



HISTORIC DISTRICTS COMMISSION Meeting Minutes Thursday, February 2, 2017

Pursuant to notice duly filed with the Town Clerk's office, the Town of Concord Historic Districts Commission held a public meeting on Thursday, February 2, 2017 at 7:00 P.M. in the First Floor Conference Room at 141 Keyes Road.

Present:

Full Members

Mark Giddings, Chair
Nea Glenn
Dennis Fiori
Terry Gregory
Justin King

Associate Members

Luis Berrizbeitia
Kate Chartener
Peter Nobile
Melinda Shumway

Lara Kritzer, Senior Planner

Chair Mark Giddings called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Voting Members for the meeting were Mr. Fiori, Mr. Giddings, Ms. Glenn, Mr. Gregory, and Mr. King.

CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

Marcia Rasmussen, 122-277 Main Street, Main Street Historic District, to install parking signage or meters

Dept. of Planning and Land Management Director Marcia Rasmussen stated that she has spoken with the Concord Free Public Library Representatives following the last meeting and that the Town would now like to install meters only along the Library's Main Street frontage. This would involve installing 14 meters on 8 posts. The rest of Main Street from Sudbury Road to Thoreau Street would use the Pay By Phone system and signage as shown at the last meeting. A Commission Member asked if the Applicant had any luck with getting alternative colors for the signs. She answered that she had not had a chance to pursue the color question yet.

A Commission member asked if this change would work for the Town. The Applicant answered that they were not happy with the reduction but felt it was a good compromise. Another Member stated his feeling that this was a good compromise and asked if the Town would be back in with the revised color scheme for the signs. The Applicant explained that she believed the signs were exempt from review and did not require further approval, but that she would make sure that any new information was passed on to the Commission. A second Member asked how many meters had been eliminated in the course of the application. The Applicant responded that they had planned to install 99 meters on around 50 posts on Main Street and were down to 14 meters on 8 posts.

A Commission Member stated that any new meters were an intrusion to the Historic District and felt that they were unnecessary. A second Member agreed and asked about the reliability of the meters, noting

that several on Walden Street were out of order. The Applicant explained that Concord Center had a problem with weak cellular network coverage and that they were working with the vendor to address the problem by switching some of the meters to stronger networks.

A Commission Member asked how many Pay By Phone signs would be installed in Concord Center. The Applicant answered that she was not sure yet as it would depend on the number of parking zones on Main Street. She expected that they would install two to three signs per block and would be working with the Police and vendor to determine the right number. A second Member asked if the Town would lose 14 parking spaces if the meters were not installed. The Applicant explained that the Library wanted to preserve the free 12 minutes allowed by the meters and preferred the meters to the Pay By Phone option. The Commission Member felt that this area was a sacred public space and was concerned that introducing meters would formalize the parking use in the area. Another Member agreed that this area is a sacred perspective in the Historic District. However, while both Members wanted to retain unobstructed views in the area, they understood the need for the meters. A third Member agreed with the concerns raised and noted that many people only stopped briefly at the Library and would use the 12 minute option. A fourth Member stated that he had been concerned for those parking in the area without smart phones and thought that the meters would provide a practical benefit to the area.

A Commission Member asked if the Town had considered installing the meters in the Stow Street lot instead. The Applicant stated that this could be discussed as the Emerson Umbrella, who shared the use of the lot, wanted to make some changes. The Member asked about installing a kiosk on Main Street. The Applicant stated that this was not a practical option right now but that kiosks were under consideration for the parking lots. Another Member thanked the Applicant for her flexibility with the project and felt that a good compromise had been reached. A third Member asked about the payback time period for the cost of the meters but the Applicant did not have that figure.

The Chair opened the discussion to Public Comment and there was none at this time. Mr. Gregory moved to approve the installation of 14 parking meters on eight posts on Main Street adjacent to the Concord Free Public Library as submitted. Mr. King seconded the motion and the motion passed by a vote of 4-1 with Mr. Fiori voting in opposition to the project.

Jennifer Lozada, 24 Lowell Road, North Bridge/Monument Square Historic District, to replace 3 windows and a porch light fixture

The Applicant had asked for a further continuance of this discussion while she considered restoring the three existing windows instead of repairing them. Members agreed to continue further discussion to the next meeting unless the Applicant chose to restore the windows, in which case the replacement application would be withdrawn.

OTHER BUSINESS

Approval of Minutes – Members had received the draft minutes for the January 19 meeting prior to the meeting and revisions were discussed and submitted at this time. Mr. King moved to approve the January 19 minutes as amended. Ms. Glenn seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

Members had also received the draft minutes for the January 19 Site Visit prior to the meeting for review. Mr. King moved to approve the January 19 Site Visit minutes as written. Ms. Glenn seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

Lastly, a set of Executive Session minutes had been written and revised some time ago but never approved. Mr. Gregory moved to approve the July 30, 2015 Executive Session minutes as submitted. Mr. King seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

New Electronic Vehicle Charging Station – Staff explained that the Concord Municipal Light Plant (CMLP) had won a grant to install an Electronic Vehicle Charging Station in Concord Center and had only recently determined that the only possible location was within the Historic Districts in the Keyes Road parking lot. They had applied for approval of the project and would be coming in on February 16, but needed to have the station installed by February 10 for the grant. Staff presented CMLP’s proposal to install the station at the center of the island in the parking lot and explained that the equipment would match the one already in place in the West Concord Municipal lot. Members expressed concern with the location in the center of the parking lot where it would be highly visible, and suggested that the station be installed along the edge of the parking lot instead, perhaps in the stretch of parking spaces adjacent to the Visitor’s Center and Middlesex Bank. Several Members felt that the project could be considered appropriate if the station was installed in this location instead. Staff agreed to pass this information on to CMLP and see if other options had been considered.

NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS

Bill Clark, 107 Lowell Road, Main Street Historic District, to paint fuel islands and replace fuel pump images

Applicant Bill Clark stated that he was present on behalf of the property owner to seek approval for new signage on the gas pumps. Concord Convenience was switching from Irving to Gulf gasoline and needed to switch out the signage at the top and bottom of the pumps to reflect the change. Members reviewed the submitted signs and expressed concern with the brightness of the design. A Commission Member asked if there was any leeway in the amount of signage or the style of the logo. The Applicant explained that this was Gulf’s corporate signage and that he was not aware of alternatives. He added that it was a legal requirement that the pumps be identified by company.

A Commission Member asked if the company had a “historic districts” option for the signage. The Applicant stated that he was not aware of any other options. Members asked that he contact the company to see if there were any more sedate options available. A second Member asked if the signage at the top of the pump could be removed and the Gulf logo on the bottom reduced to $\frac{3}{4}$ of its current sign and centered on the pump. The Applicant confirmed that the signage would only be decals and would include no lighting or reflective materials. No other signage was proposed at this time.

The Applicant stated that in addition to the pump signs, they also wanted to paint the base of the kiosks and the surrounding bollards a soft gray color. It was noted that the bollards were now bright red and the kiosk black. Members thought that the change in color was fine. The Applicant was asked to see if the signs could be done with the Gulf logo at the same size as the current Irving logo on a white background. For the top of the pumps, it was suggested that these also remain white without the logo. Members expressed their concern that the current proposed signs were too garish for the Historic District. The Applicant agreed to go back to the company and find out about alternative designs.

The Chair opened the discussion to Public Comment and there was none at this time. Further discussion was continued to the February 16 meeting.

Rob Morrison, 63 Monument Street, North Bridge/Monument Square Historic District, to construct a railing at front entrance

Owner Rob Morrison and Blacksmith Willow Zietman presented the application to install new metal railings around the front entrance landing. The Owner explained that they had recently cut back the yews surrounding the porch and now felt that they needed safety railings around the edge of the landing. He proposed to install a new metal railing with a custom decorative bud motif. The Blacksmith presented historical precedents of similar railings on homes of this style and period of construction. She explained that the railings would use the same riveted construction used in the 1890s and explained how these railings are constructed. She reviewed photos of riveted construction to illustrate its appearance and design. She explained that the floral motif that they were using was one found on other Italianate style homes of this era and showed examples of similar designs in Pennsylvania and Louisiana. She noted that in New England, many of these railings turned pickets into cornstalks and explained how the motif would be forged and installed.

Members reviewed the submitted plans and drawings of the railing and its view from the street. It was noted that the porch already had a simple handrail on the stairs and that there were no plans to replace it at this time. Members agreed that the proposal was a beautifully detailed design and had no further questions.

The Chair opened the discussion to Public Comment and there was none at this time. Ms. Glenn moved to approve the installation of new wrought iron railings around the front entrance landing with a floral motif as submitted. Mr. Fiori seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

Samantha Power, 41 Wood Street, Main Street Historic District, to convert barn to writing studio and replace garage doors

Architects John Battle and Robert Drew presented the proposed plans to alter the garage and pony barn structures on the property. Beginning with the garage, the Architects explained that the existing swing doors would be replaced with overhead doors with the same general design and the addition of new trim around the edge of the doors. The same color scheme would be used and the new doors would be custom built to fit the existing openings. The garage was also proposed to have a new light fixture installed to the right of the doors – an “Urban Barn 11 ¼” High Bronze Wall Light” barn style fully shielded downlight with a 72W maximum and an oil rubbed bronze finish.

A Commission Member asked if the new doors would rise up above the height of the opening and recede from view. The Architects answered yes. Another Member liked the variety in the width of the boards making up the existing garage door and wanted to see that maintained. The Architects thought that the detail could be replicated. It was noted that there were currently no light fixtures on the garage and the Architects explained that it was dark in this area at night. They had felt a barn style fixture would be appropriate to the structure. Members agreed to the design of the light fixture so long as it was limited to 60W maximum bulbs.

The discussion turned to the Pony Barn which the Architects explained would be converted into a new writing studio for the Owner. To do this, the existing building would be lifted up and a new floor and foundation installed. They also planned to replace the existing windows with new Marvin windows. The existing arched entrance doors would be replaced with new, slightly smaller door in the same spirit which would serve as shutters to the new French doors installed in the opening. Bollards were proposed to be installed at either side of the entrance to hold the shutter doors open. A new set of

French doors would also be installed with a landing opening into the yard, and several trees that were too close to the building would be removed during the construction. The project would add two new lights, one over each of the new entrances, which would match the one installed on the garage.

The Architects believed the barn to have been added in the mid-twentieth century to the property and noted that the rear facing skylight would not be visible from the street. They added that the new light fixtures were required by the Building code and that all new windows were proposed throughout. The existing color scheme would remain in place with a new band of trim around the bottom of the building. Each entrance would also have a painted wood landing. It was noted that the new bollards would be stone.

The Chair opened the discussion to Public Comment at this time. The Chair read a letter received from Doreen Ihara, 63 Wood Street, in support of the project. Susan Birge, 1 Nashoba Road, also spoke in support of the project at this time.

A Commission Member asked if a site visit was necessary for this project. Members reviewed the site and materials and agreed that since the changes were to outbuildings and did not pose a substantial change to the site that no site visit was necessary at this time. Members noted that there was no product information on the garage doors submitted. The Architects stated that it would be provided.

Mr. Gregory moved to approve the application for the installation of new garage door and the reconstruction of the pony barn as submitted with the condition that all three new exterior lights be limited to 60W maximum bulbs and that further manufacturer's details on the garage doors be submitted for the file. Mr. Fiori seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

The Architects stated that they had specified wood windows but were wondering if there were cases when aluminum clad windows were allowed. They argued that since these were outbuildings and the windows did not face the road, that it would be difficult to tell the difference from the street. A Commission member asked whether there was a visual difference between the aluminum clad and a high gloss painted finish. The Architects explained why they did not think that the difference would be visible. The windows would be Marvin ultimate swinging windows with muntins to match the existing windows. Members agreed to amend the decision to allow the use of aluminum clad windows but added that the doors must be all wood.

OTHER BUSINESS (Continued)

Rules and Regulations Discussion – Copies of the Commission's previously published Rules and Regulations and Administrative Procedures had been sent out to Members for review prior to the meeting. The Chair thought that these documents did a good job of laying out all of the Commission's requirements and asked if other Members had reviewed the documents. Most Members had reviewed them and had no questions at this time. It was noted that the Commission needed to be very clear in both its decisions and the reasoning behind them.

A Commission Member asked a question about examples provided as justifications for changes. She noted that an earlier project had provided samples from other states and wondered about their relevance to Concord. Members discussed this question and agreed that it depended both on the proposed change and where the sample was from, but that an example in another location did not necessarily make a change appropriate in Concord's Historic Districts. Another Member noted that in some cases,

detailing and even homes were available by catalogue in the 19th century and so it was possible that an example from another state could also have existed in Concord.

Mr. Fiori moved to adjourn. Mr. Nobile seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR. The Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Lara Kritzer
Senior Planner

Minutes Approved on: _____

Justin King, Secretary