

TOWN OF HARVARD
OLD LIBRARY ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE
MEETING
April 26, 2018
Hildreth House
13 Ayer Road, Harvard, MA

Attendees: Pete Jackson, Wendy Cote-Magan, Mark Mikitarian, Ken Swanton, Lucy Wallace

Guests were architects from Abacus: Austin Ludwig and David Pollak

The meeting was called to order at 3:05PM

The minutes of the April 23 meeting were approved unanimously (Ken moved, Lucy seconded)

David Pollak announced that Abacus' structural engineering consultant had indicated that geotechnical testing would not be required. Rather the footings for the ramp and new stairs would be slightly oversized in design compensate for lack of testing. Ken will let Tim Kilhart know that DPW department would no longer be needed to dig test holes.

Design Review with Architects:

Abacus shared their drawings, plans and samples, in advance of sharing them with the Harvard Historical Commission (HHC) on May 9. The Committee gave the following feedback:

1. Metals – The metals used to build the ramp, rails, etc. should be painted a gray slate color. The exception is the surface of the ramp which will be galvanized steel and left unpainted as paint would wear off.
2. Stairs – the stair treads would be thick (monolithic) granite blocks. The sides of the stoop would be blocks in a brown color that continue the current color of the lower part of the building.
3. Cables – the ramp and front stairs would have cables instead of pickets, so that the ramp is more transparent on the face of this historic building, and the staircase is consistent with it.
4. Walkway- concrete would be used as in the earlier cost estimate, which lasts longer and it more durable than asphalt. About halfway up the long, winding walkway, the committee liked David's proposal to "establish a place" consisting of a bench, lighting, plantings and steps down to the road at the corner of the lot. There would be about 7 granite steps with simple single handrails, and this would provide a pedestrian shortcut to the entrance from that direction.
5. Lighting – Sconces on the building either side of the door are preferred to lamp posts. Lucy will also look into having the streetlight across the street one of the town commons turned back on. One or two 10' (or lower, if possible) lamp posts would be used in the walkway area, with lamps that project down and not sideways so as to not shine on abutting properties. Austin will

now research light fixtures and suggest some for the sconces.

6. Front Door – two 4 panel doors with glass in the upper 2 panels, plus glass panels on the sides and top, as shown in the drawing on page A201
7. Side Door – the current side door would have its stairs and landing removed to make room for the walkway. The door would be replaced by a full length glass panel. The drawing should also show the two side windows to the right of it with the lower brick removed so that all three windows on that façade have similar glass panels to recreate the original look of the side of the building. This level of work will be re-evaluated after cost estimates are done, and so HHC approval will be sought for a variety of resulting alternatives.
8. Front Entry area – The new front door will again be recessed, as it was historically, which creates a new exterior front entry area. Photos were shared of an investigation of this area which show that the existing materials are still present from the last renovation. The stone blocks, tile floors and original ceiling boards are still there and appear to be able to be cost-effectively reused. More investigation will be done of a wider area. An old doorway was discovered on the right wall of the entry area, which probably went to the old post office, and the easiest way to deal with it may be to replace it by a false door.

Austin will target May 3 or 4 to provide the Committee with two new color drawings (front and three quarter view) and a revised set of plans that reflect the above feedback. These would then be emailed to the HHC so they could see them before the May 9 meeting. Abacus would also bring hardcopies to the HHC meeting along with material samples. Abacas would also bring, and share if needed, the drawings of pickets and other alternatives that were used at this Aug 26 meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 4:47 PM

Submitted by Ken Swanton