

Stratham Demolition Review Committee
Public Meeting
Minutes of July 21, 2016; 5:30 PM

Present: Nathan Merrill, Dana Dowling, Rebecca Mitchell
Absent: David Canada, Peter Wiggin

Mitchell called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM at 159 Winnicutt Rd. The homeowner, Lucy Cushman, was present and Mitchell asked her to show the committee the present garage, discuss her wish to demolish it, and her plans for replacement.

The present garage is a small (the demolition application gives the dimensions as 24' x 24') timber-framed gable-front barn that appears to have been constructed in the first half of the 19th c. with more recent modifications and adaptations, such as a poured cement floor. The siding is a mixture of aluminum siding (front), wood clapboards and novelty siding (sides), and wood shingles (rear). The asphalt shingles on the roof appear to be fairly recent. The two car entry doors have gently arched tops (evoking perhaps an earlier use as a carriage barn) with recent vinyl doors. The front gable has two six over six windows that appear to date to the original construction. There is a small privy attached to the rear corner. The ground floor interior is open with no partitions or supports. A heavy duty hinged set of ladder-form stairs leads to the loft.

Ms. Cushman indicated that it is her wish to replace this structure with a new garage on the same footprint but adding length to the rear and adding a side entry door. The proposed new garage would have a loft accessed by a set of stairs.

The committee members stepped aside to discuss their findings. Merrill stated that the physical evidence makes this a historic structure based on its age. Mitchell agreed but stated that there appears to be no evidence that the structure contributed to any historically significant activity on the site. Merrill agreed that the loss of the structure (especially as replaced by a similar structure of the same scale and in the same location) would not be unduly injurious to the public interest.

Merrill moved that: While the committee recognizes the historic nature of the timber construction of varying ages the aluminum siding on the front façade and other elements render the structure not of historical interest to the property or to the community. Dowling seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Following further discussion of the replacement garage Mitchell summed up the views of the group and moved that: The committee send an advisory letter to Ms. Cushman that in order to maintain the historic feel of her property the new structure should be of the same scale as the old in regard to width and height, most importantly maintaining the same roof pitch; and that the front façade should have wood siding and retain the present fenestration pattern.

Merrill seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

The committee rejoined Ms. Cushman and informed her of the votes and of their views that the present structure might be repaired fairly easily and at less expense than a new structure. Dowling proffered a rough estimate of \$20,000.

The meeting adjourned at 5:45.

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Mitchell, Chairman