

Minutes
Watertown Historical Commission
Thursday, March 10, 2011
Lower Hearing Room
7:00pm
Adopted April 14, 2011

Historical Commission Members Present: David J. Russo, Jr., Thomas P. Melone, J. B. Jones, Marilynne K. Roach, Elisabeth H. Loukas

Historical Commission Members Absent: Susan T. Steele, Donald S. Berg,

Staff Present: Christopher J. Hayward, Daphne M. Collins

Public Present: See attached Sign-In Form

David J. Russo, Jr. chaired. The meeting opened at 7:00p.m.

1. Public Hearing – 118-120 and 132 Pleasant Street - Demolition Permit for a two- family house and automotive repair shop. Applicant: Cressett Development Owner: Coppola Pleasant Street, LLC

Dartanian Brown, representing Cressett Development, reported that his firm was developing a 4-story, 44-unit residential complex with associated garage at 118-120 and 132 Pleasant Street. The proposal had received approval from the Zoning Board.

Brown reported that there was no historic merit to the 2-Family residential structure with commercial use located at 118-120 Pleasant Street. He stated that 132 Pleasant Street, the former location of “Dirty Dan’s,” was a blighted, concrete masonry automotive garage.

Thomas P. Melone provided photos of the site from the river view. He observed that the abutting properties were principally 2 to 3 multi-family structures. He noted that the existing commercial properties under demolition consideration were an anomaly. He concluded that the proposed residential project was more congruent with the neighboring use.

J. B. Jones inquired how the proposal would relate to the retaining wall. Brown responded that the wall will be reduced and the removed blocks would be reused in the expanded but lower new proposed wall.

Melone noted that the two-family structure had been vinyl sided, and its original windows had been changed. He felt that the structure was not a good example of a two-family of its kind because it had been so altered. He thought neither building is of historic distinction or value.

Requested by Jones, Brown described the first floor of the complex. He reported that cars would park beneath and in back of the building. At the street level, according to

Brown, the residential units and green space would be visible. The formal entrance, he said, is set back on the west side. The structure would be sided with Hardiplank, a high end, durable material. The building will be 41' tall. When the project is completed, the corridor will have more views of the river. Brown referenced a shadow study conducted on the new building throughout the seasons which indicated that the shadow cast of the building will be towards Pleasant Street.

Jones agreed that the two-family vernacular structure and the garage have no historic merit. He welcomed the proposed changes to Pleasant Street. He had no objection to the project based on the impact to the neighborhood or the demolition of the buildings.

Russo reviewed the building permit cards for the structure and garage and concluded that neither was significant.

Vote: Jones moved that 118-120 Pleasant and 132 Pleasant Street are not preferably preserved structures. Elisabeth H. Loukas seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Brown informed that the project will begin in the spring and will be completed in 12 months.

2. February Minutes – Approved.

3. Old Business

- a. Watertown Outbuilding/Barn Initiative – Ongoing.**
- b. Shick Property Preservation Led – Economic Development Study is underway.** Daphne M. Collins reported that the Tufts' student team will be conducting a public meeting March 31 in the Town Council Chamber at 7pm.
- c. Missing Historic Marker Replacement-** a subcommittee was established. The Subcommittee comprised of Joyce Kelly, Historical Society of Watertown, Susan T. Steele, Christopher J. Hayward and Russo will meet with Bob Erickson, Veterans Agent, to select the material and vendors for replacement. The tentative date is Tuesday, March 15 at 5:30pm. Russo preferred that the replacement not be a replica. Russo informed that the Watertown Community Foundation grant could be a possible funding source. The deadline for applying is May. Hayward informed that the Town Council has funding to replace the plaques and is looking to the HC for direction.
- d. Ordinance Edits Discussion –** Hayward informed that the Ordinance needs to be updated because there is no expiration timeline to HC determinations, or permits. In addition the Ordinance is unclear whether the permit is tied to the property, project, applicant or property owner. Russo suggested that it be similar to other Town permits. Hayward will check with Kenneth Thompson, Building Inspector.
- e. Form A Discussion –** Russo was looking for volunteers to assist in the completion of forms. Melone volunteered.

4. New Business

a. 2011 Preservation Awards Ceremony.

Tenatively the Awards Ceremony is scheduled for May 12th to coincide with the Tufts Student Teams final presentation. Nomination forms will be due April 7th. Collins will provide a copy to all HC as soon as it is updated.

Meeting adjourned at 8:24pm.