

## **Adrienne Hartzell**

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**Subject:** FW: NCA question

Hello Adrienne,

The Development Review Team of the Newton Planning Department met with representatives from the NCA on August 28, 2013. At this meeting the Planning Department reviewed proposed site plans and heard about plans to convert the Allen House structure to a Museum/Nonprofit. Our understanding from this meeting was that the Allen House needed more time to finalize its plans and that more information and/or an application for administrative site plan review would be forthcoming.

Katy

Katy Hax Holmes  
Senior Planner  
City of Newton  
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When responding, please be aware that the Massachusetts Secretary of State has determined that most email is public record and therefore cannot be kept confidential.

**Newton Community Preservation Program Grant Proposal**  
**Newton Cultural Alliance – Nathaniel Allen Homestead**  
**November 2013**

**History of the Nathaniel Allen Homestead**

The Nathaniel T. Allen Homestead at 35 Webster St., West Newton is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and has Newton Landmark status. The house is an excellent example of Greek Revival architecture. From 1854 it was the home of Nathaniel Topliff Allen (1823-1903) and has rich associations with the West Newton community, past and present. Allen was a colleague of Horace Mann, pioneer educator, politician and first Massachusetts Secretary of the Board of Education. Allen was widely known in the second half of the nineteenth century as an educator and abolitionist; his home is a documented site on the Underground Railroad. Allen's West Newton English and Classical School, was a progressive institution in its time and was both co-educational and racially mixed. It pioneered one of the earliest kindergartens in the country and stressed physical education as an important part of the educational program.

Allen's home was an integral part of his school, as he and his wife boarded some of the students, some who came from such far-away places as Cuba, South America and Japan. The adjacent barn housed a gymnasium, bowling alley, and later a school room for the Misses Allen School, operated by Allen's daughters Fanny and Lucy in the first half of the twentieth-century. In 1978, the last heir left the property to Smith and Radcliffe Colleges, the First Unitarian Society in Newton and Trinity Church. A community based, nonprofit corporation formed to care for the property. Beginning in the 1980's this group maintained this property as housing and community space. Despite strong community interest, the foundation was unable to establish a viable model for its preservation. In 2012, the Nathaniel Allen house was put up for sale, and in November 2012 it was acquired by the Newton Cultural Alliance, for intended use by community arts organizations for cultural and educational programs including teaching, rehearsal, performances and gatherings.

City of Newton



Setti D. Warren  
Mayor

## Inspectional Services Department

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July 25, 2013

Stephen J. Buchbinder, Esq.  
Schlesinger and Buchbinder, LLP  
Attorneys At Law  
1200 Walnut Street  
Newton, MA 02461-1267

Re: 35 Webster St./ Nathaniel Allen House

Dear Steve:

I am in receipt of your letter of June 13, 2013 and the accompanying details concerning the parking situation at this site. As noted in your letter this site is subject to Preservation Restrictions as to the landscape and the use of certain areas of the building. The building use issues have been dealt with in separate agreements and are not the subject of this letter. The parking arrangements and the landscape of the site are inextricably connected and it is incumbent upon both the applicant and the city to proceed in a most balanced manner to serve both those restrictions and the application of the Newton Zoning Ordinance (NZO), 30-19, Article III, Parking and Loading Facilities.

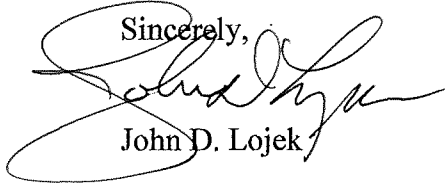
Having studied the several iterations of the plans and letters from your office, I have concluded the following:

- 1) That the parking calculation for this site is a "reasonable approach" to the parking requirements of the NZO for a multi-use institutional/ educational facility and avoids the double counting of spaces for uses not simultaneously in session.
- 2) That the proposed parking arrangement is in keeping with the Preservation Restrictions for landscape.
- 3) That a waiver of the requested landscape islands, lighting and curbing is necessary and correct to enable the Nathaniel Allen House to operate as Dover amended institution and is the best interest of the neighborhood and the City of Newton.
- 4) That 26 spaces, as designed and laid out in the plans of VTP, dated April 5, 2013 are sufficient for the ordinary uses proposed for the facility.
- 5) That these waivers are thereby granted under 40A, Section 3, "the Dover Amendment" as reasonable regulation.

I hope this letter serves your clients' purposes. Please contact this office if we can be of further assistance.

*Strict code enforcement makes the city safer  
Before buying, renting or leasing check zoning*

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John D. Lojek", written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned above the printed name.

cc: Candace Havens, Director of Planning and Development  
David Norton, Deputy Commissioner ISD/ Plans Examiner



Setti D. Warren  
Mayor

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Candace Havens  
Director

**MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARINGS  
NEWTON HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**DATE:** August 22, 2013

**PLACE/TIME:** City Hall, Room 202  
7:00 p.m.

**ATTENDING:** Donald Lang, Chair  
David Morton, Member  
Leonard Sherman, Alternate  
See Attendance List

Alfred Wojciechowski, Member  
Nancy Grissom, Member  
Brian Lever, Staff

**ABSENT:** William Roesner, Member  
Rodney Barker, Member  
Donald Tellalian, Alternate

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. with Donald Lang presiding as Chair. Voting permanent members were Lang, Wojciechowski, Morton, and Grissom. Alternate member Sherman also voted. Brian Lever acted as recording secretary and the meeting was digitally recorded. Sherman arrived at 7:10PM and left at 10:00PM.

**65-71 Walnut Park – Landmark Review**

Suzanne Perry from the Jackson-Walnut Park Schools presented an application to install two flagpoles. Perry stated that the schools desired the poles to identify their location and that they would be located behind an eight-foot brick wall. Perry stated that they had modeled their banners and flagpoles on those used at Newton Country Day School. Staff recommended that the western pole be moved slightly east as to not obstruct the view of the caretaker’s cottage from Washington Street. Perry agreed to make such a change. Grissom motioned to approve the proposed flagpoles with Morton seconding.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on August 22, 2013 the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 5-0,

**RESOLVED** to approve the proposed flagpoles at 65-71 Walnut Park as submitted with the following conditions: (1) that the western flagpole be moved so that it is the same distance from Washington Street but in between the caretaker’s house and barn so as not to obstruct the view of the caretaker’s house from the driveway off of Washington Street and (2) that a revised site plan be reviewed and approved by staff.



Voting in the Affirmative:

**Donald Lang, Chair**  
**Alfred Wojciechowski, Member**  
**David Morton, Member**  
**Nancy Grissom, Member**  
**Leonard Sherman, Alternate**

**35 Webster Street – Landmark / Preservation Restriction Review**

Adrienne Hartzell from the Newton Cultural Alliance and architect Phi Hong presented final plans for exterior alterations to the building. Hartzell stated that the Alliance was preparing a phased approach to repurposing the building and that a temporary handicap access ramp was needed along with the alteration of an entrance on the west façade to begin partial occupancy of the building. Hong provided information on the changes proposed to the exterior including replicating entrances, removing a portion of the front porch and removing a porch on the west façade, as well as new windows and doors. Hong further stated that the barn was proposed to have a dormer rather than the skylights initially proposed and presented a drawing of the proposed dormer. Hong stated that repair was the priority over replacement in kind with regard to the windows. Hong also described railings and balustrades proposed around the building. Hong stated that the main entrance on the east façade would remain and be repaired. Wojciechowski noted that there were a number of changes proposed to the barn on the east façade in particular to the windows. Grissom asked what the proposed replacement window would be if windows were replaced and Hong responded that they would be wood simulated divided light windows matching existing. Abutter Miles Smith (30 Webster Street) expressed concern regarding the visibility of the proposed elevator override and Hong stated that it would be set back from the edge of the roof and be minimally visible. Grissom motioned to approve the proposed changes with conditions and Sherman seconded.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on August 22, 2013 the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 4-0 with one recusal,

**RESOLVED** to approve the exterior alterations at 35 Webster Street as submitted with the following conditions: (1) that the proposed wood balustrades will match each other; (2) that one dormer will be used instead of the proposed skylights on the west barn roof as submitted at the meeting; (3) that the triple-track windows on the front façade will be repaired and restored; and (4) that final plans will be reviewed and approved by staff prior to issuance of a building permit.

Voting in the Affirmative:

**Alfred Wojciechowski, Member**  
**David Morton, Member**  
**Nancy Grissom, Member**  
**Leonard Sherman, Alternate**

Recused from Vote:

**Donald Lang, Chair**

**133 Forest Avenue – Demolition Review**

Property owners Ron and Jonathan Gold presented an application to demolish the building. Staff stated that this 1929 Tudor style residence is located in a neighborhood in West Newton of other Tudor style residences as well as Colonial Revival style residences. The architect for the building was Harry Morton Ramsay a Boston based architect who designed a number of residences in Newton during the 1910s through the 1930s. The first owners were Ira and Mildred Ames. Ira was a vice-president of Ames Company, a machinery manufacturer. There has been some demolition and new construction along Forest Avenue, but there is a strong Tudor style architectural context surrounding this property. The building appears to have had few if any exterior alterations and maintains its slate roof, brick and stucco façade, as well as its wood trim. Ron Gold stated that they had reconsidered a full demolition request in favor of constructing additions. Staff stated that since a full demolition request had been filed, that it could be