

Arlington Historic District Commissions

February 22, 2018
Whittemore Robbins House

Final & Approved Minutes

Commissioners Present: M. Audin, D. Baldwin, C. Barry, B. Cohen, C. Hamilton, S. Makowka, C. Tee, J. Worden

Commissioners Not Present: M. Bush, M. Capodanno, S. Lipp,

Guests: S. Shaloo, K. Lubar, H. Barber, A. Davidson, M. Vallarelli, J. Burke

1. **AHDC Meeting Opens** 8:00pm
2. **Appointment of alternate Commissioners: Pleasant Street Historic District – C. Barry, C. Hamilton. S. Makowka will preside but not be a voting member of the Commission**
3. **Approval of draft minutes from January 25, 2018; S. Makowka asked for minutes to be continued until next month**
4. **Communications**
 - a. **Request from neighbors for submission of 0 Ravine Street and submission guidelines**
 - b. **Emails between D. Baldwin (February submission monitor) and applicants with formal hearing applications**
 - c. **Email from T. Smurzynski re: 0 Ravine Street or Reconsideration of Jan. Vote**
 - d. **Email from K. Lubar re: 0 Ravine Street**
 - e. **Email from S. Shaloo re: 0 Ravine Street complaint**
 - f. **Emails from M. Davidson Bloch re: Submission for 734-736 Mass. Ave.**
 - g. **Email from C. Starks re: 1 Monadnock Road 10 Day COA for Fiberglass Gutters**
 - h. **Email from N. Bisher re: Mt. Gilboa house needing repairs and deadlines for submissions**
 - i. **Emails from S. Shaloo requesting Conflict of Interest Law for AHDC and Applicant's Submission for 0 Ravine Street**
 - j. **Application for 20 Westminster (Housing Corp of Arl) received**
 - k. **Email withdrawing application for 20 Westminster (Housing Corp of Arl) because of 40B waiver for AHDC regulations – discussion about "Friendly 40B" and changes on any approvals.**
 - l. **Email from Finance Committee on Annual Budget – Okay with renewal of current budget.**
 - m. **Email from J. Burke for extension on certificate on 15-15A Avon Place for addition. B. Cohen is the monitor and moved approval for the extension for 1 more year subject to condition that there are no changes to the original approval. Seconded by J. Worden. Unanimous approval for extension.**

- n. B. Cohen said owner of 34 Jason Street reached out to her as monitor to provide an update on the project.

5. New Business

Hearings (typically last around 20 minutes per application)

8:20pm

- a. **Formal Hearing re: 734-736 Mass. Ave. (Jason Street LLC) re: various window replacements and installation of exterior electrical meter on side of building.**

Applicant summarized requests for window replacement on first floor and installation of an exterior electrical meter as required by code. They are upgrading the electrical service in part in order to install a/c. Discussion about the location of the proposed electrical box complicated by lack of a plot plan showing these details. The Commission asked why the box could not be installed at the rear of the building. The Applicant indicated that that might not be possible because of the location of the rear parking. J. Worden said there appears to be room at the rear that is less exposed than the proposed location and that the applicant needs to tell the Commission why it can't be hidden in the back of the building. S. Makowka summarized that the Commission's objective is to minimize the visibility of the boxes on the streetscape. M. Audin suggested that the Applicant would benefit from assistance from the Commission in Applicant's discussion with the utility company.

S. Makowka noted the Applicant mentioned the installation of a/c but there is no mention of the a/c condensers in the application. He indicated that that is going to be another part of the plan that needs to be discussed also. He indicated that the Commission would not want to see the installation of such units on a major façade facing either Academy or Mass. Ave. Discussion about the possible use of mini-split a/c units as options to a large central a/c.

Discussion about the requested windows. They want to replace five large windows on the first floor: two on the east (Academy St) side, two on the front (Mass. Ave), and one on the west (driveway) side. These would be custom windows. J. Worden asked if the windows could be repaired. B. Cohen agreed that the photos don't look in total disrepair. Discussion that old windows are preferred to be repaired not replaced. S. Makowka said this property had been issued a CONA in the past for replacement of upper floor windows with all wood, single glaze true-divided lite windows. Since these proposed windows are the same single glazed, true divided lite all wood windows he feels that the similarly fall under a like with like exemption and if these are all wood non clad windows single glazed then they do qualify for a CONA. However, he emphasized that the Applicant you may be better off getting someone experienced with window restoration to examine the existing windows because repairs will maintain original windows that are made of superior materials and will likely be more cost effective. Also, if not repairing and decided to replace you may have to use tempered glass on windows close to the floor. Discussion that this is a prominent house on Mass Ave and restoration rather than replacement is the Commission's preference. S. Makowka recommended that we issue a CONA for the replacing the windows with like materials but indicating that repair is the preferred recommendation. We will need to continue the other application for the electrical box so that the Applicant can provide additional information. Applicant signed continuation form.

6. Other Business

- a. Discussion regarding sidewalks in Historic District to be incorporated into Master Plan. *D. Baldwin gave update and asked for HC to be center of discussion on sidewalk changes. Standard cement with brick border sidewalk, more formalizing to occur. Buy up for full brick sidewalk. More draft material to come still. Street signs were also discussed by committee.*
- b. Discussion regarding large project hearing procedures – *no separate discussion (see below)*
- c. Central Street Historic District vacant commissioner seat – *put in Advocate and post on town website*
- d. M. Audin update on Zoning Recodification Working Group-ZRWG – *No discussion*
- e. Discussion on Guidelines update. *S. Makowka said that he is concerned about the apparent confusion about what is to be considered within each the first 2 steps of the 3 step process for new structures. He noted that sometimes the Commissioners consideration of whether it is appropriate to build something required additional information not available to step 2 (size, massing, etc) so maybe step 1 and 2 should be combined. There was a discussion of what criteria are we using for each step and that lack of denial on step 1 does not mean that consideration of appropriateness can't be raised at a later step. A consensus developed that if we don't want to make any changes then we need to consider providing more clarification about the process. C. Barry said compatibility with the size and massing should be clarified as well.*

7. OPEN FORUM

Ordinarily, any matter presented to the Commission under Open Forum will neither be acted upon nor a formal decision made, absent a previously noticed agenda item, but the Commission may make a decision if it deems it appropriate and necessary for the public good.

- a. ***K. Lubar asked about the process for meetings. On a 3 step process – how is best way for neighbors to present historical record and information. S. Makowka said submit info ahead of time so the Commission can review it, it can't be discussed amongst Commissioners outside the meeting but individually each commissioner can review and come up with their own questions to be asked at a meeting. At a formal hearing, the applicant can discuss what has been submitted. No project can move forward until a COA is approved on any project. General discussion about what each step in the 3 step process involves. – Step 1 – can anything at all possibly be built on this lot – or not. Step 2 – discussion about massing. Step 3 specific details about a project. B. Cohen gave history of how the 3 step project and the revised applications came into being – the large changes throughout the Districts for new construction. S. Shaloo said she sent a letter asking for a reconsideration of the step 1 vote because she felt that the application didn't meet the criteria for step 1 approval. S. Makowka reiterated that the Commission has received information from interested parties that will be taken up when the hearing is reopened but that we will not have substantive discussion about any particular project (i.e. 0 Ravine Street) tonight. S. Shaloo indicated that there are numerous presentations that the neighbors are planning to make. H. Barber from 24 Irving Street introduced herself as the new owner. She questioned if trees are protected and the HDC told her we have no jurisdiction over landscaping.***

8. EXECUTIVE SESSION – To discuss ongoing litigation - *Not required at this meeting.*
9. REVIEW OF PROJECTS
10. MEETING ADJOURNED 9:45PM