



TOWN OF WATERTOWN
Historical Commission
Administration Building
149 Main Street
WATERTOWN, MASSACHUSETTS 02472

Elise Loukas, Chairperson
David Russo, Vice Chairperson
Thomas Melone, Member
Susan Steele, Member
Marilynne K. Roach, Member
Joseph Panto, Member
Matthew Walter, Member

Minutes: Thursday, April 11, 2019 Philip Pane Lower Hearing Room 7:00 p.m.

Historical Commission Members Present: Elise Loukas, Chair, Marilynne Roach, Matthew Walter, Thomas Melone, David Russo, Vice Chair, Susan Steele

Member(s) Absent: Joseph Panto

Public Present: Mathew McNeff, Kenneth Leitner, Esq., Joe Calnan

Staff Present: Andrea Adams, Susan C. Jenness (Adopted 5.9.2019)

1. **Public Hearing-** 63 Forest St. a 1-family cape style house built in approximately 1956, including the garage. Robert Calnan, Applicant/ Water Forest 63, LLC/Owner

Loukas recused herself from participating in the proceedings for 63 Forest St.

Leitner reviewed the information he had on the current structure with the board. It is a brick cape with a modified gable front entry way with the chimney to the left. There is a sloping hill in the back yard.

Leitner reported that there is one cape located around the corner on Summer St. but said this house is the smallest of the 6 brick capes in Watertown that are of higher quality. He said that this house was built to house children in and has no architectural significance.

There were no initial questions for Leitner by members of the board.

Public Comments

Aric Wax from 55 Summer St. appeared before the board because he wanted to know who would be developing the property in case there were any issues. Loukas advised him to

contact Kenneth Leitner, attorney for the owner and the Building Department if there were any complaints.

Public Hearing Closed

Commission Discussion

Roach said she found the architecture very distinctive.

Russo commented about the architectural integrity of the original structure, the special construction and mentioned the windows that were still intact.

Steel asked about the height of the building and Leitner said close to 35 feet, similar to the house at 223 Westminster Ave. Steele noted that the new construction will eat up all the land on the plot, and asked about materials for the exterior, and was told it would be vinyl sided. She requested they consider Hardie Board and was told that would cost 4 times as much.

Russo inquired about how the structure would be laid out upon the lot, and was told there would be equal amounts of land on each side, with a generous space out in the rear.

Walter said he was already intending to say the building not preferably preserved. He commented that is the owner bought the house for the price of a single family, and if redeveloped into two, there is a lot of money that will be made, and surely they could afford to spend money.

Russo noted that the smaller structure represents a feeling of space and openness and that will be gone.

Melone noted that this is a nice building and fits well on the lot.

Motion: Walter made a motion that the building was not preferably preserved.

Vote: The motion was opposed by Steele, Roach and Russo.

Motion: Steele made a motion that the house was preferably preserved. Roach seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion was supported by Russo, Roach and Steele.

Walther said the house was not significant enough to keep them from tearing down the house, while this is the most in shape house he had reviewed since becoming a member of this commission.

Melone said it would be very difficult to add to this house by adding on to the lot.

Walther said it was a nice building but he felt it would not be a loss.

Russo said capes can be significant and this one still held its architectural integrity.

Walther asked if this was at the level that the board actually needed to delay this demolition. Russo said that for him it was at that level.

Steele said this was one of the nicest of these types of buildings that had come before them and on such a nice large lot. She said she would hate for the size of the lot to be taken up with the new structure. She pointed out that Watertown is only 4 miles and that if they let this house go, there will be an impact because of the size of the Town. She said she wanted to fight it.

Melone said he would fight more about some of the singles on Westminster Ave. while he also found this building very pleasing.

Roach asked if they make a delay so that they can find a compromise.

Motion: Roach made a motion for a 6 month delay. Russo seconded the motion.

Vote: Roach and Russo supported the motion to impose a 6 month delay. Melone and Walther opposed it.

Motion: Steele made a motion that there should be no delay on the demolition of the house at 63 Forest St. Walter seconded the motion.

At the April 11, 2019 hearing it was determined, by 3 to 2 vote, that the structures at 63 Forest Street are **preferably preserved**.

The Commission also determined, by a 3 to 2 vote, that **no demolition delay should be imposed**.

2. Minutes- From March 14, 2019 Historical Commission Meeting.

Motion: Roach made a motion to adopt the minutes of the March 14, 2019 meeting as modified. Russo seconded the motion.

Vote: A unanimous vote was reached adopting the minutes of the March 14, 2019 meeting as modified.

3. Discussion Items

- a. Discussion on Demolition Delay Ordinance. Steele mentioned that it might be time for the town to start looking at Conservation Districts once again. Russo reported that there was a time when some from the town proposed that. He said it was turned down

by Mass. Historic. Russo said he would find a new model of an ordinance to bring to the next discussion about the Demolition Delay Ordinance.

- b. Community Preservation Committee Update-Steele gave an update on the CPA Committee. She said the CPA is working on an assessment of what they will need to do, and will work with the Town's Comprehensive Plan to determine that. They may hire a consultant to lay the foundation.

Steele made the following report:

- CPA Committee is considering a two-step application process that would screen out projects that are inappropriate at the first level.
- Steele passed around the Historic Preservation Plan for Framingham from 2016.
- She reported that by year 3 it is projected there will be \$634,000.00 for the funds available for Historic Preservation in Watertown.
- Steele reported that New Bedford, Somerville and Newton have criteria written up for Historic Preservation Projects and that Newton has supplemental attachments that guide the process.
- Steele said she was in favor of the concept of the Town doing one thing that is completely spectacular with the CPA money that gets everyone very excited.

Russo agreed with Steele that one really profound work would be a great way to start using the funds.

Melone reminded everyone of the Davenport Delta.

Russo mentioned the Knowles Delta.

- c. Historic Preservation Awards 2019- It was determined that with only a few nominations that had come in for 2019, it would be in the best interest of everyone to hold off on voting on winners for the 2019 HPA. The board decided to wait until 2020 to hold an awards ceremony and that they would hold on to the nominations that were received and vote on them next year.
- d. Update on 41 Paul St.- Adams reported that there had been no new contact with the owner of 41 Paul St. since Town Staff contacted them and invited them to come in and discuss all options for the house.

At 9 PM Russo made a motion to adjourn that was seconded by Roach. It was agreed upon unanimously.