

**Aberdeen Architectural Conservation District Commission**

**Public Hearing Minutes**

Boston City Hall, Room 801

Boston, MA, 02201

**August 9, 2018**

**Commissioners Present:** Sharon Cayley, Kirsten Hoffman, Lisa Parcell, Helen Pillsbury

**Commissioners Not Present:** N/A

**Staff Present:** Eric Hill, Preservation Planner

---

**4:01 PM** L. Parcell called the public hearing to order.

**VIOLATIONS**

**5 Braemore Road, Unit 12 (18.1335 AB):** Replace windows with white vinyl windows.

*Representative: Oleg Oks*

The Applicant presented the existing conditions for the property and explained when the windows were replaced which was roughly four years ago. The applicant also noted that the contractor used, told them that a permit was pulled, staff then stated that the Inspectional Services G.I.S system which notes what properties are in historic or conservation districts was not correct a couple years back and ISD issued many permits without neighborhood commission sign off. Also, the applicant stated that the condo association told the property owners that white vinyl windows are appropriate and meet their standards for replacements. The Commission discussed that it is a shame that the work has been completed, but moving forward, the best course of action would be to make the existing windows appear more appropriate to the structure. Commissioner Parcell asked staff to follow up with some of the larger Condo Associations and property management companies to make sure that they are aware of the district standards and design guidelines.

- **In conclusion the application was approved with the following provisos. L. Parcell initiated the motion and K. Hoffman seconded the motion. The vote was 4-0 (SC, KH, LP, HP).**
  - 1. That the applicant submits a paint specification to match other windows on the structure and paints all six windows and muntins that color; and**
  - 2. The two windows fronting Braemore Road have stick-on muntins in 6/1 on the exterior installed and painted to match the windows.**

**DESIGN REVIEW**

**1641 Commonwealth Avenue (19.030 AB):** Replace three vinyl windows in kind.

*Representative: John Heaster*

The Applicant presented the conditions for the proposed scope of work, including photographs and drawings of the existing and proposed windows. The owner also noted that all of the

windows on the structure are vinyl and 1/1. The Condo Association pays for the replacement of windows together so will be doing another grouping later relatively shortly. The Commission discussed the fact that the design criteria explicitly states that vinyl windows are not allowed; however, the applicant could propose an aluminum clad window or true wood window for the three facing Commonwealth Avenue. The Commission also noted that the windows not visible from a public way can be replaced with vinyl as that is outside of the Commission's purview. The applicant noted that the windows were already purchased, but staff informed them that the Commission has denied work even if items have been purchased in the past.

- **In conclusion the application was approved with the following provisos. L. Parcell initiated the motion and K. Hoffman seconded the motion. The vote was 4-0 (SC, KH, LP, HP).**
  1. **That aluminum clad wood or true wood windows are submitted to staff in a white color and 1/1 configuration for the three windows visible from Commonwealth Avenue; and**
  2. **That the applicant may install vinyl windows on any elevations not visible from a public way.**

**372A Chestnut Hill Avenue (19.043 AB):** Remove two existing signs at entrance; install 40"x84"x36" cloth awning with lettering over entrance  
*Representatives: Tram Duong*

The Applicant presented the conditions for the proposed scope of work, including the photographs, proposed cutsheets of the awning and bracket, and physical sample of the cloth awning and color. The Commission noted that the building has two large box signs which are internally illuminated and are not at all consistent with the preservation criteria. It was asked if both signs are to be removed by Commissioner Parcell. The applicant stated that she was only hired to remove the sign over the door and install and fabricate the awning; however, the company is different and it would be assumed that they would not want a different company's name on the entrance. The applicant also noted that per the owner's request, the awning would be reduced in projection from the building as well as overall height.

Commissioner Pillsbury asked if there were any architectural details or features behind the large box sign where the awning would be located. The applicant and staff said it was unlikely as all others appeared on the octagonal bays, staff noted they would check on this. Commissioner Pillsbury said that even if there is a feature behind it, the awning could still go there, but the brackets would have to be installed differently as to not damage it.

- **In conclusion the application was approved with the following provisos. H. Pillsbury initiated the motion and S. Cayley seconded the motion. The vote was 4-0 (SC, KH, LP, HP).**
  1. **That updated drawings with the proposed dimensions of the awning are submitted to staff;**
  2. **That the two existing signs are removed from the façade; and**
  3. **That staff verifies that no architectural details are under the sign where the awning would be installed.**

## ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW

19.024 AB 32 Sidlaw Park: Repair sections of portico to match existing in color and detail.

- **In conclusion the application was approved as submitted. L. Parcell initiated the motion and H. Pillsbury seconded the motion. The vote was 4-0 (SC, KH, LP, HP).**

## Ratification of the July 12, 2018 Public Hearing Minutes

- **Approved as submitted. L. Parcell initiated the motion and K. Hoffman seconded the motion. The vote was 4-0 (SC, KH, LP, HP).**

## ADVISORY REVIEW

**1954 Commonwealth Avenue**: Move historic detached home forward on lot; construct addition in rear yard.

*Representatives: Paul Rufo (Attorney); Dan Yu (Owner); Matthew Walko (Attorney); Cliff Boehmer (Architect).*

The Applicant presented the updated concepts and renderings of the proposed work at 1954 Commonwealth Avenue and gave a general history of the project. The goal as stated by Mr. Rufo is to, "preserve the historic asset and allow for increased density". The applicants talked about the setback and how moving the historic home would be read at the street level. The proposed setback would be about 57' and all other features (porte cochere and faux garage) would be brought up at the same scale to give the relative feeling of historic locations of these features. Commissioner Pillsbury asked if the carriage house could be salvaged, and the applicant noted that the existing carriage house/garage is in poor condition and it would collapse if it was attempted to be moved. The goal is to salvage as much historic and original materials from the structure as possible, including: doors, rafter tails, and tiles.

The Commission brought up concerns over the sheer massing of the rear addition which reads as a new building. Staff asked the applicants if it would be possible to build a level below grade at the rear for parking. The applicant noted that there was ledge and this would not be feasible to blast away in such a residential area. It was also noted that the floor to floor height for the proposed addition would be 10'-4" which staff noted was on the slightly higher end of the spectrum. Commissioner Parcell noted that for a large addition such as this, the massing is a major concern and the applicant should look at options to terrace out or setback the upper floors to lessen the sheer vertical mass of the addition. Also, it was mentioned by staff and the Commission that the elevator shaft, which is proposed to be taller than the addition by code, should be located away from the frontmost side of the addition as it is featureless and adversely impacts the design. Commissioner Parcell also noted that the addition should distinguish itself from the main structure in other ways possibly looking at: color of stucco, fenestration, window style, roof color and/or material, roof line.

Public testimony was called for and Patricia Finnegan, an abutter had concerns focused on the views from the Chestnut Hill Reservoir as sightlines from that area are considered a public way. She felt that the rear elevation was lacking design elements and should be less "bulky". Also, Ms. Finnegan asked about the location of the transformer in the front yard proposed, staff and the applicant noted that there is little applicants can do to change locations of these features and vegetation could be installed surrounding it such as a boxwood hedge to screen the feature. Staff also noted that adequate landscaping would be required for the site as with the proposal, much of the existing green and open space would be removed. Higher canopy trees could be analyzed to screen the larger addition and still offer sightlines of the historic asset.

The applicants noted that they felt that they had enough to work with and all of the recommendations seemed reasonable and they would look at updating the designs accordingly.

#### **STAFF UPDATES**

Staff mentioned to the Commission that there are more inquiries and questions about moving historic structures as well as demolishing detached homes for increased density. Staff noted that it would be beneficial to discuss in a possible sub-committee meeting a plan moving forward on the increased desire for density while still maintaining the character and integrity of the district.

**6:06 PM** L. Parcell adjourned the public hearing.