

Harvard Historical Commission

Meeting Minutes June 2 2009

Members present: D. Coots, C. Cutler, J. Feist (Chair), L. Horowitz, R. Minar, R. Saalfield, R. Sprague

Members absent: J. Martin,

Also in attendance: J. Wollaston

- Meeting called to order at 7: 35 p.m
- Minutes of the May meeting were unanimously accepted at 7:40
- J. Feist presented the application for a certificate of applicability submitted by Shaker Village resident Oona Aldrich who has requested permission to install new copper chimney caps on both chimneys on her home at 84 Shaker Rd. She would like to replace a current cap with a new cap with screening of a larger gauge. She would like to add a similar cap to her second chimney, which is now not covered by a cap at all. Members agreed that specs detailed in the bldg code take precedence over historical or aesthetic custom and preferences for cap height. Aldrich would like to install caps that are identical to those on her neighbors' house at 84 Shaker Rd. Members agreed to ask Aldrich to present information from the MA state bldg code as it applies to caps installed on multiple chimneys. Members voted unanimously that Aldrich's application covers a substantial change to her property and a public hearing will be held next month.
- A public hearing on the application for a certificate of applicability by Jennifer Candon (25 Oak Hill Road) for the projected renovation of an existing screened porch was called to order at 7:55 p. The current rotting porch, which is substandard, is made of fiberboard and is both unattractive and unsafe. The Candons appreciate the functionality of the porch and in replacing this old structure would like to use the concrete footprint of the current porch and match the architectural detailing of a second (possibly original, certainly older) existing porch on the structure. Flat 2 x 4 balustrades would be placed very close together for the railing the Candons would like to build on the porch. Only 5 ft of the porch is visible from Oak Hill Road. Candon indicated that standard metal screening, removable in winter time, would be used. The slope of the roof would likely be only steep enough to shed water, said the Candon's designer, Mark Barbadoro, who was present. Members voted unanimously that the proposed project is a

substantial addition. The HHC will hold a public hearing at their July meeting. D. Coats asked that the center of the porch corner balustrade posts align with the center of the posts of the main porch structure.

- Commissioners studied the application for a certificate of applicability by the Verizon corporation which would like to install fencing around their temporary generator, now visible from Littleton Rd. The company proposes copying the style of the existing wooden fence (now hiding their electrical transformer). Members voted unanimously that this proposal is a substantial change to the site and a public hearing must be held in July.
- R. Sprague spoke with a specialist (Jean Lipman) on the Rufus Porter mural in the Harvard Inn. Conservators discourage the moving of painted plaster walls. They can, however, be preserved on site even if the owner wants to paint over the mural. The mural would be protected and could be revealed at a later date. Discussion of the murals at the Inn generated a conversation about the need to share our new Design Guidelines with all brokerage firms listing and selling in this town and to make sure that brokers identify many construction projects within both of our historic districts as subject to review by the HHC. Sprague, J Wollaston and D. Coats will work together on this project.
- L. Horowitz updated all members of the HHC on our last month of research on the process of renovating the Shaker burial ground. Feist updated prospective HHC member Jared Wollaston on the history of the project to date, indicating that participants in a Mass historic commissioners list serve all objected to using a mechanical process to remove the paint (grit blasting). Though we do not have legal jurisdiction over the burial ground (the town's Cemetery Commission does) we would like to study the comparative advantages of mechanical v chemical stripping of the many coats of paint on the markers. Experts weighed in on all sides but the consensus, as tabulated by L Horowitz, was that a mechanical stripping process would be preferable. R. Saalfield will check references on all of the construction consultants she has spoken with already, reporting back next month.
- D. Coats reported that he and J. Martin have begun working on verbiage for the historic district signs. He shared the results of J. Martin's research with the group. Coats will meet with J. Martin to discuss Martin's various suggestions for the verbiage on the signs and distribute options (text and graphics) for each of us to consider before the next meeting.
- R. Saalfield reported on her contact with Bromfield guidance counselor Susan Farnsworth and was told that both Farnsworth and Bromfield principal Jim O' Shea would be the contacts for any community service projects designed by and done under the auspices of the HHC. By August each members of the commission is to design one or more volunteer projects, of at least 40 hours, that would be appropriate for high school seniors to perform.

- C. Cutler has begun work on installing the restored cellar door at the Hildreth House.
- R. Minar distributed an updated draft of the HHC Rules and Procedures.

Meeting adjourned at 9: 40 p.m./ Respectfully submitted, R. Saalfield

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