

**Meeting of the
Wellesley Historical Commission
9 September 2019 19:00
Great Hall, Wellesley Town Hall | Wellesley, Massachusetts**

1. Call to Order:

Chairman Brown called the meeting to order at approximately 19:06.

Members Present: Brown, Shlala, Racette (sitting for Schauffler by designation of the Chair), McNally, Lilley, Shepsle, Greco.

Alternate Members Present: Carley, Fergusson

Advisory Member Present: Dorin

Ms. Freniere of 72 Abbott Road appeared and raised an issue not on the agenda (i.e., 10 Livermore Road). She commented on the marvel of moving the existing structure onto its new foundation. She added that shortly thereafter, the older portion of the house (1897) and the two “wings” (1914) were put onto its new foundation. She then added that the façade of the left wing was demolished. She mentioned that she spoke with the builder and, since then, the builder had voluntarily stopped construction.

Ms. Sylvia Hahn, 64 Abbott Road, also appeared. She echoed the comments of Ms. Freniere. She also expressed disappointment with the demolition of the left façade, and expressed displeasure with the result thus far of the demolition process.

Mr. Brown thanked them for expressing their concern and indicated that analysis by various Town departments is ongoing.

Mr. Carley indicated that to the extent that the actions on the ground did not comply with the terms of the waiver, enforcement action by the appropriate department should be taken. *[Note that a subsequent public meeting to address this topic was held on September 16, 2019.]*

2. Welcome New WHC Member

3. Public Hearings on Applications for Demolition

3a. DR-2019-43: 11 Wachusett Road

William and Renee Curtin, owners, appeared. Owners indicated that they are not sure what they will do with the home at this point, but they have filed this application, essentially, to preserve their options.

Mr. Dorin provided an overview of the Wachusett Road neighborhood.

Ms. Shepsle and Mssrs. Brown and Racette commented that the character of the neighborhood had been upended by recent development.

Mr. Dorin suggested that if the character of the neighborhood has already been altered, the question to ask concerns the architectural significance of the home in its own right.

Dr. Fergusson added that there was no information about whether any persons of historical significance had lived in the home.

The Owners provided some commentary on prior home owners.

Mr. Lilley provided some commentary on the existing architecture of the home and how well it fits on the lot.

Owners provided some commentary on the architecture on the home.

Racette moved that the building NOT be preferably preserved. Seconded Shepsle. Vote 4-3 favor. Greco, Shlala, McNally voted no on the motion. No delay was imposed.

3b. DR-2019-46: 144 Weston Road

Peter Holland and Victor Sheen (both from Wellesley Park, LLC)

Mr. Dorin provided a history of the neighborhood and the building, as he has previously conducted research on this area in connection with his activities of the Commission. Built 1869, the home was on the western edge of Wellesley Village at the time. Reverend Parsons, a graduate of Bowdoin College and originally of Maine, was the original owner. Was owned by the same family from 1978 through earlier this month.

Mr. Racette commented that the neighborhood had many older homes of that era, many of which were well preserved. He indicated he was in favor of preservation.

Dr. Shlala and Mr. Brown expressed similar sentiments.

Ms. Shepsle asked whether the home had a detached garage; the owners indicated yes.

Mr. Dorin asked whether this property was connected with other nearby properties. Mr. Sheen indicated that the owner also owned 140, 144, 148 Weston Road, and that those properties are slated to be part of a larger development project.

Racette moved that the building be preferably preserved. Seconded McNally. Unanimous in favor. Delay was imposed.

3c. DR-2019-47: 37 Carisbrooke Road

Ms. Ida Tam, Architect, representing owner, appeared.

Mr. Dorin provided information about the neighborhood. It dates to the 1930s; subdivision of the Carisbrooke estate that was owned by J.F. White. White had built a cottage style house dating from the

1880s. Named “Carisbrooke” after the castle of the same name on the Isle of White. There is varied architectural styles in the neighborhood.

Mr. Lilley provided some details on the architecture of the house and its interaction with the street, and indicated that it is an extraordinary house. He commented on the importance of the style of the house in a neighborhood such as this one. He indicated that this is a neighborhood of old resplendent homes and even the newer construction homes give a nod to that history.

Mr. Greco indicated that it was for the preservation of homes like this one that the Historic Preservation Demolition Review Bylaw was enacted by Town Meeting.

Racette moved that the building be preferably preserved. Seconded Shepsle. Unanimous in favor. Delay was imposed.

4. Waiver Hearings

4a. DR-2019-34: 375 Linden Street

Attorney Himmelberger appeared on behalf of the Applicant.

Atty. Himmelberger described where they are in their development process (i.e., special permit granted, etc.)

The Applicant reiterated some of the reasons why he believes that a renovation is not practical.

Ms. Shepsle asked the Petitioners to point out the features of the proposed construction that reflected the historic characteristics of other homes in the neighborhood. Atty. Himmelberger indicated that the window treatments, gables, farmer’s porch are all elements that appear in other homes in the neighborhood.

Chairman Brown asked about whether a tandem garage was considered. Mr. Himmelberger pointed out, *inter alia*, safety concerns with such a configuration on busy Linden St.

Mr. Lilley provided some suggestions as to make the proposed structure more harmonious with itself and the surrounding neighborhood. E.g., Pull the front door forwards and center the two windows under the gable, increase the height of the garage doors, add “barn light” style lights above the garage doors.

Petitioner indicated that the revisions, as drawn by Mr. Lilley, would be acceptable.

Mr. Dorin commented on the original reasons for the finding that the building would be preferably preserved, and that respecting the diversified architecture of the neighborhood has to be considered. He also asked whether there could be some additional fenestrations on the left side elevation (particularly at the street end).

There was discussion of the addition of a window – pulling the window on the top floor forward and installing a complementary window on the 1st floor under the window on the 2nd floor (also to be shown on marked up drawings).

Mr. Greco expressed a desire to see revised drawings before granting a waiver.

Mr. Brown asked about the surface treatment.

Mr. Himmelberger asked whether there would be a way to have the revisions approved prior to the next meeting.

Chairman Brown proposed that the vote be made contingent on Mr. Lilley's approval of the drawing.

Chairman Brown moved to approve the waiver provided that the changes to the front and side elevations that were discussed are made; provided further that drawings reflecting said edits are sent to Mr. Lilley for Mr. Lilley's determination that the drawings comport with the discussion this evening; and provided further that if the drawings do not so comport, the Commission will reevaluate at the meeting on in October. Seconded McNally. Unanimous vote in favor.

4b. DR-2019-31: 9 Juniper Road

Mr. Riley, owner appeared, and presented an explanation of the revisions made to the plan presented at the last meeting of the Commission. The drawings were reviewed by the Commission. Mr. Lilley indicated that the revised drawings comport with the requests made by the Commission.

Racette moved to approve the waiver; seconded Shlala. Unanimous in favor.

4c. DR-2019-28: 11 Woodland Road

Attorney Shind and Mr. Fleming appeared on behalf of the owner of record and explained the proposed changes.

Mr. Brown asked whether any additional work had been done on retaining the structure. Mr. Fleming indicated that they conducted additional investigation, determined that it was not economically practical, and that an extension off the back would likely cause setback issues if such an additional portion were to be tied in properly to the existing structure.

Mr. Dorin asked about the third floor space.

Ms. Shepsle asked whether the house has been put on the market and there was discussion of the history of the property.

Chairman Brown inquired as to the width of the existing structure vis-à-vis the proposed structure. An analysis of same followed with some discussion.

Ms. Strawbridge, who maintains that she has an equity interest in the property, offered additional comments tending to suggest that a waiver should not be granted. She indicated there was no reason to disturb the Commission's finding that the home be preferably preserved. She offered additional commentary on the proposed plan, and indicated that she did not believe that the resulting structure would be consistent with the historical character of the neighborhood.

Mr. Fogg, 17 Woodland Rd., appeared. He expressed concern that another home that is part of the neighborhood is being slated for demolition.

Ms. Fogg, also of 17 Woodland Rd., appeared. She expressed concerns about the size of the home. She also expressed her belief that there has not been a good faith effort to renovate the existing structure.

Chairman Brown expressed concern that the proposed structure does not appear to fit in with the character in the neighborhood.

Mr. Fleming cited 20, 16 and 10 Woodlawn and other addresses as examples of larger rebuilds. He reiterated that he made significant attempts to reduce the massing and indicated that he would prefer to work with the Commission than “ride out” the delay.

Mr. Dorin discussed the regulatory posture and confirmed that the petitioners are at the Historical Commission as step one of their process.

Mr. Greco expressed concerns about the size and massing of the house being inconsistent with the historical significance of the neighborhood. He indicated that he would not support a waiver.

Mr. Lilley made numerous suggestions as to ways in which the architecture might be altered so as to create the appearance of reduced size and massing.

A discussion of how other petitioners have successfully been able to achieve those goals ensued.

Racette moved to continue until the October 21 meeting; McNally seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

4c. DR-2019-11: 40 Old Farm Road

McNally moved to continue until the October 21 meeting Greco seconded. Motion carried 5-1. Shlala voted no. (Lilley was out of the room).

4d. DR-2019-22: 35 Clifford Road

McNally moved to continue until the October 21 meeting. Greco seconded. Motion carried 6-1. Shlala voted no.

5. Minutes

The minutes of the August 5, 2019 meeting of the Commission were considered.

Racette moved to approve the August 5, 2019 minutes of the Commission as edited; McNally seconded. Unanimous in favor.

6. Waiver Approval Details and Correspondence

Chairman Brown provided an update on some thoughts and conversations he has had concerning the opportunity to have some public discourse and interaction with other boards or commissions about how the Historic Preservation Demolition Review bylaw is working. Surveys are being considered.

Ms. Shepsle indicated that the Commission needs staff support from the Planning Department.

Ms. Johnson, Chair of the Planning Board then provided an update on the hiring efforts in the Planning Department. A conditional offer has been made to a preservation planner.

7. Project Updates:

Dorin offered an update on the plaque program.

Shlala talked about outreach to media outlets, etc.

McNally mentioned the invitation from the Norfolk Register of Deeds to view the newly renovated Registry of Deeds for Norfolk County in Dedham.

8. New Business

Chairman Brown suggested a December meeting on the 17th, as there is a conflict with a Special Town Meeting on the date on which the Commission meeting is currently scheduled.

9. Chairman Brown adjourned the meeting at 22:21.