

## Belmont Historic District Commission MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, April 13, 2021  
Meeting Held Remotely via Zoom

**Staff Present:** Christine Zale

### **Commission Members Present:**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lisa Harrington, Co-Chair | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sue Pew       |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Michael Chesson           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Michael Smith |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lauren Meier              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carl Solander |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Terry McCarthy                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nushin Yazdi  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carol Moyles              |   |

**RECEIVED  
TOWN CLERK  
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: September 23, 2021

TIME: 2:41 PM

**Community Members Present:** John Beaty, homeowner, Evanthia Malliris, homeowner, 618 Pleasant St; Stephen Fink, homeowner, 354 Lake Street; Wendy Murphy, Belmont Women's Club, Andy Rojas, Rojas Design, 661 Pleasant St

Lisa Harrington presiding; C. Moyles, Minutes

### **1. New Public Hearing**

- a. Case # 21-06: 618 Pleasant Street – Install retaining wall, stepping stone path, and prepare for plantings.
  - L. Harrington opened the public hearing.
  - Homeowners John Beaty and Evanthia Malliris described the project that includes removal of overgrown vegetation, new stone retaining wall, stepping stones regrading, and plantings.
  - C. Moyles inquired about the stepping stone material and it was confirmed that the material was an NH quarried slate stone that has been installed in other areas of the property.
  - The retaining wall material (natural stone), overall ht. (max. 18") and concealed view from Pleasant St. was clarified by the homeowners.
  - C. Solander made a motion to approve, L Meier seconded. Committee members; C. Moyles, L. Meier, S. Pew, M. Smith, C. Solander, N. Yazdi, M. Chesson and L. Harrington voted and approved.
  - L. Harrington closed the public hearing.

### **2. Public Meetings**

- a. 354 Lake Street; Garage renovation, potential demolition of the garage structure.
  - Homeowner Stephen Fink described the parameters of the future project and inquired about BHC's review and potential demolition delay. The garage was built as an addition and is not a historic structure.
  - The BHC committee affirmed that the attached garage is a non-contributing feature and a demolition permit can be filed without a demolition delay.
  - L. Harrington offered to write a memo to the file and meet with the homeowner as the garage plans develop.
  - L Meier made a motion to approve, C. Solander seconded. BHC committee members; C. Moyles, L. Meier, S. Pew, M. Smith, C. Solander, N. Yazdi, M. Chesson and L. Harrington voted and approved.

### 3. Continuing Discussions:

- a. 661 Pleasant Street; Belmont Woman's Club (BWC) proposed parking spaces (moved forward in the meeting agenda)
  - Andy Rojas provided an update associated with the revised site plan.
  - Proposed grading beyond the Belmont Land Trust Conservation Restriction (BLTCR) limits has resulted in lowering the height of the retaining wall directly north of the parking spaces.
  - A continuous bituminous curb is now proposed at the south edge of the driveway.
  - Excess fill will be spread on the site to level existing settlement areas and depression at the east portions of the site.
  - M. Smith inquired about the determination of 12 proposed parking spaces.
  - Wendy Miller described the need for safe orderly parking and vehicular circulation as proposed.
  - L. Meier stated per her research, an historic photograph indicates the house sitting on a prominent landscape plinth (terrace) and suggested that the proposed regrading of the site could emulate this design approach and landscape aspect.
  - The HDC requested a complete application be submitted to the town (including an elevation of the proposed retaining wall) to better evaluate the proposed project.
  - M. Chesson pointed out the BWC/BLTCR agreement states that the landscape and natural scenery is a contributing component of the BLTCR and that the proposed parking could be interpreted as an intrusion and non-conforming feature.
  - Andy Rojas pointed out that proposed parking is not located in the BLTCR.
  - It was confirmed that all required information be submitted to the Town by April 27, 2021 for review before the next scheduled HDC meeting.

### 4. New Business:

- a. Boston Society of Architects (BSA) Nominees for HDC members.
  - After the committee's favorable review of BSA applicants, M. Smith recommended appointment of the two nominees. The HDC approved the recommendation.
  - Also announced was Sue Pew's and Terry McCarthy's committee member departures from the HCD as of April 13, 2021.
  - M. Smith commended Sue on her long service, participation and dedication to the HDC.
  - L. Meier pointed out that HDC is a statutory committee so the Select Board is obligated to fill open committee membership with stipulated criteria and expertise.
- b. Upcoming projects for HDC review.
  - i. McLean Barn-second phase, adaptive reuse study.
    - C. Solander stated that the Land Management Committee (LMC) have discussed the McLean Barn reuse and confirmed that HDC should take the lead in the reuse study.
    - C. Solander suggested engaging an architectural firm as part of the adaptive reuse study.
    - L. Meier stated that an architect would have the expertise to evaluate and program uses consistent with current conservation restrictions.
    - L. Harrington offered that seeking Belmont CPA funding for engaging professional expertise would be beneficial in moving the adaptive reuse study forward. The HDC confirmed this direction.
    - M. Chesson will address the CPA funding opportunity at the next CPC meeting.
- c. Demolition Delay
  - i. Application process; update by C. Zale.

- C. Zale stated that an inquiry to the town about the demolition permit application form and the HDC demolition delay has been made.
  - L. Meier confirmed that if a property falls within the List of Historic Properties subject to Demolition Delay, town filings have additional requirements, public hearings, and review, which are part of the timeline process stated in the bylaw.
  - L. Meier offered to assist C. Zale with a draft process document to guide Office of Community Development (OCD) on demolition delay projects.
- d. Bylaw Renewal
- L. Meier stated that the current Demolition Delay Bylaw needs to be updated for town review and approval by town meeting.
  - New committee members may be able to help in this effort with overview by L. Harrington and L. Meier.

**5. Continuing Discussions:**

- The committee resumed continuing discussions.
- b. Administrative Matters
- i. GIS Mapping; C. Zale provided an update.
- GIS mapping has created template to illustrate the Pleasant St Historic District and associated individual properties.
  - L. Meier mentioned that broader conservation and historic property information could be added as distinctly mapped GIS layers.
  - The committee concluded that potential CPA funding could be used to build the Belmont GIS mapping to include additional information as a town resource.
- c. CPC Request
- i. Sign design; Mike Chesson; No update.
- d. Work Plan
- i. Police Station: M. Smith provided a general update on progress.
- ii. Municipal Light Building; RFP edits are complete and approved. L. Harrington and C. Zale to distribute.
- iii. General Bylaws/Historic Districts; After committee discussion about the complexities associated with the General Bylaws/ Historic Districts the HDC concluded that a qualified attorney(s) should be engaged by the town for updating.

**6. General Housekeeping**

- Extra BHC Meeting scheduled on April 27, 2021. L. Harrington, M. Chesson, C. Solander, L. Meier can attend.

Meeting adjourned 9:27 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Carol Moyles