

SALEM HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MINUTES
November 4, 2020

A meeting of the Salem Historical Commission was held on Wednesday, November 4, 2020 at 6:00 pm **Zoom Virtual Meeting**. Present were: Reed Cutting, Rebecca English, Vijay Joyce, Milo Martinez, Mark Meche, Stacey Norkun, Erin Schaeffer, and Larry Spang (Chair). Not present: Mark Pattison

123 Federal Street– continuation

Lindholm Family Trust submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for fence alterations (after the fact)

Documents & Exhibits

- Application: 10/7/20
- Photographs

Owners Marisa Lindholm and Einer (Lindy) Lindholm were present

Ms. Lindholm described the fence constructed without Commission approval in order to. She stated that the previous fence had deteriorated and needed to be replaced and that she needed to provide enclosure for her rear yard.

The Commission viewed images of the new fence and the previous fence.

Mr. Joyce asked if any pieces of the previous fence were still on site. Mr. Lindholm stated no, the previous fence was demolished and removed.

Ms. Lindholm noted that the previous fence had been installed by a previous owner and was not original.

Mr. Cutting asked when the new fence was installed. Ms. Lindholm stated in September. Mr. Lindholm stated that they did not know that fences came under the Commission's guidelines.

Mr. Cutting asked for fence height. Ms. Lindholm replied that fence is 6 feet tall to match rear property fence. Mr. Joyce asked if fence matched on both sides. Ms. Lindholm replied yes.

Mr. Joyce expressed his opinion that the existing fence style was not inappropriate for the neighborhood. Ms. Norkun agreed stating that the new fence looked more primitive than Victorian. She noted the scallop on the fence gate and the exposed horizontal rails.

Mr. Spang asked if the gate opens. Ms. Lindholm replied yes. Mr. Spang asked if the fence location was selected because of its position between two windows and Ms. Lindholm replied yes.

Ms. Norkun stated that she would prefer a gate with a straight top instead of the present scallop/curved gate top. She noted that some large brick houses in the district have scalloped gates, but they were different than this house. Mr. Spang agreed noting that the scallop is usually convex / inflected. Ms. English noted that a convex / inflected scallop would give more symmetry. Ms. Norkun suggested the fence gate at 380 Essex Street as an applicable example, but Mr. Martinez noted that the fence at this property was more ornate.

Mr. Spang asked why a second smaller gate was added next to the large gate and if it would be a pedestrian gate accessed by a pathway. Ms. Lindholm replied yes, pavers would be added. Tenants of the rear carriage house would then park in a gravel area in front of the fence.

Mr. Pattison asked for the width of the gates. Ms. Lindholm replied that the large gate was 10 feet wide. Mr. Pattison noted that the gates and fence structure didn't appear plum or level and the posts looked very spindly. He asked who built the fence and Ms. Lindholm replied TD Fence.

Mr. Spang asked for public comment:

Peter Atkinson, 362 Essex Street, noted that the applicant's new fence runs along his property. He had a 15-year-old fence on his property that was removed by the applicant's fence company without his permission. The applicant's new fence was also attached to his house without permission. The fence now runs behind his house on his property where no fence was before, and he has posted as easement notice. He also noted that the fence painting was also an issue.

Ron Hartfelder, 10 Monroe Street, stated that he had an unfinished open picket fence 4 feet tall along his property that was removed. He reached out to the Historical Commission staff about the situation and told the Lindholms that they need Commission approval for a new fence. He stated that the new fence was not level and the fence design did not meet the historic district design guidelines.

Joyce Kenney expressed her agreement that the fence is not within the guidelines.

Peter Copelas, who owns 6 Monroe Street and lives at 40 Warrant Street, stated that he received no communication from the Lindholms about the removal of fencing or installation of new fencing. He stated that the Lindholms should have sought correct approvals. He expressed his opinion that the new fence was not as attractive as the previous fence and the quality of the new fence appears substandard.

Mr. Spang recommended the Commission conduct a site visit to view the new fence. Mr. Cutting agreed, noting his concern that the new fence appears to be a design that would not have been approved by the Commission. Mr. Martinez also expressed his concern with the new fence design, noting that the previous fence was more appropriate.

The Commission agreed to conduct a site visit on November 14th at 9 am and staff would coordinate with Ms. Lindholm.

Mary Hartfelder, 10 Monroe Street, noted that she has photos of previous fence that she would email to Commission staff.

VOTE: Ms. Norkun made a motion to continue to the November 18th meeting. Mr. Joyce seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion so carried.

10 Hathorne Street- continuation

Andrew Terrat submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace windows ...

Documents & Exhibits

- Application: 10/7/20
- Photographs
- Presentation Plans by Terrat Designs dated 10/21/20
- Marvin Ultimate window quote dated 10/21/20

Andrew Terrat was present.

Mr. Martinez discussed the site visit to the property conducted by himself and Commissioners Norkun, Meche and Joyce. He noted that all windows except for one have already been removed by the contractor. He also noted that it appeared from the one remaining window that the removed windows would not have been salvageable. Commissioners Martinez, Norkun, Joyce, and Meche agreed that the restoration work completed to date was excellent.

Ms. Norkun expressed her disappointment to see the windows in the dumpster but noted that the decorative windows will be retained. She expressed her support of the proposal stating that the new windows will give the property a more cohesive feel.

Mr. Meche asked about the proposal for skylights. Mr. Tenet replied that they will be located on the garage and would not be visible from a public way. He also noted that the garage doors will be rebuilt in kind.

Mr. Spang asked if the windows on the rear ell would be different. Mr. Terrat replied that they would be Anderson windows as shown in red on the plans. These windows would not be visible from the street.

Ms. Norkun asked if the trim and sills will match existing. Mr. Terrat replied that there will be no changes to exterior window casing & sills.

Mr. Joyce asked if window #26 would be 1/1 or 2/2 like the rest of the windows. Mr. Tenet replied that window #26 would be 2/2. Windows 23, 24 and 25 would be transom windows with vertical muntins but no horizontal. All would be painted to match existing colors.

There was no public comment.

VOTE: Ms. Norkun made a motion to approve Marvin Ultimate windows for windows shown in green on plan with the condition that existing window casing and sills will be preserved. Mr. Joyce seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion so carried.

125 Derby Street

Christian Haselgrove submitted an application on behalf of the condominium association to replace an existing fence

Documents & Exhibits

- Application: 10/12/20
- Photographs

Christian Haselgrove was present on behalf of the condominium association.

Mr. Haselgrove noted that the current fence is deteriorated and to replace it in-kind would be custom work and expensive. The new fence would be designed to match the existing scalloped fence at the rear of the property. The new fence would be stained and not painted.

The Commission debated paint vs stain. Ms. Norkun stated that stain would make the wood grain more noticeable.

Mr. Joyce expressed concern that the scalloped fence is not as appropriate for Federal/Georgian style house but did question whether it would be beneficial to have both fences match. Mr. Haselgrove expressed his opinion that both fences should match.

Mr. Joyce noted that the fence on Derby Street was once different. Historic photos show it more grand than the utilitarian fence located at the rear yard. He asked Mr. Haselgrove if he would you be open to a different fence design. Mr. Haselgrove responded yes but the reiterated that cost is a concern. Mr. Joyce shared the Frank Cousins photo of the property.

Mr. Pattison asked how a stock fence would fit in the area, noting that a stock fence would still require a custom installation.

The Commission looked at Google Street View images of the front and rear fence at the property.

Mr. Spang agreed that the front fence doesn't have to match the fence at the rear, noting that it should be more formalized in keeping with style of house.

Ms. English noted that there are 3 fences around this property.

Ms. Norkun expressed her concern with setting a precedent of scalloped fencing, especially on a property's main street façade.

Mr. Joyce noted that the PEM Pierce Nichols House property has a scalloped fence, but it is more delicate with pierced spindles. He suggested retaining the same size box posts at corner and gate. Ms. Norkun suggested that a bigger post could be easily sourced. She suggested a 6x6" post but it would be custom.

Mr. Spang suggested a design with a straight run of fence pickets with chambered posts behind.

Mr. Pattison agreed noting that a straight run of fence ending at the house would connect better to the house than a large post due to the decorative building quoins.

The Commission agreed to have Commissioner Pattison work with the applicant and Commissioner Joyce to provide examples of applicable fencing designs.

VOTE: Ms. Norkun made a motion to continue. Ms. English seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion so carried.

Request for Comment - 78 Bayview Avenue building renovation

Julia Mooradian from Seger Architects was present on behalf of the building owners.

Ms. Mooradian presented revised drawings that incorporated previous SHC comments. The original porch has been retained and will be 4' deep instead of 5' deep. New double doors would be added for the entrance and the original chamfered rear building corners will be preserved. At the 3rd floor, the dormers have been pushed back to allow the building gable to be more pronounced.

Ms. Schaeffer expressed her appreciation for the owners' revisions to address SHC comments, including retention of the porch and changes to the dormers.

Public Comment:

Susan St. Pierre, 74 Bayview Ave, expressed her concern about the proposal, noting that the existing building is already larger than surrounding houses. She is concerned about the rear of property, which looks like a 3-decker. She is also concerned about demolition impact on adjoining properties.

Alan Hanscom expressed concern about total demolition and the loss of the historic structure.

Ms. St. Pierre also expressed her concern about demolition, which only allows greater floor to ceiling heights. This is a trend of teardowns and building larger houses that are out of character with the Willows neighborhood.

Mr. Joyce expressed his appreciation that the owners will retain the front porch.

Mr. Spang agreed, noting that revisions to the design will result in a building façade that looks very similar to the building's existing appearance.

Mr. Meche asked whether it was appropriate to recreate historic details.

Ms. Norkun expressed concern about the lack of a chimney on the house as chimneys are a visible feature on historic houses.

Ms. Schaeffer expressed her preference for preservation over recreation.

Mr. Spang noted the renovation of 12 Mall Street as an example of how a building can be saved and renovated successfully instead of demolished. He also suggested that the proposed 4' deep porch would not be useable and recommended it be enlarged.

Ms. Shaeffer recommended that the Commission make statement that the proposal constitutes a demolition which would require review under the demolition delay regulations.

Mr. Martinez recommended discussing the environmental impacts of demolition and that it is more efficient to rehabilitate than recreate.

The Commission agreed that a letter be sent to the 2BA stating that the demolition delay regulations should be followed if the building is going demolished. They also asked that a request be sent to the City Solicitor for a determination on whether this project constitutes a demolition.

VOTE: Mr. Joyce made a motion to request a determination from the City Solicitor on the question of demolition. Ms. Norkun seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion so carried.

Presentation on Salem Willows landscape restoration project

Brittany Dolan, from the Department of Planning and Community Development, Jason Bobrowski from Hatch Engineering and landscape architectural historian Pamela Hartford were present to discuss the Willows landscape restoration project.

Ms. Hartford presented information on the history of the site, noting that the foundation and footing found on the hill might be part of carousel that once stood on the site. Historically, the hill had nothing on the site and the plans are to recreate a "woodland" contact appearance.

Mr. Bobrowski presented plans to restore hill and redesign parking area. The area was previously a “coastal forest wetland” area.

Mr. Meche asked if there was a target number for parking capacity. Mr. Bobrowski responded that there was no specific number, they are more focused on restoring the hill, which would result in a lower number of parking spaces than what is currently accommodated on the site.

Mr. Meche asked if they could reduce the drive aisles on Fort Avenue. Mr. Spang suggested eliminating second row of parking at hill. He also asked if there will be light fixtures. Mr. Bobrowski responded no. Mr. Spang recommended incorporating lights.

Mr. Spang asked if crosswalks will be raised. Mr. Bobrowski responded that while raised crosswalks would be a good idea, there was a concern about drainage. Mr. Spang clarified that he meant crosswalks at new curb cuts and not within the parking area.

Mr. Spang recommended that the plans show benches and trash barrels. Mr. Bobrowski responded that they are still in active dialogue with the City on furnishings and can provide final details later.

Mr. Cutting left the meeting.

Mr. Spang suggested that plastic memorial benches are not appropriate for an historic landscape.

Ms. Norkun asked if it was possible to shift parking to area between tennis and basketball court. Mr. Bobrowski responded that there is an issue with bedrock and that the City is interested in making this area an active recreation zone.

Mr. Spang suggested that the City consider example of gravel/paving material to be used in parking spaces

Mr. Meche left the meeting.

Other Business

122 Derby Street

Ms. Kelleher presented a request to extend two previously issued certificates for 122 Derby Street that had passed the one-year expiration date.

VOTE: Ms. Norkun made a motion to extend two Certificates of Appropriateness for 122 Derby Street previously issued in 2019. Ms. English seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion so carried.

165 Federal Street

The owner requested to alter her plans for placement of the mini-split condenser due to building code concerns. The Commission agreed that the owner should attend the next meeting to discuss this change further.

Friends of the Salem Common

Ms. Kelleher reported that the Friends of the Salem Common had requested a representative from the Historical Commission be engaged with their group. The Commission questioned whether this was a conflict of interest and asked Ms. Kelleher to explore their concern with the City Solicitor.

Meeting Minutes

No minutes to review.

VOTE: Ms. Norkun made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Joyce seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion so carried.

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Kelleher
Community Development Planner