

WELLESLEY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
TUESDAY FEBRUARY 28, 2012
REGULAR MEETING
PLANNING BOARD OFFICE, TOWN HALL
MINUTES

Members Present: Edwina McCarthy, Jean Berry, David Giangrasso, David Smith, Lisa Abeles
Also Present: Planner: Ethan Parsons

Chair Berry opened the public hearing at 6:45 pm.

15 Cottage Street

Peter Serreze, homeowner, and Joanna Reck, architect, presented a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to keep a metal chimney on the northwest roof, which was installed without prior approval.

The request is described in a January 4, 2012 email from Joanna Reck to Ethan Parsons and in a January 23, 2012 email from Joanna Reck to Ethan Parsons.

Ms. Berry asked Mr. Serreze and Ms. Reck to explain why they are before the Commission.

Ms. Reck stated that she mistakenly initially drew a chimney that was six (6) inches in diameter and smaller than the chimney that was actually installed, which is eight (8) inches in diameter and taller. She stated that the Building Inspector explained to her that the chimney must be eight (8) inches in diameter and at its installed height.

Ms. Abeles stated that she thought the chimney was actually a plumbing stack when she reviewed the initial application.

Ms. Reck showed the Board photographs of similar metal chimneys on other houses on Cottage Street. She stated that a masonry chimney in this location might call more attention to it.

Mr. Serreze stated that the house used to have a metal chimney, pre-development.

Ms. Reck stated that the new chimney would have to be larger. She proposed painting the chimney with chimney paint in order to make it blend in better. She suggested a matte grey so that it would not be so shiny.

Ms. Berry clarified that the issue is that the chimney was not shown on the approved plans.

Mr. Serreze stated that the chimney will be for a woodstove. He called the woodstove a backup plan should they lose power. He stated that the addition was designed around the woodstove.

Ms. Abeles stated that she thought the chimney looks bad. She stated she was hugely disappointed.

Ms. Berry stated that she was unsure there is much of an alternative.

Ms. McCarthy stated that the chimney must be as tall as it is in order to comply with the building requirements.

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Ms. Abeles asked if the chimney could have been installed on the other side.

Ms. Reck stated that it would have gone up through the bathroom on the second floor.

Ms. Berry stated that the Commission approved a vent.

Ms. Abeles restated that she thought the stack was a stack for plumbing, not a chimney.

Mr. Smith asked where the plumbing stack will be located.

Ms. Reck stated that it is on the southwest roof.

Ms. Berry stated that the base of the chimney is conspicuous.

Ms. Abeles stated that the chimney paint should be heat-resistant paint and she suggested Ms. Reck inspect its application at the site.

Mr. Smith stated that he agreed with Lisa about the chimney sticking out like a sore thumb. He stated that the paint will help make the chimney less obvious but it will also chip. He asked if tiles could be applied to the chimney.

Ms. Reck stated that tiles may not be used.

Mr. Smith asked what the existing chimney vents.

Ms. Reck stated that the existing chimney vents the boiler exhaust.

Ms. Abeles restated that she thought all along that there would be a plumbing stack at the location of the chimney.

Ms. Berry asked the Commission if it could reject the request.

Mr. Smith asked if the Commission could allow a vent out of the side of the house, for a gas stove rather than a woodstove.

Ms. Abeles stated that the Serrezes will have to keep the chimney painted grey.

Ms. McCarthy stated that she was also disappointed but was not sure what could be done to correct the mistake.

Mr. Serreze stated that he will be adding some arborvitae and apple trees on the northwest side of the property to add some screening.

Ms. Abeles stated that residents of the District don't like arborvitae.

Ms. Reck suggested that the chimney will blend in with time.

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Ms. Berry proposed approving the request to leave the metal chimney with the condition that it maintained by being painted with a grey, heat-resistant paint.

Mr. Giangrasso asked how the proposed condition will be enforced.

Mr. Serreze stated that he will keep it painted as he cares for the maintenance of the property.

Ms. Reck stated that they would also like to replace three (3) windows in the basement. The windows would be changed from wood to clad but would otherwise appear identical to the existing windows.

Ms. Abeles stated that this is practical because they are in the basement.

Ms. Berry stated that the Commission didn't have sufficient time to review this request before the hearing.

Ms. Abeles stated that she felt comfortable approving the window replacement because it's a no-brainer.

Ms. Reck stated that the windows are in a portion of the basement that is unfinished. She added that the windows weren't shown on the elevations.

Ms. McCarthy made a motion to approve the metal chimney with the condition that it be painted with heat-resistant grey paint and to approve the three (3) replacement windows in the basement. Mr. Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (5 to 0).

Minutes

The Commission considered for adoption the Minutes of 6/28/11, 8/2/11, 10/11/11, 10/18/11 and 11/1/11

Ms. McCarthy suggested grammatical edits to the Minutes of 6/28/11 and 10/11/11.

Mr. Giangrasso made a motion to adopt the Minutes of 6/28/11 (as amended), 8/2/11, 10/10/11 (as amended), 10/18/11 and 11/1/11. Ms. Abeles seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (5 to 0).

The Commission adjourned at approximately 7:50 pm.

Ethan Parsons
Planner

Minutes Approved: May 28, 2013