

**WELLESLEY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
CALLED MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING
SEPTEMBER 3, 2019, 6:50 PM
NATURAL RESOURCES OFFICE – WELLESLEY TOWN HALL**

Members Present: Chair David Smith, Vice-Chair Lisa Abeles, Secretary Eric Cohen, Amy Griffin, Edwina McCarthy, Emily Maitin. **Absent:** Tom Paine.

Staff: No staff present

Others Present: Warren Borgen, Sarah Borgen, Chris Royer, Patrick McMahon

Call to Order: David Smith called the meeting to order at 6:50 pm.

Public Hearing HDC 19-04 - 29 Cottage Street - Certificate of Appropriateness, Continued. Mr. Smith invited the applicants for 29 Cottage Street to come before the Commission for the continuation of the Public Hearing from July 10, 2019.

All documents from the Commission meeting are on file in the Planning Department.

Chris Royer, the architect for the project, introduced his clients, homeowners Warren and Sarah Borgen. Mr. Royer gave an overview of the project since some commission members were not present at the previous hearing. He explained that the Borgens purchased the home last November for close to \$1,000,000. Mr. Royer stated that they loved the house and the neighborhood, but wanted to make a few changes with the home. He stated that their original proposal was to create a master bedroom addition on the back side on the second floor that would be large enough to accommodate a king sized bed with access from three (3) sides. He said that they also proposed to construct an attached two car garage so that the homeowners could access the home directly from the garage.

Mr. Royer stated that they received feedback on their proposal at the previous hearing and came better prepared with material specifications. He said that at the last hearing, the Commission preferred that the garage be detached or look more separated from the house by playing with the rooflines, and that they would like the garage to look smaller by changing the pitch or size of the garage. He stated that the applicants adjusted the drawings and resubmitted plans based on this feedback.

Mr. Royer described the new plan set to the Commission. He said that Sheet 1 shows views of the existing house. On Sheet 2, he stated that it shows a 3D model of the Northerly side of the home with top images of the existing massing of the house. He said that Drawing 2 on Sheet 2 shows the proposed addition where a golden toned second floor addition peeking out from behind the structure. On Sheet 3, he said that the existing Southerly side of the house is shown. He stated that Drawing 2 on Sheet 3 depicts the proposal that was submitted at the last hearing, and Drawing 3 shows the refinements that were made. Mr. Royer described those refinements. He said that they reduced the roof pitch to 10 on 12, which

reduced the height of the garage by two feet. He also said that they played with the roof pitches on the connecting portion of the proposed addition and added porch details to improve the sense of separation between the garage and the house. On Sheet 4, he said that the Site Plan can be seen. He stated that it was important to show the Site Plan to illustrate the limitations of keeping the garage detached and moving it further back on the site. Due to set back restraints, detaching the garage and moving it back on the property would result in a longer driveway with more paving and impervious surface, and would occupy usable space in the backyard. Mr. Royer stated that Sheet 5 is the same as the previous submittal. He stated that they did not change the size of the garage because it was already considerably small in size. He said that he typically does not design a garage smaller than 24 x 24 in order to accommodate most vehicles. This garage was designed at 22 x 24 feet, because of the side set back requirements. Mr. Smith asked if the garage was the same width of the house. Mr. Royer responded that the garage is the same width of the house. On Sheet 6, the second floor plans and master bedroom proposals can be seen. Mr. Royer stated that the master bedroom has not changed, however the Second Floor is smaller because of the lower pitch on the roof. He stated that the homeowners decided to have a space above the garage connected to the house for overflow play space. Additional plumbing will not be installed in this area.

Ms. Abeles stated that in order to have a better understanding of the design, that they need a plan with more than simple blocks. She stated that the drawings should be drawn to scale with elevations to better understand the design. Ms. Abeles expressed her concerns regarding having an attached garage. She said that having clear elevations on both sides of the property, and having a section looking both ways through the connector piece will help show a better understanding of the design. She stated that there should be a plan showing the connection through the mudroom looking back towards the street to help understand what is happening with the proposed bedroom addition. She said that she wants to understand how the connecting piece will be attached to the existing roof and the proposed garage roof. She stated that there should be a complete roof plan with the elevations.

Ms. Maitin stated that at the previous meeting the Commission discussed that there were issues with having an attached garage in the first instance. Ms. Abeles stated that on historic streets in the historic buildings, there are not attached garages. She said that only the newer structures have attached garages. She was understanding of the homeowners' hesitation with pushing back the garage since it will take up yard space. She said that she has hesitation with the house and garage being so close and cannot understand what is truly happening with the plans. She stated that they could make a compelling argument with drawings to scale, elevations, and a clear showing of each connection.

Ms. Griffin stated that the drawings fail to show how the new addition will relate to the existing home in terms of height and proportions. Ms. Abeles said that having a 3D model from the back showing what is proposed may help. Ms. Abeles also said to bring in samples of the materials.

Mr. Royer stated that there were no samples of a reasonable size that he could bring in. He presented a catalog and pointed to a wood door on the last page of the catalog. He said that he would like to propose to use a wood door and that this door's top section can be made taller.

Ms. Abeles said to bring in exact proportions. She said to bring in an actual window so that the Commission can see how they are proposing to trim it out. They need a clear understanding of where the

shutters are going to be installed, how they are going to be installed, etc. She said having a sample of the window will help and to please bring one in.

Ms. Maitin asked if the existing shutters are PVC. Mr. Royer responded that they are not PVC shutters. He said that currently they are wood shutters, but they are hard to maintain, so they were hoping to see if the Commission would accept high quality PVC as an alternative. Ms. Abeles said that it would help the Commission visualize the shutters if he brought in a painted sample. Mr. Cohen stated that he would not approve a PVC shutter. Ms. Maitin asked if there is wood on the existing front porch. Mr. Royer said yes.

Ms. Abeles said that if he can bring a sample of the rail and brush paint it, then the Commission might possibly be able to see if it is hard to tell that it's PVC. It was agreed that PVC is more expensive than wood, but it is also more durable, will not rot, and will hold paint longer. Wood rails often rot out. The Board discussed wood rails vs. PVC or high-quality PVC that, when painted, might be indistinguishable. Ms. Abeles said that there are certain PVC rails that, when painted, are hard to tell that the railing isn't wood. She also said that cheaper PVC rails exist and you would be able to see that it is not wood.

Ms. Maitin said to bring a close up of the existing rail and a PVC sample. She also asked what is being shown on the bottom of Sheet 3. Mr. Royer stated that it is showing an existing rear porch. He said it is a glassed in porch going into the mudroom. He said that the railing and windows are almost coplanar. Ms. Abeles stated that she wants a detailed drawing on a larger scale of how they are proposing to do that.

Ms. Maitin stated that at the last presentation, the area above the garage was not going to be used for habitable space. Mr. Royer replied that the homeowners decided to have an overflow space for a play area if they have children. It will be accessed through the mudroom area.

Ms. Abeles said that on Sheet 5, the plans show a stair rail hitting the window. She asked if this is under a windowsill. Mr. Royer said that the railing on the existing porch is three feet high. Ms. Abeles said that they should have design development drawings to scale, and that he should enlarge the plan so that it is easier to see.

Mr. Cohen asked if the garage isn't attached, how will they access the play space above the garage. Ms. Abeles gave an example from the **Morris property [47 Cottage Street]**. She said that their garage was constructed in the back of the home and has a play space in the garage. She said there are stairs in the garage that lead up to the play space.

Mr. Smith said that he is opposed to an attached garage because it would be out of character with the neighborhood. He pointed to other properties in the neighborhood stating that those garages are detached and pushed back. A detached and pushed back garage is more appropriate for the time period. The Board discussed alternatives and whether or not the members felt an attached garage was appropriate.

Ms. Abeles asked if they considered enlarging the existing garage. She gave an example of the Tobin house [45 Cottage Street], stating that they have a wrap around porch and enlarged their garage and that they no longer use it as a garage. Mr. Borgen stated that having a detached garage would not work. If the garage were pushed towards the back, they would waste more space. Ms. Abeles suggested enlarging the

existing garage to use as a living space, and not as a garage. Mr. Borgen stated that the attached garage will provide ease of access to the home.

Ms. Maitin asked if they considered a breezeway that has a roof over it. Mr. Royer asked if the HDC is questioning the connection between the garage and the home, or if they are questioning the massing of the garage. Mr. Cohen asked if they were discussing the massing or the attachment of the garage. Mr. Smith said that it is both. He said that the massing of the garage and that it is proposed to be attached compared to what is on the rest of the street gives him pause. He said that he would be more inclined to go with a structure that is living space instead of looking at two garage doors that are facing the street.

Ms. Abeles stated that a lot of people on the street do not park in their garage. She stated that most use it as a storage or living space, and park in the driveway instead. Ms. McCarthy stated that the drawings presented at the last hearing were looking straight at the house and gave an idea of the massing compared to the house. She said they would like to see this again with quarter-inch scale elevations.

Ms. Abeles stated that when you buy into the historic district, though there are different requirements to follow, you are getting something more. She stated that they are trying to preserve the historic nature of the street. They are trying to keep the street historic and not look like the rest of Wellesley. Mr. Cohen proposed several hypothetical situations. Mr. Smith suggested a one-car garage or even an oversized one-car garage. Ms. Griffin suggested that they utilize the deck space, connecting the garage to the rear of the house. Ms. Abeles explained that they are trying to work with homeowners, but need to come to compromises to not hurt the historic nature of the street. Mr. Cohen reinforced the concept of attaching the garage in a way that was not visible from the street.

Mr. Cohen asked if the only public way that the home is visible from is Cottage Street. Ms. Abeles stated that she did not believe it was visible from Appleby Road, but that she will walk down Appleby before the next meeting to confirm.

Mr. Royer stated that they would like to have the discussion continued again. Ms. Abeles proposed they vote on continuing this hearing. She stated that they will just need the plans a few days before the meeting because this project will not need to be advertised again. Ms. Maitin stated that October 1, 2019 is the next meeting date. It was stated that the next meeting after that will be on November 5, 2019. Mr. Royer stated that it will take some time to rework the plans and that they won't be starting construction this Fall anyway. He said that the November 5, 2019 meeting will work best.

Ms. Abeles made, and Ms. Maitin seconded, a motion to continue the discussion of 29 Cottage Street on November 5, 2019. The HDC voted **unanimously (6-0)** in favor to continue the discussion of 29 Cottage Street on November 5, 2019.

Mr. Royer stated that it is expensive for the clients to have 3D drawings if they are not all needed. He asked for clarification on what drawings the Commission would like. It was stated that the Commission needs detail drawings, exterior elevations on all four sides of the property, material samples, details on the historic sill, a sample of the window, and a sample of the brush painted shutters and railings. It was also stated that plans should be at a quarter-inch scale.

Public Hearing HDC 19-06 - 22 Cottage Street - Certificate of Appropriateness. Mr. Smith introduced the Public Hearing for the Certificate of Appropriateness for changes to 22 Cottage Street. He stated that the applicant was here before and had proposed a staircase off the back deck. Mr. Smith invited Patrick McMahon to come before the Commission.

All documents from the Commission Meeting are on file in the Planning Department.

Mr. McMahon stated that he had installed a fieldstone wall at the back of the lot but had not asked for approval. He said that at that point, the Commission told him to come back for approval for this wall. The approval would be retroactive since the wall was already installed. He said that the proper course of action would have been to come before the Commission, present the design, and ask for approval because the wall is visible from a public way.

Ms. Abeles stated that she hopes the Commission can vote on the stairs and the wall separately. She said that the applicant was asked to bring in drawings with accurate elevations, but those have not been provided. She stated that the Commission could vote on the fieldstone wall, but that they have not been given what they asked for in regards to the stair proposal.

Mr. Smith asked Mr. McMahon to discuss the changes that he made to his stair proposal. Mr. McMahon stated that the original proposal had the stairway off the side of the existing deck. He stated that he is now proposing to put the stairway within the footprint of the existing deck.

Ms. Maitin and Ms. Abeles indicated that he does not have an accurate drawing of the stairs and does not have accurate lengths. Ms. Abeles suggested hiring an architect.

Mr. McMahon sketched where he is proposing to install the stairs for Ms. Maitin and the Commission. He stated that the stairs will be within the footprint of the existing deck and that the deck will become smaller.

Ms. Abeles suggested that Mr. McMahon even provide a sketch of the furniture that he intends to put on the deck to understand how much room will be left once the stairs are installed. She stated that the staircase has to be a minimum of 3-feet wide.

Ms. Griffin asked if the proposal will be visible from the street behind the property. Mr. McMahon stated that he was told that it was visible from Denton Road. Ms. Abeles asked about matching the deck with the side porch. She said that the detailing on the side porch is not correct. Ms. Maitin asked if the porches were constructed before he purchased the home. Mr. McMahon confirmed that he bought the house three (3) years ago and that the porches were already built.

Ms. Abeles stated that she did not believe the previous owners would have received approval for the porch that was built. She said that she believes they constructed the porches without coming before the Commission.

Ms. Abeles said that she thinks the Commission should just vote on the wall. She said that the wall looks great and that the Commission should approve it. She said that Mr. McMahon should not try to match the detailing on the side porch. The side porch is not historically accurate.

Mr. McMahon stated that he assumed the side porch was approved which is why they were intending to match the deck with the side porch. He said that the porch would have been built in 2004 or 2005.

Ms. Abeles said that his concept is not bad. She said that the vertical boards are a good idea to give ventilation and to look more solid and traditional. She said that this would not be a big project for an architect.

Mr. Cohen advised Mr. McMahon to mark from the edge of the deck into 42 inches towards the chaise lounge chair to see how much room is there. Ms. Abeles said to measure it off to see what the balance is and what it will look like.

Ms. Maitin asked what is supporting the deck. Mr. McMahon replied that the deck is on pressure treated columns behind a plastic lattice. He believes there are concrete footings.

Ms. Abeles made, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to approve the stone wall as built at 22 Cottage Street. The HDC voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the stone wall as built at 22 Cottage Street.

Ms. Abeles made, and Ms. Maitin seconded, a motion to continue the deck discussion for 22 Cottage Street on October 1, 2019. The HDC voted **unanimously (6-0)** in favor to continue the deck discussion for 22 Cottage Street on October 1, 2019.

Matters Not Anticipated. Ms. Abeles began to discuss the corner property on Route 16 and Cottage Street [636 Washington Street]. She said that the applicants stated there were trees on that lot that were going to stay, but that they have taken them all down instead. She said that she would like to have the drawings brought out at the next HDC meeting. She does not think they are building what was approved. Ms. Griffin said she will send an email to Lynda [Schelling, Planning Administrator] asking for the drawings.

Approve August 6, 2019 Meeting Minutes. Mr. Smith stated that the August 6, 2019 Meeting Minutes look good. He said that there are a couple of typos. Mr. Smith asked for a motion to approve the August 6, 2019 Meeting Minutes. Mr. Cohen made, and Ms. Maitin seconded, a motion to approve the August 6, 2019 Meeting Minutes with corrections. The HDC voted with one abstention (4-0-0) in favor to approve the August 6, 2019 Meeting Minutes with corrections.

Adjourn. Mr. Smith asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Maitin made, and Ms. Griffin seconded, a motion to adjourn the meeting. The HDC voted unimously (5-0) in favor to adjourn the meeting at 8:47 pm.

Next Meeting: October 1, 2019

Minutes Approved: December 3, 2019

Minutes Compiled by: Danielle Marini with Catherine Johnson, Planning Board Chair