

Historic District Commission

Town Hall, Room 126

Meeting Minutes, 4-23-2013



Meeting called to order at 7:30PM. Anita Rogers, Pam Lynn, Kathy Acerbo-Bachmann, and David Honn in attendance. Mike Gowing attended as selectman liaison. David Shoemaker attending as possible member. Aaron Goff observing as prospective member.

TOWN CLERK, ACTON

3/12/2013 and 3/27/2013 minutes are approved by consent. Approval of 4/10/13 minutes postponed.

KAB reviewed tonight's and future agenda with the Commission.

There is some question as to whether or not the HVAC piping at the Pitta Residence was installed per the certificate. Michaela can compare recent photo to certificate and contact owner, if necessary.

7:45 - Scott Kutil will discuss 62 Windsor Ave.

8:00 – 103 Main St project underway – would like to discuss some additional items.

8:45 – School of Ballet PV panels

Special meeting May 1 – PL cannot attend.

April 24 – Stone wall lecture, co-sponsored with library.

Traffic study for Acton Center was funded by town meeting. DH will consult with Cory York the town engineer to remind him of the Center's National Landmark status. Further discussion will be at the May 14th meeting.

7:47 62 Windsor Ave.

Scott Kutil has brought a presentation with photos of every home on Windsor Avenue and dimensions of its width and depth. The Commission requested information on the heights of the existing homes and that the width dimensions not be overall but of the individual building planes.

DH is the liason for this project. He requests that Commission be given a GIS map showing the entire street and the following information on each house:

Height of house, including ht of eave and ridge from grade.

Width of house at broadest single plane.

Elevation of 1st floor above grade

62 Windsor will be on the agenda on May 14.

103 Main Street – Review of addition currently in progress with approved certificate.

The homeowner is considering additional work not reviewed by the Commission at the time of the original certificate.

Front door replacement? Existing 6-panel door and possibly the sidelights need replacement. The homeowner would like to consider a plank door. ALR – this selection does not seem compatible with the existing sidelights. KAB – that door selection is an earlier era than the house. DH – OK with the door, but not with the sidelights

AC units? Addition of AC requires that 2 units be placed on pad at grade in front left corner of street elevation. KAB recommends evergreen plantings to camouflage the units. Ideally the existing hollies will be replanted. Plantings should appear informal, not linear plant placement like modern foundation plantings.

Master bedroom window? Master bedroom has a 6/6 window – owner would like to add a new, smaller window and prefers a 4-lite sash. ALR – observes that the panes in the 4 lite sash are square in proportion, not like the existing windows. Recommends a smaller 6 lite sash similar to what already is installed in the attic. Glass panes should have a vertical proportion to be consistent.

Stone wall reconstruction? Homeowner would like to move the existing stone wall to the left to widen the driveway. DH recommends that the new wall be started before the house and that stairs be inserted before the wall for access to the front door.

Homeowners will need to submit an application for an amendment to the original application that addresses any 4 additions/ changes.

8:45 - Acton School of Ballet PV panels- Application # 1306 public hearing.

KAB begins meeting by reading public hearing notice as published. Members of public sign in.

Owner, Chip Morris is present. He informed the Commission that the roof is 74' wide and the panels as specified are 66'-7" wide, leaving a margin of 3'-2.5" of shingles on each end of the roof. The panels generate 10,000KW of power which, with the change to LED lighting, will provide most of the building's power needs. New electrical panels will be installed inside the building.

KAB – The Commission has rarely approved PV panels. The application for PV panels at 543 Mass Ave (OMR) was denied. Panels were approved at the Thoughtforms building because they are minimally visible from the public way and the building has a simple industrial character. This building is also modest in scale and simple in style but the panels are considerably more visible from the public way.

PL – Feels hesitant because the panels are so very visible.

DH – This building has a modest asphalt roofing material. That was not true of 543 Mass Ave where a PV installation would have ruined the slate roof. DH is concerned that the proposed width of 10 PV panels is too wide and leaves too little shingle exposed at either end. What about reducing the width of the array to 9 panels wide? This is a commercial building in a commercial neighborhood. It does not directly front on a street. And Spruce St is particularly ill- defined. The streetscape would benefit greatly from the installation of curbs and sidewalks on Spruce St and the planting of a shade tree on the south side adjacent to the OMR building. This would increase pedestrian safety and enhance the district by improving the appearance of Spruce St as well as reducing the visibility of a PV panel installation at 3 Spruce St.

9:10 – meeting opened for public discussion

David Shoemaker expressed support for the installation.

Aaron??? Is in favor of the installation especially considering it is adjacent to another PV panel installation.

9:20 – meeting closed for public discussion

The Commission discussed the following findings with regard to a PV panel installation specifically at 3 Spruce St.:

1. This building fronts on a parking lot, not on a street.
2. This building has minimal character or detail.
3. The existing roof material is modest and must be replaced at certain intervals.
4. This pv panel installation is entirely reversible.
5. This technology is evolving and has a lifespan that will likely result in its removal in the future.

The Commission also discussed the recommendation that OMR be approached to see if a tree can be planted at the south side entry to the parking lot on Spruce St.

DH recommends that the installation be reduced by 1 panel in width so that it is 9 panels wide rather than 10 panels.

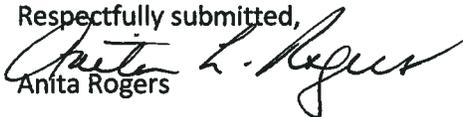
As a condition it would be required that all conduit and metering is hidden. It is also assumed that all metal finished will be dark in color and consistent in color with each other.

It is agreed that a certificate that allows PV panels in an Historic District must be carefully worded to emphasize that it is unusual for the Commission to approve a visible installation in the district. By unanimous vote, the public hearing was continued until May 1.

The hearing was adjourned at 9:25.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:36.

Respectfully submitted,


Anita Rogers