



**Arlington Historic District Commissions
Draft Minutes**

July 23, 2020 8:00 PM

Conducted by Remote Participation

Commissioners Present: M. Audin, D. Baldwin, C. Barry, M. Bush, B. Cohen, A. Frank Johnson, S. Makowka, B. Melofchik, C. Tee, J. Worden

Commissioners Not Present: N. Aikenhead

Guests: C. Lockery, C. Grinnell

1. AHDC Meeting Opens 8:00pm

- 2. Approval of draft minutes from July 9, 2020 – tabled until 8/13/20 meeting. Approval of 6/23/20 AHDC meeting minutes (due to clerical error this was listed as 7/9 in error). M. Audin moved approval of minutes. B. Cohen seconded roll call: M. Audin, C. Tee, J. Worden, B. Cohen, A. Frank Johnson, C. Barry, M. Bush, B. Melofchik approved**

S. Makowka announced at 8:05pm the meeting is being recorded

3. Appointment of Alternate Commissioners:

Pleasant Street:

Mt Gilboa/Crescent Hill:

(187 Lowell – M. Audin, C. Barry, C. Tee, M. Bush, B. Cohen, A. Frank Johnson, B. Melofchik – S. Makowka will not participate as voting member)

110 Crescent Hill Ave. – J. Worden will be voting member and B. Melofchik will not be voting but can participate

Jason/Gray: M. Audin, C. Barry, C. Tee, M. Bush, B. Cohen, A. Frank Johnson, B. Melofchik

4. Communications

5. New Business

- a. Formal Hearing for 244 Pleasant Street (Segal) for window replacements – Continued at applicant's request to 8/13/20 meeting**
- b. Formal Hearing for 110 Crescent Hill Ave. (Lockery/Baker) for an addition. C. Lockery gave presentation for addition. Cover page shows addition – 2nd floor has little piece that comes down to meet the ground. Next photos show location of project. Last house in the district. Looks like a Bavarian chalet across the street. Addition in back corner of the house – a little piece of it will be visible from the right of way. Upper left photo shows what they think was an open sleeping porch – 3 windows**

looking west and it was enclosed at some point. Want to extend roof line across – replicate elevation on left to other side of house on right. Proposal would bring the proposed addition all the way to the corner of the original body of the house. Bringing plane across and down to the ground. Would relocate small window to new plane. Details show everything to match existing conditions. Original volume shown in lower right, thick wall of basement plan describes original footprint. Addition shown and up above is ground floor plan and then 2nd floor plan. Addition right off the bedroom. Roof plan shows solar panels on top w addition off to left. Site plan shown. Doesn't increase setbacks in any way. Basement and 1st floor plan shown – green area is what has been added. Shingles will come down to the ground. Bringing wall out and maybe build a window seat to address floor issue. Next drawing shows 2nd floor where bathroom goes. Accessed by door, 2 new windows looking west. Nothing looking south at neighbors. Shed roof being extended to meet corner like it does on north side. Plan to make it look like it was always there. Elevations shown in plans. Details show exposed rafters consistent with rest of house. Will match beadboard, aluminum gutters will be continued around. Want to use Marvin Double Hung Wood Window with simulated divided lights to match addition of 10 years ago. Trim to match existing building. Architectural charcoal gray roof shingles. S. Makowka asked about window on 2nd floor on south side – will be only windows looking at back yard. M. Audin said from street looking at side of structure are we really needing to understand whether there's a window there – does there need to be one? M. Bush said only thing that caught his eye was the a-symmetric solar panels but they're not visible and it's not under our purview. C. Barry moved approval of addition as presented. Seconded by M. Audin. Unanimous Approval – M. Audin, C. Barry, C. Tee, J. Worden, M. Bush, B. Cohen, A. Frank Johnson. Monitor appointed C. Tee.

- c. Continuation of Formal Hearing for 187 Lowell Street (Grinnell) for new construction. C. Grinnell gave presentation. Prior discussion on massing and size and some feedback from HDC and some changes have been made based on the feedback. Update on response from feedback – prefer that this house was set back on lot and lower. This is all about keeping 187 the big primary structure of the property. Siting changes were done with architect (starting on page 13) and those impacted renderings and elevation done. Started pulling off things that might be helpful as far as things that might appear too ornate on this house compared to 187 Lowell. Modifications – proposed house height – peak dropped down by a foot – was 2' below 187, now it is 3' below and much lower than 175 Lowell. More pushed down harder it is to get the living space in there to remain reasonable and not have it driven into the ground. As far as location on the lot from Lowell Street. House has been pushed back (maybe 5' from what shown last time) so now front of proposed structure is 10' behind front of porch on 187. Looked for line between all 3 structures that worked out. In order to move back hit up to rear property so rear sunroom has to stay within the setback and lost a few feet of depth in order to push house back that much. Renderings show dramatically the change in how it looks with respect to other homes by moving back and dropping the peak down. On elevations – modifications were that he changed foundation from brick to stone making it less formal a façade and took off the two returns off the rake – ones on the rest of the house will follow suit also. Some more elaborate detail on window changed. Roof over garage removed as well. Slide 18 shows how you will see less of the basement façade and it shows well how far back from 187 the structure is now. M. Bush asked if living space has been reduced because of the sunroom in the back – it will be corrected, right now SF is a little bit overstated. J. Worden said what struck him was that the new house seems close to 187 – spacing

looks odd – the other house is quite a ways to the right. Why can't this be centered between the two houses? C. Grinnell said the setbacks won't allow any room to push the house to the right any further. M. Audin said 3 feet internally on a house vs 3 feet on a lot are totally a different set of dimensions. Consider the neighborhood as a whole. Is the house detracting from the historic character of the neighborhood? S. Makowka said he agrees but this lot is unique in the district. He appreciates what applicant has done to minimize impact on adjoining houses. C. Barry said neighboring houses are more vertical in composition whereas this house is a little bit more horizontal – if it were only 3 feet narrower that might help address John's question. B. Cohen said maybe it should be a little narrower and look like the house on the left and the right. C. Grinnell said overall to him looking at it to the eye he doesn't see it as significantly wider – are we talking about aspect ratio of house or space between houses. We'd lop 3' off the left hand side which would be a 10% increase of the distance – it's not going to center the house between those two houses. He's unsure of the request. S. Makowka asked what is the front gable at 187 – it's 23' according to assessor's database. S. Makowka said there was a subset for a smaller footprint previously. M. Audin said this is a historic district review not structures and he's having a hard time that the proposed structure is minimizing the character of the neighborhood. Issue is – would anything added detract from overall character of that neighborhood. S. Makowka the only thing that makes this complicated is the large cross gable that comes out and then there's another 2nd floor gable on that front roof plane that is different than other houses around and it makes the massing and the shape plane very complicated. B. Cohen said ironically it makes the house a little fancier than its neighbors – not necessarily a problem but it does make it more complicated. S. Makowka was referring to the dormers. Other question was going back to original structure – was pushed back even further on lot and treated as an accessory structure. Parking was pushed so far back on lot and it was just parking pad – not garage, no under building parking. Now that you brought the house forward how about a driveway alongside of house and parking behind. He's not pushing that but throwing it out as a concept. It wouldn't allow you push house back, you would have to pull it forward to accomplish the parking in the rear. Compared to original approved structure you would see all the cars parked in front of house and he thought it would look nicer cut into the hill and have garage under making it much less visible from the street. Focus on lot itself and open space and house itself. A. Frank Johnson asked what we are supposed to be talking about – front facing garage under house may be a concern and when should she be raising her concern about the garage in front. The visibility of those doors goes hand in hand with the siting on the lot and applicant agrees this is the time to discuss. C. Barry said it does have merits, to solve that problem would result in a much narrower house that would allow a driveway to squeeze in at 187 and have a parking lot behind and that would be a different problematic solution to this site. C. Grinnell said he needed driveway to come up right side and not break up the lot line on the left. M. Bush said he's not troubled by the doors as they sit, but you could dig foundation a foot deeper and have more ceiling height in the basement and this would bury doors in the hill. If you took windows out it would look less garage door like – M. Audin said the issue is exactly as people have pointed out – cars to back – house moves forward. B. Cohen said that is the criteria – what was valuable then was the expanse of lawn and fact that houses are back 100 feet from the street – that's extensive expanse. B. Melofchik said she appreciates all the effort put into the presentation. She like A. Frank Johnson feels the garage in the front does give her pause – the plans at prior meeting caused her to recall some recent

duplexes on Park St in E. Arlington (at street level) but in this neighborhood in the historic context and garage in front and no porch like adjoining structures there is some pause. M. Audin said he appreciates B. Melofchik's comment and issue is what do we see from a public place – if they were to arrange landscaping in such a way that from sidewalk on Lowell an average person would not see the garage. Maybe landscape design would be another way to conceal or at least minimize to a point that it is not a significant element of the elevation. Maybe a low fieldstone wall along Lowell Street or rock garden would significantly conceal from most points of view. B. Cohen said she's ok with it – she approved it before, M. Bush said if you wanted to do something to make them completely invisible – but he doesn't mean it would deter him to the building. M. Audin said maybe applicant can look at the landscape. Clearly minimizing garage doors visibility. Is orientation appropriate is the question for commissioners – if doors on front are just fundamentally incompatible with the district we should say that now. M. Bush and M. Audin said it would probably be ok. C. Barry commented issue is how you see the garage doors – are they hidden, do you see them through something – not our place to dictate a solution but there are a variety of solutions. C. Grinnell said currently looking at visually estimating its somewhere more than 12" but less than 24" of the garage doors are visible. Maybe solid wood with no lites that might make them less visible. Maybe grading/wall changes can happen as well. He's looking for guidance do they need to disappear or are you looking to see the a little less. D. Baldwin said he doesn't like having garage doors in front. 1 problem he has is the view from the street does not look like the front of a house – it looks like I'm looking at the side of the house. The door tucked around the side doesn't look like a front door. Nothing says more 2020 than garages being in front of the houses. C. Barry would rather see building in currently proposed location rather than pushed forward so he is comfortable with the tradeoff. S. Makowka said he thinks that there is not resistance to the front given the give and take of alternatives and asked if people would be comfortable continuing the hearing asking applicant to come up with options to minimize visibility of the doors and have that being opening discussion for the continuation of this hearing. So C. Grinnell will come back with alternatives – maybe lowering floor of garage, raising grade, getting rid of lites in door, hardscaping options. C. Grinnell will send Carol formal request for continuation to 8/13.

- d. Continuation of Formal Hearing for 53 Westmoreland Ave. (Leahy) for porch changes – **Continued to August Meeting at Applicant's Request**
- e. Informal Hearing re: 33 Gray Street (Lubar) for installation of fiberglass gutters (request for 10 day Certificate). S. Makowka asked whether the Commissioners would be willing to approve fiberglass gutters with a 10 day certificate. J. Worden moved that the project is so insignificant that it qualifies for a 10 day certificate. Seconded by C. Barry. Unanimous approval: M. Audin, C. Barry, C. Tee, J. Worden, M. Bush, B. Cohen, A. Frank Johnson. Approval of the 10 day certificate for fiberglass gutters as presented. Seconded by C. Barry. Unanimous approval: M. Audin, C. Barry, C. Tee, J. Worden, M. Bush, B. Cohen, A. Frank Johnson.

6. Old Business

- a. Avon Place and Central Street Historic District vacant commissioner seats – No Report
- b. Report from Streetscape sub-committee - No Report
- c. Modification of Design Guidelines for Fiberglass Gutter eligibility for a CONA – No Report

7. Review of projects – No Report

8. Meeting Adjourned 9:39pm

B. Cohen requested meeting to adjourn. Seconded by M. Bush. Unanimous approval with roll call: M. Audin, D. Baldwin, C. Barry, M. Bush, B. Cohen, A. Frank Johnson, B. Melofchik, C. Tee, J. Worden

Next AHDC Meeting Scheduled on ZOOM for 9/10/2020