

Town of Edgartown

Historic District Commission
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~Historic District Commission~

Minutes



Thursday, February 21, 2019

Members in attendance: Christopher Scott, Susan Catling, Peter Rosbeck, Julia Celeste, Edith Blake, Cassie Bradley & Ken Magnuson. Staff: Bricque Garber

Mr. Scott opened the meeting at 4:03 and explained the procedure for public hearing.

Public Hearing: 73 N. Water St. (20D-289) Brian Mann. Applicant proposes to add a ~~single car~~ garage, pool, detached bedroom & add/and modify pool fencing. There was a site visit prior to the hearing. Mr. Scott read the Public Hearing Notice. Mr. Mann made his presentation, reviewing photos and the plans for the project. He noted that the front door is the most photographed feature of his house. The current plan eliminates the garage as was in the first plan. Brian Mann described the detached bedroom as planned, including the details and location of the proposed structure, fencing, pool and location of the pool equipment. He noted the materials list as: white clapboards, (shingle on side) PVC trim. He indicated the additions to the existing fencing and the locations of the new fencing (the plan is color coded). The pool equipment will be placed in the basement or near the detached bedroom and was described as a low noise. Mr. Mann explained that the fence color could be white, green or natural at the suggestion or preference of the HDC. Noting his expectation that the abutter will object he displayed a chart outlining the lot coverage between this project and that of Ms. Tharp's project at 90 N. Water St.

The Chairman asked HDC members if they have questions, for Mr. Mann, regarding clarification on the application. There being none, Mr. Scott opened the hearing for public comment. There were comments in favor from the audience. Ms. Tharp (abutter) and Ms. Casavant (attorney for Ms. Tharp) spoke in opposition. Ms. Tharp provided a package of information for the members and discussed the elevations of the lot and concerns for runoff to hardscape and requested a plan for water control, noting that there is no certified lot survey regarding elevations on the lot. Ms. Tharp described the proposed building as being too tall, too skinny, and having faux windows which are not a compliment to the main house or the streetscape. Ms. Tharp questioned the historic integrity of the plan. She noted that the 4 ft. fence at parking area and the plan for the 6 ft. fence create disadvantages for Ms. Tharp's property. Ms. Casavant provided written findings and requested the HDC consider the arguments. She read the 4 points from her handout which included: views, streetscape, open space & scale of the proposed structures. She encouraged the HDC to deny the application. Cari Williamson read a

letter of opposition from Charlie Blair, Harbormaster and a letter from Barbara Jordan, abutter, also in opposition. Mr. Mann spoke to address the opposition and said that he has discussed, with the Harbormaster, the plan and has gained his support. He addressed the objections of Ms. Jordan saying it is a small building. He noted that there are minor grade changes and all are clearly marked on the plan and noted his contention that there are no grading issues. Ms. Tharp said that the grade appears to be steep and requested a formal certification of the grade.

There being no further public comment, Mr. Scott closed Public Hearing. Members then discussed and reviewed materials presented. Mr. Scott said that there are detached bedrooms on North Water St., but not on a corner lot noting that most of the lots on North Water are deep with minimal frontage and therefore the pools and out buildings are not visible from the public way. Mr. Scott further noted a previous application that for a detached building to be built in the green space in front of the Sydney Hotel. At that time, the HDC found that the proposal was out of scale with adjacent historic structures and was not appropriate on the iconic streetscape. Susan Catling noted that she sees the outbuilding proportions as concerning and sees this as a discussion about the streetscape. She is concerned about the distinct visibility of the pool on the most iconic street in Edgartown. Chris Scott noted that a pool is a structure, and while we don't generally discuss pools, this one is a very visible structure. Julia Celeste finds that this is a uniquely shaped lot with frontage on 2 historic streets; in effect this house has 2 front yards. The suggested addition of this outbuilding is challenging on this lot, landscaping, notwithstanding. Ken Magnuson described the scale and design are not favorable for this location, and he sees no precedent here, regarding other properties on N. Water St. as this is a very different property. Ken further noted that the plan gives up its green/open space. Cassie Bradley agreed that the proposed new construction does not contribute to the streetscape of N. Water St. Chris Scott noted the comments from the board that the detached structure is of inappropriate scale and design, suggested that the applicant might consider the feasibility of an addition to the house, in order obtain another bedroom. Mr. Scott, noting the member comments asked the applicant if he would like to reconsider the application, or if the applicant would like the members to vote. Brian Mann, noting his observation that the HDC would likely deny the application, asked to withdraw his application. But, asked the members if they would consider one story structure to be a better idea. Mr. Scott explained that a guest house/detached bedroom in that location on that lot is not seen by the HDC to enhance the streetscape, and a small detached structure is not viewed as favorable. Motion to allow the applicant to withdraw Julia Celeste. 2nd, Susan Catling. Unanimously approved for withdrawal.

Public Hearing: 93 School St. (19A-4.1) Jason Loomis. Patrick Ahearn/agent. Applicant proposes 100% demolition of house and garage, and construction of a new single family dwelling and carriage house. There was a site visit prior to the hearing. Mr. Scott read the Public Hearing Notice. Mr. Ahearn provided a letter from the Loomis's and a copy was provided to the members, as was the Structural Report. Mr. Rosbeck noted that he lives on the same street but is not a direct abutter and does not see any conflict in his review of the application. Mr. Ahearn made his presentation noting his long association with the property and described the Structural Engineer's letter. He described the house as a mishmash of additions and poor construction techniques and noted that

the owners always planned to demo and replace the house when they were able. He further outlined the poor construction, lack of foundation, etc. In describing the proposed new construction, he said that the Loomis' wanted to "be quiet on the street" and chose the Federal Colonial style as the architectural style they desired and this plan is responsive to the program. He said that overall lot coverage was considered in planning the new house. He described the open space and neighboring lot, and said that no swimming pool is anticipated. Patrick provided the resume of the owners and provided a letter from the owners, to the members. He noted the streetscape study as provided with the plans and described neighboring house styles noting that there are more farm houses as the street moves down. The proposed house on 3 levels is 3800 square feet, 31.6 inches tall and code compliant. He said that the current house is quite close to the street. He then provided the materials list. Chimneys to be brick painted white, Pella windows, brick veneer foundation, cedar roof, proper shutters with pins and holdbacks. Mr. Ahearn said there is an 'implied' history in this new construction plan. He noted that the plan includes a detached 5th bedroom.

Chairman Scott asked members if they had any questions as to clarification of the application? There being none, Mr. Scott opened the Public Hearing and asked if there was anyone in the room wishing to speak in favor of the application. Mr. Tommy Fisher said that he has no objection to tearing down the house, but is not in favor of the proposed, new construction design. He thinks that a more simple design, shingled, would be a better choice as this new house is not a good comment to what is there and does not fit in the neighborhood, and he objects to the sameness of the design. Patrick rebutted the argument by Mr. Fisher and there was a discussion of shingle vs. clapboard. Mr. Ahearn acknowledged that shingle house would create a 'different' house.

Cari Williamson read several letters (in file) as submitted by abutters. In favor: Berend Veldhoen, Paul & Cindy Milton & Michael Hershfield.

In opposition: Alwyn H. Taylor, Robert Brown (concerns about the HDC procedure and consistency). Gregory Polermo.

Patrick Ahearn addressed various concerns and noted that this house is a mini version of the Shinn house whether in clapboard or shingle. Mrs. Loomis said that this new house is their dream and noted their history in Edgartown. Chris Scott explained while members may be sensitive to personal narrative it is not why we are here, the architecture remains long after any one family occupies the house and this board is charged with the preservation of historic structures and the historic streetscapes of the district.

There being no further comment, the Public Hearing was closed: Mr. Scott noting this application is asking for 100% demolition, read from the guidelines, noting the preference of the HDC for retention of historic structures. He said that Engineer's Report does not conclude that the house must be demolished for cause but that correction of defects is a cost argument. It was further noted, by Mr. Scott, that it is clear that the structure has been altered but the original shingled farm house is evident. Mr. Scott told the applicant that the HDC had only received a cursory history of the building and thus had done further study as to the history. Susan Catling believes, from the

documentation she has gathered, that this is an 1828 farm house that was moved to this location from Chilmark. Susan described the details in the records, including the land purchase in 1890 and the documentation that house was moved from here from Chilmark. She said it is conclusive that the house was either moved or built new by 1898. It was further noted that the HDC is not in favor of demolishing old houses. Patrick asked for picture of the 1894 house, and maintained that the house as referenced may not be the same house.

Mrs. Loomis offered to give the house back to Chilmark. Mr. Ahern discussed saving the main box as an out building. He thinks that only the box matches with the story line as the history is described. It was noted that MACRIS is incorrect in this case. Julia Celeste noted that the new house does not work here as a replacement for a historic house which does not even resemble the existing house. Chris Scott noted that this is clearly a historic structure that changes should begin with the retention of the historic structure. Julia Celeste noted that the new house is a completely different style. Ms. Loomis discussed costs associated with the project and her desire to build new noting that they believed that the house has no historical significance. Ken Magnuson explained that the purpose and mandate of the Historic District expansion was to protect these houses. It was further noted that this application makes no consideration of the existing historic farm house. Several members noted that they would like to see a plan that begins with the existing farm house and makes appropriate additions that are subordinate to the historic home. There was considerable discussion regarding the application, which culminated with Mr. Ahern requesting to withdraw the application. Motion to allow the applicant to withdraw, Julia Celeste. 2nd, Susan Catling. Approved to withdraw the application.

Public Hearing: 59 School St. (20D-146) Bud & Chari Polley. Conover
 Restoration/agent. Applicant proposes to lift original 1840 house relocate & restore on a new foundation. Remove non-historic additions to main house and replace with new additions and garage. There was a site visit prior to the hearing. Mr. Scott read the Public Hearing Notice. Julia noted that Mr. Conover has worked for her in the past and she is impartial with regard to the application being presented. Gerrett Conover made the presentation noting the building is currently 18 ft. off the road. The original structure is 840 sq. ft. He provided the drawings and described the site in detail and explained that they have moved the garage further off the street creating a 10 ft difference between the structures. The garage has been reduced from the original presentation and the main house will be 15 ft. (average of houses on street) off the street. He proposes to do a renovation of the house with the garage and connector addition. He described the materials list noting the chimney will stay brick painted white with a black cap. He presented a 3D drawing to illustrate the garage location vs. the house which was difficult to see from the flat drawings. The proposal is to use clapboards, on front of the historic house, with all the rest shingles. The chimney is to be rebuilt in the same location and same size and the foundation will be brick veneer. There was no request from members for clarification of the proposal. There were no public comments for or opposed to the application. Four letters in support of the project were read by Cari Williamson. Letters from: Virginia Mortara. Nancy & Alan Brenner, Kathy-Ann & Edward Gage and Donna Wais.

There being no further comment, the Public Hearing was closed. Mr. Scott opened the hearing for members comment: Susan Catling said that she appreciated the change with regard to the garage location and sees it as a big improvement in the plan. Julia Celeste asked about the front steps of the house and rail detail. Gerrett Conover said it will be square balusters and pineapple finial and will provide a drawing of the railing detail. Chris Scott commended the work and scale given and noted that this is respectful of the historic house. Ken Magnuson applauded the subtle design of the additions. Julia asked about the shingles and shutters and Gerrett said he will provide detail. Peter likes the formalization of the clapboard, on the front of the primary house with the shingled parts subordinate. Chris agrees that the clapboard calls the house out as the artifact and the addition in shingles, is a nod toward the history. Chris Scott made the motion to approve with the following conditions: Brick steps on porch white posts and railings with pineapples, white clapboard on the street facing façade of the historic house and shingle walls on the additions. Windows above garage to be lowered approx. 8 inches and separated by approx.10-12 inches. Ken Magnuson, 2nd. Unanimously Approved.

Change to approved plan: 56 N. Water St. (20D-226) Edgartown Inn. Chuck Sullivan/agent. Peter Gearhart made the presentation. Explaining that part of the building which is an addition was found during construction to be in very poor condition. He noted that just as the foundation needs to be replaced so does this part of the structure to be removed and replaced. Applicant proposes to remove and replace the rear portion of the existing structure to match approved plans and rebuild chimney. Cari and Molly swapped place with Cassie and Julia as they sat on the original application. The chimney will be rebuilt too. The plans were reviewed and it was noted that this will not alter the appearance of what was approved. Ken foundation? A: Brick. Motion to approve, Susan Catling, 2nd Molly Costello. Approved.

Old/New Business

- Review of pool fencing: 100 School St. & 16 Pent Lane: Concise plans for the pool fencing for both the properties were presented to the members. Motion to approve both, Ken Magnuson. 2nd, Cassie Bradley. Approved.
- Demolition Guidelines revisions. Members reviewed the changes to the Demolition Guidelines. Motion to approve changes, Julia Celeste. 2nd, Susan Catling. Approved.

Minutes 2.7.19: Motion to approve, Julia Celeste. Ken Magnuson 2nd. Approved.

Respectfully submitted:

Bricque Garber, Assistant

Approved: _____ 3.7.19