



Town of Sudbury

Historic Districts Commission

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MINUTES

MARCH 5, 2020 AT 7:30 PM

SILVA ROOM, FLYNN BUILDING, 278 OLD SUDBURY ROAD, SUDBURY, MA

Members Present: Chair Fred Taylor, William Andreas, Linda Hawes, Frank Riepe, and Lee Swanson

Members Absent: None

Mr. Taylor called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

New Business:

1. CONTINUED Public Hearing – Case 19-9, 322 Concord Road (Town Assessor’s Map H09-0062), Applicant Town of Sudbury seeks a Certificate of Appropriateness to renovate the Town Hall building for accessibility and code compliance. Proposed renovations include an addition for code required restrooms, the Town Clerk’s office, and accessible entry from the parking lot, as well as an accessible ramp for the main entryway, among other items

Craig Blake Permanent Building Committee (PBC), Neil Joyce, Project Manager, and Steve Shetler, Architect, were present to discuss the matter with the Historic Districts Commission (HDC).

Mr. Taylor began the discussion regarding the windows for the Town Hall project. Mr. Taylor stated the windows presented to the HDC for the project were going to be identical to the ones on the building now. He stated the HDC normally requires the specs of the windows such as the maker and model which would be helpful information for the HDC to have.

Mr. Blake stated he would not have this information because it was a not proprietary spec, it was be a performance spec. He stated the only information he would have would be the dimensions, thickness, and materials. He noted he would not have the information for the maker of the windows until it went out to bid.

Mr. Andreas stated if he could provide the HDC with the specs that would be fine.

Mr. Blake stated he would be able to provide the HDC with that information but would not be able to provide the vendor name.

Mr. Taylor stated that Mr. Riepe made mention of an alternative to the front entrance. He asked Mr. Riepe to explain the alternative.

Mr. Riepe stated the HDC was presented with a few different options to make the front entrance handicap accessible. He stated the HDC did not like any of the schemes that had been composed. Mr. Riepe stated at a previous meeting he made mention of a different plan to make the front entrance handicap accessible that may be architecturally satisfactory and gave a sketch to Mr. Taylor so they could discuss his idea with the HDC before discussing it with the applicant.

Mr. Blake stated the building is a complicated building because currently it is set up that the main entrance is through the front door. He stated all of the rooms and the circulation is now based on that current layout. Mr. Blake stated he thought that this idea was put to rest when we decided that we were not going to use the front door as public access. Mr. Blake stated he thought they were going to discuss the new main rear entrance tonight. He noted that people entering through the back of the Town Hall created some circulation issues within the building and access to the second floor. Mr. Blake also stated the circulation will work out differently if people are coming in through the front door. He noted he was going to present some ideas for the rear entrance and some of the ideas may change depending on the front entrance.

Mr. Riepe stated he did not think the front entrance would have any effect on the new entrance they will be discussing tonight. He noted he personally did not want to see the front door entrance bolted shut and the concept that was originally in the Blue Ribbon Report noted that 95% of the people would come in through the new entrance but did not preclude someone using the front door. Mr. Riepe stated that maybe it was worth considering multiple looks and how were they going to make the front of the building handicap accessible. He noted the Commission on Disability had a strong feeling about this.

Mr. Taylor stated he preferred to go with the idea of the back entrance according to original plan.

Mr. Riepe stated the use of the front entrance would be a bonus.

Mr. Blake stated he would like to see an increase in the utilization of the building and use of the second floor. He noted a critical aspect of getting to the second floor is the use of the stairs and his concern was that if the front door of the building is not being used, then they would be missing out using a key historic aspect of the building. He noted when you enter the building through the front entrance you have this grand stair way to the second floor and felt that if the front door was bolted shut then people would be less likely to utilize the second floor. Mr. Blake stated he would like to see the second floor used for large gatherings and fundraisers. He noted he had renderings and pictures as to how they have interpreted the HDC's comments to date relative to the rear entrance.

Mr. Shetler presented the renderings of the building. He stated the renderings incorporate a few changes and comments they have heard from the Town.

Mr. Blake stated that the design was the same as the Blue Ribbon Committee (BRC) except that the ramp leading to the door was now enclosed for maintenance reasons.

Mr. Taylor asked to see the original design without the enclosure so he could see the difference.

Mr. Riepe stated that originally it was just a sloped walkway and that is why there were no railings. He noted there are differences between a ramp and a walkway and discussed the requirements of each.

Mr. Blake stated they were creating the same slope as the BRC, the only difference was it was now enclosed.

Mr. Shetler continued presenting the rest of the renderings to the HDC.

Mr. Taylor stated he like the BRC design because it opened up into a foyer instead of a hallway and asked how difficult would it be to keep original BRC design and keep entrance on the side.

Mr. Shelter stated it was more of a grade change issue and it would be the same accessibility issues as you would have at the front of the building. He stated the further down you push the entrance to the front of the building the more complex the grading becomes.

Mr. Taylor stated that the BRC had a walkway that sloped upwards.

Mr. Blake stated the entrance was in the same place as the BRC design, the difference was the slope walkway would be open to the elements and if it is not enclosed then it will be a maintenance issue such as snow and ice and if it was covered that wouldn't be a problem.

Mr. Shetler stated the walkway is enclosed in current design being presented tonight and is part of the 24 hour vestibule.

Discussion regarding the options for an enclosed walkway versus an open walkway, maintenance issues of the walkway, entrances, roof lines, elevations, architectural design, vestibule and a review of all three rendering options.

Anu Shah of 257 Concord Road and Permanent Building Committee member commented on the architectural plan and felt the plan did not unify Town Hall as one building. He commented on the 3 rendering options pointing out the different roof options and the need for a stronger looking single unified building and walkway entrance.

Mr. Blake stated he would bring in some samples of the roof material when he receives them for the HDC to see at the next meeting and hopes to have a cost for the material as well.

Mr. Taylor motioned to continue the public hearing for 322 Concord Road (Town Hall) to the Historic Districts Commission meeting on March 12, 2020. Mr. Swanson seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, 5-0.

2. Public Hearing – Case 20-04, 365 Boston Post Road (Assessor’s Map K08-0026), Applicant Viewpoint Sign & Awning OBO Infinity Med Spa seeks a Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of one (1) non-illuminated wall sign to be installed on the second story of the north facade facing Boston Post Road

Margaret Vosburgh from Viewpoint Sign & Awning was present to discuss the application with the HDC.

Mr. Taylor asked Ms. Vosburgh if she had been to the Design Review Board (DRB) for approval.

Ms. Vosburgh stated she had been before the DRB and the sign was approved.

Mr. Taylor asked if the sign was approved as presented here. Ms. Vosburgh stated yes, the sign was approved as presented to the HDC tonight.

Mr. Andreas asked if there were signs there now. Ms. Vosburgh replied yes, there is one there now that is existing and will be removed and replaced.

Mr. Andreas asked what sign was there now. Mr. Riepe thought the Satellite Systems was the sign there now. Ms. Vosburgh stated the Satellite Systems sign was next to a blue sign of a business that is no longer there and that is the sign that will be removed and replaced by the Infinity Med Spa sign.

Mr. Riepe asked if the sign would be replacing another sign that is already there. Ms. Vosburgh replied yes.

Mr. Andreas asked if the sign was the same style. Ms. Vosburgh replied everything was the same except for the colors.

Mr. Andreas asked if the color was black or dark green. Ms. Vosburgh replied the color was black.

Mr. Taylor asked if there were any questions or comments.

Mr. Riepe stated he wanted to make sure the colors were listed on the application. Ms. Vosburgh stated that the colors were listed at the bottom of the application.

Mr. Taylor motioned to approve the application as submitted. Mr. Riepe seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, 5-0.

3. Public Hearing – Case 20-05, 299 Old Sudbury Road (Assessor’s Map H09-0048), Applicant Patti Walch OBO Sudbury Garden Club seeks a Certificate of Appropriateness to install a public sign for Heritage Park

Patti Walch from the Sudbury Garden Club was present to discuss the application with the HDC.

Mr. Taylor stated he like the sign but thought the wording was a little cramped at the bottom. He suggested maybe the print could be smaller. He questioned the font on the sign and asked if the sign lettering would look like the design presented.

Ms. Walch stated that the letters would look like the design presented and the sign would be hand carved. The letters would be painted in gold and outlined in black. The background of the sign would be a deep green paint on the wood. Ms. Walch stated that the sign could be posted on granite posts if she could raise the money and the alternative to the granite posts would be wood posts.

Mr. Taylor asked what does the little white sign at the bottom say. Ms. Walch stated the sign at the bottom would say Sudbury Garden Club because they maintain the park.

Mr. Riepe stated he was a little confused because the site plans showed two signs but the application only asks for one sign. Ms. Walch stated it was only one sign and the two designs presented on plan were to show the difference between the granite posts and wood posts.

Mr. Riepe stated he was looking at the narrative description and it says the main sign and a small sign. Ms. Walch stated the narrative is asking for the main sign and the smaller sign is for the Sudbury Garden Club sign to go underneath.

Mr. Swanson asked if Ms. Walch had asked the Town Clerk if they could have permission to use the Town’s seal. Ms. Walch stated she did not ask because she unaware that she needed permission. Mr. Swanson stated that it is illegal to use the Town’s seal without permission and that this request may also need to go before the Select Board for approval. Mr. Swanson also mention the area above the entrance of the Martha Mary Chapel is gold leaf paint and was painted almost 30 years ago.

Mr. Andreas stated he did not think the gold leaf paint was that expensive to do.

Ms. Walch asked who she need to contact for permission to use the Town’s seal. Mr. Swanson stated she need to seek approval from the Town Clerk to use the seal.

Mr. Andreas asked if the seal was going to be monochrome. Ms. Walch stated she would like to mimic the Town seal that is used on other Town signs located around town. She would like to use the colors of the Town seal that is posted on the Town’s website.

Mr. Andreas stated he agreed with Mr. Taylor comments regarding the lettering on the bottom half of the sign seems a little crowded. He suggested removing the wording historical monument on the sign.

Ms. Walch stated many of the signs in the park on the walking path list historical monument on the sign.

Mr. Andreas suggested scaling the font so the wording can be the same as the other signs in the park.

Mr. Swanson suggested the wording on the sign to say historical walk.

Mr. Riepe stated that either posts presented were fine. If the budget allowed for the granite posts they would be more durable than wood. He noted if they could raise the money for the granite posts that would be a better option.

Mr. Andreas motioned to approve the application as amended with the option of wood or granite posts, the Town seal should be in color, the font on the lower element should be reduced to the same size and historical monument should be changed to historical walk.

Mr. Riepe seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, 5-0.

4. Public Hearing – Case 20-06, 248 Concord Road (Assessor’s Map H09-0020), Applicant Studio Insitu Architects, Inc. seeks a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish the intermediate connector piece between the main masses of the building’s house and barn, and replace it with a larger piece, and also to construct a new detached garage

Tim Hess from Studio Insitu Architects, Inc. was present to discuss the application with the HDC.

Mr. Taylor asked the applicant to identify the plans such as existing and proposed.

Mr. Hess stated his presentation boards are divided into three parts, existing conditions, proposed conditions and a few items that are not in the proposed category. The applicants are hopeful to execute the work on the proposed condition plans this year and they have thoughts on the longer-term future work. Mr. Hess stated since they were before the HDC tonight, he thought it might be worthwhile to receive feedback from the HDC for future work. He stated he was not seeking approval for future work tonight.

Mr. Andreas asked where the new garage was on the plan. Mr. Hess replied that is the long-term future aspiration. Existing now is a 3-car garage and for the purpose of discussion tonight he replicated the building and rotated and placed the garage on the plan. He noted that if they came back to the HDC in three years this design may not be absolutely replicated exactly but wanted to show it for the propose of discussion tonight.

Mr. Andreas asked if he was looking for approval on this tonight. Mr. Hess replied no.

Mr. Andreas asked if he was only seeking approval for replacing the connector piece between the masses of the buildings house and barn. Mr. Hess replied yes that was correct and he would set the potential future garage plans aside for tonight.

Mr. Hess presented the HDC with the existing conditions view from Concord Road. He explained that the original house is listed on national registry and the historical society informed him that the house was built in 1845. He noted he could not find the build date for the barn. Mr. Hess explained the desire to remove the little connector buildings in the south elevation, on the existing main house and existing barn little connectors and the plan is to demolish them and maintain much of what is there now with no proposed changes to the front building, but the elevations in the proposed vary a little bit.

Mr. Hess then presented the HDC with the proposed plan, keeping the pitch of the house the same, connector piece, including two over two double hung windows, crown molding, portico and terrace.

Mr. Riepe asked if the terrace piece was already in place. Mr. Hess replied yes, the terrace is there now.

Mr. Hess presented the proposed front door, the columns are a bit taller, clad board with exposure exactly matched to the ones that exist today, windows will be insulated, no shutters. Mr. Hess asked the HDC to consider using Aluminum Clad Pella architectural windows.

Mr. Andreas asked about the height difference of the new L-shaped area of the house he was proposing.

Mr. Hess replied about 16 inches. He felt the ridge should be a little higher to like to preserve ground floor ceiling height and enhance the second floor ceiling height.

Mr. Andreas stated the offset of the old L was offset to the south now to the north by roughly the same amount. Mr. Hess relied yes.

Taryn Trexler of 253 Concord Road gave a brief description of the history of the property including previous use of the barn as a school. She also discussed prior structural and architectural changes of the structure over the years.

Mr. Taylor stated he felt that the transition plan presented lost the original house.

Discussion regarding the proposed plans including the roof pitch and the proposed L shape.

Mr. Andreas asked if material of the front windows were wood. Mr. Hess replied yes, wood with aluminum triple track storms.

Discussion of future plans of the barn.

Ms. Trexler commented on the L-shape and felt that it was a little large and felt like a huge mass. Kathleen Parente of 252 Concord Road agreed with Ms. Trexler's comments.

Mr. Riepe asked if it had to be one continuous plan or could it be modulated. Mr. Hess stated he was a little hesitant to modulate but could revisit this with his client.

Mr. Andreas stated if he could take the one mass and break it into two sections and then it may not look so massive.

Mr. Shah commented on the architectural plans presented and offered some suggestions.

Mr. Swanson noted the barn could be painted red to break up all of the white.

Mr. Andreas stated he would like to have wood windows installed.

Mr. Hess stated he would like to bring in a sample for the HDC to see.

Discussion regarding window styles.

Mr. Taylor asked the applicant to come back to the HDC with revisions based on the comments discussed tonight.

Mr. Taylor motioned to continue the public hearing for 248 Concord Road to the Historic Districts Commission meeting on March 12, 2020. Mr. Riepe seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, 5-0.

Other Business:

Recommendations for a New Historic Districts Commission Member

Mr. Taylor asked the HDC members if they had received the email he had sent out the members on March 5, 2020. The HDC members replied yes.

Mr. Andreas stated he had a quick comment regarding the decision on considering a resident of a historic district. He stated the definition of a residency is not where the house is.

Ms. Hawes asked Mr. Andreas what his comment was applying to. Mr. Andreas replied the reappointment of Lee Swanson.

Mr. Taylor stated they did go over this in a previous email.

Mr. Andreas stated a resident of the Town of Sudbury is not based on where the residence is.

Mr. Taylor stated if Mr. Andreas could show documentation to the HDC it would be helpful.

Mr. Andreas stated that we can define what constitutes a resident not a residence of a historic district. He stated given that we have a lot of properties where part of the house or all of the house isn't in the historic district. Mr. Andreas stated that we could constitute if your property falls in part of the historic district, that constitutes being a resident of a historic district.

Mr. Taylor stated if he can lead him in any way regarding this situation it would be helpful.

Mr. Andreas stated that a number of properties in town where half of the property is in Sudbury and half of the property is in Marlboro. He stated they have to make a ruling as to how the towns will deal with it. He stated for both town's the Secretary of State makes those decisions for the town and residence and it has to do with where you sleep. Mr. Andreas stated the HDC could state that residency, given that anyone who has part of a property in a historic district has to come before the HDC for permission to modify any part of the property and felt that is a reasonable definition of being a resident of a historic district

Mr. Taylor asked who he was referring to as "we", meaning the Town or Historic Districts Commission.

Mr. Andreas replied he felt the HDC could make that determination.

Mr. Taylor said he would look into this further.

Approval of Minutes from February 6, 2020

Mr. Taylor motioned to approve the minutes of February 6, 2020. Mr. Andreas seconded the motion. The vote was 4-0-1, with Mr. Taylor, Mr. Andreas, Ms. Hawes, and Mr. Swanson voting in favor, and Mr. Riepe recused from the vote.

Approval of Minutes from February 20, 2020

Mr. Taylor motioned to approve the minutes of February 20, 2020. Mr. Swanson seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous 5-0.

Administrative Report/Update

Mr. Taylor adjourned the meeting at 9:38 PM.