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Director

**MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARINGS
AUBURNDALE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

DATE: July 11, 2023

PLACE/TIME: Fully Remote
7:00 p.m.

ATTENDING: Dante Capasso, Chair
Paul Dudek, Member
Nancy Grissom, Member
Joel Shames, Member
Richard Alfred, Alternate
Josh Markette, Alternate
Jennifer Caira, Staff

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. with Dante Capasso presiding as Chair. Voting permanent member were P. Dudek, N. Grissom and J. Shames. R. Alfred and J. Markette were appointed to vote as full members. J. Caira acted as recording secretary and the meeting was recorded on Zoom.

120 Seminary Avenue and 24 Robn Dell, Lasell Villate – Certificate of Appropriateness

This review was continued from previous meetings. Steve Buchbinder, Katherine Adams, Philippe Saad, Zehra Abid-Wood, and Eric Turner presented an application to relocate and renovate 24 Robin Dell and connect the historic structure to the new building. The new building would have approximately 42 independent living units which would be connected to existing Town Hall building and there would also be a connector to 24 Robin Dell. K. Adams noted that the commission took a straw vote at the February 2023 meeting to support the relocation of 24 Robin Dell. The applicants noted that the proposed materials were made available for viewing at Lasell Village.

P. Saad presented the plans for the 24 Robin Dell relocation and renovation. The bay window would be relocated, and the small shed and front door vestibule addition would be removed. The front steps and side deck would be rebuilt, and the chimney replaced with bricks to match the existing. Products and materials included simulated divided lite windows, wood siding, half round aluminum gutters and round downspouts, and new siding. There were two proposed color options for the asphalt roof shingles - Colonial Slate or Cobblestone Gray.

P. Saad presented a section through the relocated house and the new building, and the landscape materials plan. A full accessible walking path would connect to the existing fire access behind building 85. The light poles would have fully cut off lights pointed downwards. The planting plan showed a mowed lawn around the building, meadow grasses on the sloped surfaces, evergreens screening the edges of the property, and deciduous trees located throughout the site.

The new elevation drawings and renderings included information about the mechanical systems that would be installed to meet sustainability goals and the City of Newton requirements. He pointed out that the bays on the new building were reduced from three stories to two stories and the dormer would match the roof color to appear shorter and less obtrusive from Grove Street. The plans included details for the windows, eaves, and balconies. Materials were masonry, vertical siding, horizontal siding, and metal roofing. The mechanical penthouse and other rooftop equipment would not be visible from the street. P. Saad presented the wall sections which illustrated all the materials. These included detailed sections through windows, doors, and balconies. The updated renderings showed perspectives from Grove Street; the mechanical equipment and solar panels were minimally visible.

Materials Reviewed:

APPLICATION LINK: <https://newtonma.viewpointcloud.com/records/779651>

5 PDF Files:

AHDC Submission_Revisions list (list of revisions made to the 230620 documents)

230620_AHDC Submission_update_Part1

230620_AHDC Submission_update_Part2

230620_AHDC Submission_update_Part3

120 Seminary Material Sample Photos

AHDC Submission_Revisions list:

List of revisions made to the 230620 documents

230620_AHDC Submission_update_Part1

Assessors database map

Existing and proposed site plan

Existing site conditions

Proposed site plan with site and landscape products and materials

Grading plan

Planting plan

Photos of 24 Robin Dell elevations

Existing elevations and roof plan for 24 Robin Dell with call outs

Photos of 24 Robin Dell architectural details

Proposed elevations and roof plan for 24 Robin Dell with call outs

24 Robin Dell double-hung window details

Context analysis

Existing and proposed site sections

Proposed elevations for the new building with height comparisons

Proposed roof plan for the new building

Wall sections of the new building

230620_AHDC Submission_update_Part2

Perspective views with and without trees
Proposed materials for the new building
Proposed materials for 24 Robin Dell

230620_AHDC Submission_update_Part3

Appendix A: Material Product Data

Appendix B: Floor Plans

120 Seminary Material Sample Photos

Photos of the material sample mockups

P. Dudek said that he reviewed the on-site material boards, and he appreciated the continued refinement of the new building which reduced the scale and produced a very satisfactory design. He noted that the new building was only visible in increments from Grove Street (which was the only public way) and supported the design which was appropriate and would fit in to the historic district. N. Grissom noted that the HardiePlank material specification showed the grain side on the exterior; the smooth side on the exterior was preferable because it looked more like historic wood siding. She preferred the Cobblestone Gray color which was lighter, worked better with the siding color, and would absorb less heat. She said the applicants did a great job and that the proposed project would fit in well.

R. Alfred found the on-site material board mock-ups very helpful. He noted that there was tension working with a project where one side of the new construction faced Lasell Village and was not visible from a public way and not a concern for the commission, while the side that faced Grove Street was a concern for the commission. He felt better about the massing but had some concerns about matching materials that were consistent with Lasell Village and if they fit with the historic district. He agreed with N. Grissom that the HardiePlank siding needed to have the smooth side on the exterior.

He also wanted to make sure that the proposed brick veneer would have the look of traditional brick masonry and asked if the applicants were specifying full brick veneer or thin veneer. He wanted to see samples of brick that could be more appropriate for the historic Victorian neighborhood. Other commissioners thought that a brick that tied in to the Lasell Village architecture could be appropriate. There was discussion about the brick veneer. P. Saad said thin brick veneer had less embodied carbon and would have the volumetric appearance of brick. N. Grissom confirmed that the thin brick veneer would have mortar between them. R. Alfred wanted full brick veneer which would be consistent with what was required at the Walker Center. P. Dudek noted that the applicants for the Walker Center agreed to construct full brick veneer, but were given the option of submitting a mock-up of the thin brick veneer for commission review and approval.

P. Saad said they would commit to full brick with mortar. S. Buchbinder agreed that different brick samples would be made available on-site for the commissioners to review so that the commission could then review and approve a final brick product for construction at a regularly scheduled meeting. P. Saad noted that once construction started, they would have a quality control mock-up available onsite for the construction and mortar color. Commissioners agreed that they would also want to see the quality control mock-up.

R. Alfred had hoped the new building would have windows with muntins that would be sympathetic to the two-over-two double-hung windows on the historic house. J. Markette asked if more research should be done on the windows. He did not support the project but was encouraged by the changes to make the new building less noticeable. P. Dudek and D. Capasso said the design of the new building windows was appropriate; new

construction should be compatible but not try mimic a historic house. P. Saad noted that they would not be able to find windows of that size with muntins that would also meet the new energy codes.

Abutter Steve Weiss appreciated the progress and said the neighbors had the project legally reviewed and did not see any basis to allow for substantial alteration to the historic district and for moving one of the oldest houses in the district. He thought Lasell was being rewarded for not maintaining the house. He asked why the project couldn't be built on Lasell Village property that was outside of the district and that the project exceeded the previous settlement agreement with the City of Newton. He thought that the changes set precedents that benefited developers by allowing a commercial project in conjunction with a single-family home. The project only benefitted Lasell and not the neighborhood. He said the project was not in the interest of preserving the historic character of the neighborhood. T. Mack agreed with S. Weiss and said that Lasell had done very little to preserve the historic house and would be rewarded with a massive development project. Abutters had said they would buy the home if given the opportunity; he felt it was more appropriate for the historic house to be used as a residence. He said the renderings and views from Grove Street and Robin Dell looked beautiful.

N. Grissom moved to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the project as presented with requirements for the brick veneer, mock-ups and samples; the HardiePlank siding; and the 24 Robin Dell roof shingle color. P. Dudek seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-1 with J. Markette voting in the negative. R. Alfred said that he supported the application because of the design changes that were made since the previous meeting that addressed his concerns about the massing and details; he appreciated the applicants' willingness to work with the commission. J. Markette said he voted against the project because he thought it was a dramatic alteration and did not feel like preservation. He did not think commissioners provided good reasons to approve the project and this seemed like a dereliction of duty.

RECORD OF ACTION:

DATE: July 12, 2023

SUBJECT: 120 SEMINARY AVE Lasell House/Town Hall - Certificate of Appropriateness

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on July 11, 2023 the Auburndale Historic District Commission, by roll call vote of 5-1,

RESOLVED to **grant** a Certificate of Appropriateness for the project as submitted at 120 SEMINARY AVE Lasell House/Town Hall to relocate and renovate 24 Robin Dell and connect the historic structure to the new building which will have approximately 42 independent living units with the following requirements: 1) full brick veneer will be used on the Robin Dell house and the new building and the applicant is required to return to the commission with brick sample mock-ups, including older looking bricks; 2) HardiePlank siding will be used with the smooth side on the exterior; and 3) the Cobblestone Gray (lighter gray color) shingles will be used on the 24 Robin Dell house,

Voting in the Affirmative:

- Dante Capasso, Chair
- Paul Dudek, Member
- Nancy Grissom, Member
- Joel Shames, Member

Voting in the Negative:

- Josh Markette, Alternate

Abstained:

Recused:

- Richard Alfred,
Alternate

Administrative discussion

Annual Commission elections: Commissioners agreed that they supported re-electing the existing officers. D. Capasso moved to re-elect Dante Capasso for Chair, Nancy Grissom for Vice Chair, and Paul Dudek for Secretary. R. Alfred seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0 with one abstention. J. Markette abstained.

Minutes: Commissioners asked to review the March and April 2023 minutes at the next meeting in order to confirm the some of the discussion around brick veneer.

RECORD OF ACTION:

DATE: August 31, 2023

SUBJECT: Auburndale Historic District Commission Election

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on July 11, 2023, the Auburndale Historic District Commission, by vote of 5-0, with one abstention

RESOLVED to elect Dante Capasso as Chair, Nancy Grissom as Vice Chair and Paul Dudek as Secretary.

Voting in the Affirmative:

Dante Capasso, Chair
Joel Shames, Member

Paul Dudek, Member
Richard Alfred, Alternate

Nancy Grissom, Member

Abstaining:

Josh Markette, Alternate

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Recorded by Barbara Kurze, Senior Preservation Planner