

Harvard Historical Commission

Regular Meeting - Periodicals Room, Old Library

Agenda - Wednesday April 4, 2012 at 7 PM

"Oversee modifications to the Harvard Common and Shaker Village
Historic Districts in accordance with the state and local bylaws,
and generally support historic preservation in Harvard."

Members Present: Ken Swanton, John Martin, Chris Cutler, Barbara Hadad, Rhonda Sprague, Pam Marston (John will vote in Doug's absence)

Members Absent: Doug Coots and Joe Theriault

Visitors: Ron Ricci, Wade Holtzman, Pete Jackson

Applicant: Dan Crowley

The meeting was called to order at 7:03.

The commission members read the minutes and they were approved as amended.

Town Hall Renovation presentation

Pete Jackson from MBC made a presentation on the Town Hall renovation. It looks like there will not need to be much site work done. Landscaping will be done on the North side of building. All town offices will be on first floor. The top floor will have multiple meeting rooms, media and storage. Moveable partitions will allow for varied use of the rooms. There is capability for cable and media for all rooms. The stage area is to be consistent with the old building. The new windows in the building will be simpler and the woodwork throughout will be restored. In 1982 there was a building committee for the Town Hall and the police station. A new police station was built but the renovation for the Town Hall has been on hold for almost 30 years. Pete showed us the warrant article prepared for the Annual Town Meeting. There is no mention of Hildreth House in the warrant this year. That will be voted on next year.

John Martin summarized the project: Replace all windows, replace the cupola, tear down/put up an addition, remove the stairs and add an elevator. Mass Historical Commission suggests that the addition should look somewhat different from the original building and should be subservient.

The Commission felt that the glass piece on the street side of the building is questionable. It should be a window in keeping with the old building. We questioned the removal of both chimneys as well. In the end the HHC has to approve the plans in going forward.

We discussed whether we would comment on the Town Hall renovation at Annual Town Meeting. No decision was made.

In going around the table discussing the project:

Chris thinks the town needs to renovate the Town Hall building. He approves what has happened so far.

John is concerned with the physical aspects and the preservation of the town center. In the end, he favors the renovation.

Pam is concerned with the cost. She questions whether the town can afford it. She wonders where the offices are going during the renovation.

Ken likes the proposal. His concern is one of how we afford this.

Rhonda likes the building plan but is not sure we can we afford it. Trade offs are here. The vitality of the town center is important. She does not want the HHC to vote on it.

Barbara likes the handicapped access and the open feeling. She likes the look on the common. She too, is concerned with the cost. She's nervous about people leaving town because they cannot afford to stay here if taxes increase.

In general, the committee members like the design but many are concerned that the renovation costs will be too high.

The committee voted on the following motion: "The HHC believes that the schematic design is consistent with the nature of the historic district and the preservation of the Town Hall." The vote was unanimous in approving the motion.

Application for Certificate

Applicant: Dan Crowley for daughter, Lynn

Lynn Crowley, 4 Cross Street, has filed an Application for Certificate of Appropriateness for a storage shed (Reeds Ferry shed) and to paint the house a deep green. The committee determined that the project is insubstantial. We will notify the abutters and then vote at the next meeting. We recommended that he buy an "historic colonial shed". Dan Crowley agreed.

Update on continuing projects

HHC Design Guidelines: The guidelines will be made editable and Solar Guidelines will be added by Joe Theriault. The committee will vote on that next meeting.

The "Old Inn" : May 4th will be the auction of the Inn. Residents will be aided in their search for new housing.

HHC Records: Chris went to the Town Hall and found some HHC records there.

Letters to historic district homeowners: Rhonda will send out letters to homeowners in the historic districts alerting them to the fact that their homes are in historic districts and that any renovations, additions or demolitions are subject to the Historic Commission by laws.

Updated operating guidelines: Pam and Ken will discuss the changes made in the guidelines. (Essentially removing the HHC by laws and referencing them instead.)

Next scheduled meeting: May 2, 2012

Meeting adjourned at 9:04

Respectfully Submitted,

Pamela Marston