

WELLESLEY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
CALLED MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING
MARCH 8, 2016, 6:45 PM
PLANNING DEPARTMENT, WELLESLEY TOWN HALL

Members Present: David Giangrasso, Lisa Abeles, Eric Cohen, Edwina McCarthy,
and David Smith
Members Absent: Barry Friedman
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
Melissa and Gill Dailey, 126 Woodlawn Avenue

Chairperson David Giangrasso called the meeting to order at 6:45pm.

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

Documents:

1. *Staff Report, dated 3/3/2016*
2. *Project Plans dated March 8, 2016*
 - 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*

Discussion:

Ms. Abeles stated that she doesn't understand why the applicant was asked to provide more detailed information on the side door after the Commission has discussed it so extensively at the last meeting. Mr. Smith said that it was he who requested the additional information, and that he was not present at the last meeting when it was being discussed. He stated that he had expressed concerns about the door at the first meeting, and is still confused about it. Mr. Giangrasso stated that Mr. Smith was present at the first meeting, so he has the right to express his concerns about certain aspects of the project, as the Commission did not vote on the project. Ms. Abeles expressed concerns about how the Commission almost approved the project at the last meeting, and how they gave them a list of the things that needed to be revised for this meeting (which didn't include the side door). Mr. Smith stated that he was simply asking for a clarification, that he may not be opposed to a side door, but that it is a center-entry colonial and having a door that prominent on the side bothers him. Mr. Cerio stated that he hoped his email addressed some of these concerns regarding the door, and clarified that they received this request for additional information yesterday and that they've done a lot of work to try to get that to the Commission in time for this meeting. He explained that there is a net reduction in glass sq footage that faces the abutters, the proposed renovation will have less glass on that side of the house than what currently exists,

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and that they have also shrunk the size of the side doors since the last meeting. Mr. Cerio stated that they cannot provide a photograph of the door because that is a construction decision that has not been made yet. Mr. Smith explained that usually applicants have this information spec'ed out for the meeting with photographs. Mr. Cerio explained that they did what they could with receiving the request yesterday, and that they may have been able to do that had they received this request earlier. He stated that they cannot return for a fourth meeting to address this, and that they feel that they are being abused at this point. He stated that while the project was not voted on, it was very close to a vote, and that there were specific enumerated open points that needed to be resolved at this meeting, and this issue of the side door was not one of them. Mr. Cerio asked if a net glass square footage asked of every applicant in the Historic District. Mr. Smith stated that no its not, but if there is a question about the window, it can be. Mr. Smith asked if both of the doors open, or if just one opens. Mr. Cerio asked if that mattered. Mr. Smith stated that he does think it matters if they both open. Mr. Cerio asked to what point. Mr. Smith stated that it could make it more prominent than the front door. Ms. Abeles stated that you wouldn't be able to tell looking at the doorway, if one or both of the doors will be operable. Mr. Alim stated that the doors were two 2'8" doors that were 6'8" high and that they have reduced that to two 2'6" doors 6'8" high, so they have reduced the width of the doors by four inches. Mr. Cerio clarified that it is a 42% reduction in glass square footage on that side of the house. Mr. Alim explained that while both doors are operable, one is bolted top and bottom and the other door will be the operational door. Mr. Smith stated that maybe they could consider a door that has maybe one or two panes instead of the three panes they have proposed. Ms. Cerio asked the Commission why this level of attention to the number of window panes is being afforded to them, which has not been afforded to other recent applications of a similar nature. Mr. Smith stated that some things are scrutinized more than others, and that he believes that this is a prominent change to the structure. Mr. Cerio stated that there is precedence right across the street, where the Commission approved a similar project with sliding glass doors on a 100+ year old house. Mr. Alim stated that he believes that they have done their due diligence to address the issues raised by the Commission, and reduce the size of the door and the glass; and that this door has a huge impact on the homeowners as it is the access to their only yard space. Ms. Cerio stated that she spoke with the neighbors across the street and they stated there wasn't an issue like this with their door and that they are also close to their neighbors. Ms. Cerio re-iterated that she doesn't understand why this level of scrutiny is being imposed on them.

Mr. Alim reviewed the items that were asked to be revised for this meeting. The first item was the stoop at the rear of the addition. He explained that they extended that and adjusted the brackets for the door hood accordingly. He stated that they changed the style of the brackets and also extended the roof of the door hood slightly as well. Ms. Abeles asked what happened to the decorative brick detail that had been proposed for the rear wall of the addition. The applicant explained that they decided to remove it. Ms. Abeles suggested putting something there. Ms. Abeles also asked for calcifications regarding the gutter at the rear of the addition. Ms. Abeles stated that they should reconsider punching a hole in that metal roof, and that the downspout locations need to be looked at further. Mr. Alim presented the Commission with a photograph of a deck and explained that they are planning on using a wood composite for the rear porch/stoop. Ms. Abeles stated that they need to clarify what brand and style they plan on using, and then suggested that they state the porch will look like the one in the photograph presented, because otherwise the Commission doesn't know what they are doing. The applicants and the architect stated that the photograph represents what they plan on doing, and that it's going to look like that (deck, rails and posts). Mr. Alim stated that they would like to use a wood composite material, as opposed to a pressure treated wood, since those tend to rot so easily.

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Larry Luchene of 12 Waban Street stated that side of the house does not get much sun, and because of that they have had to redo their front porch three times, with this last time choosing to do a wood composite. Mr. Luchene reminded the Commission that wood composite is actually a wood set within a resin material. Mr. Alim stated that the wood composite paints nicely and does not have a sheen finish like some alternative materials. One of the Commission members asked Mr. Luchene if they used mahogany, and he stated that was a little too expensive so they had used cedar, which usually doesn't rot, but it did in their case. Ms. Abeles stated that with the wood composite materials, when they are hand-painted, you cannot tell what they are made of. She stated that the applicant should specify that it will be hand-painted not spray painted.

Ms. Abeles stated that she is still having a hard time understanding the MDO panel detail drawings, and how the detail jives with the elevation. Mr. Alim and Ms. Abeles discussed the drawing(s) and discovered that the detail drawing(s) do not accurately represent the panels as illustrated on the elevation(s).

Mr. Giangrasso asked the Commission if anyone had any issues with the proposed materials for the porch/stoop and brackets. Mr. Cohen stated that while they are not his favorite, he understands the desire to use a composite material so that the structure does not rot. Ms. Abeles stated that the wood is just not holding up anymore because it is being cut so fast; and that she does think that [composite] is the way to go these days, as long as it is painted in such a way that you cannot tell. Ms. Abeles stated that the rail system for the porch needs to be designed in such a way that the metal fasteners are not visible. Ms. Abeles stated that she would also like the posts to be tweaked so that the base of the post is taller.

Ms. Cerio stated that she went to the lighting store that Ms. Abeles recommended and picked out a possible candidate for a light fixture that is dark sky compliant. Ms. Cerio stated that they are going to work with their abutters Tad and Shannon when hanging the light to make sure the height is appropriate. Mr. Cohen asked the abutters at 17 Abbott Street if they still had concerns about the lighting. Mr. Heuer stated that if there is going to be a door there needs to be lights. Mr. Bernstein of 25 Weston Road stated that he thinks these fixtures are a big improvement from the formally proposed lantern-type fixtures, but wondered why they need six exterior lights on this house. Ms. Abeles asked the applicants how they would feel about moving the light fixtures proposed for the left side of the house to the rear porch (on either side of the door). Ms. Cerio stated that they are going to already have a light sunken into the door hood above that doorway. Mr. Cerio stated that they want those lights on the side of the house for safety reasons, that the street light is not that bright, and that it is very dark at the top of the driveway. Mr. Bernstien stated that he believes that the street lights are very bright and that the light the applicant has on their house currently already shines into their bedroom. He stated that while he does think that the fixtures are nice and an improvement, he would rather not have the lights. Ms. Cerio stated that one of the options that they have considered and discussed with the abutters, but is not on this plan is landscape lighting. Mr. Bernstein stated that they would prefer that, and it would give more of the lighting that they need at their feet. He also stated that they will already have a lot of light from the light on the back porch. Mr. Cerio stated that he doesn't believe that the lighting is within the Commission's jurisdiction. Mr. Giangrasso stated that he believes the light fixtures are. Miss Lamplough stated that light fixtures are indeed listed under the exceptions, and that she would interpret that to include both the number of and style of fixtures. Ms. Abeles stated that she thought their jurisdiction was more about aesthetics. Mr. Giangrasso agreed and stated that is why he was under the impression that the fixtures themselves were under their purview, but that it sounds like they're not. Miss Lamplough stated that they are exempt. Mr. Heuer stated that the following section of the bylaw would allow them to create a list of what light fixtures could be allowed. Mr. Cohen stated that while it says that they could do that, they haven't. Ms. Abeles stated that the applicant is going before the Zoning Board of Appeals and perhaps the issue about how much light there

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is, is more of their purview. She stated that aesthetically she liked the fixtures they have chosen, and that it sounds that they have tried to be sensitive to the needs of the neighbors, and choose lights that are not overly bright that shine into the neighbor's property. Ms. Cerio agreed and stated that they don't want bright lights out there either, that they aren't doing surgery out there and that they would like it dim. Mr. Cohen stated that while he thinks that this has allowed them to have a good discussion, it sounds like this is not under their jurisdiction. Ms. Cerio stated that she agrees that it was good to have the conversation to make sure that everyone was happy, whether it is under the Commission's purview or not. Mr. Cohen stated that he doesn't believe that anyone on the Commission can say that there is too much light, there's too little light, it's going to impact Daniel and Ellen or other neighbors. Ms. Cerio stated that they have every intention of working with the neighbors.

Ms. Abeles stated that she still has some issues with the MDO panel detail drawings and that the detail does not translate correctly. Mr. Alim stated that it's not a done detail by any means, and that it definitely needs more development. Mr. Alim stated that he did need one more day to work on it, but his daughter was ill. Mr. Alim stated that there is a workable detail in there, and that it just needs to be modified. Mr. Giangrasso asked the Commission if because they are voting on what it looks like on the façade, if it's okay. Ms. Abeles stated that her problem is that the way the detail is drawn right now, does not convince her that it will look like it does on the elevation. Mr. Giangrasso stated that if it doesn't end up looking as it does on the elevation, then they wouldn't be able to get a certificate of occupancy. Mr. Cohen said that to Lisa's point, whether a sill is flush or proud matters.

Mr. Alim indicated that the step flashing has been illustrated on the drawings. Ms. Abeles asked if the door hood is standing seam and if it is going to be curved. Mr. Alim stated it was. Mr. Cerio asked if they could clarify the open issues. Ms. Abeles stated that she doesn't have an issue with the French doors, what she wants to see are the detail drawings done accurately. Mr. Alim stated that he has done four different iterations of this house, so had he not had to change the design so many times he would have had more time to develop those details.

Mr. Smith stated that he thinks the French door is inconsistent with the style of the house. Ms. Cerio asked if there was a way to take some items and check them off the list, or is everything just going to be left open to interpretation again. Mr. Giangrasso stated that the Commission cannot be prohibited from re-visiting any aspect of the project. Mr. Cerio asked at what point does the cycle stop? Mr. Giangrasso said when the Commission votes. Mr. Cerio stated that they cannot be expected to react to requests 30 hours before the meeting, so they need to know ahead of time. Ms. Abeles stated that the applicants have done a good job responding to criticism and revising the design. Mr. Cerio stated that these meetings do not come without a burden to them. Miss Lamplough informed the Commission that the 60-day time frame for the decision will be expiring, so if they vote to continue the meeting then the applicant will need to agree to that. Ms. Watts asked the Commission if they would consider a motion subject to administrative approval to work out those construction details.

Giangrasso – From a procedural perspective Heather, can we do that? We've conditioned a bunch of different votes.

Lamplough – You can condition it that the revised section details are submitted. I'm not an architect, so I wouldn't be able to confirm that they match.

Giangrasso – So who would approve it? How does that work? Would Lisa come back and just approve it?

Lamplough – If that's how you want to work it.

Abeles – I can read the drawings and know whether these drawings are going to come out looking like this.

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Lamplough - You can approve that elevation, so the section that he submits to the builder has to match that elevation.

Abeles – Then I would certainly be willing to approve this with the stipulation that the proper drawings are submitted. That I can review and say that these details will make it look like that.

Lamplough – And then I can forward them to you.

Jeffrey Cerio – We can get an email approval contingent upon that?

Abeles – I would make a motion to do that and that the rail is built so that there are no fasteners visible and that it is painted by hand.

Giangrasso – Are there any other conditions?

Lamplough – Are there any further comments from the public?

Tad Heuer – I just have two questions. One, do materials usually get (i.e matching brick) get incorporated into the decision?

Abeles – We did talk about the brick, and the fact that they are reusing the older bricks.

Tad Heuer – Right, but is that incorporated into this decision?

Abeles – Yes

Tad Heuer – And similar for the windows and doors?

Abeles – Yes, we specified that their windows are Pella.

Alim – It’s a standard Pella door, two 2’6 by 6’8/9”. With the panel represented as in the elevation. And the material is Douglas fir.

Tad Heuer – Don’t we usually see a list of what is going to be used?

Catherine Cerio – Let’s just say we’re going to use Douglas fir.

Giangrasso – Sometimes we do get samples.

(Too many people talking - cannot decipher.)

Abeles – When we have something that we’re not familiar with, we’ve asked them bring them in. We are familiar with Pella.

Tad Heuer – And this is going to be a metal clad window?

Applicant Catherine Cerio – On the exterior

Abeles – It’s a Pella clad window, clad exterior

Tad Heuer – My question is, can the builder look at this and say I can just go get any Pella window. Or they say it’s whatever one you specify?

Catherine Cerio – On that list it does say clad exterior, wood interior.

(Too many people talking - cannot decipher.)

Abeles – You can’t just take any old window.

Tad Heuer – Well that’s my question.

Eric Cohen – This says: Pella windows, clad exterior white and new manufactured Simpson Douglas fir.

Giangrasso – Is that the door?

Alim – Yeah, that’s the door. That’s what I particularly go with, because I know it’s a little less expensive than the Pella door. We can do a Pella door or this door.

Applicant Catherine Cerio – Well we said we were going to do a Pella door, so we’re going to do a Pella door.

Abeles – I see Simpson doors all the time too. Both of those doors are acceptable. I would say use one of those two, because they are both good quality doors.

Eric Cohen – I would agree that they need to specify.

Abeles – Well they did specify. Didn’t you say that they are architectural series?

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Alim – No, it's doesn't say architectural series.

Abeles - Well then you need to say that.

Catherine Cerio – Okay, so we are saying architectural series Pella windows, Simpson or Pella door.

Jeffrey Cerio – Well I don't think this level of specification was requested at the last meeting, we would have happily brought this information.

Abeles – No, you have tried to give us whatever we asked.

Giangrasso – So, how do we want to write this?

Abeles – Alright, I would make a motion that we make it specific that the windows are Pella architectural series, clad exterior, wood interior, white cladding. The doors can be either Simpson or Pella, they are both a good quality door, and that they are doing wood, not clad. That the rail has got to be hand painted, not spray painted, and the fasteners and the system of which its put together is not showing. I'd like to stipulate that it's matching this with the exception of the base being up a little bit. And the bracket hand painted. And that the details that you have submitted are going to be resubmitted, both horizontal plan sections and vertical plan sections, such that the details will match the elevation.

Jeffrey Cerio – So that's the only contingency that requires a new drawing?

Abeles – Yes

Jeffrey Cerio – So everything else is approved contingently?

Mr. Smith – Well, it's not approved.

Abeles – I'm just trying to make a motion of what needs to be included.

Giangrasso – So, that's the outline of the motion that can be proposed. I can't propose the motion.

Abeles – I'm proposing that motion.

Giangrasso – I'm not sure, I mean, did you get all that Heather?

Lamplough – I did, and I'm recording this too.

Giangrasso – Okay.

Abeles – I know that David has raised the question about the side door. Is that something that we all want to vote on again?

Giangrasso – Well that's just part of the vote. If we vote to approve the project, then we are voting on the door.

Abeles – I would vote to keep the door as it is.

Giangrasso – We are just voting on the project.

Lamplough – I'm not sure you can really vote on individual aspects of the project.

Abeles – I would put a motion to move forward to vote approval for this project based on these contingencies.

McCarthy – I would second that.

Giangrasso – All those in favor?

Abeles – Aye

Giangrasso – Aye

McCarthy – Aye

Cohen – Aye

Giangrasso – Okay so that's four that voted in favor.

Smith – I opposed.

Giangrasso – Okay, now we just need to do some drawings.

Mr. Heuer stated that the proposed basement plans were not calculated into the TLAG. Ms. Abeles stated that they don't review what is being proposed inside of the basement. Miss Lamplough stated that the Historic District Commission does not review TLAG. Mr. Heuer stated that it should still be accurate. Ms. Abeles stated that it's not for them to review. Mr. Giangrasso asked Mr. Heuer if he was saying that one of the elevations is not correct because of the basement TLAG. Mr. Heuer stated that the TLAG is not

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correctly reflected on the GSF-1 because it does not correctly show the basement. Mr. Giangrasso stated that he's not sure how that would impact their analysis. Ms. Abeles stated that it will need to be corrected in order for them to get a permit from the building department.

Informal Discussion: 126 Woodlawn Avenue

Discussion:

Melissa and Gill Dailey of 126 Woodlawn Avenue came in to have an informal discussion with the Commission about some proposed plans they have for the Fiske House. They brought in some historic photographs of the house to show the Commission. Mr. Dailey stated that they just closed on the property three weeks ago. Mr. Dailey stated that they really want to maintain the integrity of the house, but that it is really dated, including knob and tube electricity, which needs to be updated. They will need to install HVAC and plan to replace all of the windows, keeping the 12-over12 style. They would like to enclose the existing breezeway to create a mudroom. Ms. Abeles stated that the only issue they may run into in doing that is that there may be different setback requirements when the garage is attached or detached from the house. She suggested discussing that with the building department. Ms. Dailey asked if the Commission would be amenable to enclosing that area. Mr. Giangrasso stated that people do things like that. Ms. Abeles stated that they should make it look as transparent as possible, with glass. Mr. Dailey stated that they would also like to put a second story on a portion of the house. Ms. Abeles stated that it seems like a reasonable request to her. Mr. Dailey showed the Commission a very early draft of the proposed plans. Miss Lamplough informed the homeowners that the color and material of the roof, should they replace it, is an exception, and is not reviewed by the Commission. Miss Lamplough provided the homeowners with the application and briefly explained the application process.

Minutes:

Documents:

1. *Minutes from 2/23/2016 HDC Meeting*

Ms. McCarthy moved to approve the minutes. Ms. Abeles seconded. The motion passed unanimously 5-0

Chairperson David Giangrasso adjourned the meeting at 8:15pm.

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

Minutes Approved: 05/10/2016

Respectfully submitted by:
Heather Lamplough
Planner