

Minutes
Watertown Historical Commission
Thursday, July 13, 2017
Philip Pane Lower Hearing Room
7:00 p.m.

Historical Commission Members Present: Thomas Melone, Susan Steele, Joseph Panto, Marilynn K. Roach, David Russo, Donald Berg, Elise Loukas

Member(s) Absent: N/A

Staff Present: Andrea Adams, Susan C. Jenness

David J. Russo opened the meeting and explained the jurisdiction of the Historical Commission and the process that would be followed.

- 1) **Public Hearing Continuance- 10 Winter St.** –To further consider the proposed demolition of a 3 unit structure built in approximately 1900. Proposed use of the site is as part of a multimodal community path, and open space. Kenneth Thompson, Building Inspector, Applicant/Town of Watertown, Owner

A site visit was held on July 11, 2017 with Gideon Schreiber, Senior Planner representing the Town in the public hearing on 10 Winter St.

Russo and Loukas were unable to attend the site visit but were interested in hearing about what was discovered inside the building.

Berg reported that the inside was choppy and that it was originally a 2 family that was turned into a 4 family. He reported that there was not a lot left of the original house other than the brackets and the doors, with narrow hallways and doors that went nowhere when they were opened. The bathrooms were 50-60's pink and blue.

Roach said that the brackets and doors on the outside look better than the inside.

Panto found that the house looked disconnected.

Loukas asked about the exterior and Berg said it was aluminum siding and sat on a brick and fieldstone foundation.

Loukas said that she did not hear during the town's presentation that they had considered ways for the building to be incorporated into the multi-modal community path. Loukas said that she felt there must be someone out there who would want to work with the house to preserve it.

Motion: Loukas made a motion to continue the vote on this project until the town becomes available to answer the HC's questions. Berge seconded the motion to continue the vote on this project until the town becomes available to answer the HC's questions.

Vote: A unanimous vote was reached to continue the vote on this project until the town becomes available to answer the HC's questions.

- 2) **Public Hearing- 225 Westminster Avenue** – To consider the demolition of a single family Cape style residence built approximately 1950, with an attached garage. Proposed is a new two and a half story residence with surface parking is proposed. Costa Architects, Owner Donald Cusano, Applicant

Attorney Michael Leitner presented the proposed project. He described this house as a cape style home built on a 6,000 sq. foot lot, with a gable roof, built in garage and 2 dormers. Leitner reported that it was built in 1950, and seemed to have no historical significance that he was able to find in his research.

Leitner discussed the neighborhood which he reported had around 24 capes on Westminster and Edenfield Ave, along with some bungalows.

Proposed is a new 2 family home.

Steel asked about the height of the new proposed structure. Leitner said it would be comparable to the bungalows on the street.

Public Hearing

No Comments

Commission Discussion

Loukas said there were a lot of capes on the street and next door there was a brick cape. She wondered if there was a history behind all the capes.

Steele mentioned reading an article that commented on the unique quality of this neighborhood with its brick cottages built in the 1940's

Loukas noted that this house is flanked by larger homes and said it feels less offensive to disrupt this quaint neighborhood on that note.

Motion: Loukas made a motion that this home at 225 Westminster Ave. was not preferably preserved. Berg seconded the motion.

Vote: A unanimous vote was reached that the house at 225 Westminster Ave. was not preferably preserved.

- 3) **Public Hearing- 232 Edenfield Avenue** – To consider the demolition of a single family Cape style home with brick veneer and an asphalt roof built in approximately 1953.

Proposed is two new single family homes front to back. Village Realty Developer I, LLC
Owner Michael Armstrong, Applicant

Michael Armstrong presented the project to the HC.

Armstrong said this was a post WW II home, standard, brick built in 1953 with outdated, low ceilings and no insulation.

He explained that the home is owned by the Lindsay family and has been unoccupied for some time. It is 50 x 100 feet, and has issues with water getting in through the basement.

During the course of research, there was no historical or architectural significance uncovered for this standard cape that would not meet code in its present size and condition.

Russo mentioned that this design is similar to what is now seen at 134 and 130 Edenfield Ave. He asked if it was listed on MLS, and it was but it only lasted for 5 days.

Public Hearing

None

HC Discussion

Roach said that this was not a stand out house at all

Berg said it was a perfectly nice cape with some unfortunate water issues.

Melone said that most of the houses on the street were single, but there was one large two family.

Russo pointed out that when one considers the towns Comprehensive Plan, the neighborhood does not have a lot to preserve.

Steele mentioned that she wished they would consider using hardy board as opposed to vinylsiding.

Motion: Berg made a motion that the house at 232 Edendfield Ave. is not preferably preserved. Loukas seconded the motion.

Vote: A unanimous vote was reached that the house at 232 Edenfield Ave. is not preferably preserved.

- 4) **Public Hearing – 16-18 Prentiss Street-** To consider the demolition of a two family home built in 1917. Proposed is a new two-family Colonial style, with two units, each with 2 floors, and a garage. Mark Timperio, Owner/Applicant.

Mark Timperio presented his project to the HC.

He said this was currently a two family up and down duplex on a 3,000 sq. foot lot adjacent to commercial and miscellaneous mixed use of a combination of residential and commercial.

His research concluded that there were no historically connected previous owners of the house.

He explained that he would like to build a brand new, 2 family colonial and preserving the current cut out that would include a garage.

He explained that the repair work included plumbing, kitchen, bathroom and the entire roof.

Loukas said she characterized the work mentioned by Timperio as cosmetic.

Russo asked if he thought about adding on to the current structure.

Timperio explained that he wanted to have a duplex that sits side by side which would not be possible to achieve by adding on to the current structure.

Public Hearing

Margaret Cassidy-23 Prentiss St.-Cassidy was concerned about how far back the owner would build and after a brief discussion she was assured she would not be adversely effected.

Fred Santoro 27 Prentiss St-Santoro said he was happy to have Mark coming to live in the neighborhood, and adding new blood to the street. He said he is excited to have the additional parking with a garage that will be helpful to the whole street.

Comments through an email

Maureen Murphy wrote in to say that her child attends the day care nearby and they access through the daycare through a parking lot on Prentiss St. Murphy wrote she is concerned that debris from the demolition could fly into the environment and cause harm to the children.

Russo asked the Clerk to carry the email to the Building Department the following day so that they could report the potential for hazardous material to the appropriate town officials for follow up.

Public Hearing Closed

HC Discussion

Loukas said that an addition, roofing and re-shingling could be done while also maintaining this beautiful structure.

Melone said that he did not think this building is distinctive enough to want to save.

Motion: Russo made a motion that 16-18 Prentiss St. is not preferably preserved. Melone seconded the motion.

Vote: A six to one vote was reached that 16-18 Prentiss St. is not preferably preserved. Berg opposed the motion.

- 5) **Public Hearing – 61 Highland Avenue-** To consider the demolition of a single family, Colonial-style home with vinyl siding and an asphalt roof built in the 1920's, with a 1950's detached garage to the rear. Proposed is a new two-family with two units, each with 2 floors. Michael Milendorf, Owner/Applicant.

Michael Milendorf appeared and referred to a request he made in writing to the HC requesting a continuance on the public hearing for 61 Highland Ave. Milendorf explained that the sale of the home did not go through as expected in time for Milendorf to be the owner in time for the meeting. Milendorf explained that waiting until September would cause a hardship for him. Milendorf requested the HC review his project at a meeting held in August.

Motion: A motion was made by Loukas to hold an August 10, 2017 HC meeting and to continue the hearing on 61 Highland Ave. to the August agenda. Steele seconded the motion.

Vote: A unanimous vote was reached to continue the public hearing on 61 Highland Ave. to the August 10th HC Agenda.

6) Meeting Minutes Review – June 8, 2017

The review for the minutes for the June 8, 2017 HC meeting were continued to the August 10, 2017 HC meeting.

7) New Business

a. Scheduling a site visit at the Commanders Mansion

Russo asked the clerk to follow up with Steele, Panto and Melone to set a date to go on a site visit to the Commanders Mansion.

- b. David Russo announced that he is stepping down as the chair for the Historical Commission for the town through a transition that is starting effective immediately.

The meeting was adjourned.