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**MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARINGS  
NEWTON UPPER FALLS HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

**DATE:** September 8, 2022

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

**ATTENDING:** Jeff Riklin, Chair  
Laurie Malcom, Member  
Judy Neville, Member  
Daphne Romanoff, Member  
Paul Snyder, Member  
Jay Walter, Member  
Barbara Kurze, Staff

**ABSENT:** Scott Aquilina, Member  
John Wyman, Alternate

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. with Jeff Riklin presiding as Chair. Voting permanent members were L. Malcom, J. Neville, D. Romanoff, P. Snyder, and J. Walter. B. Kurze acted as recording secretary and the meeting was recorded on Zoom.

**65 Oak Street – Certificate of Appropriateness**

Albert Costa and Luigi Sepe presented an application to replace a small existing stone wall by the garage entrance and another low retaining wall at the front corner of the property.

**Materials Reviewed:**

Assessors database map with wall location sketch  
Photo of front elevation  
Isometric and plan  
Photo of proposed stone wall construction  
MHC Form B

Commission members agreed that the wall should be made of dry stack local fieldstone like other historic walls in the district, and Staff could review and approve the proposed stone. J. Riklin commented that the wall needed a solid base so that it would not shift. L. Malcom moved to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for

the application as submitted with conditions. D. Romanoff seconded the motion. There was a roll call vote and the motion passed unanimously, 5-0 with one abstention.

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**RECORD OF ACTION:**

**DATE:** September 9, 2022

**SUBJECT:** 65 OAK ST - Certificate of Appropriateness

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on September 8, 2022 the Newton Upper Falls Historic District Commission, by roll call vote of 5-0 with one abstention,

**RESOLVED to grant** a Certificate of Appropriateness for the project as submitted at 65 OAK ST to build a stone retaining wall at the front of the property and replace an existing stone wall by the garage with the following requirements: 1) must use local type field stone; 2) cannot be taller than 24 inches; 3) must have solid base so that the wall does not shift; 4) must be dry stacked; and 5) must send photos of proposed stones to Staff for final review and approval before work can begin.

Voting in the Affirmative:

- Jeff Riklin, Chair
- Laurie Malcom,  
Vice Chair
- Daphne Romanoff,  
Member
- Jay Walter, Member
- Paul Snyder,  
Member

Voting in the Negative:

Abstained:

Recused:

- Judy Neville,  
Member

**14 Summer Street – Certificate of Appropriateness**

The review was continued from previous working sessions. Alex Babushkin presented the application to renovate the existing house and build an addition with an attached garage which would be accessed from Summer Street. They also wanted to build a new unit with an attached garage that would be accessed from Spring Street. The new unit would be connected to the existing house via the new attached garage. A. Babushkin explained that the proposed retaining walls and grade changes were added to meet Zoning average grade requirements.

Materials Reviewed:

Assessors database map

Aerial view

Photos

Project description

Product and material information

3D renderings

Site plans

Existing versus proposed elevations

Elevations

Plans

Sections

Roof plan  
Product and material information  
MHC Form B

Commission members wanted to see the existing house without the brick which was added more recently. There were items that required more construction and material details and detailed drawings such as the retaining walls, fences and railings, new stairs with landing, railing systems, gutters and downspouts, the trim details (fascia, soffit, rake, etc.), and the grading (especially around the buildings and walls). Detailed information was requested in the last meeting.

Commissioners said that the applicants should present a 3D model to show the grade; this was requested in the last meeting and was critical as the site plan showed significant grade changes which the commission needed to understand.

The Commission did not go through all the materials and products but did identify some items as not being appropriate. Concrete blocks were not consistent with historic walls in the district and the applicants should propose options that were consistent. Siding needed to be five-quarters by four inches. Windows needed to have sills. Pressure treated wood did not have the appropriate finish and could not be used for exterior architectural elements such as the railings. Vinyl railings were not appropriate. Composite railings with a matte finish that looked like traditionally constructed railings would be appropriate. Turned balusters, sidelites on the new house, and the stone piers with lights were not appropriate. The new front entry stairs and landing were too wide and presented as a contemporary feature.

P. Snyder and J. Neville said the design had improved but were still concerned about the massing. The new structure was too big and was crammed into the lot. D. Romanoff did not have issues with the massing but agreed that more details about the grading, design and materials were needed.

The commission agreed that a lot more information was needed before the review could be continued and that the architect needed to attend the meeting to answer detailed questions.

Abutter Leslie Friedman noted that the brick was a contemporary addition and that she sent the applicant a historic photo that showed the front of the property without the brick. She was concerned that the gothic vents above double windows, and the width of the landing and stairs on the new addition were inappropriate.

The applicants agreed in writing to continue the review to a future regularly scheduled meeting.

#### **1282-1284 Boylston Street – Certificate of Appropriateness**

Jack Synotte presented an application to stabilize the barn walls at the back and to renovate it. A new interior structure would be built to support the walls. They would replace roofs, repair, or replace the clapboard siding and replace the shingle siding on the east elevation. Trim, fascia, and soffits would be repaired or replaced, and aluminum gutters and downspouts would be installed. The corner boards would stay. The back rake boards and returns would be changed to match the conditions on the front. They wanted to add a landing and stairs on the left side.

#### **Materials Reviewed:**

Assessors database map  
Photos

Site plan  
 Plans  
 Elevations  
 Sections  
 Details  
 Door and window details  
 MHC Form B

Commission members appreciated the design changes which were made in response to commission feedback from the earlier meetings and agreed that the plans were appropriate. The renovations would be a huge improvement on a very visible building at one of the main entries into the historic district. Abutter Lee Fisher commented that he was very pleased with the new design. J. Walter moved to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the application as submitted. L. Malcom seconded the motion. There was a roll call vote and the motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

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**RECORD OF ACTION:**

**DATE:** September 9, 2022

**SUBJECT:** 1282-1284 BOYLSTON ST - Certificate of Appropriateness

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on September 8, 2022 the Newton Upper Falls Historic District Commission, by roll call vote of 6-0,

**RESOLVED to grant** a Certificate of Appropriateness for the project as submitted at 1282-1284 BOYLSTON ST to stabilize and renovate the barn.

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

- Jeff Riklin, Chair
- Laurie Malcom,  
Vice Chair
- Judy Neville,  
Member
- Daphne Romanoff,  
Member
- Jay Walter, Member
- Paul Snyder,  
Member

**Administrative discussion**

The April 2022 minutes were approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50.