



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

MINUTES

Tuesday, September 20, 2011 at 6:40 p.m.
Third Floor Conference Room
Somerville City Hall

Staff Present: Kristi Chase and Brandon Wilson.

Members Present: Kevin Allen, Natasha Burger**, Dick Bauer, Sarah Degutis**, Tom DeYoung*, Eric Parkes, Kelly Speakman and Todd Zinn*. Eric Parkes and Sarah Degutis arrived at 6:55 PM, and arrived Natasha Burger** at 7:00 PM.

Members Absent: Alan Bingham*, DJ Chagnon*, Ryan Falvey, Abby Freedman, Derick Snare*, and Brad Stearns*

*Alternates

**Non-voting Alternates

Others present: Ted Harvie, Albert Rex

The meeting was called to Order at 6:50 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Commission voted unanimously (4-0-3 (Kevin Allen, Dick Bauer, Kelly Speakman with Sarah Degutis** not voting)) to approve the August 2011 Minutes as emended.*

DELIBERATION OF HPC CASES

The Somerville Historic Preservation Commission will hold public hearings on the following applications, all in accordance with the Historic Districts Act, Chapter 40C of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended, and the City of Somerville Ordinance (Sections 7-16 – 7-28):



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HPC 11.62 – 396-398 Broadway, 1874 Second Empire Double Houses (continued)

6/30/11

Applicant: James W. Rogers, Contractor for 396-398 Broadway Condominium Association, Owners

The Applicant seeks a **Certificate of Appropriate (C/A)** and a **Certificate of Non-Applicability (C/NA)** for the following:

1. Remove existing 2/2 double-hung window on 3rd floor east side rear dormer (C/A); and
2. Install Pella™ Pro-line insulated 2/2 double-hung window within rough opening (C/A).

A **Certificate of Non-Applicability** was previously issued on 8/24/11 to:

1. Remove approximately 100 SF of roofing system;
2. Repair sheathing as necessary;
3. Remove and replace in-kind any abutting rotted or damaged wood behind the dormer consoles;
4. Install ice and water shield as necessary;
5. Install EPDM and flashing where necessary including bent metal and step flashing around the dormer window;
6. Re-install decorative consoles with new flashing;
7. Install 3-tab shingles to match existing where necessary; and
8. Replace any missing or damaged siding.

Ted Harvie, president of the Condominium Association presented. The meeting continued until August 25, 2011 was canceled due to the inability to both safely access the window and to arrange a duly noticed subsequent meeting outside of the regular scheduled HPC meeting. Pictures showing the condition of the window were sent to the Commission on September 9, 2011. The window to be replaced is a non-reparable replacement window located on a dormer on the 3rd floor east side of the building toward the rear, visible obliquely from the street. The condo owners only want to get rid of the leaks and make the building weather-tight. While they have proposed the Pella® Pro-line series of windows, they are not wedded to them. They will follow the Commission's recommendation on the best window for the job. Storm windows would be retained on all the windows at this time. They have no plans to remove them.

Staff Recommendations were read.

No Public Comment was received.

Documents: City of Somerville Ordinance sections 7.16 – 7.27, Property Form B, HPC Design Guidelines, contract proposal from the roofer, window specifications from Pella, photographs of the building and neighboring buildings.

Discussion: Since this window would not match exactly the Brosco replacement windows on the 3rd floor, Kevin Allen wanted to sure that storm windows would be retained on all the windows until and unless that Condo Association requests an alternative approach to the windows. Eric Parkes notes that the Pro-line was the least historically appropriate of the Pella replacement windows and that the Architect series would be a better match. Kelly Speakman agreed.

Decision: The Commission **voted** unanimously (7-0) to:

1. Remove existing 2/2 double-hung Brosco® window on 3rd floor east side rear dormer (C/A); and
2. Install Pella™ Architect series insulated 2/2 double-hung window with no Low-E coating and muntins with a similar size and profile as the existing windows with a spacer between the panes to be set within the rough opening; and with storm windows to match the existing.

The proposed window meets the HPC Guidelines in that there will be no loss of historic fabric and the window openings will not be altered. The window casings and surrounds will be repaired or replaced in-kind. The storm windows are to be retained until there is a uniform approach to the repair and replacement of all the window so that the proposed alteration will minimally affect the historic character of the Cutler Downer Second Empire Double Houses on Winter Hill.

REVIEW AND COMMENT

None as of September 20, 2011.

DEMOLITION REVIEWS

9-MONTH REVIEW PERIOD

HPC 11.02 Demolition – 39-43 Elmwood Street, circa 1898 wood-frame house

2/15/11

Applicants: Charles Aggouras and Daniel DiPierro, GFC Development Inc

The house at 39 Elmwood was ‘preferably preserved’ because its history reflects the neighborhood from its earliest day as the home of the local baker and Italian grocer, to the home of French-Canadian immigrants whose names are inscribed on the Roll of Honor, and who lost their lives as soldiers in World War II. Architecturally, the house fits in well with the residential streetscape to the north and south.

There are no further proposed changes to the original house.

DETERMINATION OF PREFERABLY PRESERVED

None this month.

DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Commission may make a preliminary determination on whether any buildings are “significant”. Public testimony followed by discussion and a vote by the Commission.

None as of September 20, 2011.

OTHER ACTION ITEMS

- **Green Line Extension Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)** (Kristi Chase)
 - Review and discussion of proposed MOA between Federal Transit Authority, Massachusetts Department of Transportation, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority & Massachusetts Historical Commission, with other invited signatories and the concurrence of the Boston Landmarks Commission, the Cambridge Historical Commission, the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission and the Medford Historic Commission
 - Agreement to concur with the MOA.

***Kristi Chase** presented. As part of the mitigation for adverse effects of the Green Line Extension an MOA is being drafted.*

***No Public Comment** was received.*

***Documents:** Draft MOA noted above, MHC Area Forms SMV.F, SMV.K, SMV.M, Building Form for 662-664 Boston Avenue*

***Discussion:** It was noted that the Somerville Automobile Company in Ball Square is technically on the Somerville/Medford line. The Powder House/Winter Hill Industrial Area Historic District was questioned until the location was understood. More locally, that area is either the Patch*

(Clyde/Murdock) on one side of the Lowell Street Bridge, and the Somerville Junction area on the other. Given that three buildings area have been demolished of the five noted on the area Form, an NR evaluation survey of the reasonably intact 1850's brick-workers housing in the Patch or of the 1870's - 1890's workers housing in the Hinckley-Magoun neighborhood immediately to the north would be of more use to the Commission than an updated SMV.F Area Form. These neighborhoods of 19th century workers housing are endangered by the proximity of the new Lowell Street Station and are fairly intact as to form, massing, and the general relationship to each other, and could merit an NR designation as a group although not individually.

Decision: *The Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to concur with the proposed MOA once it is finalized.*

- **Proposed Enlargement of Union Square LHD - Preliminary Report** (Brandon Wilson & Kristi Chase)
 - Final review and discussion of Report
 - Acceptance of Report for submission to MHC and Somerville Planning Board

Brandon Wilson *presented. She gave a run through of the properties included in the report and next steps.*

No Public Comment *was received.*

Documents: *Preliminary Report.*

Discussion: *There was little discussion since the Preliminary Report had been previously reviewed for content, although Kevin Allen noted that he liked the 1960's grate on one of the buildings not going forward as it had been too altered for inclusion.*

Decision: *The Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to submit the report to the Planning Board and the MHC.*

- **Mystic Water Works at Capen Court Housing Project**
 - Presentation of project by MacRostie Historic Advisors LLC
 - Discussion of requested letter of support to State MHC for project

Albert Rex from MacRostie Historic Advisors *presented. He gave an overview of the Tax Credit process with especial emphasis on the Massachusetts Historical Commission State Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program. The plans at this point are at about 30% Design which gives them some ballpark numbers for the pro forma. The project team will require all the money it can get to rehabilitate the building and construct the additional new housing. The Massachusetts program was very competitive. He did not expect that the project would receive any funds on the first submission. The team was also pursuing the Low Income Tax Credits and dollars from DHCD.*

No Public Comment *was received.*

Documents: *Request for a letter of support, photographs of the building, Building Form, National Register Nomination, Massachusetts Historical Commission State Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program Application, and draft letter of support.*

Discussion: *Kevin Allen noted that the project was supportive of historic preservation and would not put the Commission out on a limb. There would be ample opportunity for further review of the project.*

Decision: *The Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to send the letter of support to the MHC with a few minor corrections.*

DEMOLITIONS AND CERTIFICATES OF NON-APPLICABILITY REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY STAFF

HPC 11.82 – 45 Vinal Avenue, Lizzie Wellington House circa 1875 8/23/11
 Applicant: Glynnis Doucette, Owner

The Applicant received a Certificate of Non-Applicability (C/NA) for the following:

1. Repair and replace in-kind damaged metal roofing on 4 dormers
2. Repair and replace in-kind ice-damaged gutters, siding, and trim

HPC 11.91 – 28 Beacon Street, Queen Anne brick rowhouse 9/9/11
 Applicant: Renaldo deCarvalho, Contractor for Pavel Mikes, Owner

The Applicant received a Certificate of Non-Applicability (C/NA) for the following:

1. Repair slate roof in-kind to match the original decorative pattern;
2. Replace and re-mortar loose bricks and fallen stone frieze with appropriate high-lime content mortar; and
3. Repair and replace in-kind rotted and missing wood brackets, gutters, and other wood materials as needed.

STAFF REVIEW AND COMMENTS AS PER REQUEST OF OTHER DIVISIONS

SECTION 106 REVIEWS

Storefront Improvement Program Reviews

HPC 11.83 – 15 Union Square – Mid-Nite Convenient circa 1845 house/store 8/30/11

Replacement of signage and awnings will have no “adverse effect.”

HPC 11.84 – 76 Broadway – Vinny’s Ristorante 8/30/11

Replacement of signage and awnings will have no “adverse effect.”

HPC 11.85 – 38 Union Square, the Hill Building – J.J. Vaccaro, Inc. multiple storefronts 8/30/11

Replacement of signage will have no “adverse effect.”

HPC 11.90 – 92 Highland Avenue -- Bostonian Florist 9/6/11

Replacement of signage will have no “adverse effect.”

Housing Division Grant Program Reviews

HPC 11.86 – 181 Washington Street, Pope School, now Somerville Boys & Girls Club, 1956 8/30/11

No comments at this time due to insufficient information as to the significance of the building. Preliminary research is underway. The building was designed by Perley F. Gilbert Associates of Lowell, MA. It is very likely that the building was designed by Herbert Haskel Glassman, who was Partner-in-Charge of the architectural division of the firm in the late 1940s and later President of the firm until 1984. A website dedicated to him, <http://www.herbertglassman.com>, noted that he was responsible,

during his tenure, for the design of approx. 112 school buildings, 10 synagogues, and 4 hospitals throughout New England.

Planning Division Reviews

HPC 11.81 – 1323 Broadway 7/21/11

Applicant: Volunteers of America of Massachusetts, Inc.

The building permit records show that the building was constructed in 1959 for the Clarendon Hill Nursing Home on part of what had been the Veteran's Cemetery. The plans do not appear to make any changes beyond landscaping and the rearrangement of entry stairs and ADA ramps to the exterior of the building. These changes would not significantly alter the appearance of the building. There will be no negative impact on the abutting Veterans' Cemetery.

HPC 11.87 – 15 Union Square – Mid-Nite Convenient circa 1845 house/store 8/30/11

Applicant: Frank Golden, Owner

The proposed signage, awnings and storefront alterations are clearer and will make it possible to understand the historic nature of the buildings better. When using window decals to protect the interior service counter from the eyes of passers-by, care should be taken to minimize visual clutter by keeping them as simple as possible.

HPC 11.92 – 149-151 Washington Street – Empire Tattoo circa 1927 storefront 9/13/11

Applicant: Stephen Kroll and Central San Diego, LLC, Owner

While the proposed signage will not damage the striking brick and concrete façade, it does not relate to its design either. The current signs are set too low in the façade and should be mounted in the panels above and not set between the pilasters. There are probably decorative transom windows behind the current signs. Awnings would have protected the interior from the sun.

HPC 11.93 – 39 Adrian Street 9/13/11

Applicant: Kelly Liu, Owner

The proposed shed dormer will be located on the west side of the building to contain a stairway. The importantly essential original massing will be retained. The dormer style is one that is familiar although neither of the abutting properties has a similar dormer. The design of the proposed dormer does not appear to be thoroughly thought out and the currently proposed fenestration is conceptual. Care should be taken to ensure that the details that still currently exist on the house are carried over onto the new addition.

HPC 11.94 – 48 Newbury Street 9/14/11

Applicant: Grace Kessenich, Owner

Relocated front steps will lead to the side hall entry plan doorway and new mudroom which will have its own architectural character rather than being subsumed in the enclosed porch. A proposed new second floor door replacing a window will be centered on a new second floor porch. The proposed new fenestration will be more regular overall.

The proposed hip roofed dormer will be located on the north side of the building. The important fundamental massing will be retained and emphasized. The dormer style integrates the wing of the building making the addition part of the whole. The design of the proposed dormer is in keeping with the original structure. Alterations to the openings on the façade and the enclosed front porch will bring the building back to a more traditional appearance with a different range of modern interpretations.

Overall the proposed alterations will be an improvement on this much changed older building and will be in harmony with the prevailing character of the neighborhood.

PROJECT AND OTHER BUSINESS UPDATES

Project Updates

- **HPC Guidelines Revisions** (Abby Freedman with Amie Schaeffer)
 - Met on Wednesday 9-7-11
 - Next meeting of Subcommittee: Thursday 10-4-11 at 7-9 pm
 - Update on progress

- **City-wide LHD Expansion Project** (Brandon Wilson with Amie Schaeffer)
 - All of the BOA adopted properties in Group C, D, and remaining in Group A (Flint St. LHD) recorded by Registry of Deeds and recently submitted to the MHC and the Somerville City Clerk
 - Final Report on Group E submitted 7-14-11 to the BOA
 - BOA has referred the submission to Legislative Matters - awaiting Interim Chair to make it an agenda item
 - Proposed Hinckley-Magoun LHD properties PowerPoint presentation - in progress
 - Neighborhood meeting with above LHD owners - not scheduled yet
 - Group F Narrative being revised and packets for owners being prepared to mail in early fall.

- **2011 Surveying Projects** (Brandon Wilson & Kristi Chase with Amie Schaeffer)
 - Survey work on St. Catherine’s Church with associated properties, and other Summer Street properties - in progress
 - RFP for 2011 Broadway & Other CDBG Eligible Properties Survey - in progress
 - RFP for Union Square NRD Nomination Form - in progress
 - RFP for NR Eligibility Opinion for Prospect Hill Park - in progress
 - Properzi Way LHD Preliminary Report - to be drafted for Commission approval
 - American Tube Works LHD Preliminary Report - to be drafted for Commission approval

- **Milk Row Cemetery Preservation Project – Outstanding Work** (Brandon Wilson)
 - Heritage Tree Treatment awaiting Purchasing Dept. approval and new FY funding
 - Site signage on hold until funding identified
 - Fence Painting Touch-ups by Cassidy Fencing Co. – awaiting Cassidy site inspection
 - Bike Racks on Somerville Ave. – awaiting new shipment to City
 - Relocation, new signage & improvement of Market Basket bike racks – ph 1 completed
 - Additional restoration & repair work on tombs and markers subject to funding availability
 - Additional public access to be sponsored in October (see Events below)

- **Preservation Awards Program** (Brandon Wilson)
 - Request to profile program as “Success Story” for 2011 Comprehensive Plan - completed

- **Historic Afghan Re-design and Re-ordering** (Brandon Wilson with Mayor’s Office)
 - Arts Council still working on re-design

- **Preservation Newsletters** (Brandon Wilson with Amie Schaeffer)

- **SHPC Website Enhancements** (Brandon Wilson with Communications Office)
 - Check out new additions to both of our websites via <http://www.ci.somerville.ma.us/departments/historic-preservation-commission> and <http://www.ci.somerville.ma.us/departments/ospcd/historic-preservation>
 - Also note [Somerville Journal](#) has added a “History” link http://www.wickedlocal.com/somerville/town_info/history to their Wicked Local online site which bundles lots of historic news in one place very helpfully; let them know this is appreciated.

Other Business

- **Somerville Museum ADA Access, Repairs and Restoration Work** (Brandon Wilson)
 - Determination of how best to address all issues with very limited funds in progress
- **Conflict of Interest and Open Meeting Laws** (Brandon Wilson)
 - Reminder to return Acknowledgement and Certification forms to Brandon ASAP
- **Commission Appointments & Re-Appointments** (Brandon Wilson)
 - Proposed to Mayor: Three re-appointments (DeYoung, Parkes, Snare) & one new appointment (George Born) – in progress
- **Photo Documentation of East Somerville via Arts Council LCC Grant**
 - Photos taken & reviewed, but only of streetscapes & infrastructure & none of house interiors, as planned; new effort to reach out ES owners being explored by photographer;
 - Willing owners with some original interior house features still intact still needed
- **Somerville: Back in the Day** (SCATV Oral History Project with Kristi Chase as Host)
 - <http://somervillebackintheday.blogspot.com/2011/08/talking-with-jean-parker.html>
- **CLG Reports** (Kristi Chase with Brandon Wilson)
 - 2011 report in progress
- **On-going and Up-coming Events** (Brandon Wilson)
 - This Thurs. September 15th: Historic Somerville Talk re "Somerville (Charlestown Beyond the Neck) and the Siege of Boston" (April 1775 to March 1776) by COL. Lawrence Willwerth, Quartermaster of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Massachusetts; at the Somerville Museum at One Westwood Road from 7:30-8:30pm. To be followed by Historic Somerville meeting. More info via www.historicsomerville.org
 - This Sunday, Sept. 18th: 2011 ArtsUnion fall walking tour “Upcoming Hotspots: Historic Union Square West” –2-4:30pm led by Ed Gordon, with rain date of Sun. Sept. 25th, at same time. Opportunity for two longer stops and refreshments at the end at India Palace. Join us!
 - “Ghosts of Somerville” with opportunity for public access to explore and learn about the Milk Row Cemetery will be part of City’s “SomerStreets/Monster Mash Festival” on Sun. afternoon, Oct. 23rd. Exact format and timing to be determined.
- **New Business**

The Meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM

Upcoming Meeting Schedule for 2011: October 18, November 15, and December 20.

All of the applications summarized above are available for public inspection at the Commission’s Office on the third floor of City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, on Mon. -Wed. 9:00 am - 4:30 pm; Thurs. 9:00 am - 7:30 pm; and Fri. 9:00 am - 12:30 pm. Since cases may be continued to a later date(s), please check the agenda on the City’s website, or call before attending (tel.: (617) 625-6600 x. 2525). Continued cases will not be re-advertised. Interested persons may provide comments to the Historic Preservation Commission at the hearing, by fax to 617-625-0722, by e-mail to kchase@somervillema.gov, or by mail to the Historic Preservation Commission, City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA 02143.