

**Belmont Historic District Commission
MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday, September 10, 2020, via ZOOM

**RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: January 13, 2021
TIME: 3:34 PM

Commission Members Present:

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

Staff Member(s) Present

Ara Yogurtian, Office of Community Development (zoom host)

Also Present: Fabien Dubois

Jonathan Wolf
Nick Portnoy
Amanda Theodoropoulos
Carol Moyles
Eva Patalis
Mary Trudeau
Jeff North
Mark Smith

1. Meeting called to order; Minutes: Lauren Meier

- T. Marquis called the meeting to order at 7:05pm

2. HDC 2020 Appointments

- a. Welcome to Carol Moyles, who will join the Commission officially once she is sworn in.

3. New Public Hearing:

- a. Case # 20-09, 605 Pleasant Street; rear dormer expansion, repair and replace front porch and façade details and exterior painting [site visit: Nushin & Terry]
 - Nick Portnoy, general contractor, introduced the project to the Commission.
 - Most of the exterior work is on the back of the house, west gable.
 - In kind replacement/repair of exterior elements: wood gutters, roof, siding repair with western red cedar clapboards; 3rd floor gable window to be replaced by a Marvin wood window replacement; repair existing balustrade railing; new porch

railing at increased (code-compliant) height to match existing in design and detailing.

- T. McCarthy reported that the rear gable was not visible.
- T. Marquis noted that much of the work is repair.
- C. Moyles asked about the scope of painting; N. Portnoy reported the house will be painted the existing yellow color to match clapboard and trim paint.
- C. Moyles asked about electrical work; N. Portnoy confirmed no electrical work is required.
- S. Pew asked about abutter notices as she did not receive them; T. Marquis will check with Office of Community Development.
- L. Meier asked about an existing historic window where the new one is proposed. N. Portnoy reported that the new window is basically the same dimensions and repairing the new window wouldn't provide the same function and thermal qualities. N. Portnoy also noted that the homeowner may come back to the Commission in future with additional window replacement. C. Solander suggested the Commission needs more documentation on the existing window. N. Portnoy did report that he submitted a cut sheet for the new Marvin window. L. Harrington reviewed the HDC guidelines and general consensus was to defer decision on the window pending further information and consideration of current guidelines and potential precedent.
- N. Yazdi asked if the other windows are original or replacements. N. Portnoy agreed to get that information. N. Yazdi asked about single vs. double glazing.
- C. Solander made a motion to approve the application as submitted excluding the window replacement; L. Harrington seconded; motion unanimously approved.
- T. Marquis closed the public hearing.

4. Continued Public Hearings:

- a. Case # 20-06, 529 Pleasant Street, scope: make exterior site improvements, replace rear deck, and side porch expansion [site visit: Carl]
 - C. Solander reported on his site visit regarding visibility of certain elements, particularly the retaining wall on the side of the house that will be replaced with timbers. The short end of the wall will be concealed from view due to topography; this element has been removed from the application.
 - Homeowner Fabien Dubois reported on his communication with the building inspector; a plot plan is not required. Four sub-projects are included in this application: side deck to cover former fountain; replace front walk and steps with brick and pressure treated wood; continue fence line in cedar with pressure treated posts to enclose the rear yard to make private back yard area; rear deck with new design (same footprint) with clapboard and different stair configuration, windows, railings and clapboard painted to match existing house.

- L. Meier complimented the homeowner on the quality of the submittal.
- After a brief discussion with the Commission, C. Solander made a motion to approve the application as submitted; S. Pew seconded. Application approved unanimously.

5. Public Meetings:

a. Rock Meadow Parking Lot Design Project

- Jeff North gave an overview of the Rock Meadow parking lot design project: Objective is to present the design as it currently exists to the HDC and get guidance regarding jurisdiction. Parking lot is on the west side of Mill Street in roughly the same footprint as existing parking lot.
- Conservation Commission engaged Northeastern students to prepare a document to recommend a new parking lot for Rock Meadow, building on the Rock Meadow Conservation Master Plan prepared by the Conway School in 2018. The first priority in the Master Plan was to improve the parking and arrival experience. Northeastern looked at a number of alternatives including moving the parking lot before recommending the proposed plan.
- Project sits in two jurisdictions – Rock Meadow and Lone Tree Hill – managed by two different committees
- Includes green infrastructure, bioswale, rain garden, etc.
- Current parking and entrance drive suffers from erosion, steep slopes, awkward traffic pattern, runoff, edges poorly defined, difficult surfaces that make it impassible for some.
- Rock Meadow had more visitors during the pandemic; strong community garden participants.
- Project presents an opportunity to enhance ecological value and improving the arrival / parking experience for the 80-acre Rock Meadow, extending to a much larger area that includes adjacent open space and the Western Greenway.
- Belmont's MVP Plan calls for green infrastructure in parks and areas of flooding. This project contributes to the overall mitigation measures identified in the MVP plan.
- Project includes 26 parking sites, signage etc.
- Application to MAPC for green infrastructure and landscape.
- Project is within the McLean Hospital National Register District.
- T. Marquis noted that the Historic District Commission will have an official role as part of the Historic Preservation agreement of the McLean MOU.
- J. North asked if HDC could review the document. C. Solander noted he has reviewed the package from Northeastern, and suggested it needs to be distilled so it is clear what the Commission is responding to.
- J. North noted that additional engineering is needed; T. Marquis suggested that a landscape architect would be the ideal lead on the project.

- C. Moyles noted this is a terrific project and that the parking lot has an important relationship with the barn. C. Moyles noted the project indicates a lot of vertical elements like walls and fences which will be important to understand in terms of design and materials.
- T. Marquis noted that there is an access point into the lower barn area from the parking lot. M. Chesson noted multiple access points to the barn.
- J. North noted that the Conservation Commission will come back to HDC as the project develops.

b. Clay Pit Pond Project

- M. Trudeau introduced another project at Clay Pit Pond related to the inter-generational path, to provide visual access to the water. Beta Group had provided some general suggestions about a viewing platform.
- Invasive species management has not resumed due to COVID 19.
- New high school design noted that some visual access to the water would be beneficial to the curriculum; Lions Club has expressed interest in doing a project.
- McCarthy Theodopolous family is interested in created a memorial viewing platform as a community gathering space. A. Theodopolous noted that her motivation is a thank you to the students of the town.
- M. Trudeau confirmed that the project is conceptual at this point.
- L. Meier thanked M. Trudeau for coming to the HDC;
- C. Solander noted that the project should have a bone fide design process, not rely on generic solutions
- T. Marquis asked Meier and C. Moyles about the contributing features. C. Moyles noted that this is an exciting project to edit the edge of the pond, being sensitive to the waters edge and suggested looking at precedents for treatment of waters edges in nearby towns and areas, such as recent projects along the Charles River.
- T. Marquis noted her preference to for a lower profile barrier;
- M. Trudeau noted that there was an original gazebo in the park; M. Trudeau will reach out to HDC regarding design process.

6. Site Visits Needed:

- a. 548 Pleasant Street, moving and replacing rear window
- N. Yazdi and M. Chesson volunteered to do the site visit.

7. New Business:

- a. Updates to the HDC Submission Requirement
- T. Marquis has been reviewing the submission requirement with Christine Zale and noted some updates needed. This agenda item will be discussed in more detail at next meeting.

9/10/20

8. Continuing Discussions:

a. Work Plan / HDC Projects Update / HDC capacity

i. Police Station: Mike Smith

- CPA application has been submitted.

ii. Municipal Light Building: Lisa Harrington

iii. Richardson Farm National Register Nomination: Mike Chesson

- Awaiting input from Tim Orwig.

iv. General Bylaws/Historic Districts: Lauren Meier – no report

vi. Realtor Education: Sue Pew & Terry McCarthy

- L. Meier will talk to Mike Smith about information we might have to help with the effort.

9. Minutes

- Minutes review is postponed to next month.

Next meeting: Thursday, October 15; Minutes: Sue Pew.

Meeting adjourned 8:59pm