

Minutes

Historic Preservation Meeting

October 12, 2016

Present: Johanna Hoffman, Jay St. John, Stephen Ryan, Kelly Archer, Alyssa Bouthot, and Bob Hamblen, City Planner. Applicant, Jeffrey Gnecco.

1. Applicants Katherine Gaudet and Jeffrey Gnecco request a Certificate of Appropriateness to install a wood stockade fence in order to buffer their yard from a paved parking area on the adjacent parcel. Tax Map 39, Lot 35. Zoned R-3 and Historic District.

Chairman Johanna called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. Bob provided an overview of the application. Jay: is a permit necessary for a fence? Bob: no, a building permit is not required for a fence. Johanna: the standards found in Sec. 413-11 don't apply? Bob: agreed, they are not very applicable. Kelley: the fencing of front yards is discouraged. I viewed Preservation Brief 36, which cites the Secretary's Standards. Shape, profile and texture are each mentioned, and this appears to affect Standards 1, 2 and 9.

Jeff: this is somewhat of a response to the parking lot installed next door at 60 North Street, for which I didn't receive a notice. The fence is part of an agreement I reached with David Trottier. Approval was granted that included a buffer – the trees have died. I have two small children, and am concerned about traffic. Would like the fence to be approved. I propose a stockade and picket fence, and would like to clarify for the Commission the details. Jay: I have a six foot high fence, maybe 60 feet long, also in the District. Kelley: my homework references the cultural landscape. Could there be a hedge, with a decorative metal fence? Jay: I don't like this right on the property line, would like to see a setback from the line, with vegetation.

Johanna: we need to follow up with David Trottier and enforce the setbacks. A fence and plantings could work. Jay's house is big, and the fence is big – it works. Would like to continue the appreciation of the existing landscape. Alyssa: cites an existing fence at Main and Beach streets. Jay: let's avoid discussion of 60 North Street. Johanna: let's research 60 North St and seek enforcement. Jay: a wood fence – stain or paint? Jeffrey: to be determined, probably white. Twenty-four feet of six foot sections starting from the barn. Johanna: the right color stain could de-emphasize that section of fence. Bob: Jeffrey, are you open to setting the fence back from the property line? Jeffrey: yes, but probably not as much as three feet, I'd like to avoid the dip in the yard.

Jeffrey: okay if the post caps are other than wood? Yes, but no vinyl, was the consensus. Jay: aluminum would be okay, but painted cedar is good, too.

Johanna: can we assemble a findings of fact?

1. 40 Vernon Street is a contributing property to the District, and a highly visible one from both North Street and Vernon Street.

2. The Secretary's standards for historic landscapes are applicable, as found in Brief 36.
3. The applicant is willing to install a spaced wooden picket fence, with spaces no less than 0.75 inch between pickets, four feet in height, and a six foot high privacy fence for a length of 24 feet from the barn.

Jay: I move, based on the evidence presented, that the Commission accept the findings above, seconded by Alyssa. Johannanna: discussion? Kelley: any way the six foot stockade section could be swapped out? That may run afoul of Brief 36. Which reminds me of the three foot setback at 60 North St., from the sidewalk. That should be enforced. **Jay: I amend my motion to recognize a privacy rather than a stockade fence for the first 24 feet of fence starting at the barn, seconded by Alyssa, and so voted, 4-0.**

Jay: I move to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness based on the findings of fact, seconded by Alyssa, and so voted, 3-1 (Kelley).

Johanna: we should review the Ordinance for where referrals to other Briefs may be necessary.

Meeting adjourned at 5:05pm

Respectfully submitted by,

Bob Hamblen, City Planner