

MINUTES OF WELLESLEY HISTORICAL COMMISSION MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 11, 2017.

Present: Members: Grant Brown (Chair), Jan Gleysteen, Neal Goins, Jacob Lilley, Lawrence McNally (Vice Chair), Vicki Schaufler, and Rise Shepsle;

Alternate Members: Robert Carley, Peter Fergusson, Vin Loccisano, Emily Maitin, Michael Racette, Elizabeth Shlala, Joel Slocum;

Advisory Member: Joshua Dorin

1. Brown called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. in the Great Hall, Wellesley Town Hall.
2. Citizen Speak: No citizens present chose to speak on matters not on the agenda.
3. Public Hearing – Demolition Review Bylaw :
48 Upson Road (Application DR-2017-01)

Owners, Timothy Eaton and Catherine Dyer, 48 Upson Rd., Wellesley, MA, addressed the Commission.

Brown invited comments from any neighbors present: No neighbors asked to speak.

Michael Zehner, Town of Wellesley Planning Director, provided a brief overview of the Planning Department review of the application. He clarified, that the garage structure is not subject to the Bylaw. There have been significant alterations to the house structure. The Planning Department recommended that the Commission deem the structure not Preferably Preserved.

Dorin provided historical information about the subject building and property. Historical information is spotty.

WHC members had a general discussion regarding the Planning Department recommendation as well as the elements related to whether or not the structure should be deemed preferably preserved.

Motion (Goins) to determine that the structure be deemed not Preferably Preserved (McNally seconded). Vote: 7-0 in favor.

The Public Hearing for Application DR-2017-01 was closed.

4. Public Hearing – Demolition Review Bylaw:
5 Claflin Road (Application DR-2017-03)

Owners, Anne and Joan Green's representative, Ken Barbour (builder) addressed the Commission. Mr. Barbour is purchasing the property from the current owners.

Gleysteen recused himself from the vote on this Application. Brown designated Carley to replace Gleysteen for the purpose of voting on this Application.

Brown invited comments from any neighbors present: No neighbors asked to speak.

Zehner, provided a brief overview of the Planning Department review of the application. This home is part of a development known as "Sunny Acres." The Planning Department believed that due to intervening changes to many of the neighboring properties in that development, the original planned development had changed significantly enough that the Planning Department recommended that the Commission deem the structure not Preferably Preserved.

Dorin provided historical information about the subject building and property. The existing house is a quintessential 1920's vernacular; most of the homes on the perpendicular road, Durant Road, have been untouched or modestly added to, thus preserving some of the feel of the original development. Previously, the neighborhood was considered for possible National Historic Designation, but that was never fully pursued. The builder of the existing home does not have any recognized historical significance.

WHC members had a general discussion regarding the Planning Department recommendation as well as the elements related to whether or not the structure should be deemed preferably preserved. While there are newly constructed, larger homes, near this property, the structure is the terminal home at the end of Durant Road Street, and thus makes an important contribution to the feel of the neighborhood. It appears that due to the size of the lot and the location of the home on the lot, that renovation alternatives might be possible. Many of the homes in multiple directions are of similar style, age and character.

Motion (Schauffler) to determine that the structure be deemed Preferably Preserved, because the subject building is historically or architecturally important by reason of period, style, method of building construction or association with a particular architect or builder, either by itself or in the context of a group of Buildings (namely, the "Sunny Acres" development.) (Shepsle seconded). Vote: 5-2 in favor:

In favor: Goins, Lilley, McNally, Schauffler, and Shepsle

Opposed: Brown and Carley

The Public Hearing for Application DR-2017-03 was closed.

5. Public Hearing – Demolition Review Bylaw:
7 Wildon Road (Application DR-2017-04)

Brown reinstated Gleysteen as a voting member of the Commission, replacing Carley.

Owner, DNH Homes LLC's representative, Stanley Hargus addressed the Commission. Mr. Hargus stated that the lot is 11,000 sq. ft., and is in a 20,000 sq. ft. zone. He stated that his usual business practice is to build additions onto existing homes, but that he did not see a way to do so in this case, given the 11,000 sq. ft. lot size. He stated that he is unaware of any historical value of the existing home, which he intends to tear down and replace with a 3,600 sq. ft. home.

Brown invited comments from any neighbors present: Neighbor, Kelly Uller, 3 Wildon Road, addressed the Commission. Ms. Uller stated that the immediate surrounding neighborhood is well-preserved, with its original modest-sized homes, except for one large relatively newly constructed home across the street from the subject property. Much of the trees were also cleared from the lot of that newly-constructed home. She stated that she fears that further tear down/new construction homes would adversely affect the existing character of the neighborhood.

Zehner, provided a brief overview of the Planning Department review of the application. The existing home was constructed in 1941. A deck was added in 1984, and a one-story addition was added in 1985. The Planning Department characterized the existing home as a typical Colonial Revival Cape Cod Cottage. The Planning Department recommended that the Commission deem the structure not Preferably Preserved.

Dorin provided historical information about the subject building and property. The house does not have much historical significance. The house is part of a neighborhood sub-division developed by builder Ralph Porter, in about 1971, and was his first large-scale subdivision in Wellesley. He later developed 700-800 hundred homes in Wellesley. The homes in this neighborhood have different characteristics than the larger "Porter Colonials" that he built, and for which he is better known for. The neighborhood largely contains undersized (compared to the current 20,000 sq. ft. zone) lots. He added that the neighborhood retains a strong character and the "Brook-style Cape" is relatively rare in Wellesley.

WHC members had a general discussion regarding the elements related to whether or not the structure should be deemed preferably preserved. There was discussion regarding how one could adjust eave lines on an addition to hide a large mass while still fitting in to the existing character of the neighborhood. With the exception of one large house, the entirety of the neighborhood is of similar character, age and style.

Motion (Gleysteen) to determine that the structure be deemed Preferably Preserved, because the subject building is historically or architecturally important by reason of period, style, method of building construction or association with a particular architect or builder, either by itself or in the context of a group of Buildings (namely, the character of the immediate surrounding houses.) (McNally seconded). Vote: 7-0 in favor.

The Public Hearing for Application DR-2017-04 was closed.

6. Public Hearing – Demolition Review Bylaw:
64 Fuller Brook Road (Application DR-2017-07)

Owners, Patrick and Harriet Collins, addressed the Commission. They have lived in their home for almost 40 years. They put on an addition in 1978. The house to one side of them was torn down and replaced. The house on the other side of them had a significant addition. Across the street, there is a relatively newly-constructed home which replaced a “tear-down.”

Brown invited comments from any neighbors present: Neighbor, Jason Fiorillo, 66 Fuller Brook Road, is a direct abutter. Mr. Fiorillo stated that he has no objection to the planned “tear-down” of the subject home.

Zehner provided a brief overview of the Planning Department review of the application. The existing home was constructed in 1941. A “chicken house” and 1-bay garage were added, in 1943. A 2-story addition was built, in 1955. Another 2-story addition was built, in 1986. “Porter colonials,” Mr. Zehner stated, are often recognized, but are generally not thought to have particular significance. The Planning Department recommended that the Commission deem the structure not Preferably Preserved.

Dorin provided historical information about the subject building and property. The original house was built by Ralph Porter. The original owner is only of minor historical significance to Wellesley. This and other houses built by Ralph Porter in this neighborhood, he said, are not what are thought to be the “typical” “Porter Colonial” homes that the builder constructor later in his career.

WHC members had a general discussion regarding the elements related to whether or not the structure should be deemed preferably preserved. There was discussion of the similarity of the subject house to a neighboring house, which was renovated and enlarged in a manner that did not seem to materially change the feel of the neighborhood. There was discussion of the MWRA easement on the rear of the lot potentially restricting the size or scope of a new home. While a Porter-designed home, the WHC discussed how this example would not normally be considered a more successful or typical center-entrance Portal colonial.

The owners stated that a realtor advised them that the existing structure would require too much renovation.

Motion (McNally) to determine that the structure be deemed not Preferably Preserved (Goins seconded). Vote: 7-0 in favor.

The Public Hearing for Application DR-2017-07 was closed.

7. Public Hearing – Demolition Review Bylaw:
55 Pilgrim Road (Application DR-2017-05)

Owners, Matthew and Robert Guigli, addressed the Commission. They stated that housing stock on Pilgrim Road has experienced substantial turnover, already. They expressed an opinion that the existing structure was not consistent with the character of the neighborhood as it exists today.

Brown invited comments from any neighbors present: No neighbors asked to speak.

Zehner provided a brief overview of the Planning Department review of the application. The existing home was constructed in 1941. A 1-bay garage were added, in 1968. The Planning Department recommended that the Commission deem the structure not Preferably Preserved.

Dorin provided historical information about the subject property. The property is part of a sub-division developed by a prolific Wellesley builder. This particular parcel was purchased in 1941 from the Estate of Albion Clapp. But, it is relatively geographically removed from the Clapp Estate. The property is not a part of the neighboring Massasoit development, which includes Earle Road. If it were, then he might feel strongly about preserving it.

WHC members had a general discussion regarding the elements related to whether or not the structure should be deemed preferably preserved. The home's placement

on a corner lot places some practical limitations on the size of any new home to be built. There was discussion regarding the considerable amount of new construction that exists already on Pilgrim Road, including several houses directly across the street from the subject property.

Motion (Schauffler) to determine that the structure be deemed not Preferably Preserved (Goins seconded). Vote: 7-0 in favor.

The Public Hearing for Application DR-2017-05 was closed.

8. Public Hearing – Demolition Review Bylaw
17 Monadnock Road (Application DR-2017-06)

Owner, Patcharin Gardner, and builder, Peter Fallon, addressed the Commission. Due to various additions built onto the house over many years, the house is not accommodating to the way they live in it. Due to the various “hodgepodge” additions, and low ceiling heights, Mr. Fallon believes that renovation is not a feasible option. The original structure is a Garrison Colonial.

Brown invited comments from any neighbors present: No neighbors asked to speak.

Zehner provided a brief overview of the Planning Department review of the application. The existing home was constructed in 1947. A rear porch and various additions were built over subsequent years. Planning Department staff could not locate a building permit for the current front porch entrance addition. The Planning Department recommended that the Commission deem the structure Preferably Preserved, because the subject building is historically or architecturally important by reason of period, style, method of building construction or association with a particular architect or builder (namely, George Haynes), either by itself or in the context of a group of Buildings (namely, the Cliff estates area.)

Dorin provided historical information about the subject building and property. The property is part of land that was once owned by Albion Clapp, who, in the 1920’s, began to sell large tracts to George Haynes, who built hundreds of houses in Wellesley. Many Haynes houses in the Cliff estates area were built in the 1930’s and are in the Tudor style. The subject building was built later, in 1943, and is not in the Tudor style.

WHC members had a general discussion regarding the elements related to whether or not the structure should be deemed preferably preserved. Considerable time was spent discussing which parts were the original building and worth preserving, and the numerous additions that had occurred over the years. Additionally, the drawings

of the original building made it difficult to ascertain what was original to the house. There was a lengthy discussion about the range of additions and how they had affected the overall character of the structure. While there are older homes in the neighborhood, the home next door and across the street are both much newer.

Motion (Goins) to determine that the structure be deemed not Preferably Preserved (Lilley seconded). Vote: 7-0 in favor.

The Public Hearing for Application DR-2017-06 was closed.

9. Minutes: After discussion and review of the draft minutes of the WHC meeting of August 14, 2017, it was moved by McNally, seconded by Goins, and passed unanimously to approve the minutes as amended of the WHC meeting of August 14, 2017.
10. Minutes: After discussion and review of the draft minutes of the WHC meeting of September 6, 2017, it was moved by Goins, seconded by Schaufler, and passed unanimously to approve the minutes as amended of the WHC meeting of September 6, 2017.
11. House Plaque Approvals: No approvals.
12. CPC Projects: Historic House Research: The Commission recently selected one of six bidders for this project. The Commission is consulting with Town Counsel regarding any edits to the contract deemed necessary. The project is expected to start within a couple of weeks. The goal is to obtain packets of finished research which will be added to the Commission's data repository, building on prior research. Once available online, this should be a valuable resource to the Commission for future hearings.
13. CPC Projects: Villages Project: The Commission discussed the history of the CPC funding for this project. CPC funding was granted in 2009, but, to date, the Commission has not done a significant amount of work on the project. The Commission originally drafted an RFQ. Brown is inquiring whether this should be an RFP, and will aim to report back to Commission members at the next Commission meeting.
14. CPC Projects: Fells Branch Library Roof: The Fells Library building needs a new roof. Currently, the roof is asphalt shingle. The Facilities Maintenance Department (which maintains the building) has funding in its budget to pay for the cost of replacing the roof with asphalt shingles, but not for the additional cost that would be incurred if the new roof were cedar shingles. The Commission discussed an

effort to work with the interested parties (FMD, Library Trustees, and Board of Selectmen) to solicit CPC funds for the historic renovation of the roof with cedar, vs. asphalt, shingles. Shepsle, Slocum and Lilley will form a sub-committee to determine the best path forward in making a potential request to CPC for the required funds.

15. Project Updates: Beebe Plaque: The Commission discussed sign options, affixed to a wall on the building or a free-standing plaque. McNally and Goins agreed to continue the work begun by recently-retired Commission member, Dwight Lueth. They will speak with Lueth about the project's status, and will speak with the building's developer, and will check with appropriate town authorities concerning whether town approval might be needed for either of the possible signage choices.
16. Project Updates: Single Historic Districts: The Commission briefly discussed pursuing single district designations on one or two properties.
17. Project Updates: Historic Awareness: The Commission briefly discussed possible future efforts to raise town awareness of different architectural elements in the town and/or celebrating renovations of houses that preserve historic or other significant elements.
18. Upcoming Meetings: October 11, 2017 and October 23, 2017.
19. It was moved by McNally, seconded by Goins, and passed unanimously, to adjourn the meeting at 10:25 p.m.