

BELMONT HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Town Hall

January 7, 2004

Meeting Minutes

Commission Members Attending: Co-chairs Richard Cheek and Lydia Ogilby, Linn Hobbs, Arleyn Levee, Nancy Richards, Michael Smith, Sharon Vanderslice. Absent: Paul Bell, Richard Pichette, Caroline Darbyshire, Matthew Genta, Lisa Harrington.

585 PLEASANT STREET

Attending: Glenn Herosian, owner, and Norman Kherlop, architect. Also Eric M. Anderson, Eric H. Anderson, and Maggy Gorrill, neighbors.

Mr. Herosian and Mr. Kherlop presented a design for a one-story addition to this 1950s ranch house. The plans called for an all-brick addition of approximately 800 square feet, extending 14 feet off the rear of the house. A new flagstone patio would be added on the west side. The addition would be sided in Glengarry Red Matte brick to match the existing brick on the house, and the flagstones on the patio would match the color of those in the existing rear patio, which would be removed. The owner desires to repave the driveway in cobblestone with taupe insets and plant new trees along the western edge of the property for privacy. The front steps and entryway would be restored to their original appearance with the exception of the stair treads, which would be single pieces of bluestone.

Commission members lauded the Herosians for proposing an addition that preserves the existing character of the house. They unanimously approved a Certificate of Appropriateness subject to HDC review of the colors chosen for exterior paint, roofing, and driveway materials.

The Andersons of 548 Pleasant Street spoke in favor of the addition, saying that it was appropriate as long as it was not visible from Pleasant Street.

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR PLEASANT STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

Lisa Harrington, who was unable to attend the meeting, has formulated preliminary design guidelines for homeowners in Belmont's historic district, based on guidelines for other towns in the Boston area. She will forward these by email to all other Commission members for review, so that they can be discussed at the next meeting on February 4.

ANNUAL REPORT

Richard Cheek is preparing to draft a report of the Commission's 2003 activities for the town's annual report. He asked that Michael Smith write a summary of the renovation work completed to date on the Town Hall Complex and that Sharon Vanderslice and Rick Pichette compose a summary of the Commission's involvement with the reconstruction of Pleasant Street. These are to be sent to Mr. Cheek by January 21. Commission members briefly discussed what other subjects should be included in the report.

DEMOLITION DELAY

Linn Hobbs said he was concerned about the number of homes being razed in the town, and suggested that the Commission consider its duty to protect the architectural integrity of neighborhoods beyond the designated Historic District. He cited several properties on Thomas Street and Belmont Hill, and asked that we consider asking Town Meeting to institute a demolition delay bylaw to allow time for a review process before houses in certain neighborhoods are torn down. There was a discussion of the pros and cons of such a bylaw. Members said that the Waverley Square and the Acorn/Pine/Oak neighborhoods were areas of distinct architectural character that were certainly worth preserving and protecting. Arleyn Levee agreed to call Gretchen Schuler of Boston University and invite her to discuss preservation procedures at the March 3 meeting. She also suggested a collaboration with the Belmont Land Trust.

MCLEAN REDEVELOPMENT

Michael Smith showed the Commission the drawings that the Northland Residential Corporation had submitted to the designated subcommittee to satisfy the conditions attached to the Commission's prior approval of the final drawings for the first phase of townhouse construction in Zone 1A and of roadway construction in Zones 1A and 1B.

MINUTES

Sharon Vanderslice will forward draft minutes of the December and January meetings to Commission members via email before February 4.

Minutes recorded by Sharon Vanderslice.