

Longmeadow Historic District Commission
Betty Lowe Room, Storrs Library
March 14, 2006
7:40 PM

Present: Karen Lazeration, Eleanor Santos, John Robbins, Robert Fein, Ed Burt, Crystal Diamond, Pat Duquette

Absent: Jewel Reed, Mark Sirulnik

Public Present: Henry Cropsey, Melinda Cropsey, Kathy Ford, Gregory Farmer, Att'y Dorothy Varon, Michael Liu, Stacy Wikar, Charlene Mazur, Ed Mazur, Roberta Bolduc, Milton Reach, Hank Thor, Ann Dobbmeyer other interested persons from Bay Path, and neighbors

New Business:

Application 2006.03.01

Bay Path College

896 Longmeadow St.

Removal of metal siding and restoration of and painting of existing clapboards and wood trim, replacement basement windows in existing foundation wall to match existing, new third floor windows replicated to match existing, slate roof repair in kind as required, replacement balustrade (in kind) on front of 2nd floor balcony to match existing and minor site improvements.

Gregory Farmer, an historic restoration consultant presented the plans and the historic description of the house. Some of the trim of the house was damaged by seeping water, and some of the siding damaged by the tearing off of projecting trim to make way for the aluminum siding. The basement windows would be replaced with aluminum clad wooden windows.

Clarification of application:

Kathy Ford from Ford, Gillen Architects clarified points of the application. Support of the porch will be brick corner piers. The balustrade in the front will be replaced to match the current. The balustrade over the rear porch will match the one in front. They plan to remove the current breakfast room, which has no foundation or insulation, on the west side and replace it and extend it. The bulkhead will be at the north end of the addition and moved toward the driveway. The Benjamin Moore paint will be either Hepplewhite Ivory or Windham Cream with white trim. The AC location has not yet been determined, but would be in a place not visible from the street. It was recommended an application for a certificate of non-applicability be made for them when the location has been determined.

The proposed “minor site improvements” were defined by Michael Liu. They plan to take some of the plantings and replace them with rhododendrons and azaleas, lilacs, and wigelia.

They are considering flowering trees in the front lawn. The driveway will be adjusted, shifting the parking areas slightly north for two spaces (currently there is space for two cars). The surface of the driveway will be blacktop. The parking spaces will be approximately 10 feet from the boundary on the north. The existing wood fence is dilapidated and they would like to remove that.

Eleanor expressed her concern of removing the fence. It acts as a clear delineation of the two properties, which is desirable in trying to maintain the tapestry of the Green.

Melinda Cropsey, a neighbor expressed her gratitude for the attempts of Bay Path for trying to restore the house to its original “glory”. She reported that the neighbors have been trying to have the town do a site and design review on the increased activities of the college in the neighborhood to protect the abutting properties. The bulk of their concern is the increase of vehicular traffic of 906 driveway and Farmlea Road and the dumping of landscaping material in the back yard of 906 for the purpose of transforming the driveway into a roadway from Longmeadow St. to the lower fields behind the houses. Because they are turning the driveway into a road, there is concern about removing the fence, which they did remove in December, and replaced at the direction of the HDC. They also removed a tree and gate posts to improve traffic flow to the lower field. She expressed concern about removing the fence as it would facilitate their expanding the use of the driveway as a road. The concern is more than that of the neighbors. It was her concern that the fence, if it remains in its current location, helps to contain the use of the driveway as a driveway to the residence at 906 rather than expanding it to a road.

Att’y Dorothy Varon suggested the traffic flow of Farmlea Rd is not under the jurisdiction of the HDC. She was concerned that too much time was being devoted to something, such as traffic flow, that was not in our jurisdiction. The residential design does not involve a site and design review.

Henry Cropsey clarified that the current fence has only been there for a few years. It replaced an attractive white picket fence. He is not sure when that was removed. It is also unclear when the white picket gates were removed. The commission will try to ascertain when it was put up and removed.

John read letters from Mr. William Wagner, the Historical Society and Ronald Rinaldi, which have been attached to the minutes. The Historical Society heartily supports the restoration of the property. Mr. Rinaldi said he was confident that the work on the house as described would enhance its appearance and expressed his support for the restorations. Mr. Wagner strongly supported the restoration plans for the house. He opposed the “minor improvements” of the site. He was concerned that unnamed “site improvements” would lead to changes that might not preserve the residential appearance, and would lead

to the institutionalization of the appearance of the properties, especially between 906 and 896. He was also concerned about putting up vegetation between his property and 896 that would attract insects and opposed moving the current driveway closer to his property.

The “minor site improvements” in the application is a driveway configuration alteration 12 feet to the north not to be any closer than 10 feet to the boundary line, and the surface will be asphalt. The removal of the fence is part of the application because it is designated on the drawings submitted as part of the application. It was recommended that the removal of the fence be removed from this application and be addressed at a later date when we have better information regarding the existing fence as well as the fence that it replaced.

The applicant agreed to amend the application by taking the removal of the fence from the application until we have more information,

The application, as amended was approved 5-1

Vote:

Yes, as amended:

Eleanor Santos, Robert Fein, Pat Duquette, John Robbins, Ed Burt

No: Karen Lazeration

She felt that the clarification of the site improvements came too late for the abutters to be properly informed..

Abstained: Crystal Diamond

Att’y Varon expressed her objection to Karen Lazeration’s voting on this item on the grounds that she was involved in pending lawsuits and that the project could have a financial impact on her as an abutter.

Robert Fein will be the coordinator for this project.

Old Business:

January minutes were approved as presented.

Community Development meeting will be reported on by Mark Sirulnik at the next meeting

New Business:

The CD from the Mass. Historic Commission is copy protected and so John was not able to make copies for us. He will request some more copies. It does recommend a survey of the houses, which we have now finished.

The Cropseys requested that we write a letter to the Zoning board addressing the changing traffic patterns that affect the Historic nature of the Green.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20