

DRAFT
Historic District Commission
November 20, 2014

HDC members present: Gretchen Schuler (presiding), Margery Baston, Alice Boelter, Desmond McAuley (arrived at 8:15), Kathie Steinberg

Others present: Jan Dunn, Bob Mainer, Dick Hoyt (all board members of the Historical Society), Mike Lowery (BoPW chair), Alex Finlayson

Informal Discussion of Sign for the Grout Heard House Museum. Dick Hoyt has been in touch with the sign company that made the sign for the First Parish Church. He showed a drawing of a possible sign. The sign would be double-sided. The words would read: "Grout Heard House (on top line) MUSEUM (on the middle line in enlarged letters) and Historical Society (on the lowest line). The sign would be placed in the front yard to the left of the front door of the GHH Museum. It would be larger and more visible than the old sign. Tentatively the sign would be the same color as the house, and it would have red letters, similar to the (burgundy) color of the front door. Cedar and High Density Urethane (HDU) are the two materials under consideration. The difference in price for the cedar and urethane is \$475 in favor of the urethane. (The cost would be \$3,000 for urethane and \$3475 for wood.) The proposed posts on either side of the sign would be granite. The posts will be square at 3 to 4 inches per side. Letters for the word "Museum" will be larger (5+ inches) than other lettering on the sign. Gretchen asked about HCU posts rather than the granite. She made the point that a Commission decision should not reflect only what the HDC happens to like, rather it is what is appropriate. Alex asked about the post(s) for the current sign; and the current sign has a single wooden post. The font Dick was considering for the sign was Times Roman. Mike Lowery shared a sample of a Caslon typeface that he thought could be more appropriate -- as it was used in 1750 (whereas the Times Roman typeface came into being in the 1900s). The ground where the beech tree was removed is still soft, so the sign would not go in until the spring. The cost would be \$575 for two granite posts. When asked for thoughts from the HDC, Alice said that she would prefer that the sign be made of wood, which she felt would be more authentic and fitting for the Museum belonging to the Historical Society. Others pointed out that if it looks like real wood -- the HDU material would be approved.

Continued public hearing for temporary signs on the Mellen Law Office Green. Gretchen explained that because she sent the notice to the Selectmen when it should have been sent to the BoPW, this was grounds for tabling the application.

Mike Lowery spoke of the procedural matter and referred to MGL Ch. 266 section 126. This law requires anyone placing such signs to have the permission of the “municipal or public officer in charge thereof.” In the case of the Mellen Law Office Green, permission must be obtained from the Board of Public Works which also functions as Park Commissioners. The “owner” of the property needs to sign the HDC application, and the signature was missing on the application for temporary signs on the Mellen Law Office Green. Gretchen pointed out that the applicant had gone to the Selectmen for all of the signs and was only aware of needing HDC approval when contacted by the HDC.

Mike also pointed out that signs cannot be placed in the right-of-way and they need the owner’s permission. The one giving the permission is the public officer in charge.

Mike also warned that allowing such a sign would be counter to the purpose of the HDC -- and that if the HDC approved temporary signs on the Mellen Law Office Green, the HDC decision could be appealed. He felt plastic event signs have no place in a HD.

There was a motion to table the application. One HDC member compared the Mellen Law Office Green to a “traffic calming measure” because of its green open space. The motion was favorably accepted. (4-0-0)

Sidewalk along Old Sudbury Road -- Margery reported that she had read a memo from Gretchen during public comment at the Board of Public Works (BoPW) meeting last Thursday. The memo gave a brief history of the proposed sidewalk for Old Sudbury Road, starting in the HD at the Wayland Depot and joining the Wayland Commons sidewalk that ends between the two stone piers. The construction of the sidewalk has been delayed for a number of years, and Gretchen was asking for help from the BoPW in moving this project along. Because the proposed sidewalk was concrete with brick trim (like the sidewalk currently in the town center Historic District) and could not be done “in house” by the DPW -- the BoPW felt that the Planning Board should write the article relative to this sidewalk for Town Meeting. The next day Margery was in

touch with Mike Lowery about the possibility of an asphalt sidewalk that could be done “in house.” Mike was in touch with Sarkis Sarkisian, the Town Planner; and Sarki informed Mike that plans had already been drawn up for a concrete sidewalk, permits had been assembled, and the need was currently for some additional monies to complete the work. About \$75,000 has already been set aside for the construction of the sidewalk, which would probably cover an asphalt sidewalk while the estimate for a concrete sidewalk with brick band is about \$150,000.

Kathie said that she had spoken with Sarki that day on this matter. Sarki explained that when Wayland Commons dropped the 55 and over age requirement they also gave \$10,000 additional funds toward a sidewalk to the Old Town Center. Mike Lowery was also part of this discussion; and there was general agreement that the HDC, BoPW and PB would all need to coordinate on this matter. Kathie made the motion that the HDC co-sponsor an article for Town Meeting with the Planning Board and the BoPW requesting additional funds for a sidewalk along Old Sudbury Road. The motion passed unanimously (5-0-0). (Desmond had arrived in time to be counted in this vote.)

Report on location of handicapped parking signs at First Parish. The First Parish will need to post 2 legally required signs on the carriage house doors 10 & 11 (two doors furthest from Route 20). Then there is a need for additional signs to reserve parking. The signs are metal and colored white and green. The signs read: *RESERVED For those with impaired Mobility On Sunday & for Special Services*. The metal signs create a stark contrast with the recently preserved carriage house. However, there are 10 regular church attendees who have handicapped tags on their cars. Desmond asked if there was a consultant to help with signage. He then suggested that there are ways to attach modern signs so that they are separated somewhat from the historic fabric of the building. He thought the architectural firm they dealt with may have some ideas. One thing that possibly could be done would be to create a wood frame (like a picture frame) around the sign. Gretchen said she would be back in touch with the First Parish.

Design Review Guidelines. Gretchen has sent out to HDC members some of the proposed design review guidelines. Alice made suggestions on the guidelines received so far. She thought it sometimes was not as clear as it could be as to when something would be approved by the HDC, and when it would not. She also suggested that when referring to the Town Center Historic District or the Bow Road Historic District that it

be done in a very consistent way. She also wondered about the alphabetical listing of topics. "Paint" for instance could be broader to include stains, etc. Desmond spoke of heading specifications used by architectural firms. He wasn't sure if it would be applicable to the Design Review Guidelines -- but he would give this issue some thought. Because of the size of the Design Review Guidelines Gretchen may try to send 5 pages at a time to HDC members. There is a possibility she could share the file using Dropbox.

Other. There may be no meeting in December if there is no application. However, there is the possibility we could possibly meet on Dec. 18th to discuss the guidelines.

Desmond had arrived late -- and so had missed the discussion on temporary signs. However, he had given thought to the idea of temporary signs on the Mellen Law Office Green. He thought that because buildings and signs had been there in the past, there was historic precedence for this "function." He thought perhaps the HDC should give consideration to "function." Also, we should ask: What is the reasonable thing to do?

The minutes for October 16, 2014 were amended and approved. (5-0-0)

The meeting adjourned at about 9:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Margery Baston