

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

Brookline Preservation Commission
MINUTES OF THE August 10, 2021 MEETING
Held Virtually using Zoom Online Software

Commissioners Present:

David Jack
Richard Panciera, Vice Chair
Elton Elperin, Chair
Wendy Ecker
Elizabeth Armstrong, Alternate
John Spiers, Alternate
Peter Kleiner
Jim Batchelor
David King

Commissioners Absent:

Staff: Tina McCarthy

Minutes

There were no minutes for approval.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Mr. Elperin asked Ms. Armstrong to vote for Mr. King and Ms. Armstrong agreed. (Mr. King later joined the meeting.)

PUBLIC HEARINGS – DEMOLITION

260 Lee Street – Application for the demolition of the house (Jeffrey Cook & Pamela Tublin Cook, applicants). **Precinct 14**

Attorney Jennifer Dopazo Gilbert expressed her opinion that the house is not significant. Rugo is not an architect. There was no social relevance and no pattern of development. It's an ugly two-story building.

Public Comment – None

Mr. King thanked the applicant for the review of architectural history and agreed that the building is not significant. The design is haphazard, though the siting is nice.

Ms. Ecker agreed that the house is not attractive.

47 Mr. Panciera agreed, stating that there is no pattern of development. The design is derivative and
48 that of an amateur.

49
50 Mr. Kleiner expressed his appreciation of modern architecture, noting that the Commission should
51 not keep bad examples.

52
53 Mr. Panciera moved that the house be found not significant. Mr. Elperin seconded the motion. All
54 voted in favor of the motion.

55
56

57 **PUBLIC HEARINGS- LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS**

58
59 **60 High Street (Pill Hill LHD)** – Continuation - Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to
60 construct a glass connector between the rear of the house and garage, redesign the garage door,
61 relocate a kitchen window, replace a bulkhead, enlarge and alter basement windows and window
62 wells, and install associated mechanical equipment to convert the existing HVAC system to a high
63 efficiency condensing boiler. (Aamodt/Plumb Architecture, Construction and Development,
64 applicant). **Precinct 4**

65
66 Ms. McCarthy presented the case.

67
68 Applicant Andrew Plumb explained the change of roof to connector fence to terraced window well
69 is metal in material.

70
71 **Public Comment**

72
73 Thomas Mitchie of 68 High Street stated that the terraced window well will be very visible and
74 inappropriate.

75
76 Diana Post stated that she lives two houses away on High Street, and that the terraced window well
77 is out of character and that the commission should revisit that issue. She said she did not understand
78 window well covers.

79
80 Scott Schareir of 28 Allerton Street is an abutter, and thanked the applicant for moving the exhaust.
81 He said he likes the glass connector. He voiced concern about the window wells, especially at night.
82 The large window well is going to be very visible.

83
84 Ruta Brickus stated that she is strongly opposed to the terraced window well. The size is against the
85 guidelines and would set a bad precedent.

86
87 Andrew Plumb recalled the mock-up presented at the site visit. He said there are no guidelines for
88 the size of window wells.

89
90 Window Wells

91
92 Mr. Kleiner stated that he was unsure of precedents.

93

94 Mr. Elperin recalled that the commission allowed some larger window wells on Walnut Street and
95 Graffam McKay to allow for egress, but none as large as this. Being new doesn't mean it's wrong,
96 and the commission should discuss it. A person may be able to see 1' to 1/2' of the windows below
97 grade. The grade is raised from street level.
98

99 Mr. King said that the mock-up did not seem obtrusive, but the rendering is deceptive and shows
100 more than is visible at street level. The applicant has done a lot of other work to improve the design.
101 He didn't think it is disruptive. The grade change to High Street makes it not visible there. It's an
102 unusual request, but we want to work with people and he didn't think it is unreasonable.
103

104 Mr. Batchelor stated that he was concerned because this conversion of basement space is happening
105 a lot. Brookline needs more dwelling units, but this proposal is not good. If drawn in elevation, this
106 basement picture window would be out of place. The commission should have some principals in
107 this situation. The scale of windows should be appropriate to house, the size of a single window. As
108 long as it's needed for code there should be one window or two individual windows.
109

110 Mr. Elperin asked whether the commission knew how much of this is visible from Allerton Street.
111 He stated that the commission needed more information, as there was disagreement about visibility.
112

113 Mr. Batchelor said that the house is very visible, and the window well is set in a façade. The
114 commission could look at 3D renderings but he thinks it is visible.
115

116 Mr. Elperin stated that basement windows should relate to those above. Visibility is key, but
117 windows should glow at night.
118

119 Mr. Batchelor stated that big picture windows are not appreciated in LHDs.
120

121 Mr. Spiers said that on site it seemed less visible, but built it would be different. Maybe add a rail
122 on front to give it less of a subway station feeling. A depth of 6' may be much better, though still
123 bigger than normal.
124

125 Mr. King said that the window depth would require a fence or stone wall.
126

127 Mr. Elperin stated that the commission needs to see a physical mock-up.
128

129 Ms. Armstrong stated that the guidelines say no new openings on facades. While we want to allow
130 for more density, this is beyond what is necessary.
131

132 Mr. Elperin stated that he didn't like the stone wall and didn't like the fence.
133

134 Ms. Ecker asked why does it have to be so big.
135

136 Mr. Panciera asked whether it is for egress, stating that he thought it is for daylight.
137

138 Ms. Armstrong stated that it is a creative solution but not for an LHD. The elevation has to make
139 sense, and the use of window wells should be appropriate.
140

141 Ms. Ecker agreed, stating that the design was not appropriate.

142
143 Mr. Elperin observed that there was a desire for a different design for the window well. He suggested
144 that the commission separate this and send it back to the subcommittee. The commission could then
145 take up the rest of the design.

146
147 Glass Connector

148
149 Mr. Panciera stated that the proposed design is more successful than the previous submission. He
150 thinks it's okay, and the slate in the cricket is great. The applicant may need to show more drawn
151 details for construction.

152
153 Garage Doors

154
155 Mr. Spiers and Mr. Panciera agreed that the doors are fine.

156
157 Relocation of Rear Window and Vents

158
159 Mr. Panciera stated that the subcommittee worked on the vents and window and the proposed design
160 seemed like the best option. He thinks it's acceptable.

161
162 Mr. Elperin asked whether vents can be that close to a window.

163
164 Mr. Plumb stated that he thinks so, and would need to check with the contractor. The issue is that it
165 reduces space for insulation.

166
167 Mr. Elperin asked that Mr. Plumb find out and report back to the subcommittee.

168
169 Covers on Window Wells

170
171 Mr. Elperin stated that he doesn't like the covers.

172
173 Mr. King stated that the subcommittee felt the applicant really wanted covers, so they pushed them
174 down so they would be unobtrusive.

175
176 Mr. Plumb said they felt this is a maintenance and safety hazard, and they want nice livable space.
177 The covers are not very visible, less than 12" above grade, and are used on Walnut Street.

178
179 Mr. Panciera inquired about egress and Mr. Plumb answered that one has egress via a hatch. They
180 do not know how it will be constructed, as they are waiting for approval to complete the design.
181 There will be a thicker frame around the opening.

182
183 Mr. Panciera said that if it must be raised, that is not a great design. Mr. Plumb said they do not want
184 it to project.

185
186 Mr. Spiers suggested the commission define the limits of acceptability, with provisional approval
187 review in the subcommittee.

188
189 There were no questions concerning the bulkhead or the vents on the garage.

190
191 Mr. King stated that these window wells are typical and one could replace the terrace with this. The
192 commission has allowed similar wells and deeper wells.

193
194 Mr. Elperin moved to approve the design intent for the glass connector; approve the design of the
195 garage door, relocation of the window and vents, approve the window wells with low-rise glass
196 covers (not terraced), and approve the bulkhead. Mr. Panciera seconded the motion and all voted in
197 favor.

198
199 The details of the connector and window hatch were referred to the subcommittee.

200
201 Mr. Elperin requested an alternate design for the large window well, as well as a physical mock-up.

202
203 Mr. King said that the subcommittee reviewed a mock-up at the height of the stone wall and it did
204 not show the visibility beneath ground level.

205
206 Mr. Spiers asked how much redesign was needed.

207
208 Mr. Plumb questioned how much glass should be visible.

209
210 Mr. Batchelor discussed the relation of building to site, how site meets building. One expects there
211 to be ground where the building meets the site.

212
213 Ms. McCarthy stated that the discussion reminded her that changes to grade are reviewable.

214
215 Mr. Plumb said that he thought he understood the feedback.

216
217 Mr. Batchelor stated that the commission supported the window well covers, so the same should be
218 done here. He moved to continue to the subcommittee the issue of the terraced window wells and to
219 consider a redesign. Mr. Elperin seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

220
221

222 **53 Powell Street (Cottage Farm LHD) – Continuation - Application for a Certificate of**
223 **Appropriateness to demolish the existing garage and construct a new two car detached garage in the**
224 **southeast corner of the property (Lake Powell Nominee Trust, applicant). Precinct 1**

225
226 Kyle Sheffield thanked the commission for the time onsite and the meetings. They are trying to
227 replicate the roof line as much as possible with the lower roof.

228
229 **Public Comment**

230
231 Mike Zarren is a rear abutter. He stated that the design guidelines talk about the historic relationship
232 of buildings to each other. His house has no open space around it and he doesn't want the garage to
233 be closer to his house than other garages are to other houses, no closer than 18' and 15' away from
234 the property line. Town Meeting Members support this distance. He Appreciates the 2' move. This
235 case is a precedent for whole neighborhood. His house has been there for 100 years.

236

237 Ms. Ecker stated that the balance looks good with the house, the proximity to the corner makes a
238 back yard. She asked if the gutters are PVC.

239
240 Kyle Sheffield said that the wood gutters are faulty. These are Plymouth Bay fiberglass, which the
241 commission allows.

242
243 Mr. Elperin observed that the neighbor loses his view but the applicant gains a back yard.

244
245 Mr. Spiers agreed and said that pulling forward would have negative impact.

246
247 Mr. Elperin moved to accept the application as submitted. Mr. Spiers seconded the motion.

248 All voted in favor.

249
250 **45 Devon Road (Chestnut Hill North)** – Request for revisions to previously approved plans,
251 lowering the roof of the garage (SV Designs, applicant). **Precinct 13**

252
253 Tobin Schulman, 8V Design architect, stated that they originally wanted an attached garage but that
254 was denied. Because the garage is detached, the 15’ height requirement was triggered. The Planning
255 Board said they were not in favor of granting a variance and asked the applicant to lower the roof,
256 resulting in lost windows and attic storage. He stated that he thought this option is less obtrusive.

257
258 **Public Comment** - none

259
260 Mr. Elperin asked whether the request for a variance had gone from the Planning Board to the Zoning
261 Board of Appeals.

262
263 Mr. Schulman clarified that the ZBA agreed with the lower roof and suggested they would not be in
264 favor of the variance. They withdrew their request for a variance.

265
266 Mr. Elperin asked, whether they had actually requested the variance.

267
268 Ms. Ecker stated that she thought this is an improvement. It suits the house, and she preferred the
269 lower roof.

270
271 Mr. Panciera said that he was at odds with the ZBA on this. The design is fine, but the original was
272 better. Zoning is fine, but this is an LHD. Now the garage is an accessory building. He said that he
273 just wanted to go on record as disagreeing with ZBA.

274
275 Mr. King said that the last case also was harmed by this requirement.

276
277 Mr. Batchelor agreed, saying that the garage is set back from the porch, resulting in multiple roofs
278 further back. He didn’t want to make trouble but would go on record to support the original design.

279
280 Mr. Schulman said that the process had already been long, though he did agree with what had been
281 said.

282

283 Mr. Elperin said that he would write a letter to the ZBA encouraging more respect for the
284 commission's judgement in LHDs. He moved to accept the revised design. Ms. Ecker seconded the
285 motion and all in voted in favor.

286
287

288 **61 Spooner Road (Chestnut Hill North)** – Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to
289 construct a greenhouse in the approximate location of a previous greenhouse (Roundel 47 LLC,
290 applicant). **Precinct 13**

291

292 Michael Whitmore, the architect, stated that the original was built in the 1940s. It was manufactured
293 and built on wooden knee walls. The applicants want to replace it with a greenhouse manufactured
294 in the UK. It has a bit more glazing.

295

296 **Public Comment** - none

297

298 Mr. Panciera said that he thought this was fine. Ms. Ecker agreed.

299

300 Mr. Elperin said that it's a nice design. The dimensions of the manufacturers are different from the
301 applicant's.

302

303 Mr. Whitmore said that they are adding a panel from the model shown and asked them to extend the
304 height of the glazing, 1½' larger. They will correct the plans and have already agreed.

305

306 Mr. King asked if the chimney of the house is black.

307

308 Mr. Whitmore said he didn't know, as that was done recently during a different project.

309

310 Mr. King stated that the greenhouse is fine.

311

312 Mr. Panciera moved to accept the design as submitted. Mr. Elperin seconded the motion and all
313 voted in favor.

314

315 Mr. Panciera moved to adjourn the meeting; meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.