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**Belmont Historic District Commission
MEETING MINUTES**

Date: Thursday, October 11, 2018

Time: 7:00 PM – 10:05 PM

Location: Belmont Town Hall, Conference Room 4

Commission members present: Lauren Meier, Co-Chair; Lisa Harrington, Co-Chair; Michael Chesson, member; Terry McCarthy, member; Tracy Marquis, member; Kathleen Fahey, member; Carl Solander, member; Elizabeth (Sue) Pew, member; Nushin Yazdi, alternate member; Lydia Ogilby, member emerita.

Not present: Mike Smith, alternate member

Staff: Spencer Gober, Staff Planner

Community members present: James A. George, Jr., Nick Portnoy, Elizabeth Cole, Christopher Blake, architect for Robert Tittman, 39 Centre Avenue; Jeffrey Hausner, Margaret Velie, Chair, Community Preservation Committee.

1. 7:03 pm Meeting called to order.

2. Public Hearings

- a. 39 Centre Avenue. Case #18-12 (Continued from Public Hearing 9-11-18) Belmont Town Hall, Room 2
 - i. Winslow Homer once lived in the house. Owner/architect propose changes to the 1998 addition to give it a great view of Boston. The roof will be of standing seam bronze, in a dark gray (sample shown at meeting). An example is across the street.
 - ii. Ms. Pew moved that the project be approved. Approved unanimously.
- b. 7 Alexander Avenue, Case #18-13
 - iii. Proposal for repair and painting of house. Ms. Pew visited, and found it very deteriorated and needing work, but a great house with a beautiful garden. The project, with white siding and trim, will improve the neighborhood. The extensive clapboard repair requires a certificate. Includes an in-kind replacement of trim, siding, but with same specifications and same profile. Ms. Meier, Ms. Marquis, and Mr. Solander queried the contractor about the siding. Contractor estimated it would be 4 ¾" to the weather. Ms. Marquis moved to approve if the siding was within ½" of the current siding. Contractor said the product will not change. Ms. Meier said a different paint color would have to be approved; and to check with Mr. Gober on other changes.
 - iv. Ms. Marquis moved to approve; seconded by Ms. Fahey. Approved unanimously.

- c. 641 Pleasant Street, Case #18-14, 641 Pleasant Street *[continued from Public Meeting (9-11-18)]*
 - i. Ms. Cole presented project material. Mr. Solander visited the house, and said only view one was visible from the public way. Even in winter, other views would be blocked by trees. Photos of all views were distributed. The house will have Marvin windows, and French doors. Ms. Nushin, after seeing it, loved it. Copies of a supporting letter from neighbors Michael and Jennifer Gillette were distributed.
 - ii. Ms. Meier suggested approving view #1, and itemizing views 2-4, as not visible from the public way, and not subject to review. This could be done with one certificate, with annotations about views 2-4.
 - iii. Ms. Fahey moved to accept the proposal for 641 Pleasant Street, view #1, recognizing that views #2-4 were not visible. Ms. Yazdi seconded the motion. Approved unanimously.

3. Public Meeting

- a. Case #18-15, 467 Pleasant Street, scope: install replacement driveway with medium gray pavers
 - i. Mr. Hausner, owner of the house, presented multiple photos of his crumbling driveway. The grade is too steep to redo with gravel. Much of his driveway and dirt washes out into the street. His proposal would replace the irregular surface of the driveway with dark gray pavers. Ms. Marquis said they were “innocuous,” and not objectionable. A nearby house has the same color pavers. Ms. Meier said while the material was new, the proposed driveway did not trigger the storm water level approval process. The Commission discussed a project timeline. The next HDC regular meeting will be November 8, not November 13. Various dates for a special meeting to have a hearing to approve the project were discussed, with approaching cold weather a factor. Commissioners Marquis, Pew, Yazdi, and Chesson committed to attend on October 30 at 4 pm, with Co-Chair Harrington presiding. All other business will be done at the regular November 8 meeting.

4. New Business:

- a. The First Church in Belmont, Unitarian Universalist, letter to HDC re CPC application
 - i. Ms. Harrington reported that the application had been tabled by the Planning Board.
- b. General discussion of Massachusetts Historical Commission grant announcement

- i. Co-chairs Meier and Harrington led the detailed discussion with other members contributing.

5. Continuing Discussions:

a. CPC Applications and Funding

- i. Ms. Harrington reported that town administrative funds are being used for the Police Station project. New construction on the rear addition will start July 2019. Ms. Meier thought it was a great way to jumpstart the police station project. Ms. Fahey also commented on project funding. Ms. Meier said the project would have to meet the standards set by the Secretary of the Interior.

b. Belmont Veteran's War Memorial

- i. Margaret Velie, CPC chair, reported on the current status. Ms. Meier distributed close up photos of the work done so far. She had discussed the matter with Ms. Harrington.
- ii. There was a lengthy discussion of all phases of the project, focusing on the tangential involvement of the HDC.
- iii. Mr. Gober was asked about the involvement of the Office of Community Development on the project. He said that the OCD had not been involved at the outset. Ms. Meier reported that Town Treasurer Floyd Carman had asked her for a response from the HDC, and she sent him a note saying the matter would be taken up at this meeting.
- iv. There were comments from all HDC members present, principally Co-Chairs Harrington and Meier, joined and supported by others. Ms. Marquis revised the language of the motion, with Mr. Solander reading to her from source documents. Several drafts were read, and revisions made, resulting in a final text of the motion below by Ms. Marquis:
- v. "I make a motion to approve the following text as the HDC's official response to the questions raised pertaining to the Veteran's Memorial wall. 'Regarding your request, the HDC provides the following evaluation. As advisor to the town on matters related to historic resources, the Historic District Commission, acting in our capacity as the town's Historical Commission, has determined that the Belmont Veteran's Memorial Wall, currently under construction, does not conform to the approach stated in the CPC final application dated December 4, 2017.

"The CPA portion of the project will restore the existing monument to its original condition." The wall will be taken down, the stones preserved and cleaned (where possible), and the walls rebuilt to the same specifications.

“The wall under construction does not match the character or spirit of the historic feature, which used full stones with a natural shape and varied profile. The new wall utilizes split faced stone, resulting in a tightly packed flat surface. The original historic material has been altered or lost beyond recognition. Should the CPC want further advice, the Historic District Commission is available.”

- vi. This motion having been moved and seconded, a vote was taken, with all nine Commissioners present voting in the affirmative, and none opposed, for a unanimous approval.
- c. There was some mention of the McLean Barn project update, but nothing of substance to report. The remaining agenda items were not discussed.

6. **Adjourn**

- a. A motion to adjourn was moved and seconded, and approved unanimously.

The next regular meeting of the HDC will be November 8 instead of November 13, at 7:00 PM. A special meeting will be held Tuesday, October 30 at 4:00 PM, to consider the new driveway for 467 Pleasant Street. Both meetings will be held in Room 2 of the Belmont Town Hall.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Chesson