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

DATE: February 14, 2023

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

ATTENDING: Dante Capasso, Chair
Paul Dudek, Member
Nancy Grissom, Member
Richard Alfred, Alternate
Josh Markette, Alternate
Joel Shames, Alternate
Barbara Kurze, Staff

ABSENT: David Kayserman, Member
Martin Smargiassi, Alternate

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. with Dante Capasso presiding as Chair. Voting permanent member were P. Dudek and N. Grissom. R. Alfred, J. Markette, and J. Shames were appointed to vote as full members. B. Kurze acted as recording secretary and the meeting was recorded on Zoom.

120 Seminary Avenue and 24 Robin Dell, Lasell Village – Certificate of Appropriateness

This review was continued from previous meetings. Steve Buchbinder, Katherine Adams, Michael Alexander, Philippe Saad, and Ben Bailey presented an application to relocate 24 Robin Dell and construct a new building with approximately 42 independent living units which would be connected to existing Town Hall building. S. Buchbinder asked if the commission could grant conceptual approval of the project to move 24 Robin Dell and the locations and massing of the new buildings.

P. Saad presented the site plan changes showing the proposed relocation of 24 Robin Dell and the connector. He said that the retaining wall stones would be reused to build the proposed gabion walls. The new building materials would be composite. He noted that the revised plans for the new building showed a lower roof than what was previously presented. The 3D model videos and screenshots were based on surveyor measurements and were accurate.

Preserving the Past  Planning for the Future

THESE ARE DRAFT MINUTES WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION

Materials Reviewed:**APPLICATION LINK:** <https://newtonma.viewpointcloud.com/records/779651>**PDF Files:****20230124 AHDC Submission_reduced.pdf (file was compressed as the original file was too big to upload)****20230203 AHDC additional material_reduced.pdf (file was compressed as the original file was too big to upload)****20230124 AHDC Submission_reduced.pdf:**

Assessors database map

Site plans

Survey

24 Robin Dell photographs

24 Robin Dell existing elevations and roof plan

Aerial view

Existing views from Grove Street

Renderings

24 Robin Dell proposed elevations and roof plan

24 Robin Dell architectural detail photos

24 Robin Dell window detail drawings

24 Robin Dell window product information

Proposed landscape plans

Landscape precedent images

Gabion wall detail

Existing and proposed building sections

Context analysis – building form and surrounding buildings

New building existing conditions

New building rendering

New building elevations

24 Robin Dell proposed materials

New building proposed materials

Proposed roof plan

20230203 AHDC additional material_reduced.pdf

3D renderings and perspectives with and without vegetation

Close up rendering of new building

P. Dudek appreciated the quality of the drawings and renderings. He liked the proposed massing and articulation which broke the new building down into townhouse blocks. N. Grissom agreed and noted that the new buildings were located the same distance from Grove Street as the existing buildings and would complete that complex. R. Alfred liked the proposal to relocate and renovate 24 Robin Dell and commented that the revised design was an improvement. He did want to discuss the size of the project. J. Markette asked if the project would change the local historic district boundaries and whether the new building could be located on Seminary Avenue. He was concerned whether the setting should be preserved. Staff advised that the district boundaries would not be changed by the project and P. Saad said that they had done multiple studies to see what could be done before they put together this proposal.

Ewen Cameron (248 Grove Street), Trevor Mack (197 Grove Street), Bryan Gary (81 Old Orchard Road), and Iraida Alvarez (210 Grove Street) said that these were major changes that did not preserve the historic characteristics of the district and the setting. Neighbors were concerned with the massing and contemporary design of the new building and wanted to see more details of the proposed design. Several neighbors commented that they would not be able to build a similar structure on their properties. T. Mack and B. Gary commented that mature trees would be lost and the views from Grove Street would change. Dave Nevins (228 Grove Street) and other neighbors did not think 24 Robin Dell should be moved and wanted to know why the building was allowed to deteriorate; neighbors thought 24 Robin Dell should be restored and that the project could be built elsewhere. T. Mack was concerned that 24 Robin Dell would become part of Lasell Village which was not in the district. S. Weiss asked if the cross-section drawing had changed. S. Weiss and I. Alvarez did not think the commission had a compelling reason to relocate 24 Robin Dell. T. Mack and D. Nevins noted that they were scrutinized for details about their projects and expected this project to face similar scrutiny. B. Gary asked if the chair had a conflict of interest because of his volunteer work on a Chamber of Commerce committee with the partner of one of the applicants.

P. Dudek noted that it was appropriate for the new building to fit in with the existing contemporary buildings; it would not be appropriate to try to make the new structure look historic. D. Capasso said that he understood the conflict-of-interest rules and there was not a conflict of interest. S. Buchbinder and M. Alexander said they investigated many other options and tried to be responsive to the neighbors; there were no other suitable options.

J. Markette appreciated that Lasell Village was responsive to the commission's feedback and he thought the project had improved. He was concerned that the relocation of a unique and historic property and the new construction were a big change and could set a precedent for future projects. He asked if other existing buildings could be re-developed. He was concerned about the proposed height of the new building and asked if story poles could be set up at the site to better understand the height of the new building. R. Alfred said the renovation of the house would preserve it.

R. Alfred moved to grant preliminary approval for the project as submitted at 24 Robin Dell and 120 Seminary Avenue, Lasell Village to relocate 24 Robin Dell to the location shown on the current plan and to renovate the 24 Robin Dell building as shown on the documents, subject and contingent to the Auburndale Historic District Commission granting a Certificate of Appropriateness authorizing the entire project. N. Grissom seconded the motion. There was a roll call vote and the motion passed, 5-1 with Josh Markette voting in the negative.

P. Dudek, N. Grissom, and D. Capasso said the project was appropriate and the design was compatible and would not degrade the neighborhood. N. Grissom wanted to see product and material samples for the new building. R. Alfred was concerned with the size of the proposed project and wanted to know if the size of the new building could be reduced. J. Shames noted that there were other large, institutional buildings in the district and wanted to see a comparison to those structures to understand the height and massing. J. Markette wanted a commitment to the restoration and maintenance of 24 Robin Dell, as well as a guarantee to the City that the move would work. He requested a story pole be set up to understand how tall the new building would be.

The applicants agreed in writing to continue the review to a future regularly scheduled meeting and agreed to come back with more information to address the commissioners' concerns.

RECORD OF ACTION:

DATE: February 21, 2023

SUBJECT: 24 Robin Dell and 120 Seminary Avenue, Lasell Village

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on February 14, 2023, the Auburndale Historic District Commission, by roll call vote of 5-1.

RESOLVED to **grant** preliminary approval for the project as submitted at 24 Robin Dell and 120 Seminary Avenue, Lasell Village to relocate 24 Robin Dell to the location shown on the current plan and to renovate the building as shown on the documents, subject and contingent to the Auburndale Historic District Commission granting a Certificate of Appropriateness authorizing the entire project.

Voting in the Affirmative:

Dante Capasso, Chair

Paul Dudek, Member

Nancy Grissom, Member

Richard Alfred, Alternate

Joel Shames, Alternate

Voting in the Negative:

Josh Markette, Alternate

Administrative discussion

Minutes: the January meeting minutes were approved.

Remote meetings: There was no update on whether the order would be extended past March 31st.

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

Recorded by Barbara Kurze, Senior Preservation Planner