



Town Belmont
Historic District Commission
Homer Municipal Building, 2nd Floor
19 Moore Street
Belmont, MA 02478

OFFICE USE

Case Number: HDC -

APPLICATION

In accordance with the Historic Districts Act, MGL Ch 40C, and the Town of Belmont General Bylaws, §40-315, the undersigned applies to the Belmont Historic District Commission for a Certificate of:

☒ Appropriateness ☐ Non-Applicability ☐ Hardship

1. PRELIMINARY INFORMATION:

Address of Property: 529 Pleasant St
Property Owner's Name: Fabien & MARIE-ALEX DUBOIS
Address: 529 Pleasant St BELMONT, MA 02478
Email: Fabien.dubois3@aliceadsl.fr Phone: 857 260 8232

Agent Name: _____
Address: _____
Email: _____ Phone: _____

I am the: ☒ Property Owner ☐ Agent
☐ Property is Owned by a Corporation, LLC, or Trust (Submit authorization to sign as owner)
☐ Property is a Condominium or Cooperative Association (submit authorization to sign as trustee)

If applicable: Architect: _____ Contractor: Alex Cruz

2. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED WORK:

Exterior project: 6 sub projects: 1. Side porch floor
wood vs grey decks 2. front porch: replace weathered wood
steps 3. Continuing fence line towards pleasant st
4. replace path door and close the back yard fence with wood fence
5. back yard wood land retainer 6. back yard deck (replace)

3. SIGNATURES:

As Owner, I make the following representations:

- A. I hereby certify that I am the Owner of the Property at: 529 Pleasant St
B. I hereby certify that if an Agent is listed on this Application, this Agent has been authorized to represent this Application before the Belmont Historic District Commission.

Owner: FABIE DUBOIS Dubois Date: 06/26/2020

As Applicant/Agent, I make the following representations:

1. The information supplied on and in this Application is accurate to the best of my knowledge;
2. I will make no changes to the approved plans without prior approval from the Belmont Historic District Commission.

Applicant/Agent: _____ Date: _____

* Incomplete applications and Insufficient documentation will not be accepted. *

Approved March 23, 2017

Owner Fabien & Marie-Alix Dubois 529 Pleasant street 857 260 8232. Fabien.dubois3@aliceadsl.fr

Contractor : Alex Cruz . AFC painting, afcpaintingcorp@gmail.com 617.697.1561

We are a French family of 4 with 2 kids aged 8 and 10.

When we first came in the Boston area, transferred from Zurich back in Spring 2015, we had rented a Victorian single-family house in Cambridge in the Brattle street area. We loved the style of the house so much that when we saw a possibility to extend our time here in Massachusetts, we were looking for a similar type of house to buy in the area

We ended up acquiring the James Monroe Hale house in 529 pleasant St. in Belmont in Nov 2017 and are enjoying it every minute of minute ever since (both the house and the town)

The house was previously owned by Justin and Ann Roe since 2002 who are still living in Belmont, in Prospect St.

When we acquired the house, the inspection report had pointed out that the deck was in bad shape and needed to be replaced.

We first focused our attention and our money towards interior renovation.

Only in 2020, we have decided to go for changing the deck as it was presenting too much danger for our kids and visiting friends and have contracted with Alex Cruz, somebody we trust very much as he had already worked on the interior project, granted this was his first full deck project in Belmont.

Since we had secured Alex for that project, we have also used the opportunity to do some upgrades in the exterior, especially around landscaping. We have also used the services of John's Landscape company to upgrade and renew plantings in our yards

The 2020 exterior project would then consist of the following

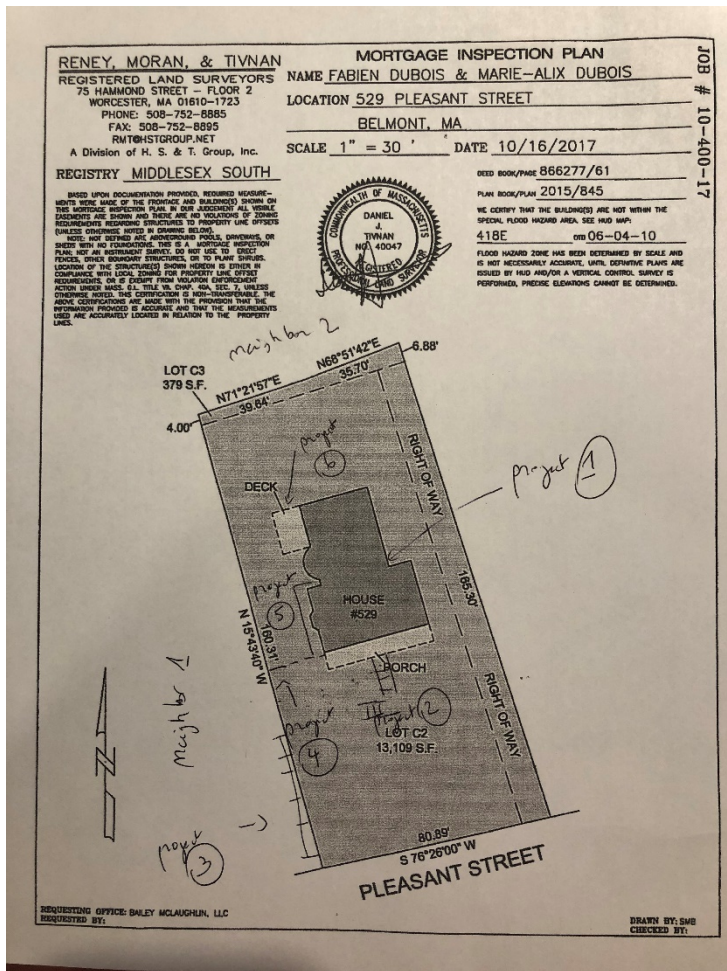
1. Side porch upgrade by replacing the fountain (not working anymore) with extending the wood floor of the side entrance and replacing grey rocks
2. Replacing rusted wood steps leading to front porch (front of the house) as too dangerous on top of not looking great
3. Continuing wood fence line to protect us from Pleasant street and create a natural fence (with shrubs and plants in front of it)
4. Replacing "wood door" in the path leading to back of the house and "closing" the area to have children safely play in the back of the house and build a "natural fence" (shrubs and plants) in front and behind it, to create an atmosphere of "secret garden", a place where we spend a lot of our time outside as protected from the noise of busy pleasant street and with enough of a closed area for the kids to play ball safely (as not possible in the front yard)
5. Install wood land retainer along the back-yard path to make it cleaner and safe (i.e. with rocks falling)
6. Deck replacement (back of the house)

We obviously knew we are living in an historical area but had sincerely no idea around the HDC process, especially since our project was not adding any new building to the house and was instead replacing existing structure in a bad shape, especially the deck in the back.

Since we had to rebuild it, our intent was to make that deck the same size but much nicer and closer to the style of the house and use the opportunity to have a dry shed below the deck to be able to store yard materials to access them more easily (land mower, garden tools, snow blower...)

We are unfortunately coming in front of the HDC commission, after most of the work has been completed, especially for the deck and the fence.

See below an overview of the 6 steps presented in the project



1. Side porch floor: wood vs stone

Here is how it is today



The project is to fill what used to be the fountain water retention with stones (to give the possibility to be re-used again should the next owner desire to plug the fountain back) and to continue the porch floor (same height as first step, same color, same wood) see **red line**. We are not planning on doing anything else, i.e. **not** removing the railing. We may add 2 light pendants on the ceiling in the future (same design as in front porch), knowing we need an electrical permit for it.

We will keep the fountain and install it as decorative item in the back yard

deck boards

Deck to build by the side door, flowing same level of the first step

160 L x70 W x 9in H

SIDE DOOR DECK Frame

To be framed by double 2x10 at ledges and single 2x10 at every 12inches

Pressure treated framing wood

Pressure treated deck floor boards

Light pendants in the front porch



2 Ideas for potential light pendant in the side porch (in case we will not use recess lights)



2. Front porch: replace rusted wood steps

Here is how it was before



We have removed the wood to replace them the exact same way, using same type of wood and existing bricks. We had to stop the work as we understood this had to be approved by HDC as well as visible from the street

Here is how it looks like today, waiting to do the work. We are seeing most of the bricks now falling as the place became unstable. We were anxious to do the work as one of our kids' friend recently fell down in that space.



3. Continuing fence line towards pleasant street

Here is how it was before (existing fence stopping there). Open visibility to the street



Here is how it looks now (and will later be hidden by growing plants (just been planted)). Wood fence height below 7 feet. Exact same design as the existing one. Cedar wood



From the other side (i.e. neighbor side) where we can see we have used exact same design as existing fences



“Continuing the line”

4. Replace path “door” and close the area with wood fence (same design as existing fence)

How it was when we bought the house (view from the back yard). With a rustic door



How it looked like when we took the “door” out (view from front yard)



How it is looking like now: view from pleasant st



Maximum rhododendron to grow like the one on the other side of the path, which will then block the view from the street and create the desired sensation of a private garden behind the natural door to be created by both rhododendrons ultimately joining branches and creating a green arch

Zoom on plants in front the fence. We hope to grow a lot of green vegetation which will eventually hide the fence both from pleasant street, especially since this “bed” will be hidden by the 2 maximum rhododendrons mentioned above



5. Wood land retainer

How it was when we bought the house (no clean line to stop the land but rocks falling from top to the bottom)



How it will look like afterwards with wood replacing rocks to retain the land (view when wood gate is closed or open).
Not visible from pleasant street



6. Back yard deck

How it was when we bought the house. (picture from August 2019)



How it looks like now:

Same surface on the ground, same top half design for poles and railings, we have re-used the existing pole caps, same colors of the house (previous owner had given us the exact color reference (White: Lancaster whitewash HC174, /grey BM HC166 Kendall charcoal and black: onyx2133-10.

All in pressure treated wood but the 2 70 Series slider buck sliding vinyl window by American Craftsman, an Andersen Company (painted in black to match other windows) We have changed the design for the bottom half, trying as best as we could to make it in conformance with the historical look.

Everything built according to the Belmont deck construction code

