

Town of Hamilton
Historic District Commission
July 27, 2015
7:00 PM
Town Hall

The meeting was convened at 7:00 PM with the following Historic District Commission members present: Ed Howard, Elizabeth Wheaton, Jack Hauck, Stefanie Serafini, and Tom Catalano (chair). Rachel Meketon (Community Projects Coordinator), Jeffrey Allsopp (applicant), Gatey Kagan (applicant) and other neighbors were also present.

Approve Minutes from the 6/29 Meeting and 7/16 Site Walk

Ed motioned to accept the minutes as presented. Jack seconded. All voted in favor.

Certificate of Appropriateness – Gatey Kagan, 588 Bay Road

Tyler Fahey, the project manager, explained the project: replacement of the siding and roof on the guest house. He shared samples of the cement board siding and said that their intention was to use a smooth board to replicate cedar. He explained that the cement lasts longer than cedar and requires less maintenance. Tom and Tyler discussed the installation of the cement board. Tom said that the reveal would be 1/4 inch, which is 50% thinner than the 3/8 inch reveal with cedar. This affects the shadows and the overall look of the building.

Gatey mentioned that another building near the historic district on Bridge Street has cement siding. She also said that her building is not historical. It was built in the 1980's as a carriage house. Elizabeth expressed the importance of all of the buildings in the historic district being consistent in character and materials. Stefanie agreed. It is an issue of precedent. Tom noted that the district is small and the building occupies a central location.

Tom asked if finances were the main consideration in choosing cement rather than cedar. Gatey explained that the cedar has mildew, and the paint on it is peeling. They would rather replace the cedar with the cement than do frequent maintenance.

Tom suggested that the PVC window trim and corner boards be painted so that their color and sheen resembles wood. Tom asked if any of the clapboards are salvageable. Tyler replied that some are. Tom recommended that they remove the clapboards; replace those that are damaged; and reinstall them with air space behind them to maintain the same vapor pressure

on either side of the wood so that the wood and paint last longer. He suggested that Gatey and Tyler research that and other options to maintain the cedar and return to the HDC.

Stefanie motioned to continue the discussion when the Kagan's share the results of their research. Elizabeth seconded. All voted in favor.

Certificate of Appropriateness – Jeffrey Allsopp, 587 Bay Road

Jeffrey shared his takeaways from the previous meetings: the criticism of cement board, of the mass or bulk of the buildings, of the simplicity of the design, and of the large parking area, and the preference for the original lay-out of the buildings on the property. In his new proposal, Jeffrey attempted to address each of these. He decided to use cedar rather than cement board siding. He reduced the pitch of the building that will replace the barn to better replicate the original structure. The new proposal is for a building that is four feet lower. He enlarged the windows to create a more “Victorian” style like the post office building. He moved the barn-structure further into the property and reduced the parking lot by three spaces. And he moved the original shed closer to the post office, rather than into the grassy area (as originally proposed). The shed will serve to enclose the dumpsters. For landscaping, he is proposing a split rail fence along the property line with arborvitae.

Tom asked where the mechanical equipment would be located. Jeffrey responded that it would be on the east side of the building (facing away from the street). Jack confirmed with Jeffrey that the design for the workshop located at the back of the property would remain the same. Stefanie confirmed that the cobbler's cottage would still be demolished and removed.

Tom noted that the building still seems utilitarian and lacks charm. He recommended that Jeffrey incorporate a change in “plane” between the front and back portions of the barn-structure like a traditional agricultural building that would have been built in pieces. An additional way to mimic traditional buildings would be to use cedar clapboards on certain walls and cedar shingles on others.

Ed commented that the barn doors seemed too small. Elizabeth asked about the windows behind the barn doors. Jeffrey said that the barn doors would be kept open to reveal two windows on the first floor. There was discussion about what type of windows would look attractive and historical. The Commission concluded that they would prefer that the barn doors remain closed and have two small windows as is traditional for New England barns.

John Serafini, a neighbor, asked about the septic. Jeffrey replied that it would be a gentle slope in the yard. Janet Colette, another neighbor, commented that she liked the new design and lay-out. She asked Jeffrey what his timeline for construction would be; and he replied that if he received the necessary permits, he would construct the workshop immediately, at which point he could demolish the barn and begin to construct the new building.

Jack motioned to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness with the following contingencies:

- The eastern portion of the barn-structure will be set back at a minimum of eight inches from the western portion;
- The north and south gables of the front section of the new building will be covered with cedar shingles painted to match the cedar clapboard siding;
- And the barn doors will remain closed with small windows in them.

Ed Howard seconded. All voted in favor. Jeffrey must submit revised plans that include the contingencies listed above.

Applications for Certificates of Appropriateness

The Commission briefly reviewed the applications for certificates of appropriateness from Newton, Framingham, and Hingham. Rachel suggested that at a minimum they should digitize the application and include sections for the applicant's contact information and a list of submission materials. They could also give applicants the option of selecting whether it's a certificate of appropriateness, non-applicability, or hardship. Tom expressed his preference for the simple and well-designed Newton application. Tom asked the Commission to review the sample applications and send feedback to Rachel who will draft a new application for Hamilton.

List of Properties in the Historic District

The Commission reviewed the map of the historic district and the list of properties. The members noted that Hamilton Gardens is not in the district, but the historic district sign makes it seem as though it is.

Tom confirmed with Rachel that the Town Building Department has a copy of the map and the list of properties so that they can easily cross-reference building permit applications.

New Appointments to the Historic District Commission

Jack introduced George Connolly, the owner of Connolly's Pharmacy, who will be appointed to the Historic District Commission at the August 3rd Board of Selectmen's meeting. The Commission members welcomed George.

Jack motioned to support George Connolly's appointment to the Historic District Commission. Ed seconded. All voted in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.