

Minutes
Watertown Historical Commission
Thursday, January 10, 2013
Watertown Lower Hearing Room
7:00pm
Adopted February 14, 2013

Historical Commission Members Present: David J. Russo, Jr., J. B. Jones, Marilynne K. Roach, Thomas Melone, Susan T. Steele, Elisabeth H. Loukas, Donald S. Berg

Staff Present: Christopher J. Hayward, Daphne M. Collins

Public Present: See attached Sign-In Form

David J. Russo chaired. The meeting opened at 7:00p.m.

1. Public Hearing – Demolition Permit Review – 9 Hersom Street, a single-family home with garage to be replaced by a two-family duplex. Sean Lyons, owner, applicant.

Brenda Malatesta, broker for 9 Hersom Street representing Sean Lyons, the buyer, informed that the property is proposed for demolition to be replaced with a 2-family development. She believed the house does not meet the historic standards for preservation. Ken Sheytanian, broker representing the owner, stated that the house had no historic merit and the replacement will meet all the established zoning requirements for a 2-family zone.

Jones urged the applicant to save the building and add to it. He thought the proposed replacement was out of place in the neighborhood. He suggested that the applicant model the proposal on 40 Hersom Street, a nice example of an addition that fits more comfortably in the neighborhood. He thought the garage at 9 Hersom Street was junk.

John Carvey, builder for 9 Hersom Street, responded that he was open to adding to the existing structure.

Yasmin Daikh, 17 Hersom Street, read a petition signed by the neighbors supporting a one year demolition delay to allow an architectural solution which would protect the neighborhood and street scape. She was also concerned about the loss of open space and trees with the new development.

Ann Rinaldi, 20 Hersom Street, stated she has lived at her address since 1945. She was concerned about the continued erosion of the large yards to allow for infill housing and increased density. She did not feel that there was enough space to sustain the density and the associated parking needs.

Peter Rinaldi, 20 Hersom Street, supported the preservation of the neighborhood scale.

Neil Rodberg, 29 Hersom Street, informed that he had spoken to the developer to consider redesigning his plans to develop a project similar to 40 Hersom Street. He thought the present proposal would negatively impact the street and the neighborhood which was comprised of older homes. He supported a demolition delay to allow a design solution in keeping with the neighborhood. He urged the HC to consider the street as a whole.

Originally owned by Robert Morris, Berg reported that the house and garage were built in 1916 for \$3000. He thought the house was nicely sited on the property. He suggested removing the garage to allow for a more creative development option.

Melone noted that there was a good mix of two and one family structures of similar scale in the neighborhood. He was concerned with the existing proposal was two times the size of the abutting structures.

Steele encouraged the builder to work with the neighbors to develop a structure that is similar to the scale and detail of the neighborhood.

Hayward informed the applicant that there is a public tree in front of 9 Hersom Street that will need a public hearing if it's being considered for removal. The builder agreed not to remove the tree.

Carvey withdrew the demolition request for the house on 9 Hersom Street.

Vote: Berg moved that the garage at 9 Hersom Street be considered as not preferably preserved. Melone seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

2. Discussion of potential agreement with Walker School regarding 917 Belmont Street

Steve Magoon, Director of Community Development and Planning, reported that an agreement between the owners of 917 Belmont Street and the Town was proceeding. He asked that Russo be selected to act on behalf of the HC during negotiations.

Vote: Jones moved to select David Russo as the HC's representative in negotiations regarding 917 Belmont Street. Loukas seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

3. December Minutes – approved.

4. 2013 HC Calendar of Meetings – The HC reviewed the established February 2013 meeting date and made no changes.

5. Old Business

East Library Plaque – Hayward reported that there will be an extra cost to recreate the plaque image on granite. The original bronze plaque will be cleaned and displayed in a

to be determined public building. Hayward reported that all the bronze plaques are being replaced with black granite.

Old Burial Grounds Sign – Russo reported that the sign has been installed. A dedication ceremony is scheduled for Saturday, January 19, 2013 at 11:00am, followed by a tour. A snow date is scheduled for January 26, 2013.

Meeting adjourned at 8:54pm