

**WELLESLEY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
CALLED MEETING & PUBLIC HEARINGS
JANUARY 5, 2021, 6:45 PM
ONLINE REMOTE MEETING**

Members Present: David Smith, Chair; Meredith Angjeli; Pluton Angjeli; Eric Cohen; Emily Maitin; Thomas Paine; BB Wood

Staff: Dana Marks, Planner.

Others Present: Barry Friedman, 57 Cottage Street; Valerie Gates, 57 Cottage Street; Annette Luchene, 12 Waban Street; Larry Luchene, 12 Waban Street.

Call to Order: David Smith called the meeting to order at 6:49pm.

Public Hearing: HDC-20-10 – 57 Cottage Street – Certificate of Appropriateness. Mr. Smith opened the Public Hearing for 57 Cottage Street. Homeowners Barry Friedman and Valerie Gates were in attendance to present their Application. Mr. Smith summarized the project to install a 67 linear ft. tongue-and-groove fence 6 ft. tall.

Ms. Gates stated that they live on the corner of Cottage and West Riding Streets, so their back yard is on a street. They intend to build a privacy fence in a style similar to others present throughout the Historic District. It will be a tongue-and-groove fence built by Perfection Fence. Ms. Gates added that they plan to paint the fence the same color as their house.

While not under the Commission’s purview, Mr. Cohen suggested that staining on fences is longer-lasting than paint. Mr. Friedman and Ms. Gates noted that they misspoke earlier, and the fence will be stained rather than painted. Mr. Cohen further suggested that they think about staining the fence another color rather than matching the same color as their house (either white or natural finish), although he reiterated that color is not within the purview of the Commission. Ms. Gates and Mr. Friedman commented that they would be open to thinking about other color finishes.

Mr. Smith made a motion to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness as shown in the presented submission with the recommended conditions included in the corresponding Staff Report. Mr. Cohen seconded the motion. After a roll-call vote, the motion unanimously passed (7-0).

Public Hearing: HDC 20-11 – 12 Waban Street – Certificate of Appropriateness. Mr. Smith opened the Public Hearing for 12 Waban Street. Homeowners Annette and Larry Luchene were in attendance to present their Application. Mr. Smith summarized the project to install a 54 linear ft. picket fence to match their neighbors and enclose their back yard for their new puppy.

Mrs. Luchene stated that they intend to build a 54 linear ft. fence 42” tall, which matches their next door neighbors. This was also the height recommended by Perfection Fence based on the size of their new dog.

It will be in the Mt. Vernon style, which will match the style of their neighbor's fence. Mrs. Luchene noted that the fence could either be painted or stained. Based on their neighbor's fence and recommendations from others, they will probably be staining their fence. It will be finished in white to match their new gutters and other surrounding picket fences.

The fence will enclose their backyard in order for their newly adopted Bernedoodle dog to run around in an enclosed space. There will also be an entrance gate. Mrs. Luchene explained that it will be made of northern white cedar wood with western red cedar pickets.

Mr. and Mrs. Luchene introduced their new dog Annie to the Commission.

Mr. Smith moved to grant the Certificate of Appropriateness for the fence as submitted with the conditions outlined in the corresponding Staff Report. Mr. Cohen seconded the motion. After a roll-call vote, the motion unanimously passed (7-0).

Continued Public Hearing – Historic Preservation Design Guidelines. Mr. Smith re-opened the continued Public Hearing on the Historic Preservation Design Guidelines that were presented by Peter Benton of Heritage Strategies last month on December 1, 2020.

Mr. Smith summarized the project, stating that the Commission commissioned Heritage Strategies with funding from the Town to compile historic preservation design guidelines. The document been posted online for a number of weeks and months for review. The initial meeting and Public Hearing was held on December 1, 2020, where there was a productive discussion and public comments.

Since that meeting, Mr. Smith reported that some of the language to the Introduction was changed to reiterate that this document is a set of design guidelines, and they are not more codes, bylaws, or restrictions. Mr. Smith pointed out specific changes made to the beginning of the document.

Mr. Smith also addressed concerns brought up last month about the term "guidelines." Mr. Smith stated that they have to call the document "guidelines" because that will make it consistent with other documents of a similar nature that are employed by other cities and towns. They will remain titled as "Historic Preservation Design Guidelines." Mr. Smith added that clarification on the Town website was amended to more clearly state that the document is a reference to provide guidance rather than change the review authority of the Commission. This was also reiterated within the document in Chapter 1.

Mr. Angjeli was concerned that there may be confusion between the Design Guidelines and the Guideline section of the Historic Districts Bylaw. Mr. Angjeli pointed out that Section 14D.F is called "Guidelines." Ms. Marks mentioned that this section of the Bylaw is included in Staff Reports as a reminder for what the Commission can and cannot take into consideration and condition in their application review process.

Mrs. Maitin suggested that they could resolve any possible confusion with the language the Commission uses in referencing the Design Guidelines as a means of guidance and as a reference document. Ms. Maitin does not believe this will cause any confusion, and the title of the document should not change.

Ms. Marks spoke to Ms. Maitin's point and comments that came up last month about how the Design Guidelines will be presented on the Town website. Ms. Marks shared a few changes that were made to how it is now presented on the Town website. Mrs. Angjeli appreciated the changes made online to further clarify the difference between the Historic Preservation Design Guidelines and the Commission's enabling bylaws.

Ms. Maitin further suggested ways to clarify the description of the Design Guidelines on the Town website. Mrs. Angjeli added further suggestions to address the feedback from public comments received last month.

Ms. Maitin also suggested further changes to the Introduction of the Design Guidelines document as well.

Mr. Paine further suggested using the word "resource" to describe the Design Guidelines. Mr. Paine mentioned that this could be used on the Town website. Mrs. Angjeli agreed that this was a good suggestion.

Mrs. Angjeli suggested one more change to the Introduction of the Design Guidelines document.

Ms. Maitin made a motion to approve the Historic Preservation Design Guidelines, prepared by Heritage Strategies, to serve as a resource and reference document for the Commission and for property owners and residents in Wellesley with Ms. Maitin's proposed changes to the second and third paragraphs of the Introduction and Mrs. Angjeli's proposed changes to the third paragraph of the Introduction. Mr. Cohen seconded the motion. After a roll-call vote, the motion unanimously passed (7-0).

Review & Approve Revised Application Form & Materials Checklist. Prior to the meeting, Ms. Marks circulated a draft of a further updated Application Form & Materials Checklist based on the Commission's discussion during their meeting on December 1, 2020. Ms. Marks presented the further changes and opened the discussion for the Commission to share additional comments.

The Commission went through the draft and discussed the proposed changes from the current form. The updated draft was acceptable to all members of the Commission.

Mr. Cohen left the meeting, however there was still a quorum present with the remaining six members of the Commission in attendance.

The Commission decided to move forward with the updated application form as prepared and edited. Ms. Marks will finalize the form, post online, and make available for future Applicants to use.

Approval of Minutes. Prior to the meeting, Ms. Marks circulated a draft of minutes from the previous Commission meeting on December 1, 2020. Ms. Maitin made a motion to approve the December 1 minutes as presented. Ms. Wood seconded the motion. After a roll-call vote, the Commission unanimously (6-0) approved the December 1 minutes.

Adjourn. Mr. Smith adjourned the meeting at 7:52pm.

Next Meeting: February 2, 2021

Minutes Approved: March 9, 2021

Minutes Compiled by: Dana Marks, Planner

A full recording of this meeting can be viewed through www.wellesleymedia.org.