

WELLESLEY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
CALLED MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING
FEBRUARY 23, 2016, 6:45 PM
GREAT HALL, WELLESLEY TOWN HALL

Members Present: David Giangrasso, Lisa Abeles, Eric Cohen, and Barry Friedman
Members Absent: Edwina McCarthy and David Smith
Staff: Heather Lamplough
Also Present: Jeffrey and Catherine Cerio, 19 Abbott Street
Brian Alim, Architect for 19 Abbott Street
Daniel Bernstein and Ellen Watts, 25 Weston Road
Thaddeus Heuer and Shannon Monaghan, 17 Abbott Street
Larry and Annette Luchene, 12 Waban Street
Hunter and Kim Emerson, 10 Abbott Street

Chairperson David Giangrasso called the meeting to order at 6:57pm.

Certificate of Appropriateness: 19 Abbott Street HDC 16-01:

Documents:

1. *Staff Report, dated 2/19/2016*
2. *Photos from site visit on January 7, 2016 and January 19, 2016*
3. *Project Plans dated February 23, 2016*
 - A-0. *Ext. / New House Survey*
 - A-1. *New L-Side Elevation and New Front Elevation*
 - A-2. *New R-Side Elevation and New Rear Elevation*
 - A-3. *Existing L-Side Elevation and Existing Front Elevation*
 - A-4. *Existing R-Side Elevation and Existing Rear Elevation*
 - A-5. *Proposed First Floor Plan*
 - A-6. *Proposed Second Floor Plan*
 - A-8. *Existing First Floor Plan*
 - A-9. *Existing Second Floor Plan*
 - A-10. *Existing Basement / Foundation Plan*
 - GSF-1. *GSF Calculations*
4. *Letter from Tad Heuer and Shannon Monaghan regarding 19 Abbott Street, dated 2/21/2016*

Discussion:

Project architect, Brian Alim introduced the proposed project at 19 Abbott Street to the Commission. Mr. Alim explained how following the previous meeting, he met with his clients to redesign the proposed addition. He stated that the new proposed addition (10'x15') conforms with the side yard setback, so he will no longer require a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals. He explained the revised addition has been stepped back from the street façade, reducing the relief needed for the nonconforming front yard setback. He stated that because they needed to shrink the addition down to 10x15, they moved the mudroom program into that space with a small bathroom. They were also able to keep the kitchen and the family room spaces together, which was important for his client. The existing stairs have been left in place in the new proposal. Mr. Alim explained that the changes to the exterior of the addition include some of the architectural elements that exist on the original structure, like the brick corbelling. He stated that he copied that detail on the proposed dormer on the second story of the addition, as well as on the main box of the addition. The addition contains a rear-facing door with a small stoop, and a shed dormer on the rear of the addition to allow for headroom in the proposed master bath (since the overall height of

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the addition was shrunken). On the lower-level of the addition he is proposing pilaster columns with paneling, which is consistent with a first story addition on a house of this era. They are proposing to re-side the existing addition [located on the rear of the house] to match the paneling on the proposed addition, and place planter boxes under the windows on the original structure and the addition. The first floor of the addition is 150 sq ft and 125 sq ft on the second story, existing house is 1650 sq ft, so the total with the proposed addition will be 1925 sq ft (under 2000 sq ft).

Mr. Cohen asked the applicant how they feel about the redesigned project. Ms. Cerio stated that they love it, and that they believe that the feedback that they received at the last meeting really helped. Ms. Abeles asked the applicant if they are happy with how the inside of the house works, and the applicant stated that they are.

Ms. Abeles asked for an explanation on how the paneling detailing proposed for the addition will look/work, and stated that she cannot tell from the plans provided. She stated that all of the lines on the elevation suggest that there are a lot of changes to the plane, but that she cannot tell what those changes are without a detail sheet. Ms. Abeles stated that she doesn't have an issue with the proposed French doors on the right side of the house. She explained that with the new light fixtures that hide the source of the light (just emits the glow of the light), the abutter's concern about the lights may be answered. Ms. Abeles also stated that while she appreciates that the architect included architectural elements from the original house into the addition, she thinks that the wood (lighter structure) below the brick (heavier mass) stands out to her. Mr. Alim presented an alternate version that he prepared which included more brick and less paneling on the first story elevation.

Mr. Friedman inquired as to the material for the proposed stoop at the rear of the addition. Mr. Alim stated that the drawings provided were mis-hatched, and that it would be poured concrete, with brick. Mr. Friedman asked whether they considered doing brick on the bottom, and the wood on the top half of the addition. Mr. Alim stated that they explored that option, but when he did that he would lose the corbelling detailing of the brick. Ms. Abeles stated that she likes how he also corbelled the dormer, and that she believes the elevations which illustrate more brick on the addition makes more sense. Ms. Abeles stated that the revised plans show that the architect and the applicant were very responsive to the Commission's previous suggestions.

Mr. Cohen asked about the proposed window changes on the rear of the house, and the brick decorative detail on the rear of the addition. Ms. Abeles stated that another reason why she is okay with the French doors is because of the light that they will help provide to the interior of the house. Ms. Abeles said that she understood why the doors were being proposed in that location, due to that leading to the only yard space for the kids to play in. Shannon Monaghan of 17 Abbott Street stated that she believes that the existing exterior door location should remain on the rear side of the house. Ms. Abeles stated that for circulation reasons, the proposed location makes more sense. Ms. Monaghan questioned whether the swing of the door cleared the table. Mr. Cohen pointed out that one side of the French door is fixed and inoperable. Mr. Cohen asked the abutters whether the issue was light coming from the house through the double doors or the exterior lights. Ms. Monaghan stated that she doesn't want the exterior lights to shine directly into her house. Ms. Abeles stated that you wouldn't even be able to see the light bulb in the fixture. The question of motion sensors was brought up. Ms. Cerio stated that the houses in that neighborhood are very close together, and it is not their intention to purposefully shine lights onto their neighbor's property. Mr. Cohen asked the abutters if the double French door is still a concern of theirs. Thaddeus Heuer of 17 Abbott Street stated that the existing opening which is a single window will be going to a 5 ½ foot opening

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for the door, roughly doubling the width and the height of the opening in that wall. These changes result in 3 ½ more glass than what is existing. Ms. Abeles asked Mr. Heuer why that is so offensive to him. He replied stating that because it was a large opening close to their house. Ms. Abeles stated that is just the nature of the neighborhood, and that shouldn't prohibit them from having natural light in their house. Mr. Alim stated that is the applicant/owners intend to create more privacy with landscaping in that side yard in the future as well. Mr. Cohen stated that he has neighbors that are very close to him as well, and that at night he closes the drapes because he doesn't want to look at them, and they don't want to look at him eating dinner and watching TV. He stated that it's just a mutual courtesy that you have with your neighbors.

Annette Luchene of 12 Waban Street spoke about being the former owners of the house, and how it was previously used as a rental property. She stated that it's refreshing to have someone that wants to stay and invest in the house.

Kim Emerson of 10 Abbott Street stated that she quickly googled the type of lights Mrs. Abeles had mentioned, and found a number of aesthetically-appropriate fixtures for the Cerio's house.

Ms. Abeles asked the other Commission members how they feel about the alternate scheme that has incorporated more brick. Mr. Giangrasso stated that he likes the scheme better, but he questions whether or not they would have enough brick for this plan. Ms. Abeles reminded the Commission that they are planning on salvaging the brick from the side of the house to use on the addition. Mr. Alim stated that yes they do plan on salvaging, and that because they have such a wide variety of existing brick, they should be able to match and patch pretty easily. Mr. Giangrasso states that the plan with more brick looks more integrated with the original structure. Mr. Alim states that he thinks it looks like it transfers the mass better.

Ms. Abeles stated that the proposed paneling still needs to be illustrated better through section drawings. Mr. Cohen asked for window specs. Mr. Alim explained that the existing windows are Pella, and they will be matching those windows, and painting the trim/cladding white (currently red). Ms. Abeles asked about the proposed decorative brick element on the addition, and asked for a larger drawing of that detail.

Ms. Abeles inquired about the stoop. Mr. Alim explained that it will be poured concrete, and the treads will be something like a bluestone. Ms. Cerio stated that she doesn't want it to be brick, because she feels it's getting "too brick-y." Ms. Abeles suggested that they could do the stairs/stoop in wood (to match the wood paneling) and to break up all of the brick. Ms. Abeles also suggested making the landing for the rear stairs wider. She suggested carrying the landing over to the edge of the main house to make opening the door with people on the landing easier, and to eliminate that small space in between the stoop and the house that would just become a leaf collector. Ms. Abeles suggested centering the brackets for the door hood on the panels. Ms. Abeles asked if the material of the door hood would be copper, which was confirmed by the applicant.

Mr. Cohen asked where the architect feels in terms of design maturity, and whether or not he feels that he needs to spend more time on it. Mr. Giangrasso stated that he feels that there are a few too many changes that the Commission would like to see before they approve the application.

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Ellen Watts and Daniel Bernstein of 25 Weston Road asked a question regarding the roof flashing. Mr. Alim stated that they are still discussing roofing options and pricing, and that will determine the flashing. They are hoping to do a copper roof and copper flashing on the addition.

Mr. Alim summarized the revisions and details that the HDC is wanting to see at the next meeting: panel detailing, lighting, bracket detail, stoop extension, stair detailing, masonry, decorative brick detail. Miss Lamplough stated that while not required, a photometric plan of those two exterior lights could help to ease the minds of the abutters. Mr. Giangrasso reiterated that he does not believe that they can do a conditional approval with all of the things the Commission still wants to review.

Mr. Cohen asked the Commission what their consensus on the French door was, and whether there was anyone that believes that there shouldn't be a French door there. Mr. Cohen stated that he doesn't feel comfortable making a decision based on whether or not it sheds too much light next door, and that is beyond the scope of the HDC's review. He stated that he is sympathetic to it, but that it is something that people in small neighborhoods have to deal with. Ms. Abeles stated that she thinks it looks better with the French door. Mr. Cohen asked whether the Commission thinks the door is appropriate or inappropriate, and if there is anyone that feels strongly that there should not be a door on that side of the house. Mr. Giangrasso said that he doesn't feel strongly about it, that the door looks good, and that a lot of houses of that era had French doors.

Mrs. Abeles made a motion to continue the public hearing for HDC 16-01 19 Abbott Street to Tuesday, March 8th, 2016 at 6:45pm. Mr. Giangrasso seconded. The motion passed (4-0).

Miss Lamplough made an announcement to the audience clarifying that they will not be receiving notification of the next public hearing because it was continued to a set date at tonight's hearing.

Minutes:

Documents:

1. *Minutes from 1/26/2016 HDC Meeting*

Mr. Friedman moved to approve the minutes. Mrs. Abeles seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4-0

Chairperson David Giangrasso adjourned the meeting at 7:52pm.

Note: A recording of this meeting is available from the Planning Department.

Minutes Approved: 3/8/2016

Respectfully submitted by:
Heather Lamplough
Planner