

HARVARD HISTORICAL COMMISSION

13 AYER ROAD • HARVARD, MASSACHUSETTS 01451



The Harvard Historical Commission is chartered "...to preserve and protect the historic assets of Harvard, its buildings, structures, places, sites, and surrounding settings of historical or architectural significance."

Those wishing to record any or all of the meeting must, prior to the meeting's start, alert the chair to such and the chair will announce the fact, in accordance with The Massachusetts Open Meeting Law.

Following are the **minutes** of a public hearing and regular meeting of the Harvard Historical Commission, held via Zoom, on **Wednesday, December 2, 2020 at 7 pm**.

Submitted by George Triantaris, Secretary.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Pam Marston (Chair)
Steve Nigzus (Vice Chair)
George Triantaris (Secretary)
Emanuel Lindo
Richard Cabelus
Brandon Loughery
Matthew McRae

MEMBERS IN ABSENTIA: None

AUDIENCE:

Charlotte Vallaey, Marijke Vallaey, Judy and Andy Warner, Alice Thayer, Lucas Thayer, Robert Moran, Paul Willard, Stephen Morris, Karen Levitt, Andrea Palik, Victoria Anderson, Spencer Marks, Rosie Vandam, Spanick Marks, and Staci Donahue (liaison to planning board).

TOPICS:

CALL TO ORDER:

7:01 pm

REVIEW/APPROVE MINUTES OF LAST MEETING:

The minutes of the November 4, 2020 meeting were approved by unanimous vote.

ONGOING APPLICATION:

3 Fairbank Street – Pat Hatch – Generator

Pat Hatch presented her application to install a generator next to her house. This was discussed at the last meeting and determined to be an insubstantial change. Pat stated that the generator will be placed near the house on the Littleton Road side, she plans to screen the generator with landscaping. When asked about the placement, Pat stated that she has no property in the rear of her house and that there are no possible locations where it would not be visible to some extent. Commissioners discussed and considered that the generator is not attached to the structure, is removable, and would be screened as much as possible. The application was unanimously approved as appropriate (Steve and George did not abstain as the possible conflict was not an issue).

PUBLIC HEARING:

1. 101 South Shaker Road – Charlotte Vallaey – new fence

Public Hearing opened at 7:14

Presentation opened

Presentation of application

Charlotte Vallaey presented

Charlotte presented her application to extend her agricultural fence utilizing the current design of wood post framing backed by a tall wire fence to keep out wildlife. She maintained that the construction was consistent with historic pictures of Shaker designed fences.

Presentation closed

Public Presentation opened

Public comments in favor:

Lucas Thayer, Judy Warner, Andrea Palick, Karen Levitt, Rosie Vandam and Stephen Morris all spoke in

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favor of the fence saying that it was in keeping with the Shaker district and was an attractive addition.

Public comments against:

No member of the public appeared

Public Participation closed

Commissioners' Deliberation and Vote

The commissioners discussed the fence. Manny thought it was in keeping with the district. George felt it did not distract from the landscape and the shaker properties nearby. Richard felt it was consistent with the design guidelines. Steve agreed. The commissioners voted unanimously to approve the application as appropriate.

Public Hearing closed

2. South Shaker Road – Alice Thayer – fence

Public Hearing opened at 7:26

Presentation opened

Presentation of application

Lucas Thayer presented the application

Lucas showed the pictures of the current fence that encloses the garden area. It is comprised of metal dog kennel panels that are 10 by 6 feet in size. His first proposal is to leave the fence as is, his second to paint the panels green.

Presentation closed

Public Presentation opened

Public comments in favor:

Paul Willard felt that there should be no restrictions on agricultural fencing regardless of whether it is in the historic district.

Public comments against:

Stephen Morris, Karen Levitt, Andrea Polick, Spencer Marks, Rosie Vandorf and Judy Warner all spoke in opposition to the application. The consistent comments mentioned that the fence was not in keeping with the district, was an eyesore, and obtrusive. Judy added that she is pro-agriculture but the materials and appearance of this fence are inappropriate.

Public Participation closed

Commissioners' Deliberation and Vote

Manny pointed out that the fence is inconsistent with the design guidelines. George mentioned that the HHC's charge is to determine whether the structure (here a fence) is appropriate for the district, not to evaluate the purpose of the structure. Matt pointed out that the HHC favors agriculture and would approve a fence that is in line with the design guidelines. Pam stated that she had met with the applicants and asked them to consider alternate fences but they declined to do so. She thought the painted version was slightly better but still not appropriate. George agreed with the feedback from the abutters that the fence was distracting from the landscape and structures in the vicinity. The application was denied in its entirety by unanimous vote. The applicants were encouraged to work with Pam as their advocate to come up with an alternate design.

Public Hearing closed

3. 20 Fairbank – Matthew McRae – modified front entryway, addition of 3 windows, modified roof line

Public Hearing opened at 7:48

Presentation opened

Presentation of application

Matthew McRae presented

Matt presented his application which had been reviewed at the last meeting. He shared with the

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commission a history of the structure and his findings as he has renovated the interior. It seems that the original structure on this site is the house on the south side dating from the about the 1840's. The structure on the north side (which is the subject of this application) is likely comprised of two structures that were moved to the site and "stitched" together. They have no foundation or basement and sit on a dirt base. The lean to in the back is an additional structure. Matt reviewed each of the changes in the application including the addition of a window on the façade of the house over the entry way, improving the entry way to be more in line with a entryway from the period that will also help to shed water, the addition of two gas lamps, two windows on the side of the lean to and changing the roof pitch to both accommodate building code and preserve the interior beams which are original to the structures. Matt pointed out that because the renovation is so extensive he must bring the structure up to modern building code provisions.

Presentation closed

Public Presentation opened

Public comments in favor:

None

Public comments against:

None

Public Participation closed

Commissioners' Deliberation and Vote

Manny asked about the choice of casement rather than double hung windows on the side of the structure. Matt said these were selected because they would be above kitchen counters. Brandon appreciated the work that went into the application and Matt's summary of the history which was very helpful. George has acted as Matt's advocate and stated that buildings evolve over their lifespan and that Matt has worked very hard to preserve as much as possible in a structure that had significant condition issues. While the HHC might not normally approve a change to the façade of a historic structure, in this case the structure represents a number of periods and designs and is comprised of a number of structures so the change seems appropriate. He also pointed out that the preservation of the historic windows represented a significant investment of time and energy and the use of a historic window for the "new" window was commendable. Pam was impressed with Matt's efforts. Richard agreed and found Matt's efforts to be laudable. The commissioners voted unanimously to approve the application as appropriate in its entirety (Matt abstained).

Public Hearing Closed 8:17

NEW APPLICATIONS: None

NEW APPLICATIONS APPROVED: None

NEW BUSINESS: None

ON-GOING BUSINESS:

1. Bromfield stonewall project – update (EL)

2. Bromfield House discussion (MM)

Matt presented information on Bromfield House prepared by Susan Lee. Pam is the liaison to the committee that will consider the disposition of the property. It was decided that the HHC should prepare a position statement with regard to the structure. Matt will work on a draft to be approved by the HHC that will reference the terminology to determine "significant structures" as outlined in the draft demolition delay bylaw. This position will then be presented to the committee.

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3. Certificates of Appropriateness – update on uploading prior certificates on HHC website (GT)
On Hold.
4. HHC welcome packet for new homeowners – update (BL) Brochure (PM) and introduction letter to district residents (GT)
Brandon has updated the brochure and letter and moved them into a new format which should be more user friendly – he will distribute for consideration at the next meeting.
5. Historic Harvard Website (PM & BL)
Brandon has access to this website. It was decided that he would remove the application and other official HHC documents which are now out of date and add a link to the official HHC website so that anyone looking for information will be directed to the official resource. Brandon will also be in touch with Judy Warner at the Harvard Historical Society to learn whether they might want to take over management of the historical data section of the website which they use as a resource.
6. Herb House (ML)
A report should be ready for review at the January meeting.
7. Photo record of historic districts (GT)
George stated that he had not heard from any Bromfield students but suggested the commission should proceed with this project during the winter when it is easiest to see the structures. He will obtain maps and take pictures of houses as they currently stand. Brandon to help figure out how to best store and organize the pictures so they are accessible for reference purposes. Brandon has a file of pictures taken over the years by Joe T.
8. Project currently on hold:
 - Demolition Delay (GT)
 - Town Center lighting and power lines (GT)
 - Harvard Narrative History – historical surveys 1993 and 1994 (GT)

CORRESPONDENCE: None

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND LIAISONS:

Monument Committee (RC) – Work on the monument project is well underway.

CPC (PM)

PUBLIC COMMENTARY: None

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

SET DATE FOR NEXT MEETING: January 6, 2021

MEETING ADJOURNED:

8:53 pm

DOCUMENTS:

Applications