration of another area. He was concerned about the ill will the pursuit of 270 Mt. Auburn would create and the perception that the HDC is expanding by single properties. He recalled the Brigham Historic District Study for the most historic area in Watertown which failed to garner property owner support for a historic district

Sheytanian was not in favor of including the property and wanted to withdraw the item.

Hecker concurred with Sheytanian and Childs, he did not agree with the inclusion of the one property.

Steiner suggested that the item be tabled to next month.

Vote: Sheytanian moved to continue the discussion to the next HDC meeting. Famiglietti seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

4. March Minutes – Adopted.

5. Old Business

- a. Signage – Steiner sought members to volunteer to meet with him to help select images for district signage.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50pm.