

**Minutes
of the
Watertown Historical Commission
Thursday, January 12, 2006
3rd Floor Council Chambers**

Historical Commission Members Present:

Lane, Chairperson

Light

Russo

Roach

O'Looney

Jones

Berg

Staff Present:

Hayward

Collins

Public Present: See attached Sign-In Form

The meeting opened at 7:30p.m.

- 1. Public Hearing – 80 Walnut Street, Demolition Permit, Wayne Brosco, applicant**

The applicant made a request to the HD Office for a continuance.

Vote: Russo moved to continue the hearing to the next meeting on January 12, 2006. Jones seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Collins will send future agendas notifying interested citizens attending.

2. Informational Item – 917 Belmont Street

Warren Tolman, representative for the applicant, reported that the property was under Purchase and Sale with the Walker School.

Steve Tannenbaum, Member of the Walker School Board, informed that the Beacon High School has been in operation since 1971 as an alternative high school for 15 to 22 year olds, non-violent students. The school is presently located in Brookline. 80% of the student body graduate and 90% continue their education. The school has approximately 50 students. The plan is to acquire and renovate 917 Belmont Street. 2/3rds of the present structure in the back is to be replaced for physical education, performance and community.

Laura Warneck, architect for the applicant, reported that the historic Greek Revival front of the building will be historically renovated. Additions are planned at residential scale in the backside of the building to meet the needs for a new multi-purpose space, meeting space and performance arts which will be approximately the size of a half a basketball court. The design will use the same material, elements and porch of the Greek Revival home design. She noted that the parking will remain.

Karnig Ostayan, 60 N. Beacon, wanted to see a perspective of the proposed building from Belmont Street.

Jones requested the same perspective from Belmont Street. Jones queried whether the connector from the addition to the new building in back was proposed. Warneck replied that was no longer being considered.

Russo noted that he was not sure what period the back 2/3rds of the building was built. He liked to look at the building to determine the age.

Berg informed that there were permits for additions in 1916 and 1961.

Roach informed that the buildings show up in the maps dating back to 1890.

Warneck noted that the renovations to the front exterior will be historically sensitive. Not many alterations are expected. In fact, the original windows will be repaired. Only the interior will be altered.

Jones noted that the original site was a farm and that any proposed building forms respect the barn scale.

Russo requested that a view of the proposed structure from Belmont street be provided.

Tolman requested any information regarding the history of the building. Tolman invited the members for a site visit of building if interested.

Russo asked that the applicant work with the neighborhood and he encouraged the exchange of business cards.

4. Information Item – 109 Spring Street, Tom Anzoni, owner

Tom Anzuoni, owner, recognized the value of the historic property and wanted to preserve the structure. He reported that the area was zoned 1-2 family and that he was seeking a zoning variance to allow a 3rd unit.

O'Looney expressed concern over the size of the dormer. Anzuoni responded that with a smaller dormer the unit was not financially feasible. Besides the dormer, there will be no alterations to the existing building.

Jones questioned why the project couldn't be done without dormers as proposed for the back bedroom. Anzuoni responded that it was possible to do the project without dormers. However, they are proposed to eliminate the interior sloping roofs.

Light noted that the historic nature of the structure would be gone with the dormer.

Russo indicated that the design overwhelms the structure and suggested that the massing be reduced to individual dormers. Anzuoni felt it could be done.

Berg suggested placing two dormers.

Light suggested that the project be downscaled to two units. Jones suggested that they be centered over the lower windows.

Jones was concerned about the peak from the back units creating a "widow's peak" to the front unit. Anzuoni and Joe Deodato, the builder for the project, agreed to eliminate it.

Russo stated that he was not wedded to brick and that the original structure be differentiated from the rest of the new construction.

Jones observed that since the 109 Spring Street was a separate unit, he regretted that the project wasn't two separate buildings. Anzuoni and Deodato also wished that the roof lines could have matched between the units.

4. **December Minutes**

The December minutes were approved and adopted.

5. 2006 Meeting Calendar

Vote: Jones moved to approve the 2006 meeting calendar with an August meeting if there are any Public Hearing items. Berg seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

6. Mount Auburn Boundary Update

Russo reported that no progress has been made and he will further pursue the matter.

Roach reported that there was an article on *Yankee Magazine* about the Mount Auburn Cemetery which incorrectly located the cemetery in Cambridge. Roach e-mailed the magazine, which was printed in the next issue, identifying Mount Auburn in Watertown.

7. 2006 Preservation Award

Award materials are to be updated and prepared.

8. Proposed Regulations for the Demolition of Historically or Architecturally Significant Buildings

Russo reported that the proposed regulations could limit the projects to properties of over 100 years old for reviewed under "substantial destruction." Berg suggested 75 years.

9. 917 Belmont Street

Members discussed whether it was possible to walk have a site visit at 917 Belmont Street to become more informed as to the age of the buildings. Staff will contact the property owners to conduct a site visit on Friday, January 27 during the day time.

10. Nominations and Elections of Officers

O'Looney nominated Russo as Chairman. Light seconded the nomination. Russo accepted the nomination. The election was unanimously approved.

Light nominated Lane as Vice-Chairman. Jones seconded the nomination. Acceptance on hold.

. 131 Russell Avenue

Russo reported that the case was settled in favor of the Town and that the property owner is not demolishing the property.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm