

Minutes of the Harvard Historical Commission on February 1, 2012

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Members in attendance were: Doug Coots (presiding chair) Rhonda Sprague, Barbara Hadad, Pam Marston and John Martin

Absent: Ken Swanton, Chris Cutler

Guests: JoeThierault was attending as a nominee to our commission from Conservation Commission, Lucy Wallace, Tim Clark, Marie Sobalvaro, Joe Hutchinson, Sydney Blackwell and Pierre Comtois.

Previous meeting minutes discussion

The minutes of the Jan 4, 2012 meeting were amended and accepted.

Presentation by proposed developers of Vicksburg Square, Devens

Dan Drazen was present to inform us about the planned development at Vicksburg Square on Devens. He is the project manager with Trinity Financial. He showed the commission examples of prior restorations; one each in Mattapan, Lowell and East Boston. The commission heard that the various town forums had suggested “green development”, senior housing and a way to honor the military history of the post. Vicksburg Square is planned to be composed of 246 units in four converted barracks; 20% at market rate, 80% low income of \$30,000-\$45,000 a year. The current parking lot will be turned into green space with additional parking added in surrounding areas. Hale Hall, one of the buildings, will be converted into 78 units of housing for 55 and older. There will be a preference for veterans.

As regards the historical elements: the porches will be added back and the chimneys repointed. The façade treatments will include new metal rails, new doors, new roofs and new gutters. The interiors will be repaired from water damage and will be updated.

When questioned about having retail stores on Devens, Dan argued that retail uses are not necessary as Ayer businesses are struggling. There was a discussion about transportation and parking being far from the units. Are there plans for community buildings? Many communities have a community center. There was discussion about the boundaries going through the homes. The Theater building would be gutted and then converted to The Fort Devens Museum by fundraising. A Super Town Meeting of all three towns will have to approve the project in a few months.

Follow-up on Certificates of Applicability

Homeowners should send us a note when renovations are completed. They have two years. We should have before and after pictures of the project. Assign someone to be in charge of applications.

Election of Commission secretary

Pam was elected as secretary.

Progress report on Town Hall and Hildreth House renovations

Architects would present the designs and would come to us for Application for Certificate of Applicability. We want to improve the outside of the buildings. We should set up a meeting with architects and have a discussion of the various focus groups and how the citizens see the uses of these buildings.

HHC Records

Town Hall has all the records so John and Chris will go to TH to determine what we have.

Sending letter to historic district homeowners

Rhonda says that no one has a list for all property owners in the historic district but...there is a list. Pam will get a list from Ken so she can mail out letters letting historic district homeowners that they are in an historic district and are subject to historic district bylaws and restrictions.

Filling HHC appointment

Joe Theriault has been nominated by the Conservation Commission to the HHC and is scheduled to be appointed at the Feb 7th BoS meeting.

Updated operating guidelines

Pam will talk to Ken about any changes to the document

Adding Solar Guidelines to HHC Design Guidelines

Doug will import it to *Indesign* and make necessary changes there.

Ongoing and new business

We need to update the official map for our website as well as a list of homes in the historic districts and add pictures and events of HHC.

Meeting adjourned at 8:58

Next scheduled meeting: March 7.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Marston