

WELLESLEY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION  
PUBLIC HEARING  
JUNE 24, 2014; 6:45 PM  
PLANNING BOARD OFFICE, TOWN HALL

*Members Present:* Edwina McCarthy, David Giangrasso, David Smith, Lisa Abeles, Eric Cohen  
*Staff:* Erin Heacock  
*Also Present:* Brian Alim, Zach Galvin, Matthew Troxell, Denise Troxell, Tamara Sielecki, Inger Nielsen, Rick Picard

Chair McCarthy opened the public hearing at 6:50 pm.

### **32 Cottage Street**

*Documents:*

- Project Narrative
- 32 Cottage Street, Wellesley, MA Plan Set, Prepared by Brian Charles Alim, Inc.
  - Sheet A-1, Existing and Proposed Front Elevation, dated May 14, 2014, revised June 11, 2014
  - Sheet A-2, Existing and Proposed Right Side Elevation, dated May 14, 2014, revised June 11, 2014
  - Sheet A-3, Existing and Proposed Rear Elevation, dated May 14, 2014, revised June 11, 2014
  - Sheet A-4, Existing and Proposed Left Side Elevation, dated May 14, 2014, revised June 11, 2014
  - Sheet A-5, Proposed First Floor Plan, dated May 14, 2014, revised June 11, 2014
  - Sheet A-6, Proposed Second Floor Plan, dated May 14, 2014, revised June 11, 2014
  - Sheet A-7, Existing First Floor Plan, dated May 14, 2014, revised June 11, 2014
  - Sheet A-8, Existing Second Floor Plan, dated May 14, 2014, revised June 11, 2014
  - Sheet A-9, Building Section, dated June 11, 2014
  - Sheet G-1, Existing Gross Square Footage Calculations, May 14, 2014, revised June 11, 2014
  - Sheet G-2, Proposed Gross Square Footage Calculations, May 14, 2014, revised June 11, 2014
- Site Photographs

*Discussion:*

Brian Alim, architect, presented the proposal for the addition at 32 Cottage Street. A master suite will be added to the rear of the home. On the first floor, a small mud room addition over an existing foundation. On the second floor, there is an existing bedroom with low sloped ceiling, and the master bedroom would be an expansion over the first floor of that bedroom.

Mr. Alim also presented the elevations for the proposed project. On the front elevation, the roof line from the master suite will be visible, and the existing steps to the front door will be replaced. On the rear elevation, the new enclosed area is visible and the second floor addition is visible. On the right side elevation (driveway side), the design carried the main ridge roof line over and a shed dormer.

Ms. Abeles asked about the gutter that is applied to a flat wall on the right side elevation. Mr. Alim noted that it would be a faux gutter to break up the wall.

On the left side elevation, Mr. Alim revised the plan. The shed dormer carries across the side. The pitch was lowered. It mimics the other side.

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Ms. Abeles stated that the front elevation is awkward with the additional peak for the second floor addition. It looks unintentional. Ms. Abeles asked if the peak could be tucked to the right behind the main ridgeline of the home, even if the gable at the rear is asymmetrical.

Ms. Abeles indicated that if the ceiling would be cathedraled, there's no reason to create the awkward peak seen from the front elevation. It appears that the ridgeline could be dropped based on the drawings presented by Mr. Alim.

Ms. Abeles also recommended removing the faux gutter.

Ms. McCarthy noted that Mr. Alim mentioned decorative trim to be added to the house. Mr. Alim described the trim as typically a 1 by 5 MDO panel which would be layered to match existing trim.

Mr. Alim suggested that the gutter could be eliminated on the right side elevation, and a shed dormer could be added.

Ms. Abeles agreed, and suggested pulling back the wall a bit to create more roof which is comparable to the existing structure's roof.

Mr. Smith asked if the home's square footage would double. Mr. Alim indicated that it is an addition of 385 square feet.

Mr. Smith indicated that the proposed side elevations look massive. Ms. Abeles agreed, indicating that the left side elevation is a long wall.

Ms. Abeles noted the two dormers of different pitches are awkward. She suggested that the new dormer in the closet could be altered. Ms. Abeles suggested altering the dormer to a simple dormer that is similar to the adjacent existing dormer.

Mr. Alim thought that it would make the closet unusable. Ms. Abeles suggested that the closet be broken up into two closets: one is still a walk-in closet and the other is off the hall. She indicated that the elevation looks extremely massive and is detrimental to the look of the house.

Ms. Abeles suggested that her recommendations would not make the rear of the home where the addition is located feel bigger than the front of the home. Mr. Alim agreed with her suggestions.

Mr. Smith asked about the two window bays on the rear elevation. He thought it looked awkward as well.

Ms. Abeles suggested making the windows bigger and creating the illusion that the upper window is suspended from the lowered roof line. Ms. Abeles alternatively suggested pushing the bay back as a triple window.

Ms. Abeles also suggested that pulling the second floor bedroom back a foot would make the rear elevation appear less massive.

Ms. Heacock reminded that Commission that the windows will be replaced on the house as well, and pointed to Mr. Alim's window sample.

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Mr. Cohen asked about the window and trim. Mr. Alim explained that the proposed will match existing.

Ms. McCarthy noted that there are a few abutters in the audience.

Zach Galvin, 30 ½ Cottage Street, stated that he is interested in the trees on the property. Ms. Abeles noted that the Commission does not have jurisdiction over the trees. Ms. Heacock explained to Mr. Galvin that the removal of trees may be addressed by the Zoning Board of Appeals as well as being subject to the Tree Bylaw. (Staff Edit: The project will not trigger the Tree Bylaw.) Mr. Galvin explained that there is a specific tree at the rear of the property that is near to the addition. He is wondering if the tree would be pruned as it may impact his home. Ms. Heacock explained that it could be addressed by the Zoning Board of Appeals as the Commission has no jurisdiction over the trees.

Denise Troxell, 46 Denton Road, asked about the shared driveway and the construction staging. Mr. Alim explained that the existing fence on the subject property would be removed to accommodate construction debris. Ms. Troxell noted that Cottage Street is a narrow road. Mr. Alim noted that the applicants will not be living in the house during construction so their cars will not add to the number of vehicles accessing the site. Ms. Heacock mentioned that construction management can be addressed by the Zoning Board of Appeals. She let the abutters know that they would receive a notification again with the date of the Zoning Board of Appeals hearing.

Mr. Troxell, 46 Denton Road, explained that he has concerns about the rear massing. Ms. Abeles explained that her suggestions should be break up the mass. Ms. McCarthy explained that the addition is over the existing footprint so the home would not be any closer to Mr. Troxell's property. Mr. Alim stated that the proposed addition includes typical modifications, so it's unlikely that future additions would occur.

Mr. Troxell was also interested in the height of the addition. Ms. Abeles stated that it wouldn't be any higher than the existing home.

Ms. Abeles moved to continue the public hearing. Mr. Giangrasso seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

#### **14 Waban Street**

*Documents:*

- Project Narrative for 14 Waban Street – Window Replacement and Shed Replacement
- Harvey Majesty Window Specification
- Reeds Ferry Shed Historic Colonial Specification

*Discussion:*

Tamara Sielecki, homeowner, presented the proposed project at 14 Waban Street. Ms. Sielecki plans to replace all of the windows (except for the stained glass windows) with Harvey Majesty windows, and replace the existing shed with a Reeds Ferry Shed.

Ms. Sielecki brought a sample of the window that she proposes to use at her home. The inside is a wood window; the exterior is an aluminum clad window. The product is a Harvey Majesty window. There are two different sizes of muntins available: a wider muntin or a skinny muntin.

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Ms. Abeles stated that it looks like a clad window with a snap in grill. She prefers the narrower muntin, but it is still very shiny.

Ms. Sielecki notes that most of her windows are 2 over 1, but there are a few that are 2 over 2.

Mr. Smith asked if the windows would be replaced as 2 over 1 windows. Ms. Sielecki indicated that the same configuration would be replaced per window. She points out that there is a sideways window on a shed dormer that will be upgraded.

Mr. Cohen notes that the question is whether the Commission can approve the proposed window.

Ms. Abeles asked whether Ms. Sielecki has considered the Marvin Integrity window. Ms. Sielecki did look at that window, but it costs about 75 percent more. She has approximately 30 windows to replace.

Ms. McCarthy noted that Ms. Sielecki and her husband had made a similar request a number of years ago. At the time, the Commission recommended looking at renovating the existing windows.

Ms. Sielecki stated that she did look into the option, but it also quite expensive. Many of her windows have structural damage and the wood is also damaged. The project's purpose is to repair these structural issues for a safer home.

Ms. Abeles suggested the Brosco sash windows as another non-clad option. Ms. Sielecki explained that those windows don't tilt in for cleaning purposes.

Ms. Abeles is concerned with the shiny aluminum.

Ms. Sielecki explained that they specifically looked at the Harvey model because it was approved for 14 Waban Street.

Ms. Abeles explained that the Commission's decisions do not set precedent. Each case is reviewed independently.

Mr. Smith asked if Harvey makes a vinyl window. It may be less shiny. He suggested pricing out the model.

Ms. Abeles is interested in seeing the vinyl window with the skinny muntin. Part of the problem is that the Commission is viewing the windows extremely close in the meeting setting.

Ms. Sielecki suggested viewing the windows at 17 Waban Street.

Ms. Abeles asked if Ms. Sielecki would use full or half screens. Ms. Sielecki's preference would be half screens. She would be open to using full screens on the first floor and use the half screens on the second and third floors.

Ms. McCarthy suggested that the Commission members view the neighbor's home.

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Ms. Abeles suggested that the Commission conditionally approve the project, and allow Ms. Sielecki to apply for her Building Permit, which could be amended.

Ms. Sielecki asked if the Harvey window would be approved, and then the detail would be sorted out at a later meeting.

Mr. Giangrasso moved to conditionally approve the window replacement project using Harvey Majesty windows pending a visit to 17 Waban Street to view the identical windows, and to decide on the specific window at a deferred meeting. Mr. Cohen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Ms. McCarthy asked if the shed is as shown in the Reeds Ferry shed specification. It would not include the cupola.

Ms. Sielecki stated that the existing shed is non-conforming so to replace it would require going to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Ms. Abeles confirmed that the shed is wood construction with asphalt roof shingles. It will be.

Mr. Giangrasso asked how tall the shed stands. It is unclear how tall the shed will be, but it will not be oversized.

Ms. McCarthy asked if the color will match the house. It will eventually, but the Commission does not have jurisdiction over paint color.

Mr. Smith asked how big the shed will be. Ms. Sielecki stated that is 10 feet by 16 feet.

Ms. Abeles moved to approve the shed replacement with the 10 foot by 16 foot Reeds Ferry Historical Colonial shed. Mr. Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

#### **41 Cottage Street**

*Documents:*

- Project Narrative for 41 Cottage Street
- Site Photographs

*Discussion:*

Ms. Nielsen, homeowner, presented the proposed project at 41 Cottage Street. Ms. Nielsen plans to replace the concrete steps at the front entrance with granite steps. The walkway would be replaced with red brick. A step at the street will also be replaced with a granite step. Ms. Nielsen noted that the granite style will be similar to the rear steps, although the stone retaining walls securing the rear steps will not be duplicated in the front.

Ms. McCarthy noted that the walkway is not under the Commission's jurisdiction as it is at-grade. Features that are substantially at-grade are exempt from review.

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The Commission members agreed that the proposed project will be an improvement to the existing conditions

Mr. Giangrasso moved to approve the replacement of the existing cement steps at the front entrance and at the street with granite steps as well as the replacement of the walkway with red brick. Ms. Abeles seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

### **17 Cottage Street**

*Documents:*

- Project Narrative for 17 Cottage Street
- “Plot of Land located at 17 Cottage Street, Wellesley, MA” prepared by Massachusetts Survey Consultants, dated April 28, 2014
- System 1, Option A Placement
- System 1, Option B Placement
- System 2 Lower
- System 2 Upper
- Mitsubishi Electric, Mr. Slim, MXZ-4A36NA Specification
- Mitsubishi Electric, Mr. Slim, MXZ-3B24NA Specification
- Mitsubishi Electric, Line-Hide, Lineset Cover System Specification

*Discussion:*

Rick Picard, of Rodenhiser, representing Dawn Balczar, owner of 17 Cottage Street, presented the proposed project to install two ductless air conditioning units at-grade and the associated conduits on the rear and left side elevations of the existing structure.

Ms. Abeles indicated that she doesn't mind the units at-grade, but the conduits should be internal to the house. Mr. Picard noted that the conduits cannot be internal to the house. The conduits connect the at-grade condenser to the wall unit inside the home. The conduits are paintable, so clients typically paint the units.

Ms. Abeles stated the conduits are just not appropriate.

Mr. Smith asked if the conduits can run along the chimney. Ms. Abeles agreed that the conduits should travel in a way along the wall to conceal the conduits or in a straight line.

Mr. Picard noted that the conduits must be installed so that condensation can drain.

Ms. McCarthy asked if the proposal will provide air conditioning for the whole home. It will provide air conditioning and heat.

Mr. Picard noted that there are two options for the at-grade units. One of the options puts the unit within the setback; the other option locates the unit outside of the setback. Ms. Heacock noted that the Commission cannot approve Option A as the unit would be located within the 20-foot side yard setback and therefore would be a zoning violation. Noise emitting equipment, such as air conditioning units, must be located outside of the setbacks. If the client wants to pursue a Variance to locate the unit within the setback that would be an option, but the threshold for the granting of a Variance is high and the Zoning

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Board of Appeals would likely deny the request as there is no indication that this project meets the high threshold of review.

Mr. Picard noted that these units are quiet.

Mr. Giangrasso agreed that the units are quiet; however, the path proposed for the conduits is distracting.

Ms. Abeles stated that since it's the back of the house, it's not that bad.

Ms. Abeles asked what colored the house and conduits will be painted. It will be gray.

Mr. Picard described the two sets of three units that will be installed. There is no space for duct work in the attic or in the walls.

Ms. Abeles suggested that a corner of the room could be boxed out. Mr. Picard noted that there is too much in the way of the floor to floor connection. There are also mechanical issues regarding turns in the ducts as they require the ability to drain properly.

Ms. Abeles suggested that the conduit run closer to the chimney and could access the interior units from the other direction with a soffit.

Ms. Heacock thought that the chimney may obscure the conduits.

Ms. Abeles agreed if the conduits were closer to the chimney. She asked Mr. Picard how close he can get the conduit to the chimney.

Ms. McCarthy asked how close the neighbors are. Mr. Picard thought that it is at least 30 feet.

Ms. Abeles suggested that Mr. Picard bring the main line up close to the chimney and then do straight lines to the interior units that follow the clapboard lines.

Mr. Picard noted that the lines have to have a pitch.

Mr. Picard suggested that the interior units can be connected via the interior left side or the interior right side. He indicated that he can connect the interior units on the interior left side so that the lines on the exterior will be closer to the chimney.

Ms. Abeles thought that it would make a big difference to follow Mr. Picard's suggestion.

Mr. Smith moved to approve the two air conditioning units at-grade and associated ductwork on the rear and left side elevations of the existing structure at 17 Cottage Street subject to the following conditions:

1. Option B is required for the rear air conditioning unit.
2. The ductwork on the left side elevation must be located as close to the chimney as possible;
3. The ductwork will be painted to match the house;
4. Mr. Picard oversee the installation of the ductwork; and
5. Post-installation photographs of the ductwork are provided to the Historic District Commission.

Mr. Cohen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

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**Vacant Commissioner Position**

The Historic District Commission deferred a decision.

**Previous Minutes**

Mr. Cohen moved to approve the minutes from June 3, 2014 as written. Mr. Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

The Commission adjourned at approximately 8:45 pm.

Erin L. Heacock  
Planner

Minutes Approved: July 29, 2014