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

DATE: January 4, 2022

PLACE/TIME: Via Zoom

ATTENDING:	Peter Dimond, Chairman	Doug Cornelius, Member
	Nancy Grissom, Member	Mark Armstrong, Member
	Katie Kubie, Member	John Rice, Member
	Jennifer Bentley-Houston Alt.	Valerie Birmingham, Staff

ABSENT: Amanda Stauffer Park, Member

The meeting was called to order via Zoom at 7:00 p.m. with Peter Dimond serving as Chair. Voting permanent members were Cornelius, Grissom, Armstrong, Kubie and Rice. Bentley-Houston was designated to vote as an alternate. Valerie Birmingham acted as Zoom host and the meeting was digitally recorded on the Zoom device.

- FY22 Survey and Planning Grant Application CPA – Letter of Support**
Request letter of support for Newton Architectural Survey 1940-1972 from NHC

Staff reported that the Planning Department has applied for CPA funding to submit a full application to the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) for an FY22 Survey and Planning Grant, which is a 50% matching grant program. Planning has already submitted a pre-application to MHC, and the City of Newton has been invited to submit a full application in February 2022.

Following all guidelines and approvals set out by MHC, the proposed \$35,000 project would hire consultants to research and document approximately 140 historic buildings that are approximately between 50 and 80 years old. Buildings in this date range are under-surveyed, and, given recent City Council discussions about changing the demolition delay age trigger from 50 years to 75 years, it is important to understand and document the significance of these resources. The project would be directly managed by the city’s Preservation Planners, both of whom have managed Survey and

Planning Grant projects in past fiscal rounds. The city is asking the match (\$17,500) to come from CPA funding. Staff presented the pre-proposal application to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) on December 14, 2021, and the CPC unanimously voted to accept the submittal of the full application. Staff will be returning to the CPC on January 11, 2022, to present the full proposal, and are seeking a letter of support for the proposal from the Newton Historical Commission prior. Additionally, with the full application to MHC that Planning will be submitting in early February, application will need to include a letter of support for the project from the Commission with that as well.

As noted on the CPC application, in 2001 and 2003, Newton completed two projects to understand the City's largely unrecognized Post WWII development and plan for its preservation. The current proposal uses these resources as a starting point to develop a list of historically and architecturally significant mid-twentieth century structures for additional research and study. Additionally, Preservation Planners will use GIS data, building permit research and field studies to begin putting together a list of 140 properties. The goal of this project is to preserve Newton's historically significant mid-twentieth century resources by completing new historic inventory forms that will allow for a more complete understanding of the individual structures and neighborhoods constructed during this period. The inventory forms are also uploaded on the State's database and available to the public for their own research. Newton has over 3,200 structures built between 1940 and 1972 yet to survey, including commercial and institutional structures which warrant recognition, and this project is seen to be the first of several phases of survey needed to fully document this period. This survey will provide the city with much needed information to help it better implement its existing preservation tools and strategies to preserve, rehabilitate, and restore mid-century structures for future generations.

Questions and comments from the Commission included the reason for the number of properties to be included, how the list of properties will be determined, the change in the Demolition Delay Ordinance to include buildings less than 50 years old that are included on MACRIS, next steps, the benefits of the project, and past studies.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Dimond made a motion to recommend that the Chair prepare a letter of support on behalf of the NHC, to the CPC and the Massachusetts Historical Commission, for the Newton Architectural Survey 1940-1972 proposal and application. Ms. Grissom seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 4, 2022 the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 7-0:

RESOLVED to recommend that the Chair prepare a letter of support on behalf of the NHC, to the CPC and the Massachusetts Historical Commission, for the Newton Architectural Survey 1940-1972 proposal and application.

Voting in the Affirmative: Voting in the Negative: Recusal:

Peter Dimond, Chair

Doug Cornelius, Member

Nancy Grissom, Member

Mark Armstrong, Member
Katie Kubie, Member
John Rice, Member
Jennifer Bentley-Houston, Alt.

A letter was submitted to Lara Kritzer, CPA Program Manager, on January 10, 2022.

2. **19 Highland Avenue, Church of the Open Word/Newt Art Center CPA – Letter of Support (Ward 2)**
Request letter of support to conduct needs assessment from NHC

Staff reported that The New Art Center has applied for CPA funding to conduct a feasibility study of the Church of the Open Word site on Highland Avenue. The Newton CPC voted unanimously to accept a full application for the proposed work. The application was submitted on December 17, 2021, for inclusion on the January 11, 2022, agenda. The New Art Center has requested a letter of support from the NHC in preparation for the January CPC meeting.

Emily O’Neil and Michael Kaufman, on behalf of the New Art Center, went over the CPA proposal with the Commission and remarked that the purpose is to do a feasibility assessment in order to know what the future scope will be, and that this was preliminary and still in the early stages. Ms. O’Neil described the architect of the building, and a previous assessment.

Comments and questions from the Commission included the historical elements of the building, the reason for relocating facilities and the New Art Center’s current building, it was a great project, a feasibility study using CPA funds was the best scenario and right process in order to understand the necessary scope of work.

The item was opened to public comment. Jay Walter commented that he loved the idea of creating a cultural district in that area.

Mr. Dimond made a motion to recommend that the Chair prepare a letter of support on behalf of the NHC to the CPC, for the New Art Center/Church of the Open Word Restoration proposal. Ms. Bentley-Houston seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 4, 2022 the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 7-0:

RESOLVED to recommend that the Chair prepare a letter of support on behalf of the NHC to the CPC, for the New Art Center/Church of the Open Word Restoration proposal.

Voting in the Affirmative: Voting in the Negative: Recusal:

Peter Dimond, Chair
Doug Cornelius, Member
Nancy Grissom, Member
Mark Armstrong, Member
Katie Kubie, Member

John Rice, Member
Jennifer Bentley-Houston, Alt.

A letter was submitted to Lara Kritzer, CPA Program Manager, on January 10, 2022.

3. **270 Linwood Avenue – Partial and Demolition Review (Ward 1)**

Request to construct additions and demolish detached garage

Staff reported that the house at 270 Linwood Avenue first appears on the 1874 atlas, belonging to a Mrs. Sylvester. This would be Mrs. Emeline Sylvester, wife of Austin T. Sylvester, a jewelry salesman and Civil War veteran. The property would remain under the ownership of the Sylvester family until at least 1895, and it was this family that constructed an accessory structure in its current location, as it appears on the 1886 atlas. The façade of the former stable was most likely intentionally designed to mimic the appearance of the façade of the main body of the house, which was common during the years following the Civil War. According to the atlases it appears that between 1886 and 1895, a rear ell was removed on the house, and a larger rear addition and ell were constructed. The Sylvester family owned the property until at least 1901 prior to their move to Winthrop, MA.

By 1907, Harry Harwood is listed as the owner, and lived at the property with his wife Elizabeth and their children. Harwood worked for Harwood Brothers Inc., a jewelry wholesale company in Boston and in 1915 pulled a building permit for the installation of a window in the rear building for \$2. On the building permit Harwood notes that it was formerly a stable, but it was being used as a playhouse for children. In 1917, Harwood permitted the construction of an open balcony and in 1920, as appropriate for the time, he once again altered the use of the rear building to be a two-car garage and had the left side addition constructed. The front porch was repaired and replaced as needed between 2010-2011.

The wood framed house and former stable have retained character defining elements including the cornice returns and wood 2/2 windows. Further, the decorative wood window trim, elaborate corner brackets, dentil work and intact front porch help maintain the architecturally significant appearance of the 19th century dwelling. Staff recommended preferably preserving both the house and converted garage for architectural integrity.

Jay Walter, architect for the project, commented that the house is nicely detailed, that they were proposing an addition in the rear, the site drops several feet and that the outbuilding was set back in the corner and its wood floor was not appropriate for use as a garage. Further, Mr. Walter commented that the outbuilding intentionally had much less detail than the house.

Mr. Cornelius asked about the outbuilding and commented that he did not think it should be preferably preserved. Mr. Walter commented that it had no ornamentation or architectural detail. Ms. Bentley-Houston commented that the outbuilding still had appeal. Ms. Kubie remarked that the outbuilding went with the house, but it was not as ornate and pretty simple with not as many redeeming qualities as others the Commission has seen. Ms. Kubie commented that the main house is beautiful. Mr. Dimond commented that he thought the garage did go with the house. Mr. Armstrong disagreed and commented that it was asymmetrical and less formal. Mr. Rice remarked that he did not hate the outbuilding but did not think it should be preserved.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Dimond made a motion to preferably preserve the house at 270 Linwood Avenue. Ms. Grissom seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 4, 2022, the Newton Historical Commission, by a vote of 7-0:

RESOLVED to preferably preserve the house at 270 Linwood Avenue

Voting in the Affirmative: Voting in the Negative: Abstained:

Peter Dimond, Chair
Doug Cornelius, Member
Katie Kubie, Member
Mark Armstrong, Member
Nancy Grissom, Member
John Rice, Member
Jennifer Bentley-Houston, Alt.

Mr. Dimond made a motion to preferably preserve the outbuilding at 270 Linwood Avenue. Ms. Bentley-Houston seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 4, 2022, the Newton Historical Commission, by a vote of 3-4:

RESOLVED to preferably preserve the outbuilding at 270 Linwood Avenue

Voting in the Affirmative: Voting in the Negative: Abstained:

Peter Dimond, Chair	
	Doug Cornelius, Member
	Katie Kubie, Member
	Mark Armstrong, Member
Nancy Grissom, Member	
	John Rice, Member
Jennifer Bentley-Houston, Alt	

The motion failed to pass so the garage is not preferably preserved.

Mr. Walter went over the proposed plans for the property with the Commission and commented that there would be little demolition on the house.

Ms. Bentley-Houston asked about the siding material. Mr. Walter responded and stated that he would staff with a list of materials. The Commission discussed the windows in the proposed addition and

commented that they would leave the final placement and number of windows to the architect. Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Cornelius both commented that it was a great project.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Dimond made a motion to waive the demo delay on the house at 270 Linwood Avenue based on the submitted plans, with the condition that the plans be updated to include a list of materials as discussed at the hearing, and final plans be reviewed by staff. Ms. Kubie seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on November 4, 2021, the Newton Historical Commission, by a vote of 7-0:

RESOLVED to waive the demo delay on the house at 270 Linwood Avenue based on the submitted plans, with the condition that the plans be updated to include a list of materials as discussed at the hearing, and final plans be reviewed by staff.

Voting in the Affirmative: Voting in the Negative: Abstained:

Peter Dimond, Chair
Doug Cornelius, Member
Katie Kubie, Member
Mark Armstrong, Member
Nancy Grissom, Member
John Rice, Member
Jennifer Bentley-Houston, Alt.

4. **54 Indiana Terrace –Demolition Review (Ward 5)**

Request to demolish house and detached garage

Staff reported that the single-family house at 54 Indiana Terrace, originally known as 83 Hale Street, was permitted for construction in 1925 for \$4500. The owner was listed as Walter Burns and the architect/builder was O.W. Lewis. Burns, a machinist who emigrated from Canada, is listed as residing at the property with his sons and boarders on the 1930 census. In 1936, then owner Grant and Eva Simpson obtained approval from the then Board of Alderman to construct a metal prefabricated Brooks Skinner detached garage within the side setback. Arguably the most popular prefab garage manufacturer in the area, the Brooks Skinner Company at one point proclaimed to “produce a complete building every 55 minutes in the factory.” By 1938, Philip Powell, a machinist at the mill at nearby 1238 Chestnut St, is residing in the dwelling. Ernest Simpson and his family is first listed at the address in a 1939 newspaper article, and the Simpson family will continue to reside in the dwelling until at least 1963. In 1974 the entire width of the front of the house was extended 7’ over the existing front porch, which was likely previously enclosed. In 2006 (5) windows were replaced. Staff recommended not preferably preserving the house and garage as the most visible elevation of the house has been substantially altered.

No one was present to represent the application.

Mr. Cornelius remarked that the view was remarkable, but that he did not find much with the house and that it only minimally fit into the area. Mr. Armstrong commented that it was simple shape and hard to judge. Mr. Rice commented that it should not be preserved, and it was not one of the great Upper Falls houses.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Dimond made a motion to preferably preserve the house at 54 Indiana Terrace. There was no second to the motion, so the motion did not pass. The house is not preferably preserved.

Mr. Dimond made a motion to preferably preserve the garage at 54 Indiana Terrace. There was no second to the motion, so the motion did not pass. The garage is not preferably preserved.

5. **164 Spiers Road – Waiver Request (Ward 8)**

Request to waive demo delay

Staff reported that the owner of the property would present plans for a replacement structure at this location. This property was preferably preserved on August 26, 2021, and the minimum four-month waiting period had elapsed.

Victoria Sirotin, owner, went over the proposed plans with the Commission and commented on the condition of the existing structure, that there was little historic context to salvage, and financial hardships.

Ms. Bentley-Houston remarked that she did not think the proposal mitigated the loss of the existing house, and that the proposed garage was forward of the house and was a focal point of the side. Ms. Bentley-Houston additionally commented on the column on the side of the and the large size of the proposed dwelling. Ms. Sirotin remarked that the garage was pushed back further than any other on the street. Ms. Kubie stated that the design did not mitigate the loss and was not appropriate, and that there are still houses similar in scale in the area that had additions constructed in order to maintain the scale. Ms. Grissom commented on past experiences with the Commission and Oak Hill Park. Mr. Armstrong commented that the applicants had designed the first-floor roof to imitate the existing ranch. Mr. Dimond commented that the garage should be pushed back. Mr. Cornelius remarked that he would not ask that applicants retain the single-story design.

The item was opened to public comment. Judith Freedman, 191 Spiers Road, commented that her husband had grown up in the area and saw new development, that this site was an eyesore, and she would be happier once it was down, and the driveway. Councilor Wright asked about the FAR, to which Ms. Sirotin responded. Councilor Wright additionally commented on the setback and that the house would change addresses. Lisa Garland commented that she had grown up there and take care of her own house, however this house had been neglected and she was not in favor of only large houses. Ben Ginsburg, 250 Spiers Road, remarked that it was one of few original houses and did not see how it was beyond repair and mitigates the loss of the existing house. Joyce Romanow, 15 Van Roosen Road, remarked there were only two houses left on the street but she was in favor of its demolition, and that the neighborhood still has character and wanted people to move in. Natalya Shtokman, 247 Spiers Road, stated it was an eyesore that would be torn down at some point. Svetlana Goncharehko, 184

Spiers Road, remarked she was an advocate for its demolition and the construction will provide jobs. Ace Gershfield, 10 Esty Farm Road, stated he knew the owner and the demolition was much needed for neighborhood and that the lot was a waste otherwise. Patty Steenvruggen, 22 Caldon Path, commented on another project done by the owner and a change in the address to a roadway. Jennifer Shea, associate with the owner, commented that the address change for the other mentioned address was due to the city's Engineering Department. Lana Lukatsky, remarked that she loved and was in favor of the proposed plan.

No vote was taken, and the delay was not waived at 164 Spiers Road.

6. **197 Nehoiden Road – Waiver Request (Ward 5)**

Request to waive demo delay – continuation

Staff reported that the owner of this property would present revised plans for a replacement structure at this location. This property was preferably preserved on April 22, 2021, and the applicant first presented plans for a waiver at the November 18, 2021 hearing. The delay was not waived at that hearing. At the November 18, 2021, the Commission reviewed plans for a waiver and commented on the roof material, that the massing was too much for the site and seemed out of scale, and that the front was too big for the space. A motion to waive the delay was not seconded and the delay remained in place.

Arthur Elzon, owner, commented that they had spent time addressing the neighbor's and the Commission's concerns. Mike McKay, architect for the project, presented the revised plans and noted that they had simplified the lines to have the massing not feel as overpowering, and that the project was under the allowable FAR.

Mr. Dimond asked about the proposed materials. Mr. McKay responded and commented that they would be willing to do wood shingles to have a mix of clapboards and shingles to break up the scale. Mr. Armstrong remarked it was a satisfying design and that he thought it mitigated the loss of the existing house. The Commissioners discussed the tall modern looking windows. Ms. Kubie commented it was an interesting design and there was feel of what was there now. Ms. Grissom commented on the ends of the gables and the mix in the neighborhood. Mr. Cornelius commented that the revised changes were great and the previous design was too busy.

The item was opened to public comment. Rena Getz of Waban commented that the new building was significantly larger than the existing and it would be a loss as the property is significant to Waban. Further, Ms. Getz commented on the significant location, and that the original house is much more articulated and she did not think it mitigated its loss.

Mr. Dimond made a motion to waive the demo delay on the house at 197 Nehoiden Road based on the submitted plans, with the condition that the plans be updated to include a list of materials as discussed at the hearing, and final plans be reviewed by staff. Mr. Cornelius seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 4, 2022, the Newton Historical Commission, by a vote of 7-0:

RESOLVED to waive the demo delay on 197 Nehoiden Road based on submitted plans with the condition that the materials be updated as discussed at the hearing. Final details to be approved by staff.

Voting in the Affirmative: Voting in the Negative: Recused:

Peter Dimond, Chair
Doug Cornelius, Member
Katie Kubie, Member
Mark Armstrong, Member
Nancy Grissom, Member
John Rice, Member
Jennifer Bentley-Houston, Alt.

Administrative Discussion:

a) Approval of minutes from the November 18, 2021, meeting

Minutes from the November 18, 2021 hearing were unanimously approved by those in attendance at the hearing

b) Discussion about the revised Demolition Delay Ordinance and edits to the Commission's Rules and Regulations

The Commission discussed a plan to revise the Rule and Regulations, and that Mr. Dimond, Mr. Cornelius, Mr. Armstrong and staff would meet with the Law Department to discuss the revisions and return to the Commission with an updated draft.

Administratively approved Full Demos for the month of December:

235 California Street (garage)	11/9/2021	D
134 Sumner St (garage)	11/12/2021	D
12 Antonellis Cir	11/17/2021	D
82 Collins Rd	11/18/2021	D
92-96 Webster Pk (garage)	11/23/2021	D
63 Fenwick Rd	11/24/2021	D
518 Quinobequin Rd	11/24/2021	D
71 Cloverdale Rd	12/1/2021	D
28 Edward Rd	12/2/2021	D
41 Terrace Ave (garage)	12/3/2021	D
21 Tocci Path	12/6/2021	D

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote.

Respectfully,

 , NHC