

SALEM HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MINUTES
December 16, 2015

A meeting of the Salem Historical Commission was held on Wednesday, December 16, 2015 at 7:00 pm at 120 Washington Street, Salem, MA. Present were Jessica Herbert (Chair), David Hart, Reed Cutting, Susan Keenan and Jane Turiel.

370 Essex Street

The Salem Public Library submitted an application for a Certificate of Non-applicability to undertake brownstone and brickwork repair/replacement, clean, sealing and paint.

Nancy Tracey of Salem Public Library and architect Bob Farley were present.

Documents & Exhibits

- Application: 12/10/15
- Photographs
- Exterior Repairs Specification: 1/20/16

Mr. Hart stated that the application was submitted for non-applicability. He questioned if it is non-applicable because it is a change of material. He noted that brownstone is a material that is subject to deterioration over the years and is rather difficult to repair. He stated that his first choice is to replace. He stated that he wants to understand what is occurring.

Mr. Farley stated that they are replacing badly damaged stone on the side elevation belt course and some on the front. Three stones will be replaced with new stone. He stated that one piece has a short crack, so it will be pinned with stainless steel pins and grouted, with cracks to be filled with epoxy resin. He is confident it will work because the rest of the stone is pretty sound. He stated that other fine cracks will be sealed with polyurethane sealant and dusted with stone dust that is ground from the stones being removed. Larger cracks will be injected with a syringe. He noted that some on the wing is not brownstone; it was done in 1911 with precast concrete. He noted that you cannot tell it is not brownstone; it is in excellent condition and has retained the color.

Mr. Hart asked if they will be using any jahn or mortar.

Mr. Farley replied in the negative.

Mr. Farley stated that they will be repainting some wood on the front of the building (mullion over entrance) in textured paint to look like stone.

Mr. Hart asked if the repointing on the front elevation will be colored mortar.

Mr. Farley stated that it is hard to say because it is very fine joints. It may have been sand lime mortar which is white and he would not recommend using. They will experiment a little before starting the repointing. He hopes to get a mason that is sensitive to it.

Mr. Hart stated that really hard mortar is not preferred on a building of this type.

VOTE : Mr. Hart made a motion to approve the application as presented. Ms. Turiel seconded the motion; all were in favor and the motion so carried.

55 Warren Street

Richard Jones and Naomi Cottrell submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the use of granite in lieu of brick for stair and cheek wall material at the front stoop and for the stair at the sidewalk edge, elimination of the vestibule and trellis structure additions, reduction of the size of the front stoop to be consistent with the original construction of the house, adding a full light painted wood storm door with glass/screens at the front door.

Naomi Cottrell was present.

Documents & Exhibits

- Application: 12/01/15
- Photographs
- Drawings
- Upstate Door catalog cut

Ms. Cottrell stated that she is a landscape architect and her husband is an architect. They have had major failure in the stairs leading up to house from the sidewalk to the landing. The existing vestibule is poorly functioning and does not shut. They want to remove it. She stated that when vestibule was installed, it was built over the existing stairs and extended beyond. They want to bring the cheek walls back to the original size and to have a 3 foot landing at the top. They will repoint the foundation. The house was built in 1925, after the original house was burnt in a fire. The foundation may be original to the previous house. They want granite rather than brick cheek walls. The columns will remain. They will remove the lattice. They are removing the brick out completely and will be matching the foundation.

Ms. Herbert stated that since there is a granite foundation, it makes perfect sense.

Mr. Hart noted that the existing wood door and sidelights will remain.

Ms. Cottrell stated that there will be a new storm door. The proposed cheek wall is to replicate what is likely Rockport granite, sourced to match existing foundation. The solid risers will be Swenson granite.

Ms. Herbert stated that brick steps are typical of the 1920s, but are bad idea. She did not feel a need to replicate a bad idea. She stated that she felt granite will look cohesive.

Ms. Keenan was in agreement.

Ms. Cottrell stated that the brick on this house looks like an add on.

Ms. Herbert stated that brick always looks wrong next to granite.

VOTE: Mr. Hart made a motion to approve the application as presented. Mr. Cutting seconded the motion; all were in favor and the motion so carried.

320 Lafayette Street – Section 106 Review

Empire Telecom requested comments on potential effects on historic properties for a proposed telecommunications facility at 320 Lafayette Street.

Documents & Exhibits

- Letter from Empire Telecom received 12/4/15
- Maps
- Drawings: 11/18/15

Ms. Guy noted that no renderings or photos of existing conditions were submitted and suggested a letter be sent requesting them.

Ms. Herbert stated that the letter should also ask for an inventory of all the units up there, including the supplier and if they working or obsolete.

VOTE: Mr. Hart made a motion to request that the proponent submit photos of existing conditions and renderings showing the visibility and design of the proposed facility, including existing facilities on the site along with an inventory of all units, their supplier and if they are working or obsolete. Ms. Turiel seconded the motion; all were in favor, and the motion so carried.

Other Business

Ms. Guy provided a draft letter for Ms. Herbert's signature in continued support of North Shore Community Development Coalition's request for MA Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits for 8 properties located in the Point Neighborhood. She stated that it is the same letter provided in the past to MHC, but with the dates changed.

Ms. Guy stated that she could not see anything in recent minutes that the minutes had been approved for 10/7/15, 10/21/15, 11/4/15, 11/18/15 and 12/2/15.

VOTE: Mr. Cutting made a motion to approve the minutes of 10/7/15, 10/21/15, 11/4/15, 11/18/15 and 12/2/15. Mr. Hart seconded the motion; all were in favor and the motion so carried.

Mr. Hart stated that the PEM is putting on an addition which will impact the garden. She asked if anything has been heard from MHC.

Ms. Guy replied in the negative.

Ms. Herbert stated that the Ward 2 Social Club building has been sold and she has volunteered to assist with the design. She noted that HSI wrote a letter opposing the new buildings due to size and that the neighbors want to keep the existing building. She is planning to arrange a site visit. The developer will be coming before the SHC for demolition delay. She noted that the Commission is in a position to make some suggestions about what is built. She stated that she has an interest in the project because the SHC gave a demolition delay waiver for the Planters Street project for which was built five little vinyl sided homes. She hopes to influence the new project in order to give incentive to other owners over time to not have vinyl. She noted that the project was going before the ZBA tonight, but that she encouraged them to wait. She hopes to get HSI on board.

Ms. Keenan noted that the building is flooded and smells like mold.

Ms. Herbert stated that the Planters Street project is a not very interesting design, which could influence others to continue in that direction. This is an opportunity to change that direction.

VOTE: There being no further business, Mr. Hart made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Cutting seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the motion so carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane A. Guy
Assistant Community Development Director