

## Belmont Historic District Commission MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, July 21, 2021  
Meeting Held Remotely via Zoom

**RECEIVED  
TOWN CLERK  
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: September 15, 2021  
TIME: 2:07 PM

**Staff Present:** Christine Zale; Patrice Garvin, Jay Marcotte

### Commission Members Present:

☒ Lisa Harrington, Co-Chair  
☒ Michael Chesson  
☒ Lauren Meier  
☒ Carol Moyles  
☒ Michael Smith

☐ Carl Solander  
☐ Nushin Yazdi

Drew Nealon (to be sworn in)

**Community Members Present:** Jack Dawley, Chris Yates, Alan Aukeman, Edward Bradford, Craig Carson, Michael Breau

### 1. Meeting Called to Order; 7:00PM Lisa Harrington presiding; L. Meier, Minutes

- Lisa introduced Drew Nealon, appointed to fill the Real Estate slot on the Commission and present at the meeting
- Architects Seth Clarke and Stefan Ahlblad, also appointed by the Select Board

### 2. Public Hearings:

- a. **Case 21-18: 21 Sunnyside Place** – repair rot damaged porch by replacing decking, posts, rails, balusters, finials and tighten spacing between balusters to meet code requirements. This project was discussed at a previous meeting and the Commission generally approved the approach. Mike Smith moved to approve the application; Mike Chesson seconded; application approved unanimously.
- b. **Case 21-19: 11 Sunnyside Place** – paint shed to match house colors that were approved in 2020. This project was discussed last month and because of the color change, it was changed from a CONA to COA; Mike Smith moved to approve the application; Carol Moyles seconded; application was approved unanimously.
- c. **Case 21-20: 11 Sunnyside Place** – remove cinderblock wall along driveway and replace with rock wall; add brick patio at the end of the driveway.

Overview: Home owners desire to replace a portion of the non-historic cinderblock with a wall made of New England fieldstone flats with fieldstone; a new L-shaped patio made of historic S&H pavers set in a herringbone pattern will provide an outdoor area. Lauren Meier asked about phasing of the wall construction – only the section at the interior end of the driveway will be covered by this application. Carol Moyles asked if the brick qualifies as additional impervious paving and whether there are any issues related to lot coverage and stormwater. The Commission asked if tie into drainage is to town stormwater system; homeowners reported that

it is handled on site with a French drain. Christine Zale will confirm with Building Inspector and OCD if there are any issues related to impervious surface. Homeowners will follow up with a clearer site plan that better delineates the extent of the brick paving.

Mike Chesson moved to approve the application; Carol Moyles seconded; application was unanimously approved.

### **3. Informal Consultations**

#### **a. Location and installation of a bench in honor of Jeffrey Wheeler**

Patrice Garvin, Town Administrator and Jay Marcottte, DPW, asked for approval to place a bench outside Town Hall in memory of Jeffrey Wheeler along with a Flowering Dogwood. The bench will be similar to the existing bench honoring Dick Betts and will be installed by DPW. Patrice asked about the dogwood species; Carol Moyles suggested a white flowering *Cornus florida* as opposed to pink so as to not conflict with the Town Hall complex brick; Lauren Meier suggested a *Cornus kousa* because its less susceptible to Dogwood Anthracnose. Lauren noted how much we all miss Jeffrey and what a loss to the Town his passing represents. Patrice Garvin also introduced Craig Carson, Jeffrey's husband, who thanked the Commission for their support. Jack Dawley asked if donations were still being accepted. Patrice Garvin noted donations can be made to the Town of Belmont, sent to the attention of the Town Administrator. Lauren Meier made a motion to approve; Mike Smith seconded; unanimously approved.

#### **b. Northland – McLean Zone 3 Site Plan Review/Chapel**

Jack Dawley introduced Alan Aukeman of Ryan Associates; Ed Bradford, Michael Breau architects. Mr. Dawley reviewed the site plan approval process related to the Zoning Bylaw that was approved by Town Meeting in fall 2020. The Planning Board is meeting to consider the site plan review application before them. Mr. Dawley summarized prior project reviews with the HDC related to the Woodlands and the rehabilitation of historic buildings. HDC has in the past provided both "high level" review of new construction as well as more detailed design review on specific historic buildings and landscapes. Jack asked the Commission to engage in a review and feedback, to be completed ideally in the next 45 days.

Ed Bradford presented a slide deck to illustrate the project: subdistrict A – 38 age restricted town homes and Eliot Chapel with two age restricted units; subdistrict B includes 2 apartment buildings with below grade as well on grade parking, 112 units total. The Northland goal is to create a nice neighborhood and respect the historic McLean campus. Buildings are arranged to take advantage of the site in a pedestrian scale environment. For the townhomes, garages are oriented interior to the site.

Michael Breau discussed architectural approach: 3-story and 4-story apartment building with an amenity building. Town house architecture – 2 story units sited like small cottages with a pedestrian streetscape. Cottages step down the slope similar to the Woodlands with landscape elements. The overall Master Plan responds to the siting of the Chapel and is complementary to the historic Upham Bowl with the Eliot Chapel as a focal point on the hill. Architectural language for the townhouses is inspired by shingle style houses with wrap around porches.

Alan Aukeman reviewed historic projects completed to date – the Stables, Upham House and South Cottage.

For the Eliot Chapel – the front entrance currently faces the hospital on the north side; in the rehabilitated building, the entrance to both units is at the south end off Olmsted Drive. A new, free-standing garage is proposed for the larger 3-bed unit, with on-grade parking nearby for the smaller unit. The entrance to the 1-bedroom unit is through an existing doorway. There are two entrances to the 3-bedroom unit: one is a new door to be added, symmetrical with the 1-bed unit entrance, the other is at the north end of the Chapel utilizing the historic primary entrance. A very helpful image showed the Chapel in the context of the cottage buildings. The garage design is patterned after the architecture of the Chapel. The large 3-unit occupies the nave/celebratory space; with the smaller unit located in the alter/chancel area. For the 3-bedroom, 2 bays are full story main living space with bedrooms in back two bays. New exterior stairs are proposed at the south end of the building, at the main entrance to the smaller unit. At the doorways, a new exterior addition projects from the entrances with with a bracketed detail that is replicates other brackets on the Chapel. Site plan shows the driveways, circulation and general planting concept for the chapel. Elevations show 4 facades, placement of garage, and sloped topography. Lower level floor plan shows entrance; first floor plan shows zoning of space of two units and truss system. Loft level plan shows third bedroom lofted to allow full height ceiling.

Jack Dawley expressed an interest in a site walk. He shared images of the chapel – exterior and interior. Discussion of creating operable windows where existing stained glass windows occur. After discussion, site visit scheduled for Tuesday, July 27 4:30PM.

#### **4. New Business**

- a. Upcoming projects for HDC review
  - i. McLean Barn – second phase, adaptive reuse study; graffiti removal – no discussion

#### **5. Continuing Discussions**

- a. Property updates – N/A
- b. Administrative Matters – GIS Map; Christine will meet with GIS coordinator regarding historic layers to be added.
- c. CPC Request
  - i. Draft list of Town-owned historic resources; discussion about the draft list prepared by Lauren Meier. Carol Moyles mentioned the need to have clear materials for Commission members, e.g. the boundaries of existing historic districts. Carol asked if we could have a Google drive to share documents. Christine will follow up to see what might be feasible related to Town access and Open Meeting Law.
  - ii. Potential CPA Project List – discussion of list submitted by Mike Chesson. Mike Chesson discussed recent judicial decisions related to recreation improvements noting that the parking lot proposed for Rock Meadow would not be eligible for CPA funding.

- iii. CPC CPA Project Timeline  
Discussion of timeline for submittal of project applications. Mike Smith asked about use of administrative funds; Lisa noted the stabilization study for McLean Barn was done through administrative funds, while the construction work was done with a CPA project funds. Discussion about use of administrative funds for the Municipal Light Building; Lisa will follow up with Glen Clancy.
- d. HDC Membership update – see notes at beginning of Minutes
  - i. Orientation materials for HDC members; Lauren Meier prepared a list of key resources all Commission members need to be aware of. Three new members were appointed by Select Board.
  - e. Demolition Delay Bylaw renewal – Lauren Meier suggested meeting with Steve Pinkerton, Chair of the Planning Board. Mike suggested engaging the entire Commission and setting up a meeting to distribute the workload and make assignments. Two dates were discussed – July 29 or August 12. Christine Zale will follow up to schedule the meeting.
  - f. Work Plan
    - i. Police Station - Mike Smith reported no change other than waiting for exterior finish work. Mike Chesson reported on how nice it looks. Ribbon cutting scheduled for October.
    - ii. Municipal Light Building – Lisa will follow up with Glenn Clancy regarding the RFP.
    - iii. Update Design Guidelines – we will add that to the workload list mentioned above.

## **6. General Housekeeping**

- a. List of website updates; Lauren Meier prepared a preliminary list of updates needed for the website; this is a work item that needs to be added to the upcoming meeting.
- b. Minutes 6/8/21 Mike Chesson moved to approve the Minutes as amended; Carol seconded; approved unanimously. Lisa will send amended Minutes to Christine Zale.

### **Additional Discussion:**

- a. Women's Club: Lisa Harrington reported on the Women's Club parking project, which was approved by the Planning Board. Next step is to discuss signage on site, which will require a Certificate. Carol discussed the need for a proper protocol and submittal for future submittals from the Club. Lisa suggested looking at signage at Town Hall as a precedent for the Homer House. Lauren will also look at the Longfellow National Historic Site. Mike Smith asked why signage is even needed. Carol reported that the Planning Board has concerns about controlling parking.
- b. Christine Zale asked about a site visit for 480 Pleasant Street. Mike Smith and Lauren Meier will meet at 1PM on July 28.

- c. Lisa Harrington raised the issue of 693 Pleasant Street, for which the status was a bit confusing and homeowners didn't think they were subject to review because the house was built in 1979. Lauren Meier explained the difference between a National Register and Local Historic District; 693 was constructed after the original NR district was established, which is possibly why it isn't on list of buildings in the Local Historic District. The property is clearly shown on maps for the Pleasant Street District. Carol Moyles reiterated the issue about having clear information to avoid confusion during meetings.

Carol Moyles moved to adjourn. Mike Smith seconded. Meeting adjourned 9:53

Respectfully submitted by Lauren Meier