



SOUTH END LANDMARK DISTRICT COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
Held virtually via Zoom

MAY 18, 2020

Commissioners Present: John Amodeo, John Freeman, Catherine Hunt, Diana Parcon, Fabian D'Souza; David Sheppard

Staff Present: Nicolas Armata, Senior Preservation Planner; Mary Cirbus, Preservation Planner; Joseph Cornish, Director of Design Review

5:04 PM J. Amodeo called the public hearing to order and welcomed F. D'Souza and D. Sheppard to the Commission. He also announced that he would recuse himself from the review of 566 Columbus Avenue.

Staff J. Cornish asked Commissioners F. D'Souza and D. Sheppard to confirm that they had received and reviewed the materials relevant to 566 Columbus Avenue APP # 20.827 SE from the 5/05/2020 SELDC public hearing. They both confirmed that they had. He also asked that any Commissioners with a conflict of interest to please recuse themselves.

I. DESIGN REVIEW

APP# 20.827 SE

566 COLUMBUS AVENUE

Continued from the 5/05/2020 SELDC Public Hearing

Applicant: New Boston Ventures

Proposed Work: Construct a new building

J. Amodeo recused himself.

David Goldman (New Boston Ventures) and Jonathan Garland (J. Garland Enterprises) were the project representatives. They gave a brief overview before starting the presentation.

C. Hunt asked about the precedent at 1701 Washington Street, the Hotel Commonwealth, which may have wrapped around to West Springfield Street.

The Commissioners asked several questions regarding materiality, design, and precedent. The applicants plan to incorporate a signage master plan. There were also questions about the ground level and the change in vocabulary at the corner elevation of Columbus and Massachusetts Avenues. F. D'Souza asked about the differing building heights at Massachusetts Avenue and West Springfield Street. J. Garland answered that this height difference contributes to the "bookend" approach of the design and massing.



During the comment period, D. Shepperd noted that the height of the West Springfield Street elevation is not harmonious with the adjacent lower buildings. He also noted that the proposed building has an overhang which is level with the sidewalk which does not seem to be a successful use of space. He also noted that there should be more garden space. He also expressed concern over the busy brickwork around the windows and metal materiality of the “mansard” level. F. D’ Souza questioned if the sculptural character of the metal corner might be more subtle. C. Hunt also expressed concern over the massing of West Springfield Street and wondered if a setback might help.

J. Freeman noted that the rendering shows the West Springfield Street façade “looming” over the rest of the building and explained that the design can be tweaked to help – increasing the 5 degree slope, lowering the height of the windows, etc. He also expressed that the window articulation reads too Art Deco and should be refined to look more like a South End building. With regard to the corner, he noted that this location might be more strongly expressed, perhaps by tweaking the design of the windows. He also brought up the question of whether the Commission has approved balconies on the fronts of buildings elsewhere in the district. There was a brief discussion of balconies in the district.

Staff N. Armata read comments that had arrived via the group chat. Akuna Na expressed concern over the disappearance of black history in the neighborhood and asked about the preservation of the mural. Charles Hoening asked about the top floor. Chris Cox expressed his support for the project. Mike Reinders commented on the height of the building and noted that there is no historic precedent for the “bookend” approach on this parcel. head houses which will be visible from a public way, and the sixth floor terraces. Mike Kelly expressed his support. Marianne Pollard, an abutter, asked to know more about the gap between the new building and 220 West Springfield Street and expressed concern about the height on West Springfield Street. Jared Katsiane expressed concern over the mural. Gabrielle Ballard asked that the vote be delayed until after the State of Emergency ends. Alina Walhart expressed her support. Arthur Laramie expressed support. Chase Donnelly also expressed support. Georgia Murray also expressed support. Nino Brown asked how the black history of the Harriet Tubman House is being preserved. Kim Barzola asked about the Mural Advisory Committee and spoke about its history. Jennifer Copeland spoke in support of the project. Will Sahakian also spoke in support of the development. Charles Denison suggested a stronger presence on the corner of Massachusetts and Columbus Avenues, and expressed that the height is too tall on West Springfield Street. Mayra Negron-Roche expressed support for the project. Staff J. Cornish read emails that had been received from constituents both in support of, and in opposition to, the development project. Mike Purdyman noted that this proposed building does not fit the guidelines and asked the Commissioners to comment on that. Carrie Nelson, an abutter, expressed concern about the height of the building and the loss of green space. Staff N. Armata read additional chat messages received during the group chat. Jim Alexander also expressed support. Staff M. Cirbus read several letters received via email into the record. Chris Dearbeck spoke to clarify his email. Leslie Kuelig spoke in opposition to several aspects of the presentation.



There was a final brief discussion with Alexa Pinard (BPDA) about the specific details to be worked out in subcommittee. J. Freeman explained that this subcommittee would look at several things, including the connection to West Springfield Street, the ground level storefront, and the other items discussed during this review.

J. Freeman motioned to approve the application in concept but to remand details of the proposal to a subcommittee consisting of J. Freeman and C. Hunt, with D. Shepperd as an alternate. C. Hunt seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 (JF, CH, DP, FD, DS) (JA – ABSENT).

APP# 20.983 SE

158 WEST CANTON STREET

Applicant: M. Holland & Sons Construction

Proposed Work: At the stoop, install new decorative metal railings; at the garden level entry under the stoop, modify the entryway, and install new door. *See additional items under Administrative Review.*

Zachary Shedlock (contractor) was the project representative. He explained the scope of the project, which includes installing new decorative railings to match the original and installing a new door and exterior trim at the entrance under the stoop. The exterior trim is required for a weathertight seal. He also showed similar examples along the street. He also explained that if the Commission requested that the door be retained he would ask to replace the glazed panels in kind. He noted that the wire mesh is not part of the glass but rather applied at the interior.

J. Freeman questioned if the door is original or relocated in this opening since there is no exterior jamb. D. Shepperd asked about adequate clearance for the door knob with the proposed trim. J. Amodeo asked about the removal of original material for the installation of trim. J. Freeman indicated that the trim is meant to be installed on top of the stone.

There was no public comment.

J. Freeman motioned to approve the railing as submitted and to approve refurbishment of the existing door with the proviso that the details be submitted to staff for review and approval. F. D' Souza seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 (JA, JF, CH, DP, FD, DS).

APP # 20.981 SE

69 RUTLAND STREET

Applicant: Derek Rubinoff

Proposed Work: Construct a roof deck.

Derek Rubinoff (architect) was the project representative. He explained that the existing roof decking material will be replaced in kind and the railings will be replaced with metal pickets. The head house will remain. The Commissioners discussed the visibility



of the railings with staff and the applicant.

D. Shepperd noted that the new railings should not be visible from any public way. J. Amodeo clarified the newel posts and reiterated that the top of the posts should be flush with the rail. He also suggested that the railings be moved back one foot to eliminate visibility from the front of the building. The privacy screen will be eliminated.

There was no public comment.

D. Shepperd motioned to remand the placement of the front railings to staff. C. Hunt seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 (JA, JF, CH, DP, FD, DS).

APP # 20.958 SE

48 UNION PARK

Applicant: Ghita Akhar

Proposed Work: At the stoop replace pipe railings with new decorative metal handrails; at the front yard install new metal fence.

Norberto Leon (architect) was the project representative. He explained the scope of work to the Commissioners.

The Commissioners had several questions regarding the proposed railing and the fence. F. D' Souza expressed concerns about introducing an additional new design to the streetscape. The Commissioners shared this same concern.

J. Amodeo noted that the fence should match that of the street side fence. There should also be a newel post that matches the post on the corner. With regard to the stair rail, he noted that the historic photograph does not indicate their design. He suggested that the design take cues from the neighboring rails. He also suggested that the bottom rail not rest at every tread so as to minimize damage to the brownstone material.

Brian Hase (abutter at 46 Union Park) offered public comment and explained that the original fence was removed in violation.

C. Hunt motioned to deny the application without prejudice and encouraged the applicant to work with staff to resolve the issues discussed. D. Parcon seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 (JA, JF, CH, DP, FD, DS).

II. ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW/ APPROVAL

APP # 20.983 SE 158 WEST CANTON STREET: At the front façade, wash brick using the gentlest method possible (by hand or power washing under 500 psi) and



repoint using mortar to match the historic mortar in terms of color, texture, joint width, profile, and tooling, and replace copper snowbelt, gutter, and downspout in kind; at the front façade mansard level replace slate shingles and wood trim in kind.

J. Freeman motioned to approve the application as presented. D. Parcon seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 (JA, JF, CH, DP, FD, DS).

III. STAFF UPDATES

Staff reported the appointment of Fabian D' Souza and David Shepperd to the SELDC.

IV. ADJOURN – 9:42 PM

C. Hunt motioned to adjourn. D. Parcon seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 (JA, JF, CH, DP, FD, DS).