



Arlington Historic District Commissions Final and Approved Minutes

October 28, 2021 8:00 PM
Conducted by Remote Participation

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

Commissioners Not Present: A. Frank Johnson, B. Melofchik

Guests: H. Haley, K. Tremblay, S. Conway, N. Raughley, J. Wenocur, M. Giamo

1. **AHDC Meeting Opens 8:00pm:** S. Makowka opened meeting at 8:04pm and announced meeting would be held remotely and will be recorded for the purposes of finalizing minutes only.
2. **Approval of draft minutes from September 23, 2021 and Executive Session Draft Minutes from 8/26 and 9/23/21:** S. Makowka announced that ES minutes will be dealt with during the executive session scheduled at the end of the meeting. S. Makowka asked for any comments on draft minutes. Hearing none, C. Barry moved approval, D. Baldwin seconded motion – Roll call vote: C. Tee - abstained, M. Audin -y, D. Baldwin - y, C. Barry - y, M. Bush - y, B. Cohen - y, S. Makowka - y, C. Tee - y, J. Worden -y. Minutes approved.
3. **Appointment of Alternate Commissioners:** Central – S. Makowka, M. Bush; Mt Gilboa – B. Cohen
4. **Communications**
 - a. **Letter from R. Ellenhorn (87 Pleasant Street owner) for reconsideration on denial (20-48P) for Tesla solar roof at 87 Pleasant Street.** S. Makowka noted communication from prior applicant. Suggested that the defer discussion of the topic until the end of new business given the number of hearings on the agenda.

Discussion: M. Bush asked how they plan to incorporate the existing copper crest which was an issue with the original application. The Commission also noted a number of other concerns with the past proposal including the complicated roof intersections and valleys the prominence of the location, and the historical significance of the structure is of concern. Tim Haley spoke on behalf of R. Ellenhorn indicating that they want to be a net zero entity. They floated the idea of possibly making other desirable changes such as taking the vinyl off the structure and repairing some of the property's other original conditions. The Commission noted that the removal of the existing copper top roof crest removal was of greatest concern, along with other factors including the look of the roof proposed solar tiles not being consistent with original

materials when actual samples viewed. In short, there were a number of factors, not just one particular thing, that would need to be substantially addressed in any new application. Tim Haley indicated that the manufacturer considered its solar tiles incompatible with the existing copper crest and that they were hoping that maybe the roof crest removal might be traded off for something else.

- b. **Emails from M Bush to Mt Gilboa/Crescent Hill properties proposing installation of fiberglass gutters re: acceptable fascia boards, etc.**
- c. **Application from 123 Westminster (Pardo) for landscape changes not at grade)**
- d. **Town Clerk email regarding record retention:** See discussion under Old Business.
- e. **CONA Application for fascia repairs at 37-39 Jason Street (Lees)**
- f. **Gutter Bylaw:** S. Makowka had discussion with Atty Heim regarding the delay in the Attorney General's office approval of the Fiberglass Gutter By-Law amendment from Town Meeting. S. Makowka submitted the documentation requested to move process – hopefully complete by next meeting.
- g. **B. Cohen received communication from project manager on Central School on Maple Street:** Sample came in wrong for the sandstone replacement so architect is rejecting it but they are discussing. B. Cohen is working with them to match better the color. They also requested concrete instead of granite for sign post and she denied and said granite.
- h. **B. Cohen received communication from 12 Wellington Street:** They were considered replacing existing wood windows with alternatives not consistent with the design guidelines. She has provided additional information.

5. New Business

- a. **Formal Hearing for request from Verizon Telephone/Eversource to attach 3 antennas with built in RRUs, meter, disconnect and associated cabling to an existing pole located at 16 Central Street, Pole on Bacon St Side (Pole #806/0).** M. Giamo, attorney for Verizon present to give presentation along with S. Conway. B. Cohen noted that she is recusing herself as an employee from Verizon for this hearing. The Applicant described that there are a group of small cell sites being built out in Arlington and this one is in a HD. They need the installation at this location to serve local wireless needs. This is a standard utility pole type installation. S. Conway is the Verizon Engineer. Presentation added to the record. As shown in the diagram, midway up the pole you see antennae and radios, fiber connection, power disconnect and power meter. There are side mount and top mount small cell installations. The utility owning the poles requires side or top mount based on the utility company's requirements. Examples shown in presentation. These small cells are intended to fill in coverage within the town – this is the next step in building out the network in Arlington to provide better service. S. Makowka noted that the drawing in the application makes it appear that the panels are tucked in close to the pole but the presentation given and the answer given by Applicant is that the panels will be installed approximately 2 feet out from the pole. J. Worden asked if it can be closer to pole? Answer: it needs to be out so there is no interference by the pole. S. Makowka asked if there is any way to put this somewhere else not on the most prominent corner in the middle of a local HD. Maybe on the roof of the old police station across the street? Has the applicant looked at alternative sites that would be less visually intrusive? Answer: There are other poles down Bacon Street and they did look at

them but none worked for a variety of reasons. The Commissioners would like them to explore other options such as the old police station brick building, the high Rock Church steeple, the post office parking lot across the street, etc. S. Makowka also asked if the panel does have to go on pole, can they position the meter and disconnect on the backside of the poles to be less visible. M. Bush feels another antennae sticking up from the roof of the building in his mind is not a win – applicant said these are small cell antennas and these are low powered dealing with a very small area for the network to work as they need. Functionally the type of use on a pole versus the macro sites recently on the tall towers and on the rooftops are a different type of technology. These need to be on a pole and the inventory of poles showed only this one to work. D. Baldwin asked what would be the alternative if the utilities were placed underground? No further questions or comments. S. Makowka asked if other carriers are going to be asking to put things on poles. Answer: Usually only one carrier per pole is done.

P. Hedlund owner of 10 Central Street spoke – appreciates drawings and time by HDC to discuss this proposal. Every car, pedestrian, etc. will see this very visible pole and he feels it does set an unfortunate precedent having this type of a setup. There is a lot of stuff going on with that pole and he feels this will be detrimental to a local HD. M. Bush questioned if the existing power and communications lines are less unattractive than the antennae. S. Makowka feels there should be some guidelines and parameters set up in HD for these types of requests. J. Worden asked if the applicant has looked at the spire of the High Rock Church and if that would be an opportunity. Applicant’s attorney explained this is low powered and needs to be focused where the coverage is needed. They looked at nearest utility poles and came up with a list of potential poles that might be available. They didn’t just pick this pole, they looked around the neighborhood. This services up to ¼ mile. The existing service is either weak or they are experiencing capacity problems in the area. A small cell is put in to deal with coverage issues in the area. M. Bush pointed out that in his decade on the Commission we have never requested approval for transformers, street light poles, “telcom” boxes, etc. which are more intrusive and which are broadly present in the HD. S. Mawkowka said the Town’s back in 2019 set up ground rules for exactly this reason and this is why we are having this discussion today. M. Bush argued that this is not meaningfully bigger than a parking sign.

M. Bush moved approval of the application as proposed. Seconded by M. Audin. J. Worden said they seem to be fixated on it having to be on a pole even though the Commissioners have been suggested looking at other sites. It was noted by M. Audin that this vote is on a site specific application and there is no final precedent being set tonight. Roll call vote: D. Baldwin abstain (because he doesn’t have enough information), M. Audin - yes, C. Tee - abstain, J. Worden - no, C. Barry - yes, M. Bush - yes, S. Makowka - abstain. Vote: 3 yes, 1 no, 3 abstain. The motion does do get the four affirmative votes required for approval.

S. Makowka noted his sense that the Commission wanted more information about possible alternatives. Atty. Giamo responded that additional information isn’t going to help since this is the pole that works for the area. S. Makowka said that we could continue the hearing with the Applicant’s approval to gather more information or

someone could make a motion to deny the application based on the information before us. The Applicant agreed that they are ok to continue the hearing until 11/18 and will work with an AHDC appointed contact, possibly walking the district to discuss options and constraints.

- b. **Formal Hearing for 25 Elder Terrace (Tremblay) for landscape changes (not at grade) and addition of walls.** K. Tremblay gave presentation. Looking at building a dry boulder wall on back slope of yard. Had 2 large trees removed due to exposed roots and erosion and want something to provide a buffer area and retain the steep slope. M. Bush said up high in picture you can see the Westminster Ave guard rail. Probably a 30-40 ft drop from Westminster to where car is located in the provided picture at top of driveway. Applicant confirmed that the wall will be backfilled with gravel. There might be some minor excavation to nestle it in – they will use a dry laid stone with the intention of matching the existing stones on the site below. M. Audin thinks what they are proposing is totally unobtrusive with character of the District as long as they get the stone wall builder to match the stone wall stones as close as possible. The applicant noted that this change will also benefit the building itself by preventing current water runoff from above. The Applicant also clarified that, after additional research, they were no longer requesting approval of any parking pad in front of the house

B. Cohen moved acceptance of proposal as presented, seconded by M. Audin, S. Makowka noted that the Applicant should get approval by monitor for wall material choice prior to installation. B. Cohen amended her motion to include that language and M. Audin seconded. Roll Call – Baldwin – y, Audin- y, Tee – y, Worden – y, Barry – y, Cohen – y, Bush – y. Unanimous approval – monitor appointed B. Cohen.

- c. **Formal Hearing for 195 Westminster Ave. (Raughley-Meinke) for fiberglass gutter replacement of wood gutters.** N. Raughley presented application – want to replace wood gutters with fiberglass gutters. Top portion of gutter has significant damage. Some of the gutter returns are damaged so he wants to replace damaged returns. The actual gutter is only located on the sides of the house, while the front gable only has returns. M. Bush said the return is trim that looks like a gutter. The Applicant indicated that they are using the product made by the Fiberglass Gutter Company and are also proposing to use the Lifespan brand trim/facia which was previously approved by the Commission – i.e., they are no longer requesting the PVC listed in original application. M. Bush said there is some odd confusion regarding the actual fascia material. The application lists finger jointed stock (apparently from website of local supplier) but he spoke with the actual Lifespan regional company rep. who confirmed (per the product literature) that there is no finger-jointing in their product (and has not been for over a decade). M. Bush indicated that the product we have approved is specifically called Lifespan Solid Select – and that it is available from a number of suppliers: Sterritt in Watertown, and Arlington Coal and Lumber can get it but you need to tell them “Lifespan Solid Select” is what is approved which is NOT finger jointed. Applicant agreed to amend the application to be Lifespan Solid Select with Fiberglass Gutter Company gutters.

J. Worden moved the application be approved, seconded by C. Barry. S. Makowka suggested specifying that the facia material will be Lifespan Solid Select. J. Worden amended his motion to reflect that requirement, amended motion seconded by C. Barry, Roll Call Vote – Baldwin – y, Audin – y , Worden – y, Tee – y, Baldwin y, Bush – y, Cohen – y. M. Bush appointed monitor.

- d. **Informal Hearing for 62 Crescent Hill Ave. (Wenocur) for fiberglass gutter replacement of wood gutters.** Roof replacement being done and gutter upgrade being done at same time. The Commission noted that this application seems very straightforward with the clarification (based on the earlier hearing) that Lifespan Solid Select will be specified with Fiberglass Gutter company gutters. The applicant agreed and also clarified that there is a little bump out in the back of the house with a flat rubber roof but it is not visible and, so, is not under our jurisdiction.

B. Cohen made a motion that the proposed work is so inconsequential to the character of the District that a formal hearing can be dispensed with subject to a 10-day notification period for abutting properties. Seconded by M. Audin. Roll call vote: Bush – abstain, Baldwin – y, Audin – y, Worden – y, Tee – y, Baldwin - y, Cohen – y. Motion approved.

B. Cohen then moved approval of the Application for installation of fiberglass gutters as specified in their application including the use of Lifespan Solid Select fascia material. J. Worden seconded. Roll call vote: M. Bush abstaining Bush – abstain, Baldwin – y, Audin – y, Worden – y, Tee – y, Baldwin - y, Cohen – y. Motion approved. M. Bush volunteered and appointed as monitor

- e. **Informal Hearing for 123 Westminster Ave. (Pardo) for landscape changes (not at grade) and addition of walls and fence changes.** G. Pardo gave presentation. M. Bush stated that he did a site visit and confirmed that this work is only just barely visible. The Applicant explained that they want to regrade in the back of the house. The existing patio in the rear of the structure pulls water towards the house so they want to regrade the area and build a small retaining wall located at the bottom of the existing fence to accommodate the change in grade. M. Bush said the part of the project that would be within the Commissions review would be the approximately 1.5ft retaining wall since the rest is not subject to public view. With the change, the existing fence will move about 20” up and there will be a new stone wall be at the bottom that will match the existing stone walls on the property.

M. Bush made a motion that the proposed work is so inconsequential to the character of the District that a formal hearing can be dispensed with subject to a 10-day notification period for abutting properties., seconded by B. Cohen. Roll call vote: Baldwin – y, Audin – y, Tee – y, Worden – y, Barry y, Bush – y, Cohen – y.

M. Bush moved approval of the application as submitted and as presented at the meeting tonight. B. Cohen seconded. Roll call vote– Baldwin – y, Audin – y, Tee – y, Worden – y, Barry – y, Bush -y, Cohen – y. M. Bush volunteered as monitor.

6. Old Business

- a. **Avon Place Historic District and Realtor Designee vacant commissioner seats** – Resumes received – two nominees still active and resumes circulated. C. Greeley to remind S. Makowka to invite both in for 11/18 for introductions.
- b. **Report from Streetscape sub-committee** – No report
- c. **Modification of Design Guidelines (Little Libraries)** – no discussion
- d. **Town Clerk Record Retention** – J. Worden sent a memo around. M. Bush read the whole document. M. Bush said according to Mass. Regs. Provided by J. Worden, requirement is that application for building permits be retained for the life of the building. He asserts that anything we approved that is then presented to the building

dept. should be kept forever. Most building depts. do hold onto their permits.
Discussion about how to move forward – very large concern over denials especially.
C. Greeley to follow up with Town's IT person and library.

- 7. Review of projects**
- 8. Executive Session to Discuss Ongoing Litigation regarding 0 Ravine (Perlo v AHDC) - Commission opted not to move into Executive Session.**
- 9. Meeting adjourned at 10:37pm**

Meeting Minutes Approved at AHDC Meeting of 12/16/21