



**Town of Arlington, Massachusetts**  
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## Historic Districts Commission Minutes 11/18/2004

### MINUTES

AHDC Commissioners Present: S. Makowka, A. Alberg, B. Cohen, J. Worden, Temporary R. Duffy (from the AHC)

AHDC Commissioners

Not Present: M. Berkowitz, L. Kuhn, M. Logan, Y. Logan, M. Penzenik, M. Potter

Guests Present: Rick & Jennifer Wells, Jeff Salocks, Alex Frisch

Meeting called to order at 8:07PM. S. Makowka and R. Duffy (representative of Historical Commission) appointed alternates to Pleasant Street Historic District. Approval of October Minutes. Moved by A. Alberg, seconded by B. Cohen, all approved unanimously. November 4 Minutes (Joint meeting with AHC) moved approval by B. Cohen, seconded by A. Alberg, voted unanimously. C. Greeley will forward minutes on to AHC.

#### 1. Communications –

- a. S. Makowka reported that no date has been set yet for Board of Survey hearing re: 187 Lowell Street.
- b. Westport Historical Commission Guidelines – they requested permission to use our design guidelines, S. Makowka agreed while letting them know that the AHDC had relied on information received from Brookline.
- c. 75 Westminster (Dressler) re: change of monitor. (Approved restoration of front porch and addition on left rear) L. Kuhn was the monitor but he will be out of town for an extended period so S. Makowka assumed role as Monitor and approved a minor change regarding window placement requested on the project. Applicant also requested the addition of porch screening, but was advised to apply for a Certificate of Appropriateness for this change. Applicant indicated that they would come before the Commission at a later time for that and other requests.
- d. Monitor approved modifications form – suggested by S. Makowka for record of what is agreed to by monitors on projects. J. Worden liked idea and suggested certificate should note that changes by monitor require this form in the future.
- e. Hardship criteria – S. Makowka said he received information from Mass. Historical Commission regarding proposed guidelines for determining hardship. Hopefully more information will be forthcoming.
- f. 199 Pleasant Street – Owner interested in replacing garage doors. S. Makowka suggested that info Mr. Wells provides on his garage doors tonight may be of interest to property owner. B. Cohen did talk with owner as well as Mrs. Greeley

#### 2. New Business

##### a. 8:20pm – Formal Hearing re: 152 Pleasant Street (Wells)

Requesting certificate of Appropriateness as described in application to 1) alter front door over garage (1880s addition on right of front façade) and 2) change garage doors from existing L-1011 Panels to Carriage Style, and 3) rebuild retaining wall near garage. Mr. Wells had pictures and gave presentation with assistance from his architect. Proposal would add a shingled canopy (30" deep & 6ft wide) above existing front door opening to building addition located to left of original structure. As shown in the submitted plans, the 'kick out' detail will match existing stringcourses over upper and lower floor with wood side brackets to support that piece. There will be a light built into canopy to light at night. Roof of garage would still be deck. The original Greek revival portion of the structure is not being touched at all; it's still all clapboard. Plastic shutters gone, not being replaced. Storm door is off and gone on side entry. Existing door will remain. J. Worden asked for

canopy design details -- applicant replied that stringcourse would be continuous extension of existing detail and that sides would be finished with shingles.

Proposed garage door changes. Current conditions are sliding L-1011 paneled doors (one is fixed) locate on garage addition located largely below grade at front left of structure. Applicant desires to replace old doors with an overhead door with more appropriate design elements. Mr. Wells prefers steel composite door with composite overlay with wood grain pattern (Coachman series Clopay per provided literature). S. Makowka reminded Commissioners that this garage is almost below grade, and has only limited visibility from the public way. Given inappropriateness of existing doors, a steel door that very closely mimics the look of a wood carriage house style door may be appropriate under these specific circumstances. A. Alberg said that given the probable date of the garage (clearly post-dating the original structure and the addition), she doesn't have a problem with the door type specified by the Applicant. S. Makowka pointed out that this is not an 1850's barn or similar structure where a steel door would not be appropriate. R. Duffy asked about the windows. Applicant is choosing rectangular, non-arched window with outside overlay grill. Provided material indicates that door composite material is paintable, and Applicant stated that he is likely to paint the doors the same white used on the house trim so that they didn't stand out from rest of house. The commission reminded the applicant that it did not have jurisdiction over paint colors, but did reiterate that the doors should be covered a painted finish.

The rebuilt retaining wall is located on edge of driveway leading down to garage (currently built of patched concrete and some patched concrete block). Wall is located below grade and is only minimally visible from the public way. Applicant proposed replacement with pre-cast interlocking stone product as shown in supplied literature. Wall would be angled back slightly to retain grade, and would be capped with similar larger stones (universal cap). R. Duffy said like for like would be another concrete wall, but it is barely visible from the street. The new proposed wall is neutral enough, not a prominent feature and clearly a dramatic improvement over what is there now. R. Duffy suggested going with tannish coloring option (over reddish tint), to maintain neutral look in landscape.

J. Worden asked again about Applicant's request for steel doors instead of wooden. Will the doors need to be custom made to fit the existing opening? Applicant responded that he did not have the exact measurements of the opening but assumed that a standard sized door (as offered by the manufacturer) would fit. If not, he acknowledged that he would need to move to a more custom built (probably wooden) door. B. Cohen said this appears to be a wide door opening. And fabricating a single wood door might be difficult. R. Duffy said he would have preferred to have drawings of the garage with the proposed doors in addition to the drawings provided in the product literature. A. Alberg suggested that the Commission approve the three proposed changes. She indicated that whether door is composite or wood it doesn't matter on this particular non-garage structure, which is basically a bumped out basement where previous owners had dug out a place to build parking. In this situation, should be okay if you can't order one of the manufacturer's stock sizes, to get a door that looks the same (whether steel composite or wood) with outside profile on the window muntins -- either would be a significant improvement. R. Duffy suggested that they let the monitor authorize the variation if necessary. B. Cohen agreed that changing the doors was a vast improvement and agreed with the suggestions made. A. Alberg made a motion that the Pleasant Street Historic District Commission, having fully reviewed the application before it, finds that the project under consideration for the (1) addition of a canopy over the left side front door (located over garage); (2) replacement of existing garage doors to Clopay Coachman Collection Series Model-13 SQ23 (subject to monitor's discretion to approve a variation on door if necessary to fill the opening); and (3) repair and replacement of retaining wall using Keystone Country Manor wall system in a natural stone finish, if constructed according to the plans submitted therewith as clarified by this motion, will be in harmony and not incongruous with the historical and architectural values of the district. Seconded by B. Cohen. S. Makowka stated for the record that the approval of this particular door and this wall material is predicated on the unique features of this particular structure and site (non-contributory structure and very limited visibility) and these materials should not be considered as acceptable alternatives for other applications in a historic district. Voted unanimously. A. Alberg appointed Monitor.

### 3. Other Business

- a. S. Makowka submitted \$5,600 request for FY2006 budget. We will have to make our justification to Finance Committee in the spring.
- b. S. Makowka explained that he has been urging Applicants to request a Certificates of Non-Applicability even on non-jurisdictional projects in order to avoid possible misunderstanding by clearly specifying the scope of any proposed work. He asked others to assist in checking out the properties to get these certificates issued as soon as possible so that this step does not cause any unnecessary delay. Others agreed to assist
- c. Letter & survey to property owners – we're going to send letter to property owners without brochure due to cost of republishing sufficient copies.
- d. Election of officers -- deferred to next month.
- e. Annual report – Carol to draft and J. Worden willing to edit as necessary.
- f. Monthly schedule for 2005 should be posted at town hall and WRH room reserved. J. Worden will coordinate dates, Carol to follow up with posting.
- g. Pre-hearing review process. Commissioners reiterated their desire to have Applicants submitted all additional documentation required upon submission.
- h. Re: 157 Lowell Street. S. Makowka got 2 calls about what could be built there by a few developers. He appreciates these developers approaching the Commission, but is concerned that all interested parties may not realize property in a District. Property does not appear to be in MLS and there are no applications before Commission so this is just an FYI.
- i. R. Duffy questioned about 239 Pleasant Street (Galal). Specifically work done on windows on top floor, which were replaced earlier. S. Makowka indicated that new owner had replicated existing replacement windows, and that the Commission is continuing to follow developments at this property.
- j. R. Duffy (as Co-Chair of the AHC) received a call from owner of 231 Pleasant Street complaining that abutter trespassed onto property to cut down trees; he advised that the AHDC and the AHC have no jurisdiction over trees.
  - i. Guest J. Salock questioned agenda item re: Colonial Circle. Was advised no hearing at this point regarding 187 Lowell Street.

Motion to adjourn made at 9:30pm by S. Makowka. Approved unanimously

Carol Greeley  
Executive Secretary

Cc: AHDC Commissioners  
Arlington Historical Commission, Ms. JoAnn Robinson, Mr. Richard Duffy, co-chairs  
Building Inspector, Mr. Michael Byrne  
Building Department, Mr. Rick Vallarelli  
Planning Dept. and Redevelopment Board, Mr. Kevin O'Brien  
Massachusetts Historical Commission  
Town Clerk  
Robbins Library  
Town Webmaster, J. Miksis