

Town of Edgartown
Historic District Commission
Post Office Box 5158 ~ 70 Main St.
Edgartown, MA 02539
508 627-6155 ~ HDC@edgartown-ma.us

~Historic District Commission~

Minutes

Thursday, May 17, 2018



Members in attendance: Christopher Scott-Chairman, Susan Catling-Vice-Chairman, Julia Celeste, Cassie Bradley, Edith Blake, Cari Williamson (A), Carole Berger. Absent: Ken Magnuson. Staff: Bricque Garber

Mr. Scott called the meeting to order at 4:18 PM.

Public Hearing: 16 Pent Lane (20D-50) Brad Jensen & Carolyn Blackwood. Patrick Ahearn/agent. Applicant proposes demolition of cottage and construction of a new 3 BR house & garage with detached bedroom & pool. Mr. Scott recused himself from this hearing. Mr. Ahearn made his presentation. Mr. Ahearn presented the plans for the proposed house and a “new” plan for the garage/detached bedroom. Susan chairing the hearing described the procedure for a public hearing. Susan read the PH Notice. The homeowners Mr. Jensen and Ms. Blackwood attended the hearing. Patrick described the ZBA approval. He read from the decision including approval of the plan for the house the detached garage and detached bedroom above. He described the project as meeting the zoning setbacks. Pool equipment will be placed inside the garage. Owners agreed to have a licensed arborist on site for construction to assure the preservation of the Stewartia tree. He continued to read from the ZBA application noting the comparables in the area with regard to the size of the proposed construction and described a plan to mitigate neighbor’s concerns. He noted that there were no restrictions placed on the project by ZBA. Patrick read from the ZBA record of findings including positive comments of individual Board members.

Patrick said that it is important to note that this project is sized appropriately for the neighborhood. The plan as submitted is identical to that provided to ZBA with exception of changes to the proposed garage/detached bedroom. Patrick presented the plans as were previously presented to this Commission and were provided to the ZBA members. They were displayed on the meeting room screen. He provided letters of support. He explained that the front fence will be lowered, from the previous submission, as requested by the members in the last meeting, to allow a view of the green-space and 2nd structure. Patrick noted that Commissioners asked, at the previous meeting, if the applicant would repurpose part of the small cottage. He said the owners had resisted, noting that they wanted what was approved by the ZBA, but eventually presented a plan to repurpose the right part of the structure as a compromise. He proposed a modification of the garage and compared the 2

versions of the plans. Patrick noting that the 2nd floor living space is eliminated, in this plan, with a retention of the right side (48% of the structure) with an elevation to the roof/ceiling height that results in lowering the overall roof by 2 feet (from the ZBA approved garage plan). It appears, due to the reduction of the height and sq. ft. that this will not force a full hearing from ZBA. (though ZBA must review). Two opposition letters were read to the Commission from abutters, Croteau and Tankard. Patrick addressed the letters re: density & setbacks and debated the merits of the letters. He presented biographical information noting achievements in his field and noted 177 residential projects, over 25 years, have been completed in Edgartown. He does not believe the abutters really understand the village and how density benefits the village. He believes the opinions of the abutters are misguided. He noted that this cottage design has been replicated over time in the village. The design was carefully thought through. He again noted the positive comments of the members of the ZBA and other abutters. He believes the house, when completed will be silent on the streetscape. Noting that the houses are very close to the street on one side of Pent Lane and on the other side is a service lane. He and his clients strongly believe this is the right solution for the house in its proposed configuration. There was a discussion of the Tree: Patrick noted that the Stewartia tree is not a public shade tree, and could be cut down, but the owners want to protect the tree, and will hire an arborists noting they will not damage the tree. They will have a gravel area to park 2 cars in tandem and they propose to do the “right thing” to care for the tree.

Mr. Ahearn requested a vote on the main house as the first part of the plan. Mrs. Blackwood spoke to address the Croteau letter. She felt it important to address parts of the presentation to the ZBA, explaining that they too, have a great affection for the village and they too, feel strongly about their desire to live in the Edgartown village. Mr. Jensen noted that the letter that was referred to, in the Croteau letter, by Mr. Dyroff was a different plan, than what is currently proposed. Ms. Blackwood said she very much wants to preserve the tree and noted that the Dyroffs are in favor of the current plan. Ms. Blackwood noted that they want to be responsive to any legitimate concerns.

Susan Catling provided information as to the processes that are used for making decisions by the HDC. She read from the reference materials including The Place of Houses. She noted the variety of styles, ages and sizes of homes and buildings that make up the village saying that the town has a rich collection of diverse architectural styles including Greek Revival, colonial, Victorian, Mission and Federal. Quoting Christopher Scott “They vary widely both in age and in architectural styles,” said Christopher Scott, executive director of the Martha’s Vineyard Preservation Trust. “There is one place right in front of the Daniel Fisher house where you can see eight different architectural styles.” She read from Keeping Time about “little buildings” describing the loss of small buildings as a visual loss to the community. She read from the National Register Nomination Form, noting bungalow cottages are an integral part of the historic streetscapes.

Ms. Catling opened the hearing to the HDC members to discuss the new house. Julia noted that the lowering of the fence is very helpful and is appreciated. It was explained that the pool fence will be at the rear of the house. Mr. Ahearn confirmed that there were no changes from the previous presentation regarding the new house. There were no further member comments regarding the new construction (3 bedroom house).

Cassie Bradley discussed the retention of the part of the current house, as was discussed in the previous meeting. She noted that this plan does not appear to repurpose part of the cottage providing a valuable retention of the building. She noted that the addition of garage doors change the cottage into a garage and the value of the cottage is lost. There was a discussion regarding the plan, as presented, to repurpose almost 1/2 of the cottage. Julia Celeste agreed that the cottage noting the left side of the cottage is more interesting as it has a chimney but can understand the desire to keep the left side to be seen from the street. She noted that she would like to see the repurposing to still read as the cottage, as it exists, with perhaps the addition of a chimney.

Patrick said that the owners wanted to keep what was approved by ZBA but sees the newer plan (with garage doors) as a compromise. Julia and Cassie noted that they do not agree and feel it more appropriate to see a reflection of the current building. Susan and Carole agreed. Susan noted the difficulty in attempting to date the origins of the cottage but the HDC has looked to saving other buildings that had become part of the village streetscape. Patrick explained his view that there is no architectural merit to the cottage and he does not see it as a relevant building. Discussion ensued as to evaluating the merit of a structure, and the basis for preserving what is there. Patrick does not see this building as having much value and sees the newer garage plan (repurposing part of the cottage) as reasonable as they have eliminated the 2nd floor living space. He noted that this plan reduced the living space by 300+ sq. ft. He said that the owners want to be able to park their Jeep in the garage for the off-season. Cassie noted that the lowering of the roof line is a good step but does not like the garage doors as they change the building substantially.

However, said Mr. Ahearn, the proportions could be made better by lowering the roof line more. He provided a new plan eliminating the garage doors, which reads from the street as a small cottage, creating better proportions. He described the "scheme D" plan as "like a little jewel box at the rear of the property" that celebrates cottage and creates an implied history. This plan fits in better and feels nice and preserves 50% of the cottage, changing the carriage doors to windows. He noted that from a historical point of view this plan is more historically correct. Revisiting proportions and scale of the cottage and seems to better reflect the history of the village. Susan noted that in the 1940's this cottage was living space. The 2 elements of the cottage were likely combined in 1952. Susan noted that the (scheme D) plan creates an implied cottage at the rear of the property. There was a discussion regarding the setback, height of doors, windows, etc. Patrick noted that height of the ridge would be raised by 3'6" creating a more correct proportion. Discussion ensued. Regarding a cottage door, it was agreed that door on the front creates the look of a cottage. There being no further input from the public, Susan closed the public hearing. Susan asked members if anybody thinks they need more time to review the plans. Julia Celeste said she feels ready to make a motion. Motion to approve the plan for the construction of the 3 bedroom house as proposed, noting the house is appropriate, scaled correctly and reads as friendly to the streetscape, with the latest plan (Scheme D) for the 2nd structure, as a detached pavilion with bath and enclosure for pool equipment, repurposing approx. 1/2 of the existing cottage, with an increase in ridge height of 3'6" and adding a street facing door and chimney, Julia Celeste. 2nd, Cassie Bradley. Unanimously Approved. Plans were

amended and signed by Mr. Ahearn and Vice-Chairman Catling. Additional drawings, illustrating the approved changes will be provided by Mr. Ahearn to the HDC and the ZBA.

Public Hearing: 66 N. Water St. (20D-233) Postponed from 4.19.18 at the request of the agent. Fred & Lisa Murrell. Patrick Ahearn/agent. Applicant proposes to remove existing garage and guesthouse, add new foundation & add addition to the main house on south side. Patrick said the house was constructed in 1820 and altered in 1845. A bay window was added fin 1923-1940. In 1973 Steve Gentle owned the property. The lot may be the most deep in the entire village. He noted that the depth of the lot allows for privacy. The house currently has vinyl siding and in 1989 a widows walk was added. His plan shows what is visible from the public way. They are proposing to remove the vinyl siding and the aluminum windows. Front elevation was described as “slightly off kilter”, but could be left as is. Mr. Ahearn said that he is looking for guidance. It was noted that the ‘widow’s walk’ is off center and could be made more symmetrical. Windows on the front facade are off center but appear to be original configuration. All windows will be replaced with Pella Architectural Series. All elevations were discussed and Patrick illustrated the proposed changes. There is an addition of a 2nd chimney on the opposite side of the widow’s walk. Questions: Carole Berger noted that she appreciates the off center windows and sees them as appropriate to this building. Cari Williamson agreed that what is described as “off kilter” creates part of the charm and she thinks it should be left, as is. Patrick noted that he is fine with leaving the façade as is. Julia asked about the garage and wondered if it will comply with current code. The current garage will be removed as it is currently on the property line. Chris noted the treatment of the sides, stepping back, is a good idea, saying that the new plan is preferential to the existing bay. Chris thinks the finish of a 2nd chimney is a good choice. When polled, all members prefer that the street facing façade stays, as is. Per Cassie’s question it was noted the front door treatment will stay as is. Widow’s walk benches will be removed. Cari asked about the look of the widow’s walk that is 1989 and noted that it is not very well detailed. She wondered if they are willing to look at existing, village, widow’s walks for, what might be, a better idea as it now reads more like a roof deck. Julia noted the loss of the view of the large space with the new garage. Susan agreed, noting that the garage is more forward and reduces the view. Patrick noted that he used the garage-line as established by the Warren house as the location for the garage. Chris noted the positive tradeoff of the proposed 1 car vs. the 2 car garage but agreed that the new location reduces the view. Susan agreed that the one car garage is a good choice but noted that the current garage is farther back, on the lot, so there is a view of green space. Carole agreed that there is a problem with the garage location wondering if it can be moved back on the lot. Susan, too, wondered if there could be some compromise on the location of the garage given that this is a very large lot. Patrick reviewed the plans and noted that it may be possible to move the garage to the location of the current garage which is estimated to be back 18-20 additional feet. Discussion ensued and it was noted that removing the bay would create more view of green space.

George Brush, for the abutter, spoke referencing the vantage point of the abutter. He noted that this plan represents a 70% increase in ground area. Speaking for his client, he noted the increase as regards proportion and scale, as a problem. He said that it doesn’t seem right to have this large addition and would like to see some relief regarding the back

side of the property. Mr. Brush sees the mass from the street view as concerning. He noted that the property needs to be renovated and sees many positives. Patrick discussed the concerns, noting that the proposed change is approx. 8 feet longer than the existing wing, and that this plan steps toward the inside twice. Julia asked about the height of what is proposed vs. what is existing. Julia asked if the proposed roof is taller than existing? A: The middle section matches the existing and is not taller than the historic house. Patrick noted that the pitch of the existing roof might be changed to reduce the height. There was a review of plans and discussion regarding the height and the abutters concerns. Elevations were compared and discussed. Julia noted that a reduction of the height would be helpful and create a compromise. Mr. Brush noted the addition of windows on the 2nd floor of the North side creates a view into what was previously private. Mr. Scott noted that a mass of wall space without any windows would not be viewed as a positive plan, by the HDC. Motion to continue for changes to the widow's walk, the addition of a chimney, possible change in ridge height and location of the garage. Julia Celeste, 2nd, Susan Catling. Unanimously voted to be continued to June 7, 2018. Mr. Ahearn and Ms. Catling will view and discuss possible design changes for the widow's walk, prior to the June 7 meeting.

84 Peases. (20B-59) John and Cyndy O'Hara. Patrick Ahearn/agent .

House: Applicant proposes to add 1,645 sq. ft. addition at rear, relocate bay window, add 215 sq. ft., entry porch add Nantucket dormer at rear, south and north side. Add new basement foundation, new wood roof and cedar siding, brick veneer foundation, new chimney, Pella windows. Barn: New doors, dormers, windows, cedar roof. Cottage: New French doors, will be on windows, wood roof, siding, shutters throughout. Motion to send to public hearing on June 21st, with a site visit prior to the meeting on June 7th, Julia Celeste. 2nd, Susan Catling. Approved to move forward for Public Hearing.

53 S. Water St. (20D-330.3) Change to approved plan. Paul Ronan. Patrick Ahearn/agent. Applicant proposes to modify plan to adjust street side elevation, retain existing boat shed, removed from approved plan and add new doors and windows to existing boat shed. Patrick made the presentation for the proposed changes to the approved plan which removes the current garage door and adds windows. The current revision changes the window pattern to retain the existing bathroom window. There was no support, by the Commission for the further changes to the house. Patrick withdrew the part of the application that deals with other changes. The south elevation will remain as approved and no changes, from the approved plan, to that side were approved. Boat house to be retained (previously approved to be demolished) with windows added and doors replaced, keeping the existing front elevation door with addition of a 4 light window. Cassie prefers the retention of the current boat shed doors. Addition of 4 light window to the existing sliding boat shed doors (2) in the rear. Motion to approve, Julia Celeste. 2nd, Cassie Bradley. Approved.

New/Old Business:

**May include matters not reasonably anticipated within 48 hours of meeting.*

Minutes: April 3, 2018

Motion to approve minutes, Carole Berger. 2nd, Susan Catling. Approved.

The meeting was adjourned @ 7:20

Respectfully submitted:

Bricque Garber, Assistant

Approved: _____ June 7, 2018
Christopher Scott, Chairman