

**Minutes**  
**Historic District Commission**  
**Wednesday, October 22, 2014, 7:00 p.m.**  
**Lower Hearing Room**

**Members Present:** Carolyn Famiglietti, Linda Sternberg, John Hecker, Harvey Steiner, Kenneth Sheytanian.

**Members Absent:** None

**Staff Present:** Christopher J. Hayward, Susan C. Jenness.

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Steiner chaired.

**1. Public Hearing continuation - Certificate of Appropriateness # HDO-14-13**  
**106 Mt Auburn St., Dino Tangredi, owner**

- a. To remove and replace damaged sills on east side of building.
- b. To repair rotted wood canopy over Mt Auburn St entrance. Replace using Azek and Fypon synthetic materials.

Dina Tangredi, Trustee of 106 Mt. Auburn St. appeared for presentation on the property that he purchased from the dentist last year. This application relates to the damaged sills and rotted wood repair as outlined above.

Also discussed at this meeting was a problem with the foundation and some repair that will be required to fix a termite issue from the past. When that takes place in the future, a new application will be filed, and once approved the house will need to be jacked up in order to do the work.

Hecker recommended that the applicant save pieces of the house removed during repair work for a reasonable period of time.

Steiner asked why wood is not being used. The owner said he planned on using materials to preserve the building another 80-100 years. His understanding is that some other materials may be more durable than wood.

Hecker recommended keeping balusters and molding and Steiner asked if wood will be used for those pieces. The owner replied that he is working with the same contractor who worked with the previous owner and will talk to him to get his opinion on the best materials to use for this project.

Steiner spoke about a similar project where he used Spanish Cedar and he said he knows where to get pieces made with Spanish Cedar or Mahogany.

Hecker stated that Azek and Fypon are good materials for flat pieces but Steiner asserted his preference is wood.

Tangredi stated he plans to take the house back to the original condition and will use copper on the roof if found to be consistent with the original design.

Hecker reminded the owner that we are here to protect what is special about the building and said that Harvey is right to urge the use of wood.

Steiner asked again if it is possible to use wood. The owner stated again the he will talk to the contractor more about materials and that he will return to the commission for future projects as required when urged by Famiglietti.

### **Commission Discusses**

Sternberg stated that wood is preferred in the Ordinance and other materials should be considered on a case by case basis. Hecker requested a balance of materials be outlined.

Steiner specified that Molded Trim and Balusters should be made of Spanish Cedar or Mahogany and Aztec or Felon is for flat pieces.

**Motion:** Famiglietti motioned to approve the application with the understanding that Molding and Trim be made from Spanish Cedar or Mahogany, and Aztec or Fypon for flat pieces. Hecker seconded the motion.

**Vote:** The Commission unanimously voted in favor of the application with the conditions stated as above.

### **Public Hearing is closed.**

## **2. Public Hearing Held-Certificate of Appropriateness #HDO-14-17 113. Auburn St. Samir Sidhom, Owner.**

To install 2 new custom sized fixed frame windows in bronze anodized finish with 1-inch clear tempered insulated glass and sub-sills on Phillips St. side of building.

- a. Approx. 156" x 94" (3 liters of glass).
- b. Approx. 76" x 94" (2 liters of glass).

Samir Sidhom, owner of 113 Mt. Auburn Street appeared to present the project. He is 80 years old and works in his check cashing business which started in Waltham and moved to Watertown.

He is from Egypt and would like to build "Watertown Strong Business" to promote stronger business after the concept of "Watertown Strong Schools." He stated he feels this project would help achieve that

Sidhom said his intention is to break down the brick side of the building and replace it with glass to match the pictures of glass sided buildings he presented during the hearing.

Hecker began the discussion by pointing out that to take the bricks out from the side of the building could cause a collapse in the absence of steel shelving. He inquired if a steel shelf would be built to support the new design. The owner was not sure of the answer to that at this point.

Steiner led the discussion back to the topic of preserving the Historic District.

Sternberg and Famiglietti questioned what would be inside the building that would now be seen if glass were to replace the now brick wall. Mr. Sidhom presented pictures of buildings that were glass sided. Steiner pointed out that the photos are not photos of this building or in the Historic District.

Sternberg referred to the two boarded up windows already in existence and asked if he is planning on leaving them boarded up in the scope of this project. Sidhom replied the he was only planning on opening up the brick below and placing glass in that space.

Hecker informed him that a structural engineer would be needed to deal with realities like snow loads etc. The applicant agreed to bring one in if allowed to go forward.

Sternberg looked at photographs she had of other similar buildings, for example the sub shop on Parker St. She discussed the photos and compared them conceptually within the parameters of the proposed project which is in the Historic District. She concluded that the side of this building should stay brick to protect the historic character and structure of the building. This change would be far too significant.

Sheytanian stated that if the applicant were to open the side of the building and make it all glass this would not be a flower shop or furniture store we would look in on.

Sidhom asserted he wanted to encourage business by making his building look more like Times Square.

Steiner said he is opposed to all glass but he countered that he could allow putting glass in the existing windows cut outs.

Hecker reminded the applicant that the wall brings stability to the building and knocking out the wall will take away the lateral stability of the existing structure.

### **Commission Discusses.**

Steiner said the commission would probably allow the 2 windows that are already there and that would let light into the building. He further stated he would not approve this project as it is proposed.

Sheytanian opposed the proposed project.

Hecker stated that the block now has integrity.

Sternberg said this project would be detrimental to the historic character of the building.

Famiglietti said it will not add to the district but detract from it.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Sternberg to deny the Certificate of Appropriateness. Hecker seconded the motion.

**Vote:** A unanimous vote was reached and all agreed to deny the Certificate of Appropriateness.

Steiner explained to the applicant that the application was denied. He gave exact details why when asked by the applicant.

Steiner also explained to the applicant that he can apply for other projects.

Steiner advised the applicant of his right to appeal and directed the applicant to seek out Agent Hayward for assistance with the process if he needed help.

**The Public Hearing was closed.**

- 3. September minutes were unanimously approved.**
- 4. July minutes were unanimously approved.**
- 5. Old Business-** Agent Hayward commented that Stepping Stones was really pressing to move forward on their project. The school year has started and so now we are all just waiting for it to start again.
- 6. New Business-Introduction of new clerk for the Conservation/Preservation Office, Susan C. Jenness.**
- 7. The Meeting was closed by Steiner.**