

Minutes
Watertown Historical Commission
Thursday, November 9, 2017
Philip Pane Lower Hearing Room
7:00 p.m.

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

Member(s) Absent: Joseph Panto

Staff Present: Andrea Adams, Susan C. Jenness

(Adopted 12.14.17)

David J. Russo opened the meeting and explained the jurisdiction of the Historical Commission, as well as what could and could not be discussed.

1. **Public Hearing- 11 Loomis Ave.-** To consider the Demolition Permit Application submitted for an existing single family cape style house and attached garage, with vinyl siding and an asphalt roof, built in approximately 1950. A new two family residence is proposed. Roy and Sharon Tiano, Owners/ Leonard T. Holt, Applicant

Len Holt appeared to review the proposed demolition and project for the HC which he said was to build a 2 family house at the site of this 1 family home built in the 1950's. He explained that the area is zoned for 2 families with mixed used buildings in the immediate neighborhood. He said that this new construction proposes to be an improvement to the neighborhood.

Berg asked about the dormer in the proposed drawing and Holt clarified that it was a decorative one. Loukas asked about the driveways and Holt explained that there are 2 stacked driveways in the proposed plans.

Steele asked Holt about materials and requested that he consider building with Hardyboard. Holt said he plans to use vinyl siding and explained that Hardyboard is now reported to be showing signs of melting when exposed to ice, water and extreme temperatures.

Public Hearing

Roy Tiano-Owner of 11 Loomis Ave.- Tiano said that he has lived in the house for 17 years. He explained that his daughters have grown and moved out and he now wishes to relocate to be closer to them. He says that he knows of no historical significance to the house and as a civil engineer, he has the professional experience to say that this is just a plain little house.

Public Hearing Closed

Commission Discussion

Melone said that there was a mixture both 1 and 2 family homes in the neighborhood.

Motion: Berg made a motion that the house at 11 Loomis Ave. was not preferably preserved. Melone seconded the motion.

Vote: A unanimous vote was reached that the house was not preferably preserved.

2. **Public Hearing- 14 Downey St.-** To consider the Demolition Permit Application submitted for an existing single family cape style house with aluminum siding and an asphalt roof, built in approximately 1952. Two town house style homes are proposed. Jane E. Tobin, Owners/ Kamel Alhady, Applicant

Kamel Alhady appeared to present the proposed project to the HC. He reviewed the project with the members of the HC.

Steele commented that the proposed project seemed massive next to the house on the right.

Public Hearing

Deborah Silvio of 7 Downey St. appeared and stated that the proposed new construction seems pretty massive going across the street compared to what is there now.

Frank Loughran 3 Downey St. said that 3 and 11 Downey St. were both built at the same time as 14 Downey St. He explained that there was a grotto built with a statue and he wanted to know what would come of it. Russo explained that he would need to wait and ask the applicant when the public hearing had come to an end.

Russo thought out loud that the neighborhood would have 3 cape style homes, and then this big massive building would follow.

Roach said she felt that this would change the feel of the neighborhood as a whole.

Berg and Loukas both agreed with Roach that this was a big change.

Steele explained that she thought the front of the building makes it look so large. She asked the applicant if he could do something to see to it that the façade of the building related better to the rest of the neighborhood.

Russo said that the Comprehensive Plan has called for protection of the neighborhoods in town, and this is one neighborhood that is still intact.

Adams worked with the HC to define what it was about the façade of the building that they would like to see changed. She mirrored back to the HC that the dominant theme of

their requested reconfiguration would address the top heavy, front heavy, massive detail orientation of the façade.

Adams invited the applicant to come and work with the planning staff to reconfigure the façade of the proposed structure so that it would relate better to the rest of the neighborhood. She asked if the HC would consider continuing the public hearing until the following month.

Motion: Loukas made a motion to allow the applicant to work on the scaling of the building. Roach seconded the motion.

Vote: A unanimous vote was reached approving the motion made by Loukas.

3. **Minutes-** from October 12, 2017 Historical Commission (HC) Meeting.

After a small modification, the minutes of the October 12, 2017 Historical Commission

4. **Commission Election-** Election for a Chairperson and potentially a Vice Chairperson.

After a discussion among the Historical Commission, a motion was made.

Motion: Steele made a motion to slate the following: Loukas was selected as the Chairperson of the Historical Commission commencing in January 2018. Russo was selected as the candidate for the Vice Chairperson of the Historical Commission commencing in January 2018. Roach seconded the motion.

Vote: A unanimous vote was reached electing Loukas as the Chairperson commencing in January 2018 and Russo was elected as the Vice Chairperson of the Historical Commission commencing in January 2018.

5. **Commission Discussion-** Led by Russo on writing a letter of support to Mass Historic for restoring veteran's graves.

Russo received an email from Mt. Auburn Cemetery notifying him of an opportunity to endorse a grant for restoration of veteran's graves at the cemetery.

A consensus was reached among the HC that they would support the letter which would be written by Russo's endorsing that the cemetery be awarded the grant for restoration of the veteran's graves.

Russo will write the letter on behalf of the HC, and forward a copy to the Historical Preservation Office to share with HC members for the next meeting.

6. Discussion Items from October 12, 2017 meeting.

- a. Status report by Russo about contacting Steve Magoon to discuss formation of an HC sub-committee to visit the East Branch Library to inspect the contents for items that have potential historical preservation value.

Motion: Russo made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 PM. Roach seconded the motion.

Vote: A unanimous vote was reached to adjourn the meeting.