

Historic District Commission Meeting
December 8, 2011

Present: Gretchen Schuler (presiding), Margery Baston, Chris Hagger, George Ives, Desmond McAuley, Kathie Steinberg

Others: Lynne Spencer (Menders, Torrey & Spencer), Susan Keyes, Brad Keyes, Steven Baczek

Public Comment – There was none.

Minutes of October 20, 2011 were approved.

Public Hearing - C. B. Adams House - 15 Bow Road - Construct stone wall parallel with front of house facing Bow Road.

Steven Baczek spoke for this application. There is a berm where the wall will go. River rock (smooth, not jagged), 6 to 8 inches in size will be used. The wall will be mortared to keep stones in place, but the mortar will be set in about 2 inches (so as to be less visible). The wall will wrap around to the landing. There will be no hitching posts. The corners are to be at 90 degrees and not rounded. (The only difference from the drawing is that wall corners will be 90 degree and not rounded.) The landscaper cut the ground for the wall which will die into the grade. The stone color will be a darker gray to match the foundation. The work could start as early as Monday and take 3 or 4 days.

Shutters will appear on the front of the house. They will be two panel shutters, with an inch and one half rail, and painted black.

George made the motion that a Certificate of Appropriateness be granted for a stone wall with a rustic, random look, with mortar held back, and with stones similar in color to the foundation of the house. Kathie seconded. This received a unanimous, favorable vote (5-0-0) (Chris Hagger had not arrived at this point.)

Gretchen told Steven that she would take care of this by 10 am tomorrow and that she would e-mail him the record of action. She pointed out that a building permit was not needed for this work.

First Parish Church - informal discussion seeking input and advice about future plans that will require HDC approval. Susan Keyes started this informal discussion about the expansion of the Parish Hall. (The Parish Hall is not in the HD, but the Meeting House is.) In 2008 a church survey was done as to how the church and Parish Hall could be more access friendly. Most important was access – the stairs are difficult for the elderly, and the entrance could be easier. Also, the congregation liked the idea of more dedicated space for youth. A feasibility study was done – and because of cost, some of the larger goals had to be compromised. Susan said that in later conversations with Lynne Spencer, preservation principal at the architectural firm Menders, Torrey & Spencer the thought of connecting the two buildings emerged. This hall-like connection could help with access and after the church service those attending a reception or another church function would not have to walk outside.

Lynne Spencer spoke next. She started by reminding everyone that "It came upon a Midnight Clear" was first sung at the Meeting House. The design of the church was Asher Benjamin, built in 1814. The outside has had modest modifications. In the 1850's there were lots of changes inside. 1983 the Parish Hall was built. It was a nod to the Meeting House; and there was rhythm with the sheds. This has an off-axis location. In 1993 there was an addition to the Meeting House which houses an elevator, creating more access. There is parking by the carriage sheds. There were 21 carriage sheds, but down now to 12. Gretchen made the point that there are few churches with carriage sheds remaining. Lynne pointed out that there are lots of entrances to the buildings, but the members are looking for a main entrance. The main way could be in the entry Lobby (the proposed addition connecting the Parish Hall and Meeting House). However, there are different levels, so a 1 and 20 walk would be needed. Also, there is a need for an internal ramp. With this you could go straight into the sanctuary. The proposed entrance lobby would be used as a very large foyer. Desmond suggested that where the direct contact occurs between the proposed connective hallway to the Meeting House, that there be a pinching down, to allow Meetinghouse to be the Meetinghouse and the link to be the link. Or, to have a connection that was less robust. Lynne pointed out the proposed link would have clapboards and gable roof -- with a linear sky-light. On the east side there would be a major entrance with columns that would provide some shelter. Gretchen asked if they had thought of using glass. Chris asked about additional lighting. Lynne and Susan spoke of ground lighting on the building. Desmond asked if the link would be LEED certified. Lynne responded that it would not be. However, they would be using radiant floor heating, and ventilation through the skylights. Also there would be the use of materials that are native, and the use of less processed materials. Chris asked about time frame for this project. Susan Keyes thought it would be a couple of years before building started. People are pledging over a 5-year period. We would need 60% of the pledges before beginning. It would start in the summer when the church is not in active use. Desmond asked about recycled wood for flooring. Lynn responded that the wood flooring will have to be replaced in the Vestry some time. However, for the link Lynn was thinking of tile for flooring and divided windows. The roof will be slate, or asphalt shingles. Desmond thought real slate would be nice on this reasonably small addition. However, the Parish Hall currently has asphalt shingles. Lynne asked the Commission about recommendation for windows. Desmond spoke of the proportion of existing lights, and the need for the proportions to be right for this addition. Desmond suggested that the slice of light along the top of the addition could be angled as it meets the Meeting House. The drawings Lynne referred to during her talk with the WHDC had been done by hand. Desmond asked about the ceiling of the proposed link, as it would be viewed by people on the second floor. Desmond mentioned the name of Sir Michael Hopkins, an architect who does interesting things under the roofs with beautiful trusses.

Gretchen offered to send the names of Commission members to Susan and Lynn.

Route 27/ Route 126 Intersection Construction Update. Reference was made to recent articles in the Town Crier by Woody Baston. According to an agreement with the Board of Road Commissioners, no work was to begin at the intersection of 126/27 in the HD until the utility poles had been relocated. Currently there is a pole in the middle of the paved intersection, surrounded by barrels. With the road wider and smoother, the trucks and cars travel faster than ever before. Also, it is difficult for those driving south on 126 to see around the barrels and other

obstacles to see the oncoming traffic. The traffic lights cannot go in until the utility pole is removed; and the particular masts needed for the traffic lights will not be available until February. This intersection without traffic lights is more hazardous than the original intersection. Gretchen asked, "How can we go about this without being bitter and nasty?" A lengthy discussion followed; and there was unanimous agreement that we should lay out what we expect. The permitting process must be followed; and no building permit should be issued until all lines are checked. Gretchen will speak with Selectmen during public comment.

Window Policy. Members of the Commission had received the updated version of the Window Policy ahead of time; and all agreed to the content that has been re-drafted and honed over several meetings. There was agreement to the idea of putting it on the website as a draft. The policy could be stamped with a "draft" watermark. George moved that we proceed with a public hearing to consider the adoption of the window policy. Desmond seconded. This motion received a unanimous, favorable vote. (6-0-0). The hearing will be held on the Thursday, January 19th.

Electronic Sign. Gretchen met with Fred Turkington, the Police Chief and Tom Fay. The policy for the HD is that the electronic sign will be used only when there are safety issues or if there is an emergency.

Freight House. The work on the Freight House has been proceeding well. Currently additional work is required -- a post is completely rotted on one corner and a beam on the north side needs to be replaced.

However, there was one glitch. The contractor, Philip North of Northern Improvements, had not been advised by John Moynihan, the Facilities Director, to set aside boards that included historic markings. When the boards disappeared Rick Conard spent hours rifling through the dumpster and checking the landfill. Eventually, Rick spoke with Jim Zebrowski, at the Wayland Library, who recalled that an artist had expressed interest in using the refuse boards for picture frames. Rick was able to contact the artist before the boards had been turned into picture frames. Almost all the historic boards were retrieved – with the exception of one board that included the date, 1914.

The meeting adjourned at 9:55 pm.

Margery Baston