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STAFF MEMORANDUM

Meeting Date: April 21, 2022
DATE: April 14, 2022
TO: Chestnut Hill Historic District Commission
FROM: Barbara Kurze, Senior Preservation Planner
SUBJECT: **Additional Review Information**

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the members of the Chestnut Hill Historic District Commission (Chestnut Hill HDC) with information about the significance of the properties being reviewed and the application process, which may be useful in the review and decision-making process of Chestnut Hill HDC. Additional information may be presented at the meeting that the Chestnut Hill HDC can take into consideration when discussing a Local Historic District Review application.

Dear Chestnut Hill HDC Members,

The following is additional information for the Local Historic District Review applications that you should have received in your meeting packet.

29 Gate House Road – Final Project Approval of Remediation

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE: The 1931 English Revival house was designed by Newton Centre architect Hawley W. Morton and built by Sherman and Fennell. The first occupants were George Austin and Harriet C. D’Arcy. George D’Arcy is listed in the 1932 and 1934 City Directories as working in “humidifying” in Rhode Island.

APPLICATION PROCESS: The owner was approved to remediate the solar panels that were in violation by flattening and centering the existing panels. The remediation work is completed, and the owner is requesting the final project approval.

MATERIALS PROVIDED:

- Remediation decision
- Photographs of completed work
- Approved remediation plan

5 Chestnut Hill Terrace – Certificate of Appropriateness

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE: The Colonial Revival house was built in 1987.

APPLICATION PROCESS: The owners submitted two applications: 1) replace the house and garage roofs with a Owens Corning TruDefinition Duration shingles in Driftwood color which appears to be a different color shingle from the existing (proposed is brown and existing is gray); and 2) replace the wood gutters on the house with aluminum K-style gutters to match the gutters on the garage. Wood fascia and trim will be repaired in-kind; no work is planned on the downspouts.

Notes:

Staff requested a photo showing the proposed roof shingle next to the house to show how it would work with the color palette. And requested a sample be made available for commission members to do a site visit.

Staff recommended that the applicant consider an option for gray shingle that might be approved administratively.

Applicants were advised that the commission typically does not approve aluminum gutters to replace wood and to consider applying for fiberglass gutters with a historic profile or for copper gutters.

MATERIALS PROVIDED:

Roof shingle information

Photographs

Roofing quotation

Gutter color and profile

31 Chestnut Hill Terrace – Certificate of Appropriateness

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE: Newton and Chestnut Hill experienced heavy development pressure in the 1920s. Several large Chestnut Hill estates were subdivided at that time, including Mrs. Henry Lee's property along Gatehouse Road and Beacon Street. Chestnut Hill Terrace was named Newton Street when it was laid out in 1928; the name was changed to Chestnut Hill Terrace in 1930. The Colonial Revival house was designed by Newton architect Albert M. Kreider and built by J.C. Crowley of Brighton in 1941. Kreider was the architect for 358 Beacon Street, and Post war 1940s and 1950s subdivisions on Evelyn Road, Judith Road, Mary Ellen Road and Walnut Street. The first owners of 31 Chestnut Hill Terrace were Martin W. and Mary Newman. Martin worked as a broker at 66 Summer Street in Boston.

APPLICATION PROCESS: The owners submitted two applications.

The first application is to remove the stairs leading from the back of the rear deck as they are a safety hazard, install a section of railing that matches the existing to close the gap, change the left side railing configuration to install new stairs similar to the existing ones that lead off the left side of the deck. The existing Trex Transcend railing system with the mahogany cocktail rail will be re-used or matched.

Note: The work at the back of the deck is not visible from a public or private way, but the left side of the deck is visible from Chestnut Hill Terrace.

Applicants were asked to provide details and a scale drawing of the proposed left side stairs.

The bluestone stair in front of the back retaining wall was not included in this application. But it would not be visible and will be administratively approved once we receive the application submission.

The second application is to paint the front door black (Benjamin Moore Impervo HC 190) to match the garage door, shutters, and right-side door. Other items on this application were determined to be in-kind and were administratively approved.

Notes:

The owner provided additional information to confirm that the shutter repair and shutter hardware replacement will be in-kind, so this work was administratively approved.

Re-painting the existing shutters, garage door and porch door black to match the existing color was also administratively approved.

MATERIALS PROVIDED:

Project description

Photographs of front door

Shutter painted with proposed black paint

22 Chestnut Hill Road – Certificate of Appropriateness

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE: The Tudor style house was built in 1997.

APPLICATION PROCESS: The owners want to move a window on the right side of the house. The existing trim and “half timbering” will be re-used and the stucco will be patched to match the existing stucco.

MATERIALS PROVIDED:

Information on re-using and matching materials

Assessor’s database map

Photographs

Elevations

Plans

Original plans

70 Suffolk Road – Certificate of Appropriateness

Note: the back of the property is visible from the MBTA line.

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE: The 1928 Colonial Revival house was designed by Coolidge, Shepley, Bulfinch, and Abbott. The first owner was Samuel Eliot who worked in real estate; his offices were at 131 State Street in Boston.

APPLICATION PROCESS: This review is continued from a previous meeting. The owners want to remove one chimney and add three dormers to the front of the house and three new dormers to the back. They want to demolish a single-story sunroom addition at the back of the house and replace it with a two-story addition. They want to partially demolish a brick wall at the front of the house and add one story to the existing attached three-car garage. A new attached two-car garage would be built perpendicular to the back of the house.

Notes:

There are minor changes from the previously reviewed design: the Tudor-style half-timbering treatment of the west addition was changed to brick quoining on the corners and window casings, and the two small windows that flanked the larger center window on the west elevation were removed.

The owners have withdrawn the part of the application to replace all the existing windows.

MATERIALS PROVIDED:

Explanation of design changes from last submission
Withdrawal of the part of the application for the replacement of existing windows
MHC Form B
Project description
Site plan
Historic plans
Elevations
Roof plans
Photographs
Detail drawings
Renderings
Product and material information

50 Chestnut Hill Road – Certificate of Appropriateness

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE: The International Style house was built in 1953.

APPLICATION PROCESS: The owners want to change one right side fixed glass panel to a glass door with a sidelite and extend the existing landing and steps.

MATERIALS PROVIDED:

Assessor’s database map
MHC Form B
Street views and map
Photos
Plans
Elevations
Product and material details

152 Suffolk Road – Certificate of Appropriateness

Note: the back of the property is visible from the MBTA line and from Houghton Gardens.

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE: The 1904 Spanish Eclectic style house was designed by Chapman & Frazer for Clement S. Houghton and is individually listed on the National Register. The house was built on a 26-acre parcel that was formerly the property of local farmer Francis Kingsbury who began subdividing his land and selling off house lots in the mid-1800s. Houghton was a founding member of the Chestnut Hill Garden Club; he and his wife Martha worked with the Arnold Arboretum to gather rare plants and Martha travelled to England, France, and Japan to research gardens and collect plants. Landscape architect Warren Manning was responsible for the comprehensive landscape design and the “wild garden” that became today’s Houghton Garden. Landscape architect Wayne Stiles worked with Martha Houghton to create the alpine rock garden along the northern edge of Houghton Pond; this was one of the earliest rock gardens in the U.S. Houghton Garden was established in 1968 after the Chestnut Hill Neighborhood Association fought off a proposed art school. The stable, garage and coachman’s house are now 100 Suffolk Road.

APPLICATION PROCESS: This review is continued from previous meetings. The main changes are that the greenhouse and in-ground trampoline were removed from the application and the heights of the retaining wall structures were reduced.

The owners want to add decking and wrought iron guardrails to the second story porches on either end of the house. A new shed would be built across from the existing garage bays.

At the back of the property, they want to build a terrace structure with a pool and pergola, and a sports court with court lighting. The children's play structure which was put in without commission approval would be moved to the back of the house.

New wood and wire fencing would be installed along the side and rear property lines.

In previous meetings, commission members expressed concerns with the amount of hardscaping and structures that were proposed and that the project was not respectful of the historic setting of a property that was extremely important in the Chestnut Hill Historic District. Included in the materials is an email from Staff to the applicants summarizing the feedback from the commission.

MATERIALS PROVIDED:

Email from Staff summarizing commission feedback

MHC Form B

Site plans

Plant information

Lighting plan

Site plan

Fence plan

Site elevations

Partial front elevations and parapet details

Pergola and outdoor kitchen plans and elevations

Shed plans and elevations

Backyard and topography review

Renderings

Product and material specifications

Outdoor recreational improvement review

24 Essex Road – Certificate of Appropriateness

Note: Because the property was recently sold and is no longer legally or beneficially owned by the owners of the property in 1996, the commission has jurisdiction for full review.

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE: The 1951 International style house was designed by architect G. Holmes Perkins in close collaboration with the owners shortly after Perkins left the Harvard Graduate School of Design to become Dean of the School of Fine Arts at the University of Pennsylvania. Perkins had a distinguished career as an educator, urban planner and architect.

APPLICATION PROCESS: The owners want to demolish the existing house and structures and to build a new house, swimming pool, pavilion, and hardscaping.

MATERIALS PROVIDED:

Project description

Assessor's database map

Site plan
Plans
Elevations
Photographs
Details
Products and materials
MHC Form B

9 Old Orchard Road – Certificate of Appropriateness

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE: This is a significant property in the district and in the City of Newton; the property is individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The circa 1714 main house block is one of the earliest surviving structures in Newton. In 1919, owners William H. and Dorothy G. Coburn hired architect Joseph Everett Chandler to restore interior features and the exterior clapboards. Chandler specialized in the Colonial Revival style and extensively studied colonial buildings in the eastern U.S. He restored and renovated a number of important historic Massachusetts structures, including the Mayflower House in Plymouth (1898), the Old State House (1908), the Paul Revere House (1908), and The House of the Seven Gables in Salem (1909.) In 1930, architect Harold Field Kellogg designed the two large wings, and attached garage.

APPLICATION PROCESS: The owners want to replace the roofs, install two more condensers, install light fixtures, upgrade the electric meter, install vents, confirm that they are using the approved paint color formula, review the paint finish (one commissioner had a question or concern about the sheen), modify the previously approved outdoor kitchen, and add railings to the back steps.

Notes:

The owners will have proposed roof shingle samples available at the house for commissioners to review on site.

We requested larger scale details of the railings.

MATERIALS PROVIDED:

Project narrative
Plans
Roofing specs
Outdoor kitchen products
Plans
Pergola and seat wall details
Preliminary planting information
Renderings

32 Gate House Road – Working Session

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE: The 1931 Colonial Revival style house was designed by C.H. Johnson and built for Edward A. Lally who lived at 11 Meigh Road. Lally also developed the properties at 12 and 17 Chestnut Hill Terrace.

APPLICATION PROCESS: This review is continued from a previous meeting. The owners want to Request to build a front entry vestibule, change window at the back to a door, change color of windows, and demolish shed at the back of the property.

Notes: The application is on the agenda for a working session as we require additional drawings and more details: enlarged elevation, enlarged plan with complete and consistent details, elevations and sections that are consistent (for example, there are discrepancies between A4.01 and A5.01), and lack of detail with the rake. Staff recommended that they look at similar properties on Acacia Avenue that might provide good examples of enclosed front entries.

MATERIALS PROVIDED:

Photographs
MHC Form B
Plot plan
Plans
Elevations
Product information
Door specification

67 Old Orchard Road – Certificate of Appropriateness

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE: The 1906 English Revival house was built as the carriage house or garage for 40 Old Orchard Road and converted into a residence in 1958. The first owner was Albert Farwell Bemis who was the president of Bemis Brothers Bag Company at 89 State Street in Boston, and director of the Boot Cotton Mills of Lowell and the Angua Jute Company of Calcutta, India.

APPLICATION PROCESS: The owners want to replace three sets of wood landscape steps at the back with masonry steps.

MATERIALS PROVIDED:

Photographs
Material information
Existing conditions

Administrative discussion

Minutes: The draft November 2021 and March 2022 meeting minutes are NOT ready for review.

New Commission members: update on where we are with recruiting new commission members

Rules & Regulations: update on where the draft Rules & Regulations stand. Discuss whether we need a meeting to review the latest draft. The latest draft is included in the packet. Sections highlighted in yellow were added after the last review.