

CONCORD HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Public Meeting Minutes
June 11, 2020, 7:00 P.M.
Virtual Meeting

Pursuant to notice duly filed with the Town Clerk's office, the Town of Concord Historical Commission held a virtual public meeting on Thursday, June 11, 2020 at 7:00 P.M. using the Zoom meeting platform. Meeting ID: 862 5456 5246 Password: 944769

Commission Members Present: Melissa Saalfield, Thomas Beardsley, Rebecca Lemaitre, Robert Gross, Nancy Nelson and Michael Capizzi

Staff: Heather Gill, Senior Planner

Ms. Saalfield called the meeting to order at 7:03 P.M. by a roll call vote.

1651 and 1657 Main Street Demolition Delay Waiver Request

Meg Sweeny and Shelbie McCormack from NOW Communities attended the meeting. Ms. McCormack explained their desire to request a waiver of the remainder of the demolition review period. Ms. Gill stated that this is the first time that the Commission has received a waiver request, so everyone will be learning as we go tonight. Ms. Gill reminded the Commission the conditions under which they can grant a waiver, which includes a historic structures report.

Ms. Saalfield asked if demolition has been reconsidered, or if they can save portions of the historic buildings. Ms. McCormack stated that they originally intended to save the barn, but found that the current building would not work structurally for the proposed use. Ms. McCormack stated that they are interested in using beams from the barn in the proposed pavilion on the property, and possibly using the barn doors in their new design. Ms. Sweeny stated that they are working with a company to salvage materials from the buildings for re-use. Mr. Gross stated that he is concerned about the disappearing Damon landscape and disappearing "affordable" or more modest housing in town. Ms. McCormack stated that both the house and the barn were for employees of the mill, and the Damon family never lived in them. Ms. Saalfield wondered if they could impose a condition that certain design elements be re-used. Ms. Gill stated that anything that the Commission and the applicant agree upon can be placed in the condition. Ms. Nelson stated that she wishes at least the façade of the barn and house could be saved and re-used. Mr. Beardsley stated that the industrial revolution is often overlooked, and he would like to see as much of it saved and incorporated as possible, as well as a historic plaque on the site. Mr. Gross stated that interpretive signs to summarize the history of the site would be great.

The Commission discussed the proposed name of the development. Ms. McCormack explained that both Damon Village and a Westvale name were considered, but police and fire had issues with those names due to nearby buildings and communities with similar names. Ms. Nelson suggested that they use design elements in the new buildings that somewhat suggest what is being lost. Ms. Saalfield agreed with the above and stated that a historic structures report for both buildings and interpretive signage would also be needed. Ms. Saalfield acknowledged that four months is not a lot of time to do a full historic structures report. Ms. Nelson stated that it would be important to have photo documentation and floorplans included in the reports. Ms. Lemaitre suggested the report includes a history of the property, photos, floorplans and elevations, as well as a history and significance for the two structures. The Commission agreed that the reports would need to be received prior to the waiver being granted.

Ms. Nelson moved to grant a waiver for the remainder of the demolition delay period under the following conditions:

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1. The applicant submits a modified Historic Structures Report on both 1651 and 1657 Main Street to include, photo documentation of the interior and exterior of the structures, floorplans, elevations, and a narrative of the building's history and significance;
2. The applicant submits language to be used on the interpretive signage on the site;
3. The applicant has made an effort to use design elements from the two structures being demolished in the new buildings on the site;

With the condition that the reports are to be reviewed and approved by the Chair of the Historical Commission and Planning Department staff prior to a demolition permit being issued. Mr. Gross seconded the motion and all others voted in favor by a roll call vote. The motion passed (5-0).

111 Ripley Hill Road Demolition Delay Waiver Request

Jim Kelley and Mark White from Bentley Builders attended the meeting. Mr. White stated that they are also requesting a waiver of the demolition delay period and they would propose the same conditions that were just approved for the Main Street properties.

Mr. Gross stated that the real estate photos appear to show a livable house, and asked why they are not renovating the existing structure. Mr. White explained why they are not renovating. The Commission discussed the fact that two structures will be placed on this property. Ms. Saalfield stated that the development history of this area and neighborhood will be important to include in a historic structures report. Mr. Capizzi stated that he concurs with the need for a report with the items discussed included. The Commission discussed the process and time timeline of granting a waiver. The Commission had a brief discussion on the design elements of the house. Ms. Lemaitre stated that she doesn't feel as strongly about requiring design elements to be incorporated and for interpretive signage for this property. The Commission concurred.

Mr. Capizzi moved to grant a waiver for the remainder of the demolition delay period under the following conditions:

1. The applicant submits a modified Historic Structures Report on 111 Ripley Hill Road to include, photo documentation of the interior and exterior of the structures, floorplans, elevations, and a narrative of the building and site's history and significance.

With the condition that the reports are to be reviewed and approved by the Chair of the Historical Commission and Planning Department staff prior to a demolition permit being issued. Mr. Gross seconded the motion and all others voted in favor by a roll call vote. The motion passed (5-0).

Discussion – Article 48

Ms. Saalfield briefly summarized article 48 for the Commission. Mr. Capizzi asked if Planning was consulted about this article. Ms. Gill stated that they were not consulted. Ms. Nelson asked what may be on the warrant for Town Meeting given the current situation. Susan Bates stated that urgent articles will be taken up and non-urgent articles will be taken up at a subsequent town meeting. Mr. Gross stated that it would be helpful to understand why the Library and the Concord Museum were nominating committees when the bylaw was enacted.

Updates

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Ms. Gill stated that the property at 15 Middle Street was found to be not historically significant.

Ms. Saalfield stated that she cannot attend the upcoming Chair's breakfast and would look for a volunteer to attend in her place. Ms. Nelson will attend the meeting.

Ms. Saalfield stated that she has contacted Mass Historical with questions about how to update the historic resources masterplan. She explained that Mass Historical has asked if she would share the Commission's contact information and she wanted to make sure everyone was okay with that first. The Commission was fine with their contact information being given to Mass Historical.

Ms. Nelson stated that she is paying close attention to the Rte 2A repaving project.

Ms. Nelson moved to adjourn. Mr. Capizzi seconded the motion and all others voted in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 P.M.

Minutes Approved: 9-10-2020

Respectfully submitted by:
Heather Gill
Senior Planner