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

**DATE:** August 6, 2020

**PLACE/TIME:** Full Remote Zoom Meeting  
7:30 p.m.

**ATTENDING:** Jim Gross, Chair  
Ralph Abele, Member  
John Martin, Member  
Dave Morton, Member  
Barbara Wales, Member  
Tarik Lucas, Alternate  
Peter Mooradian, Alternate  
Barbara Kurze, Commission Staff

**ABSENT:** Mark Chudy, Member  
Nancy Grissom, Member

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. with Jim Gross presiding as Chair. Voting permanent members were R. Abele, J. Martin, D. Morton, and B. Wales. Alternates T. Lucas and P. Mooradian were appointed to vote as full members. B. Kurze acted as recording secretary and the meeting was digitally recorded on Zoom.

**122 Lowell Avenue – Certificate of Appropriateness**

Elvin Ruan presented an application to replace the grass, gravel and stone dust area between the driveway and the front walkway with permeable concrete Turfstone pavers. The grass did not grow well in that area.

**Materials Reviewed:**

Assessors database map  
MHC Form B  
Photographs  
Product information

Commission members agreed that the pavers were appropriate and would be an improvement. T. Lucas moved to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the application as submitted. J. Martin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

**RECORD OF ACTION:****DATE:** August 7, 2020**SUBJECT:** 122 Lowell Avenue – Certificate of Appropriateness

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on August 6, 2020 the Newtonville Historic District Commission, by roll call vote of 7-0,

**RESOLVED** to **grant** a Certificate of Appropriateness for the application as submitted for 122 Lowell Avenue to replace the grass area between the driveway and the front walkway with Turfstone pavers.

**Voting in the Affirmative:**

Jim Gross, Chair

Ralph Abele, Member

John Martin, Member

David Morton, Member

Barbara Wales, Member

Tarik Lucas, Alternate

Peter Mooradian, Alternate

**161 Walnut Street – Certificate of Appropriateness (Violation)**

This review was continued from previous meetings. Benny Lu presented an application to get approval for the outstanding window and window area violations. He also submitted the specifications for the four-over-one windows that will replace two windows at the back, B1 and B2, which were changed to one-over-one windows. The list of items was:

1. Boarded up left side basement window RB2.
2. Replaced right side basement window LB1.
3. Removed window, new infill, and new vent on the right side; between L9 and L10.
4. Enclosed second-story three-season porch and new windows.

**Materials Reviewed:**

Photographs

Product specifications

Tracker of items reviewed in previous meetings

Commission members agreed that the removed window, new infill, and vent on the right side (Item #3) were appropriate. J. Gross moved to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the window that was removed, the infill and vent. P. Mooradian seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

Commission members stated that the replacement vinyl basement window was minimally visible (Item #2). The boarded-up basement windows were visible (Item #1) and needed to be painted gray to blend in. Any future work on the basement windows needed to restore all the windows to be identical and historically appropriate. J. Gross moved to grant a Certificate of Hardship for the replacement basement window and boarded-up basement windows with conditions. P. Mooradian seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

There was discussion about when the three-season porch (Item #4) was enclosed. B. Wales stated that it was well documented that the bank of windows on the left, back and return at the back was enclosed from when the owner purchased the property; she wanted it restored to a bank of windows. R. Abele agreed that the change was made recently. B. Wales and T. Lucas showed photos of what that area looked like before the changes. Commission members agreed that this was a substantial and inappropriate change that altered the historic character of the house. B. Wales wanted to see the same amount of glass. J. Martin, D. Morton, and J. Gross thought that there might be an appropriate solution with less glass than there was previously and more glass than was currently there. J. Gross moved to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the three-season

porch enclosure. T. Lucas seconded the motion. The motion was 0-7 and the Certificate of Appropriateness was denied. The owner said he would agree in writing to continue the review for a Certificate of Hardship.

Commission members agreed that the proposed four-over-one windows were appropriate to replace the one-over-one windows in violation at the back of the house. J. Gross moved to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed four-over-one windows. P. Mooradian seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

**RECORD OF ACTION:**

**DATE:** August 13, 2020

**SUBJECT:** 161 Walnut Street – Certificate of Appropriateness (Violation)

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on August 6, 2020 the Newtonville Historic District Commission, by roll call vote of 7-0,

**RESOLVED to grant** a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work that was done at 161 Walnut Street without Commission approval to remove the window between window L9 and L10 on the right side and to fill in the area with siding and install a new vent.

**Voting in the Affirmative:**

Jim Gross, Chair

Ralph Abele, Member

John Martin, Member

David Morton, Member

Barbara Wales, Member

Tarik Lucas, Alternate

Peter Mooradian, Alternate

**RECORD OF ACTION:**

**DATE:** August 13, 2020

**SUBJECT:** 161 Walnut Street – Certificate of Hardship (Violation)

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on August 6, 2020 the Newtonville Historic District Commission, by roll call vote of 7-0,

**RESOLVED to grant** a Certificate of Hardship for the work that was done at 161 Walnut Street without Commission approval to board up three basement windows and replace one basement window with a vinyl window **with the following requirements: 1) if the owner applies to change other basement windows, all of the basement windows must be changed to historically appropriate windows; and 2) paint the exterior of the three boarded up windows LB2, RB1 and RB2 gray to blend in with the rubble foundations.** The replaced window is minimally visible, RB1 and RB2 are somewhat screened by plantings, and painting the boarded-up windows gray will make them less obtrusive. This does not set a precedent for other properties in the district.

**Voting in the Affirmative:**

Jim Gross, Chair

Ralph Abele, Member

John Martin, Member

David Morton, Member

Barbara Wales, Member

Tarik Lucas, Alternate

Peter Mooradian, Alternate

**RECORD OF ACTION:**

**DATE:** August 13, 2020

**SUBJECT:** 161 Walnut Street – Certificate of Appropriateness (Violation)

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on August 6, 2020 the Newtonville Historic District Commission, by roll call vote of 7-0,

**RESOLVED to deny** a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work that was done at 161 Walnut Street without Commission approval to enclose the second-story porch on the back left of the house. The enclosure substantially reduced the openness of that area and changed the character of the house.

**Voting in the Affirmative (to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness):**

No members voted to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness

**Voting in the Negative (to deny a Certificate of Appropriateness):**

Jim Gross, Chair	Ralph Abele, Member	John Martin, Member
David Morton, Member	Barbara Wales, Member	Tarik Lucas, Alternate
Peter Mooradian, Alternate		

**RECORD OF ACTION:**

**DATE:** August 13, 2020

**SUBJECT:** 161 Walnut Street – Certificate of Appropriateness (Violation)

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on August 6, 2020 the Newtonville Historic District Commission, by roll call vote of 7-0,

**RESOLVED to grant** a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed four-over-one windows to replace the vinyl windows B1 and B2 on the back of the house at 161 Walnut Street that were installed without Commission approval.

**Voting in the Affirmative:**

Jim Gross, Chair	Ralph Abele, Member	John Martin, Member
David Morton, Member	Barbara Wales, Member	Tarik Lucas, Alternate
Peter Mooradian, Alternate		

**161 Walnut Street – Working Session (Violation)**

Benny Lu asked for Commission feedback on a proposed project to expand the driveway and install drainage. He also wanted to remove the historic retaining wall and front entry steps, build a new retaining wall, and install a path and stairs connecting the driveway and front entry. The side entry deck would be replaced with a larger deck and new stairs and railings. Sections of the historic retaining wall were removed the end of May and early June without approvals or permits.

**Materials Reviewed:**

Sketches  
Photographs  
Material information

Commission members reminded the owner that even if the contractor said he obtained permits for the work, all exterior changes needed to be reviewed and approved by the Commission. No new projects should be started without approval from the Commission. The owner could contact Staff if there were any questions about what was required. Commission members said that the retaining wall need to use the same stone and mortar as the existing historic wall; B. Kurze recommended that the owner keep the stones from the section that was removed without approval. J. Martin and D. Morton said that the owner needed to submit a comprehensive design with complete, detailed, and accurate drawings and details. The drawings needed to include plans, existing and proposed grading, elevations that showed the complete scope of work (walls, porches including front and side, stairs, railings, etc.) and made it clear what was existing and what was proposed, section drawings of the retaining walls, detail drawings of the railings and hand rails, trim details, column details, details for the stone source and the mortar, and material and product details. The design and materials needed to be appropriate to the historic house. For example, a pressure-treated deck with minimal

detail would not be appropriate. They strongly recommended hiring a landscape architect or professional who could provide a comprehensive design and details.

**Administrative Discussion**

Minutes: The July meeting minutes were approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Recorded by B. Kurze, Senior Preservation Planner