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**Belmont Historic District Commission
MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, May 9, 2017

Belmont Town Hall, Conference Room 2

Commission Members Present: Lauren Meier, Co-Chair, Lisa Harrington, Co-Chair, Elizabeth (Sue) Pew, Mike Smith, Karl Leabo, Terry McCarthy, Michael Chesson, Lydia Ogilby, Member Emerita

Jeffrey Wheeler, Office of Community Development (OCD); Spencer Gober, OCD

Not Present: Kathleen Fahey, Nushin Yazdi, Jacob Cohen

Meeting Notes:

1. **7:00 P.M. Meeting called to order.**

2. **Public Hearings:**

- a. 480 Concord Ave., Unit A, scope: Remove and replace windows with like windows to match the rest of the house.

Scott Kirker and Rachel Krol, owners of Unit A, came before the commission, along with their agent, Matthew Palmer, and other residents of Units A (Cathy Yeo) and B (Gail Palmeri). S. Kirker said that seven windows from 1990 are to be replaced. There was detailed discussion of mullions and screens and confirmation that the existing windows are not historic. Owner presented a signed paper from the condo association in support of project.

Approved unanimously.

- b. 721 Pleasant Street, scope: Relocating a proposed door that was previously approved by HDC.

The rear of this property is visible from Hay Road. The owner, Romain Aubanel, presented their desire to relocate a door that had been previously approved, to facilitate better flow in the new main floor configuration. There was discussion of this ongoing project. K. Leabo suggested moving a beautiful old window over to replace current door. The Owner will discuss this option with his architect S. Pew moved to continue the hearing on this project to the next HDC meeting, June 13. Seconded by M. Smith.

Motion carried unanimously.

- c. 524 Pleasant Street, scope: Repainting in a different color – Sherwin Williams Peace Yellow and Classical White for the trim.

Kathy and Jim Trainor, owners, displayed a board with various colors they are considering. HDC recommended paint in the district is from the Sherwin-Williams historic palette. L.Meier noted recommendations for houses of this style/period as fawn, gray, or yellow. The owners have chosen Peace Yellow for the body of the house. Shutters do not exist and will not be added.

L. Meier said the house was one of the most important in town. N. Yazdi paid a visit to the house. The first owner, Mr. Winn, built it for his daughter, who never married, and lived there into her nineties; it was sold to Mr. Block in 1942. [Betts, *Streets of Belmont*, 156, says that Miss Alice Winn sold the house in 1948.]

There was some discussion of the color for the trim. L. Harrington said the detail on the house speaks for itself. The house originally had a weathervane on the top of its tower, valued at \$3,000, but it disappeared. [Weathervane appears to be visible in photo of front of house taken from across the street, just to left of an evergreen branch. If photo could be enlarged, might be possible to create a duplicate.]

J. Trainor is interested in the original footprint of the house, which once had a side entrance facing the Winn house. He'd like to restore it to its original condition.

S. Pew asked about the wisteria entwined in the stockade fence, which will have to be cut, but will grow back. J. Trainor said it grew five to six feet over the past winter, and has a 6" thick main root.

Someone said there's a photo of house at the Belmont Historical Society. L. Meier said it was in "the green book," i.e., *Belmont: the Architecture and Development of the Town of Homes* (1984). (See p. 75.)

T. McCarthy moved to approve the colors chosen by the owners for the project. K. Leabo seconded the motion. Approved unanimously.

3. New Business:

- a. General discussion regarding the vote for the Demolition Delay Bylaw at Town Meeting. Discussion of Town Meeting's approval of the CPA grant for the Sons of Italy headquarters museum and archive, with comments by TM members similar to those raised at an HDC meeting.

- b. Proposed as a July meeting agenda item: potential projects for the coming year, including preservation of the police station, the light building, the Mclean Hospital barn, a conservation bylaw, and updates to the historic preservation list.
 - c. L. Meier gave two updates:
 - i. Linn W. Hobbs, 12 Moore Street, was approved by HDC for a project involving two windows, but now wants only one window, and L. Meier responded to OCD that this would be allowable. There were some code questions pending, but this has been resolved by OCD.
 - ii. Judith A. Sarno had approached L. Meier about a red repeater on the steeple of the Plymouth Congregational Church, in the wrong location, above the railing, and visible. Verizon installed the repeater in the correct location, as shown on plan, but it is still visible, and was supposed to be painted white. Two neighbors have objected. L. Harrington asked what was the minimum for due diligence that HDC should do? S. Gober agreed to follow up with Chet Messer, POC on board of Plymouth Congregational Church.
 - d. J. Wheeler gave a detailed presentation about the proposed routes for the Community Path, using large boards with features of different plans. Path would be on part of the old Boston & Albany RR, 1850-1880, the right of way that still exists from Waltham to Northampton. L. Meier expressed concern about how tight the layout was in Belmont Center, and that HDC would want allow for future rehabilitation of police station and light building if the town released the two structures. L. Harrington asked a question about the crossing of the tracks from the south side at the DPW yard and Housing Authority to the north side. Thinking out loud, the HDC discussed various scenarios and possibilities. In six weeks one route will be chosen and presented to the Board for Selectmen, who can approve or disapprove. Total funding for the project is \$30-40 million from U.S. through the state. Belmont needs to approve \$2-3 million to pay for the design phase. Project goes to BOS at the end of June. HDC meeting scheduled for June 13. J. Wheeler referred the Commission members to the website for the Community Path Feasibility Study.
4. **Continuing Discussions:**
- a. Next steps for the Demolition Delay Bylaw: a 2013 appeal document exists from the first version of the bylaw, and HDC needs to consider it and discuss changes. There were no appeals by home owners listed last time, but HDC may get some appeals under the new bylaw. Notices will be sent via certified mail. Properties in the Historic District are not on the demo delay list, because it applies only to unprotected properties.

- b. Mention of the proposed preservation tools workshop and general agreement to postpone to the fall.
- c. M. Smith asked about the application submission requirements, which have never been approved by the HDC, and whether owner of a property is required to sign? The application must be completed and signed by the property owner, and if appropriate by the authorized agent. Another question was raised about the exact wording on the form. L. Meier and S. Gober commented on rules and regulations, changes that do not require HDC approval, and that we might look at the language of the form, e.g., minor changes to shingles associated with a repair project. One suggestion is to draft a FAQ re windows as a placeholder until guidelines are updated, as some owners concerned about heat loss are interested in adding energy efficient windows.

5. Minutes:

- a. Review and approval of minutes for 3/23/17, 4/5/17, and 4/13/17
 - N. Yazdi's name was misspelled in minutes for 4/20/17. L. Meier suggested that her name be added as present at that meeting, as she was there.
 - L. Meier moved approval of minutes for 3/23 and 4/5. Approved unanimously.
 - Regarding minutes for 5/1, S. Pew was not present. M. Smith moved to approve as amended, seconded by L. Harrington. Passed unanimously.
 - More discussion of minutes for 4/13. Q & A re what was discussed, the appeals process, themes of discussion.
- b. Assignment of Minutes: L. Harrington will take minutes in June, and K. Fahey in July, then M. Smith for the tentative August meeting. M. Smith noted he would be gone first two weeks of August. It was noted that HDC needs four people minimum for a quorum if a meeting in August is needed.

M. Smith moved to adjourn. Passed unanimously. **Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 13, 7:00 P.M., Town Hall, Conference Room 2**