

SALEM HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MINUTES
March 1, 2023

A meeting of the Salem Historical Commission was held on Wednesday, March 1, 2023 at 6:00PM via **Zoom Virtual Meeting**. Present were: Larry Spang (Chair), Vijay Joyce, Milo Martinez, Mark Meche, Kelly Tyler-Lewis. Staff: Patti Kelleher. Not present: Reed Cutting, Rebecca English, Jamie Graham, Mark Pattison.

Request for a CLG (Certified Local Government) opinion on Pioneer Village

Ms. Kelleher reported that this discussion will be heard at the Commission's next meeting on March 15, 2023.

180 Derby Street—continuation

The Brookhouse Home submitted an application for a Certificate of Hardship to replace brick boundary wall.

Documents & Exhibits

- Application: 1/18/23
- Slideshow/photographs

Martha Ryan, Judy Kane (administrator of Brookhouse Home for Women) and Chris MacFarlane (project landscape architect with Landworks Studio, 83 North St, Salem) were present on the call.

Mr. Macfarlane presented slideshow on Brookhouse Home Wall Remediation. A property wall has failed between Brookhouse Home and neighboring property at 188 Derby St. Location of failing wall was shown; built in approximately 1930. A plan view was also shown, running from carriage house at back of 180 Derby property to concrete wall at front of property, approximately 150 feet long. Photo of wall pre-fail was shown. Present condition of wall was shown, which was said to have failed due to storm conditions in fall 2022. Contractors examined damage to assess possibility of repair; structural integrity of wall was compromised over time. The wall has no solid core; two layers of brick mortared together. Previously proposed plan dated February 15, 2023 was shown: showing that majority of wall would be replaced with sloped landscape abutting neighbor's property, with small portion of wall installed to help mitigate damage to one of large shade trees in front of property (three large oak trees are there). Engineering block wall detail was shown. Commission had previously noted that the engineering blocks were not aesthetically historic and advised applicant to seek alternatives. Mr. MacFarlane noted that the most discussed alternative was brick and showed brick veneer wall detail. Applicants' concerns with this approach is danger to tree on property and cost concerns due to complications of reinforcing concrete, brick, and a capstone. Another alternative was large granite blocks; three vendors were contacted and cost was determined to be a prohibitive factor.

New proposed plan was shown which involves removing current wall in its entirety; and to add landscaping the entire length of present wall via landscaping, including planting a new tree as current tree will be removed. Sloped garden landscape was shown. The applicants requested permission to remove failed wall in its entirety and implement sloped garden solution to replace barrier of property.

Chair Spang reiterated that re-grading for a new brick wall would endanger existing tree on property and clarified that the strategy is thus to remove tree and grade out the grade difference between two properties, and add landscaping in a way that is sympathetic to rest of gardens. The concrete wall at end of existing brick wall to the street would remain, Mr. MacFarlane confirmed. Distance between house next door and property line is approximately 4 feet, according to Mr. MacFarlane. The nextdoor house has a stacked stone foundation, thus any digging to create concrete foundation for brick wall could interfere with neighboring foundation, Mr. MacFarlane said.

Mr. Joyce questioned if the cost quote for granite was for replacement of the brick wall in entirety, which Mr. MacFarlane said no. The new plan would be to remove brick wall, existing tree, and to plant earth berm that is inclusive of replanted tree to account for the tree that is lost.

Chair Spang asked if the Brookhouse Home has contacted the abutting property owners about removing the fence. Mr. MacFarlane noted that a plateau landscape would be placed at top of property, and shrubs would be placed at edges. Ms. Kane noted that the neighbors have the decision as to whether they want to continue their fence.

Mr. Meche noted that full brick wall was quoted \$200k; engineered block, much smaller wall \$20,000; granite wall was approximately double the cost of engineered block. Making a tree well for a new wall would cause disturbance to existing tree roots, thus it would be difficult to judge whether the tree would or would not be impacted. Ms. Kelleher cited Mass General Law Chapter 40c Section 10 for guidance on hardship definition, which does make mention financial hardship. Discussion shifted to attempting to retain portions of wall as exists at present. Chair Spang confirmed that previous discussion had demonstrated more concern for 30 ft portion of wall remaining rather than a 100 ft section missing, which Mr. MacFarlane agreed with. Mr. MacFarlane noted that 60 ft of wall is remaining, though Brookhouse desires to remove entire wall for future concerns. Chair Spang characterized the wall's failing as "demolition by neglect," though noted that the wall may have been flawed by design and impossible to detect deficiencies in.

Chair Spang affirmed that the new plan is to remove entire brick wall, lay back the slope, add landscaping, which will result in the loss of one tree which will be replaced.

Mr. Meche expressed favor in supporting the plan as presented or approving a smaller engineered block wall towards the front of the property, though expressed reservation about removing remains of wall that still exist. Ms. Kelleher noted that most of the wall is not readily observable from Derby Street. Discussion shifted to pergola and rear structure on property, which Ms. Kelleher noted were described on inventory form for the home, though the wall was not. Mr. MacFarlane noted that the shed keeps the end of pergola from being exposed. Chair Spang questioned if the end of the property is brick. The applicants were advised to consider how the plan would account for existing wall of rear structure at back edge of property.

Ms. Tyler-Lewis confirmed that the Structures North report had found the existing wall to be structurally unsound, which Mr. MacFarlane affirmed.

Mr. Martinez supported engineered block with Roman Pisa Block in order to help maintain wall at property and protect or save the existing tree. Mr. MacFarlane noted that new wall would end up being

30” tall. Chair Spang proposed continuing application to allow for a site visit to inspect remaining existing wall before further discussion.

No public comment.

VOTE: Mr. Martinez motioned to approve applicants’ initial proposal to remove length of brick wall and build a 35 ft retaining wall as spec’d on plan, approximately 30” high, using Roman Pisa and Ideal pavers in quarry blend mixed block sizes; the remainder of wall to be graded and landscaped as proposed; Chair Spang added removal as shown on demolition drawing. Ms. Tyler-Lewis seconded the motion. Roll Call: Joyce (no), Tyler-Lewis, Meche, Martinez, Spang were in favor and the motion so carried.

15 Cambridge Street—continuation

Jonathan Collins and Kristelle Lavalee submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for an EV charging station (after the fact).

Documents & Exhibits

- Application: 1/30/23
- Slideshow/photographs

An EV charging station was installed at corner of building. Ms. Kelleher noted that City Solicitor did find upon review that SHC has jurisdiction over EV charging stations under Certificate of Appropriateness, and they are not to be considered appurtenances (such as antennas, air conditioners, etc.). Chair Spang inquired as to whether the device can be relocated and/or enclosed. Ms. Lavalee noted that present location is safest and in the most out of the way location for other residents at the property. Ms. Lavalee was amenable to constructing an enclosure to hide the charging station; an example was shown from a property in Vermont (according to Chair Spang). Ms. Lavalee described a two-sided wall that would not completely enclose the station but would occlude the object from view. Chair Spang clarified that the station should not be visible from any angle of public way. Mr. Meche pointed out that a charger is going to be in use quite often, thus an opening would be ideal; and also expressed hope that these devices *can* be enclosed safely. Chair Spang raised the possibility of a hose charger coming out the bottom of an enclosure. Mr. Joyce expressed interest in seeing more options for enclosures. Mr. Joyce advised the applicant to have the enclosure in keeping with the house (in terms of paint color; clapboards; sloped roof, ideally), and did not take issue with the enclosure being open on one of its sides. Chair Spang proposed that bottom of enclosure goes all the way down to grade.

VOTE: Mr. Joyce motioned to continue the application to the March 15, 2023 meeting. Mr. Martinez seconded the motion. Roll Call: Joyce, Tyler-Lewis, Meche, Martinez, Spang were in favor and the motion so carried.

275 Lafayette Street—continuation

MD Property Development LLC submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to renovate building and new construction.

Ms. Kelleher reported that the applicant requested a continuation to the next meeting.

VOTE: Mr. Martinez motioned to approve request for continuation to the March 15th meeting. Mr. Joyce seconded the motion. Roll Call: Joyce, Tyler-Lewis, Meche, Martinez, Spang were in favor and the motion so carried.

183R Federal Street

Alina Zalucki submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for an HVAC minisplit system (after the fact).

Documents & Exhibits

- Application: 2/7/23
- Slideshow/photographs

Alina Zalucki and Dan Cappucci were present on call. Ms. Kelleher reported that she observed duct work on building façade during a recent separate site visit and confirmed that this work had not received approval from the Commission. Ms. Zalucki noted that there are three residential units in the building though one of the residents did not have an AC unit installed. Mr. Cappucci stated that they had installed one unit in July 2020 and the other unit approximately one month after. Mr. Cappucci noted having received permits from the city to conduct work and was unaware that more oversight would be necessary for a ductless system. Mr. Cappucci identified MVP HVAC as the contractor responsible for installation. Ms. Kelleher noted that the city has an improved electronic online system for permitting which now flags items to SHC for oversight. Ms. Zalucki and Mr. Cappucci noted locations of condenser units which are hidden from public view behind fencing. Painting the visible ducts to match color of house was previously discussed among current owners. Mr. Joyce expressed support for requiring applicants to paint the duct to match.

No public comment.

VOTE: Mr. Joyce motioned to approve the application with the caveat that ducts are painted to match house body color. Ms. Tyler-Lewis seconded the motion. Roll Call: Joyce, Tyler-Lewis, Meche, Martinez, Spang were in favor and the motion so carried.

19 Broad Street

Kyle Watson submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for new gutters and downspouts.

Documents & Exhibits

- Application: 2/7/23
- Slideshow/photographs

Kyle Watson and Amanda Lott were present on the call.

Mr. Watson noted that front face of house does not have gutters or downspouts, and homeowners have experienced water problems (since purchasing in summer 2022). Applicants noted that basement has been redone. The sill and front doorstep are rotted from water damage. The applicants have been told by contractors that gutters need to be installed. Based on information in the guidelines, the applicants are

looking to install copper gutters: 5" half round; 3" downspouts at ends. The applicants noted that rear of house already has gutters. Mr. Joyce asked how gutters would be clipped to the roof. Mr. Meche provided guidance on hanging gutters from roof edge in a way that least disturbs ornate roof line. Mr. Joyce and others desired that applicants retain the fascia/molding as much as possible. Mr. Martinez noted that the Athenaeum recently submitted a proposal for addressing rainfall overflow at a cross gable similar to the subject property and suggested that applicants consult with the Athenaeum on their solution. Mr. Watson proposed requesting and submitting a drawing from Atlantic (the installer) that would show the product and manner of installation for the Commission to approve. Mr. Martinez volunteered to serve as Commission member to review final installation details.

No public comment.

VOTE: Mr. Joyce motioned to approve installation of copper 5" half round copper gutters and 3" downspouts at the front to be hung in order to preserve the existing fascia; final installation detail to be reviewed by Commission. Mr. Martinez seconded the motion. Roll Call: Joyce, Tyler-Lewis, Meche, Martinez, Spang were in favor and the motion so carried.

8 Mead Court

Christopher Nikolopoulos submitted an application for a waiver of the Demolition Delay Ordinance to remove more than 50% of roof.

Documents & Exhibits

- Application: 2/9/23
- Slideshow/photographs

Ms. Kelleher reminded the Commission that the WDDO language was revised to include review of proposals where more than 50% of a roof was to be removed. Mr. Nikolopoulos shared screen to show Google Earth of property at 8 Mead Ct; on left hand side of property is the applicant's unit. The proposal was to add shed-type dormer similar to the one across the street; with four windows. Sideview of intended dormer was featured. Portion of roof would remain, the dormer would start approximately one foot or so from existing side of the house. Drawing of new dormer was shown; two windows on either side of roof, vertically aligning with first and second floor windows. Mr. Nikolopoulos mentioned the size of the street as a factor in the application, noting that it is a short dead-end street off of North St. The desire is to get more head clearance in unit.

Chair Spang clarified that dormer on other side of roof is part of the bathroom in that unit, which Mr. Nikolopoulos confirmed. Chair Spang also clarified that the right chimney would be removed as part of the dormer addition. Mr. Nikolopoulos confirmed this, citing structural concern with adding a ridge beam for support (which the house does not currently have). By eliminating chimney, there would not have to be a cut in ridge line. The chimney on backside currently vents boilers. The chimney to be removed is not currently in use. Mr. Meche clarified that this is a three-unit house and asked if applicant has an architect. Mr. Nikolopoulos stated that he is working with a carpenter on this project. Mr. Meche wondered if three-unit properties required an architect for permitting, which Mr. Joyce confirmed. Mr. Nikolopoulos noted having received ZBA approval for the project.

Ms. Kelleher showed examples of other properties that had similar dormers (from 4 Dearborn and 136 North St). Mr. Nikolopoulos expressed curiosity as to whether this project would constitute more than 50% of the roof being removed given that this project itself was on one side of the home (and would not be removing the entirety of the roof). Chair Spang clarified that applicant's drawing and intent was to keep the existing fascia and proposed potentially adding a window in the middle of dormer (which would feature in a closet according to the applicant's plan). Chair Spang clarified that the intent would be to have the dormer match the shingles/appearance of the roof rather than a continuation of the side of the house (i.e. clapboards).

Mr. Meche shifted discussion to the house across the street which features a dormer with a gang of windows. Chair Spang advised having outer wall of dormer match up with wall of house as much as possible for structural support. Ms. Kelleher noted that the building does have an inventory form, pursuant to its historical significance under the WDDO.

No public comment.

VOTE: Mr. Meche made a motion to find the building historically significant. Mr. Joyce seconded the motion. Roll Call: Joyce, Tyler-Lewis, Meche, Martinez, Spang were in favor and the motion so carried.

Mr. Martinez favored making the building a true three-story rather than adding a dormer as planned; or, if a dormer was to be the applicant's desired outcome, to place dormer two feet from roof edge. Ms. Kelleher emphasized focusing solely on the roof (in terms of the WDDO language of "preferably preserved") given that the only planned alterations involved the roof.

VOTE: Mr. Meche made a motion to not find the building preferably preserved and to allow removal of roof to construct new shed dormer (on south roof plane), generally as shown in drawings submitted. Mr. Joyce seconded the motion. Roll Call: Joyce, Tyler-Lewis, Meche, Martinez, Spang were in favor and the motion so carried.

6 Riverbank Road

Michael and Melissa McKinnon submitted an application for a waiver of the Demolition Delay Ordinance to remove more than 50% of roof.

Documents & Exhibits

- Application: 2/9/23
- Slideshow/photographs

Michael and Melissa McKinnon and Stephen Livermore, project architect, were present on call.

Mr. McKinnon noted the intent to put addition and full second floor on house, which would entail removing the roof. Two small dormers would be placed on the front. Mr. Livermore showed photographs of existing conditions of house; lower floor is masonry, CMU (concrete masonry unit) with stucco, building dates to 1948. Has gable-pitched roof with gable dormer on rear of house. Existing front elevation was shown as well as portion of roof to be removed and replaced with a similar pitched roof with two dormers over main body of house and a larger dormer over a new entrance. The roof pitches will be similar to present existing, but the roof will be heightened to increase living space. On the side,

the plan is to bring gable to the rear and two dormers that eyebrow up from the roof. The new siding material will be wood, clapboards, or synthetic shingles. Chair Spang clarified that new vertical addition will sit on top of CMU. Ms. Kelleher noted that neither the building nor neighborhood have been inventoried, in response to Mr. Meche's question about potential historical significance. Mr. Martinez spoke of the tastefulness of the alterations, which were called an improvement to the property.

No public comment.

VOTE: Mr. Joyce made a motion to find the property historically significant in terms of its post-war construction style in context of neighborhood. Mr. Meche seconded the motion. Roll Call: Joyce, Tyler-Lewis, Meche, Martinez, Spang (no) were in favor and the motion carried.

VOTE: Mr. Joyce made a motion to find the building not preferably preserved and to support the removal of existing roof in order to construct second story as generally shown in plans. Mr. Martinez seconded the motion. Roll Call: Joyce, Tyler-Lewis, Meche, Martinez, Spang were in favor and the motion carried.

Other Business

Broad Street Streetscape Improvements

Ms. Kelleher presented comment letter on proposed changes to Broad Street. All new striping for entire length of street has been proposed; Mr. Martinez clarified that flex posts are being proposed. The striping is a result of neighborhood concerns about vehicles speeding on Broad Street. Mr. Meche clarified that a complete street scheme is not being proposed, which Ms. Kelleher confirmed. Based on images shown, board members felt that the new striping appeared to make the street "ahistoric" [sic] in appearance. Mr. Martinez questioned jurisdiction on roadway improvements/alterations. Chair Spang noted that the Commission does not have jurisdiction but could provide input in an advisory capacity. Ms. Tyler-Lewis preferred to see a more aesthetic-minded solution, though acknowledged seriousness of traffic issues. Chair Spang questioned if the striping was intended to narrow lanes in order to slow vehicles. Other than the flex posts at intersection of Pickering St, only paint featured as an alteration. Ms. Kelleher stated intent to speak with Traffic & Parking for further information based on initial drawings/plans. Ms. Kelleher advocated that SHC write a letter to the planners based on initial drawings/plans. Given the one-page length of proposed plan, the plan was judged to be in an early stage of conception.

Prospective Return to In-Person

Ms. Kelleher noted that State rule permitting online meetings is set to expire on March 30, 2023, which would result in return to in-person meetings. Mr. Martinez clarified that the shift would be to hybrid meetings, allowing online and in-person participation.

Pioneer Village

Ms. Tyler-Lewis expressed desire to set up a site visit of Pioneer Village to walk the interior, which Mr. Martinez and Mr. Joyce also were interested in. Ms. Tyler-Lewis expressed curiosity as to any known or accessible archival records of Harlan Kelsey's landscape architecture work for the site. Ms. Kelleher stated that no archival documentation is known to exist.

Adjournment

VOTE: Mr. Joyce motioned to adjourn. Mr. Martinez seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion so carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:58PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Dan Graham, Historical Commission Clerk