

Beacon Hill Architectural Commission
Public Hearing Minutes
Boston City Hall, Piemonte Room
Boston, MA, 02201

July 19, 2018

Commissioners Present: Paul Donnelly, Joel Pierce, Miguel Rosales, Danielle Santos, Kenneth Taylor, P.T. Vineburgh

Commissioners Not Present: Thomas Hopkins

Staff Present: Eric Hill

5:03 PM K. Taylor called the public hearing to order.

DESIGN REVIEW

82 Mount Vernon Street (18.1410 BH): Repair and repaint front doors, trim, handrails and shutters; repaint copper oriel; replace all 12 double hung windows on front elevation due to severe rot and some replacements with TDL double hung, true wood 6/6 windows with insulated glass and half screens.

Representatives: Steven Young, Shimspace; Thomas Curran.

Commissioner Rosales recused himself and left the chambers.

Before the applicant began the presentation, Commissioner Taylor asked staff to give a background on the project as it was noted there were a lot of members of the public in attendance for this item. Staff mentioned that the items on the agenda for the front elevation are all that the Commission would be voting on and that work on the rear elevation of the property applied for thus far has been deemed exempt from purview of the BHAC as it is not visible from a public way.

The applicant presented the updated application for the items continued from the June BHAC hearing and mentioned that they are willing to paint the windows the cream/white color and to repaint the oriel in kind as opposed to stripping the paint.

Public testimony was called for and Jamie Howell-Walton with Councilman Zakim's office requested a deferment of the application as they felt that there was a zoning issue and felt that there should be community input. Next, Rani Jacobson of Councilwoman Wu's office addressed concerns on the zoning and requested a deferment of the application until the appeal date on September 11, 2018. The attorney for 84 Mount Vernon LLC noted that there are many issues with the application and the segmented approach of the applications is a concern and the Commission would not have an adequate understanding of the projects if viewed piecemeal.

After these statements, Commissioner Taylor asked staff to explain this process. Joseph Cornish, the Director of Design Review for the Boston Landmarks Commission explained that applications are often heard in pieces as throughout the design process, applicants can alter plans and scopes of work depending on various conditions; he also noted that nowhere in the enabling legislation does it state that applications must be heard all at once.

John Corey of 84 Mount Vernon read a letter addressed to staff and members of the BHAC with concerns over the segmented approach of the application and that all aspects of the application should be withheld until the ZBA appeal hearing on September 11, 2018. Commissioner Taylor asked the applicant if a permit was acquired for the work, and the applicant, Mr. Young stated that it had been released for the rear work as it was all as-of-right. Staff reiterated that the only items on the agenda are in regards to the front elevation and as noted, the Law Department noted that this is not a "zoning issue" as stated in the design criteria as the work on the property as applied for is "as-of-right" and no variances are required.

Greg Galer of the Boston Preservation Alliance stated that there were concerns over the historic integrity of the structure and others in the district and felt that the application should not be approved. Margaret Lilly and Frank McGuire spoke out against the project with concerns over the architectural precedence this would have and that the rear elevation is visible to other abutters and would not preserve the historic openings on the structure. Martha McNamara stated that she is a Historic Preservation professional and has an education in Architectural History and felt that as no architectural historians are on the commission, it was a concern. She mentioned that the altering of the rear elevation is a disrespectful change to the historic fabric.

Staff reiterated that the only aspect of the application on the agenda was the replacement of windows, painting the oriel, and repairing other features on the front elevation; and that only comments and questions regarding this aspect of the application should be discussed. Commissioner Taylor asked the Commissioners what they felt about the half-screens and stated that he was not in favor of these as they are not typical in the district and asked that the applicant look at other options. Mr. Young said that they could look into interior screens.

- **In conclusion the application for work on Mount Vernon Street façade only was approved with the following proviso. K. Taylor initiated the motion and P.T. Vineburgh seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 (PD, JP, DS, KT, PTV)(MR-recused)**
 - **Half-screens are not installed.**

Commissioner Rosales re-entered the chambers.

87 Pinckney Street (18.1407 BH): Replace existing pendant light at front entrance with recessed lighting.

Representatives: None

There were no representatives to present the proposal and the Commission had questions on the application and the installation of the lighting. It was suggested that the application be continued for discussion.

- **In conclusion the application was continued. P.T. Vineburgh initiated the motion and D. Santos seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 (PD, JP, MR, KT, PTV, DS).**

11 Chestnut Street (18.1415 BH): Replace all historic 6/6 window sashes on front elevation with insulated glass sashes.

Representatives: Zach Shedlock, Holland Construction.

The applicant presented the updated application showing the dimensioned drawings of the windows. The Commission had questions on the windows proposed as it was unclear what some of the drawings were showing. Commissioner Rosales stated that the existing window drawings would be required as to make sure that the windows would match existing exactly.

Public testimony was called for and Patrick Hickox asked for drawings to show the projection of the sill and existing sill should be included in the drawing as well as showing where the existing and proposed sashes would be in the opening. Charlotte Thibedeau of the Beacon Hill Civic Association mentioned that some of the project was apparently uncompliant with Zoning and the BHCA would be reviewing the project in an abutters meeting in mid-August and the application should be heard after that. Staff noted that replacing windows on the front elevation has nothing to do with zoning compliance and could be reviewed.

- **In conclusion the application was continued. P.T. Vineburgh initiated the motion and M. Rosales seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 (PD, JP, MR, KT, PTV, DS).**

40 Beacon Street (18.1389 BH): Construct 4th floor addition at existing 3-story ell connecting previously approved addition to the existing 4-story carriage house; install shutters on front elevation.

Representatives: Joe Hanley; Guy Grassi

The applicant presented the updated application and explained the history of the project spanning back multiple years. It was mentioned that the updated plans presented were based on recommendations by the BHAC the last time they met including: lowering the height of the connecting addition, utilizing a different material/cladding to distinguish itself as new construction, and to set it back off the building. The applicant also mentioned that an updated mockup was constructed on the roof and had been up for upwards of 2 weeks, they noted that it did not obscure any skyview.

Commissioner Rosales noted that he stopped by the property and said that the mockup was not obscured by buildings behind and the mockup indeed did obstruct skyview. He also stated that the mockup as he saw was different in color than the one in the photos in the presentation. Mr. Grassi then stated that his employees may have spray-painted it to make it more visible, but it was not moved or altered otherwise.

Commissioner Vineburgh noted that he felt the proposed addition was nominally visible and its inclusion would not adversely impact the building and that its inclusion would make the space more functional. Commissioner Donnelly agreed and said that since it is setback from the adjacent carriage house's cornice and from the end wall of the existing connecting addition it

shows itself as a new feature. Staff mentioned the recommendation to allow the addition in the existing location and dimension; however, to install two double hung windows as opposed two three ganged windows taking up nearly that entire wall. Commissioner Santos agreed that the two window option looked better than windows all along the façade.

Commissioner Vineburgh stated that the modern option would also be viable as three larger panes of glass and lowering of the connecting addition by 6" as stated by Guy Grassi would be his recommendation. Commissioner Taylor discussed that overall the design was okay, but still had concerns over blocking the sky behind and knowing that there were issues with the visibility as the mockup was constructed, did not feel supportive of the project as presented.

Public testimony was called for and Martha McNamara stated concerns regarding the addition and said that in architectural history, carriage houses should not be visually connected to the main structures and there should be a distinct visual gap between the two. She felt that the integrity of the neighborhood was slowly being chipped away. Katherine Kimball of the Beacon Hill Civic Association added her concerns that the work is visible from a public way and should not be allowed per the design guidelines. Sandy Steele agreed with Commissioner Rosales that visible additions should not be allowed. Frank McGuire stated that he felt the addition was insensitive and the Commission should not allow something just to fit a real estate deal.

- **In conclusion the application was denied. J. Pierce initiated the motion and M. Rosales seconded the motion. The vote was 5-1 (PD, JP, MR, KT, DS) (PTV against).**

133 Charles Street (18.1330 BH): Install 26"x20" solid oak, painted projecting sign using existing bracket.

Representatives: None

There were no representatives to present the proposal and the Commission had questions on the application and the need for shop drawings with detail on the signage not included. It was suggested that the application be continued for discussion.

- **In conclusion the application was continued. M. Rosales initiated the motion and P.T. Vineburgh seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 (PD, JP, MR, KT, PTV, DS).**

141 Cambridge Street (18.1524 BH): Install iron hand railings at front entrance; install irrigation line; install four security cameras.

Representatives: Valerie, Historic Advisor.

The applicant noted the desire for the project to be approved mentioning; the cameras are for staff and public security, the hand railings are for elderly and handicapped visitors as the building welcomes visitors all year round and currently does not have front step railings, and the irrigation line is to water the plantings in the front to beautify the street. The applicant then presented the application along with the locations of all work and design. The railings were inspired by the 1910s photo of the building before it was moved and the portico was removed; but it was stated that the railing would not be affixed to the structure and only installed into the brownstone steps after scheduled repair work is completed.

Commissioner Rosales had concerns over the lack of detail in the railing drawings and needed dimensions, material, color and how the railings would be installed. Also, he noted that the cameras were very visible and more research should be done to determine the least possible visibility of these cameras and to look at other designs. It was recommended that for the staff entrance, install a camera in the wood transom over the door. The irrigation line should not be visible and the applicant should look at relocating it to be hidden underground as much as feasible and possibly up the granite wall. It was suggested by Commissioner Taylor to avoid any visible conduit, pipes, or additional penetrations on the building as it is one of the most significant in the city.

- **In conclusion the application was continued. M. Rosales initiated the motion and P. Donnelly seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 (PD, JP, MR, KT, PTV, DS).**

1A Acorn Street (18.1527 BH): Install iron hand railings at front entrance; install irrigation line; install four security cameras.

Representatives: Valerie, Historic Advisor.

The applicant noted the desire for the project to be approved mentioning; the cameras are for staff and public security, the hand railings are for elderly and handicapped visitors as the building welcomes visitors all year round and currently does not have front step railings, and the irrigation line is to water the plantings in the front to beautify the street. The applicant then presented the application along with the locations of all work and design. The railings were inspired by the 1910s photo of the building before it was moved and the portico was removed; but it was stated that the railing would not be affixed to the structure and only installed into the brownstone steps after scheduled repair work is completed.

Commissioner Rosales had concerns over the lack of detail in the railing drawings and needed dimensions, material, color and how the railings would be installed. Also, he noted that the cameras were very visible and more research should be done to determine the least possible visibility of these cameras and to look at other designs. It was recommended that for the staff entrance, install a camera in the wood transom over the door. The irrigation line should not be visible and the applicant should look at relocating it to be hidden underground as much as feasible and possibly up the granite wall. It was suggested by Commissioner Taylor to avoid any visible conduit, pipes, or additional penetrations on the building as it is one of the most significant in the city.

- **In conclusion the application was continued. M. Rosales initiated the motion and P. Donnelly seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 (PD, JP, MR, KT, PTV, DS).**

158 Mount Vernon Street (18.1521 BH): Replace front door to match adjacent homes; replace garden level door; replace existing rooftop deck in expanded footprint.

Representatives: Dustin Nolin, DNA Architecture.

The applicant presented the application along with the locations of all work and design elements along with a general history of the building. It was mentioned that the building was constructed in the 1880s and is of the Second Empire style, which according to the survey documents, was a sister building to both abutting rowhouses. The applicant also noted that the

buildings all had 2/2 windows (as typical with the style) and two were later converted to multi-pane 6/6 windows in the Colonial Revival style in the early 1900s. Both doors were noted to not be original to the structure and the applicant stated that they would like to match the adjacent homes in design. Lastly, a new rooftop deck was proposed and asked for a slightly larger footprint.

Commissioner Rosales felt that the 6/6 windows were historic in their own right and should be replaced in kind or repaired if feasible. Staff mentioned that in 2008, the property adjacent, which had replacements at the same time as 158 Mount Vernon, was approved to go back to the original 2/2 configuration. Staff noted that due to the windows next door being replaced and approved by the commission with identical circumstances and that there was photographic evidence to show that 2/2 windows were on the structure; it was placed on the Administrative Review docket.

By Commissioner Vineburgh, it was discussed that for the rooftop deck, the front rail should remain in place and due to the very minimal visibility; the rear of the deck could be extended per the plans. The other Commissioners felt the same in that the adjacent properties had very visible deck rails and to make this property more visible from Brimmer Street would not be recommended. For the front door, Commissioner Rosales felt that the plans to match the adjacent doors were a little off in scale and that updated drawings showing the correct dimensions should be submitted to staff.

Commissioner Taylor stated that he felt the secondary door was much too modern and should be a simple, lesser door to the front and suggested a four-panel solid mahogany door. The other commissioners agreed.

- **In conclusion the application was approved with the following provisos. P.T. Vineburgh initiated the motion and P. Donnelly seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 (PD, JP, MR, KT, PTV, DS).**
 - **The applicant is to submit updated drawings for the front (main) door with correct dimensions and scale to match adjacent doors;**
 - **That a four-panel solid mahogany door is submitted for the secondary door;**
 - **That both doors are painted black, with specifications to be submitted to staff;**
and
 - **That the roof deck is to move no closer to the front elevation but may be extended to the rear in accordance to the plans submitted, updated plans must be sent to staff.**

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW

18.1512 BH 43 Anderson Street: Replace three window sashes on second story in kind with 6/1 wood TDL windows.

18.1406 BH 34.5 Beacon Street, Unit 4S: Replace 11 curved and straight sashes in kind with 1/1 wood windows.

18.1396 BH 17 Bowdoin Street: Replace three non-original sash sets on third story of the front elevation in kind with 6/6 wood TDL windows.

18.1518 BH 12 Brimmer Street: Repoint mortar in kind; at rear elevation, remove fire escape and infill brick to match existing; repair sills and lintels; install brick mold around window to match existing; repair rotten wood on dormers.

18.1509 BH 142 Chestnut Street: Replace five non-original sash sets on third story of the front elevation in kind with 8/8 wood TDL windows.

18.1530 BH 19 Joy Street: Repair five 2/2 windows on third story front elevation and paint to match existing.

18.1525 BH 11 Louisburg Square: Replace 14 windows on front elevation in kind with TDL, wood, double hung windows with curved sashes at bowfront; repaint and repair shutters; repaint ironwork; repaint previously painted stone window sills.

18.1526 BH 148 Mount Vernon Street: Replace existing painted metal roof on oriel with flat seam copper roofing; repair and replace sections of rotten wood at oriel panels in kind; repaint oriel to match existing.

18.1521 BH 158 Mount Vernon Street: Replace eight non-original Colonial Revival windows on front elevation with 2/2 wood TDL windows; replace window casing in kind; repoint mortar to match existing; repair lintels on rear elevation; relocated mechanical venting to roof. (See Administrative Approval/Review items below).

19.019 BH 50 Myrtle Street: Replace existing playground equipment; install new landscaping and hardscaping at playground.

18.1386 BH 71 Myrtle Street: Remove existing roof deck to replace flat roof and construct roof deck in lesser footprint with low-profile black metal railings.

18.1452 BH 115 Pinckney Street: Paint front door black; repair oriel and paint in kind.

18.1440 BH 81 Revere Street: Replace two non-original 2/2 wood windows at basement level in kind with insulated glass sashes; remove security bars at basement level windows.

18.1505 BH 30 Temple Street: Replace three non-original 6/6 sash sets on third story and replace with 6/6 TDL wood, double-hung windows with insulated glass.

18.1533 BH Various Locations in Public Right of Way/Sidewalks: Repair sections of brick sidewalks using "Boston City Hall Pavers".

- **In conclusion the applications above were approved. M. Rosales initiated the motion and D. Santos seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 (PD, JP, MR, KT, PTV, DS).**

18.1447 BH 120 Charles Street: Repair window sashes and storm windows in kind.

Commissioner Rosales wanted to pull this application off the Administrative docket due to questions on how the window sashes would be repaired.

18.1511 BH 32-34 Hancock Street: Replace asphalt shingles at roof in kind in "Black Pepper"; replace awning fabric at dormer in "Driftwood Tweed".

Commissioner Rosales wanted to pull this application off the Administrative docket due to questions on the fire escapes and balconies and what was approved in the past for the project.

18.1423 BH 36 Joy Court: Replace existing 6'-0" cedar stockade fencing along side yard; attach five panels of treated lattice fencing for ivy wall; install single lattice panel at wall and alley end for ivy wall.

Commissioner Rosales wanted to pull this application off the Administrative docket due to questions on the fence and wanting to see detailed drawings and information regarding what the fence would look like, how it would be installed and how the lattice would be mounted.

18.1525 BH 11 Louisburg Square: Replace 14 windows on front elevation in kind with TDL, wood, double hung windows with curved sashes at bowfront; repaint and repair shutters; repaint ironwork; repaint previously painted stone window sills.

Commissioner Rosales wanted to pull this application off the Administrative docket due to the desire to see additional documentation addressing the need to replace the windows as opposed to repairing them.

- **In conclusion the applications above were continued. M. Rosales initiated the motion and D. Santos seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 (PD, JP, MR, KT, PTV, DS).**

Ratification of the April 19, 2018; May 17, 2018; and June 21, 2018 Public Hearing Minutes

- **Approved as submitted. K. Taylor initiated the motion and J. Pierce seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 (PD, JP, MR, KT, PTV, DS).**

8:45 PM K. Taylor adjourned the public hearing.