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City of Newton, Massachusetts

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Department of Planning and Development

Barney S. Heath
Director

Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

1000 Commonwealth Avenue Newton, Massachusetts 02459

Date: November 21st 2024

Place/Time: Zoom, at 7:00 PM

Attending: Doug Cornelius, Chair — John Rice, Vice Chair
Mark Armstrong, Member — Harvey Schorr, Member
Nancy Grissom, Member — Anne Marie Stein, Member
David Lewis, Staff

The meeting was called to order via Zoom at 7:00 p.m. with Doug Cornelius serving as Chair. Voting permanent members were John Rice, Mark Armstrong, Harvey Schorr, Nancy Grissom, and Anne Marie Stein. David Lewis acted as Zoom host and the meeting was digitally recorded on the Zoom device.

1. 235 California Street – Violation of Demolition Delay Ordinance

Request for Local Landmark Review

Staff Reported that This Queen Anne style house was built ca. 1880 for original owner Samuel Fletcher. Fletcher was a grocer who owned a store nearby on Bridge Street. The house features typical Queen Anne details including a porch and a bay window on the front elevation, additional bay windows on the right and left elevations, cross-gabled roofs, and a brick chimney. One of the bay windows was added in 1947, and a sunporch was added on the left side of the house in 1950. The house is individually inventoried on MACRIS, as are many of the nearby houses on California Street, many of which were built in a similar style also in the late 1890s. In January 2024, NHC approved plans for partial demolition at this property. During construction, the building was damaged, leading to a partial collapse. At the October 24th NHC meeting, the commission voted to find a violation of demolition delay. The applicant has now returned to seek a waiver of the demolition delay and fines associated with the violation ordinance.

Benjamin Stevens was present to represent the application. Mr. Cornelius clarified the violation process. Mr. Stevens described that the partial collapse was accidental, and that they would like to rebuild the house to look like the plans that were approved by NHC previously. Mr. Stevens asked NHC to allow them to demolish the structure and proceed with construction based upon those

plans. Staff gave a presentation using the share screen function to display what was proposed to be preserved from the building. Andrew Lee, from the City's Law department spoke to clarify the process to the commissioners, and provided a recommendation to reduce the demolition delay from two years to for months. Terry Morris spoke on behalf of the applicant, repeated Mr. Stevens comments that the demolition was an accident, and asked the commission to allow the applicant to proceed without any further delay.

Ms. Stein asked for clarification on if the plans would change. Ms. Grissom asked if it would be possible to save any part of the house. Mr. Schorr commented that he was unsure about putting a delay on the property as he was unsure what it would accomplish. Mr. Armstrong commented that waving all penalty could set an improper precedent.

MaryLee Belleville commented that she agreed with Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Lee that the precedent is very important. Councilor Malakie agreed and said that we have seen other houses with violations and taking away penalties could lead to it happening there.

Mr. Stevens commented that he would be willing to pay a fine if the delay was lessened. Mr. Lee commented that it would be possible to table the item and allow for further settlement negotiation. Ms. Stein commented that she would be in favor of that option.

Ms. Stein made a motion to hold the item until next month's meeting and allowing staff to negotiate a settlement agreement with the applicant. Mr. Armstrong seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on November 21, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 5-1:

RESOLVED to hold the item until a later meeting, allowing for further settlement negotiation.

Voting in the Affirmative:	**Voting in the Negative:**	**Abstained/Recused:**
AMS	NG	
MA		
JR		
HS		
DC		

2. 5 Keller Path – Request for Demolition

Request for Total Demolition

Staff Reported that staff welcomes discussion of the historical significance of this 1948 Oak Hill Park house.

Dan Burmenko was present to represent the application. Mr. Cornelius described the demolition delay process. Mr. Burmenko gave a presentation using the share screen function, showing a map of the neighborhood as well as photos of the house and neighborhood, identifying nearby homes that had been altered or demolished.

Mr. Cornelius commented that the commission has struggled with Oak Hill Park over the years. Ms. Stein commented that she thought we have reached a tipping point in Oak Hill Park, and suggested

that it was worth a demolition delay to see what would be built and try to retain the spirit of the neighborhood. Mr. Armstrong commented that he agreed with Ms. Stein, but that it was hard to mitigate the loss in Oak Hill Park as the historic context is being lost. Mr. Cornelius commented that Oak Hill Park is a zoning failure, because much larger houses can be built in the area and preservation is not incentivized.

Councilor Malakie commented that she was curious if the house was marketed publicly. Mr. Cornelius and the applicant clarified that that was beyond the scope of the commission. Mr. Burmenko commented that the neighborhood has changed, and that construction is continuing across the neighborhood with or without the demolition delay.

Mr. Rice commented that the demolition delay does not seem to be effective in Oak Hill Park, and larger homes are built whether or not the delay is put on. Ms. Stein commented that the delay has led to improved designs in her opinion. Councilor Wright commented that she agreed with Ms. Stein.

Mr. Rice made a motion to find the property preferably preserved. Ms. Stein seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on November 21, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 4-2:

RESOLVED to find the property preferably preserved.

Voting in the Affirmative:	**Voting in the Negative:**	**Abstained/Recused:**
AMS	MA	
NG	JR	
HS		
DC		

3. 30 Timson Path – Request for Demolition

Request for Total Demolition

Staff Reported that Staff welcomes discussion of the historical significance of this 1948 Oak Hill Park house.

Laurance Lee was present to represent the application. Mr. Lee gave a presentation using the share screen function, showing a map of the neighborhood and photos of the house and neighboring houses. Mr. Lee argued that there were fewer original homes in this area than the previous property in his opinion.

Councilor Malakie commented that she would recommend the commission find this property preferably preserved as well. Ms. Stein commented that she would like to see a design that was built similar in style to those that were built originally.

Mr. Cornelius commented that Oak Hill Park is difficult for the commission.

Ms. Grissom made a motion to find the property preferably preserved. Ms. Stein seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on November 21, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 4-2:

RESOLVED to find the property preferably preserved.

Voting in the Affirmative:	Voting in the Negative:	Abstained/Recused:
AMS	MA	
NG	JR	
HS		
DC		

4. 723 Washington Street – Request for Demolition

Request for Total Demolition

Staff Reported that Staff welcomes discussion of this ca. 1900 house with a 1957 storefront addition.

Cynthia Lanciloti was present to represent the application. She commented that the properties were obsolete, and that the updated zoning would allow for the construction of more units.

Mr. Cornelius commented that the age of the properties led to some significance. Mr. Armstrong commented that the Victorian-era building could be preserved and added onto.

Annie Raines commented that she felt that the houses had good bones, and that she would suggest finding them preferably preserved. Councilor Wright commented that she would like to see the house preserved. MaryLee Belleville commented that she agreed with Mr. Armstrong that constructing an addition to at least one of the buildings would be preferable. Ms. Stein commented that she did not see as much historic character on these houses as those nearby.

Ms. Stein made a motion to find the property preferably preserved. Ms. Grissom seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on November 21, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 0-6:

RESOLVED to find the property preferably preserved.

Voting in the Affirmative:	Voting in the Negative:	Abstained/Recused:
	AMS	
	NG	
	MA	
	JR	
	HS	
	DC	

5. 727 Washington Street – Request for Demolition

Mr./Ms. Stein made a motion to find the property preferably preserved. Mr./Ms. Grissom seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on November 21, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 2-4:

RESOLVED to find the property preferably preserved:

Voting in the Affirmative:	Voting in the Negative:	Abstained/Recused:
NG	AMS	
HS	MA	
	JR	
	DC	

6. 255 Jackson Street – Request for Demolition

Request for Partial Demolition

Staff Reported that this is a 1936 Colonial Revival style house in a relatively well-preserved neighborhood. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved and approves of the proposed addition

Andrew Netburn and Mary Beth Johnson was present to represent the application. Mr. Cornelius clarified the partial demolition process. Mr. Netburn commented that they are long term residents looking to invest in their home and their neighborhood. Mr. Netburn and Ms. Johnson opted to allow for a preferably preserved vote.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on November 21, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 4-2:

RESOLVED to find the property preferably preserved.

Voting in the Affirmative:	Voting in the Negative:	Abstained/Recused:
NG	AMS	
MA	DC	
JR		
HS		

Mr. Netburn and Ms. Johnson presented their plans using the share screen function, and described their proposed project, a two-story rear addition. They then showed a site plan of the proposed construction on the lot. Mr. Armstrong commented that he liked the proposed design. Mr. Schorr commented that he liked the design overall, but questioned the window placement on the left side of the addition.

There was no public comment.

Ms. Grissom made a motion to waive the demolition delay and approve the plans as drawn. Ms. Stein seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on November 21, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 6-0:

RESOLVED to waive the demolition delay and approve the plans as drawn.

Voting in the Affirmative:	Voting in the Negative:	Abstained/Recused:
AMS		
NG		
MA		
JR		
HS		
DC		

7. 29 Walter Street – Request for Demolition

Request for Partial Demolition

Staff Reported that this is a well-preserved 1925 Cape style house. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved and approves of the proposed addition.

David Iwatsuki was present to represent the application. Mr. Iwatsuki commented that they want to stay in the house and would like to update the home to allow them to remain there. Mr. Iwatsuki opted to allow for a preferably preserved vote.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on November 21, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 5-0:

RESOLVED to find the property preferably preserved.

Voting in the Affirmative:	Voting in the Negative:	Abstained/Recused:
AMS		
NG		
JR		
HS		
DC		

Mr. Iwatsuki gave a presentation using the share screen function, showing pictures of the house and the proposed partial demolition plans.

Ms. Stein commented that she knows the neighborhood well and that she likes the existing house, and was supportive of the proposed plans. Barry Bergman commented that he is a neighbor and that he appreciates the proposed design.

Ms. Stein made a motion to waive the demolition delay and approve the plans as drawn. Mr. Armstrong seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on November 21, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 5-0:

RESOLVED to waive the demolition delay and approve the plans as drawn.

Voting in the Affirmative:	Voting in the Negative:	Abstained/Recused:
AMS		
MA		
JR		
HS		
DC		

8. 790 Centre Street – Request for Demolition

Request for Partial Demolition of School and Total Demolition of Carriage House

Staff Reported that This is an application for total demolition of a 1913 Carriage House and partial demolition of a 1964 school building on the former Mount Alvernia Campus. Staff recommends finding both buildings preferably preserved, and welcomes discussion of the proposed partial demolition.

Joe Herlihy and Gretchen Pineo were present to represent the application. Ms. Pineo gave a presentation using the share screen function, first describing the history of the property and structures. Ms. Pineo showed photos of the buildings and described various alterations. Mr. Herlihy clarified the scope of the project.

Mr. Armstrong commented that he thought there was more historic significance to the carriage house than the school building. Mr. Cornelius showed the site plan using the share screen function. Todd Symonds commented that the demolition of the Carriage House would allow them to meet the parking requirements. Mr. Schorr commented that the charm of the carriage house is in the exterior not the interior, and that he thinks the structure deserves to be preserved.

MaryLee Belle commented that she agreed with Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Schorr, and thought that the demolition of the carriage house would be unnecessary. Ms. Stein commented that she did not think many parking spots would fit in the footprint of the building. Mr. Symonds commented that they looked at other places within the site to put parking spaces. Councilor Malakie commented that she thought the building was beautiful, and asked if there was any way to use the carriage house for parking. MaryLee Belleville asked if there was a possibility to relocate the carriage house to a different place on the site.

Ms. Grissom made a motion to find the carriage house preferably preserved. Ms. Stein seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on November 21, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 6-0:

RESOLVED to find the carriage house preferably preserved.

Voting in the Affirmative:	Voting in the Negative:	Abstained/Recused:
AMS		
NG		
MA		
JR		

HS		
DC		

Ms. Grissom made a motion to find the school building preferably preserved. Ms. Stein seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on November 21, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 0-6:

RESOLVED to find the property preferably preserved. The motion failed.

Voting in the Affirmative:	**Voting in the Negative:**	**Abstained/Recused:**
	AMS	
	NG	
	MA	
	JR	
	HS	
	DC	

9. 10 Parker Avenue – Request for Demolition

Request for Total Demolition

Staff Reported that this is a well-preserved ca. 1890 house, one of the earliest built in an inventoried subdivision. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved.

Wen-Chi Chou was present to represent the application. Mr. Chou commented that the house needs work, and that they considered saving the property but that the cost may be too great.

Mr. Armstrong commented that he thought the house should be preferably preserved. Mr. Cornelius disagreed with Mr. Armstrong. Mr. Schorr recommended building an addition on the house.

There was no public comment.

Ms. Grissom made a motion to find the property preferably preserved. Mr. Schorr seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on November 21, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 4-1-1:

RESOLVED to find the property preferably preserved:

Voting in the Affirmative:	**Voting in the Negative:**	**Abstained/Recused:**
NG	DC	AMS abstained
MA		
JR		
HS		

10. 38 Wetherell Street – Request for Demolition

Request for Total Demolition of House and Garage

Staff Reported that this is a ca. 1910 Queen Anne style house in a neighborhood with mixed historic context. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved.

Arthur Elzon was present to represent the application. Mr. Elzon commented that the property was very old, but that there was new construction in the neighborhood.

Mr. Cornelius commented that there is new construction on the street, but that the house is very old. Ms. Grissom commented that the house appeared to be in reasonably good shape. Ms. Stein commented that she wondered if it would be possible to build an addition and make the property two units.

MaryLee Belleville commented that she did not think the applicant provided a good reason for demolition.

Ms. Grissom made a motion to find the house preferably preserved. Ms. Stein seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on November 21, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 5-1:

RESOLVED to find the house preferably preserved.

Voting in the Affirmative:	**Voting in the Negative:**	**Abstained/Recused:**
AMS	MA	
NG		
JR		
HS		
DC		

Ms. Grissom made a motion to find the garage preferably preserved. Ms. Stein seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on November 21, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 0-6:

RESOLVED to find the garage preferably preserved. The motion failed.

Voting in the Affirmative:	**Voting in the Negative:**	**Abstained/Recused:**
	MA	
	AMS	
	NG	
	JR	
	HS	
	DC	

11. 245 Webster Street – Request for Demolition

Request for Total Demolition

Staff Reported that this is a ca. 1900 Queen Anne style house in a well-preserved neighborhood. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved.

Carmine Petruzziello was present to represent the application. Mr. Petruzziello gave a presentation using the share screen function, showing an assessor's map and photos of the existing house, as well as describing the condition of the existing house.

Ms. Stein commented that she did not think the house looked salvageable. Ms. Grissom disagreed and thought the house could be repaired.

MaryLee Belleville commented that she did not think demolition by neglect should be rewarded, and that she agreed with Ms. Grissom. Councilor Malakie commented that she was torn on this property, but hoped that the style of potential new construction would reflect that of the neighborhood.

Ms. Grissom made a motion to find the property preferably preserved. Mr. Armstrong seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on November 21, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 2-3-1:

RESOLVED to find the property preferably preserved. The motion failed.

Voting in the Affirmative:	**Voting in the Negative:**	**Abstained/Recused:**
NG	AMS	HS abstain
DC	MA	
	JR	

12. 133 Bigelow Road – Request for Demolition

Request for Total Demolition

Staff Reported that this is a 1913 Georgian Revival style house in a neighborhood with historic context. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved.

Matt Relle was present to represent the application. Mr. Relle described his reasoning for the demolition request, and why it does not presently fit the needs of his family. Mr. Relle shared his screen to show photos of the house and neighborhood.

Ms. Stein made a motion to find the property preferably preserved. Ms. Grissom seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on November 21, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 2-3-1:

RESOLVED to find the property preferably preserved. The motion failed.

Voting in the Affirmative:	**Voting in the Negative:**	**Abstained/Recused:**
DC	AMS	HS abstain
NG	MA	
	JR	

13. 129 Norwood Avenue – Request for Demolition

Request for Partial Demolition

Staff Reported that this is a ca. 1800 Federal style house. Staff recommends finding the property preferably preserved, and generally approves of the proposed addition.

Peter Sachs and Ana Gabby were present to represent the application. Mr. Sachs and Ms. Gabby opted for a preferably preserved vote.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on November 21, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 6-0:

RESOLVED to find the property preferably preserved.

Voting in the Affirmative:	**Voting in the Negative:**	**Abstained/Recused:**
AMS		
NG		
MA		
JR		
HS		
DC		

Ms. Gabby gave a presentation using the share screen function, beginning by showing photos of the existing house before moving on to the plans for a proposed rear addition.

Mr. Schorr commented that he thought the design was great. Mr. Armstrong agreed.

Councilor Wright commented that she thought the design was great. Ms. Stein commented that she thought it made the house look nicer.

Mr. Armstrong made a motion to waive the demolition delay and approve the plans as drawn. Ms. Stein seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on November 21, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 5-0-1:

RESOLVED to waive the demolition delay and approve the plans as drawn.

Voting in the Affirmative:	**Voting in the Negative:**	**Abstained/Recused:**
AMS		DC abstain
NG		
MA		
JR		
HS		

14. 454 Dudley Road – Request for Demolition Waiver

Request for Waiver of Demolition Delay

Staff Reported that this 1956 ranch style house is part of an in-tact development.

Jason Graca was present to represent the application. Mr. Graca gave a presentation using the share screen function. Mr. Graca described the changes made to the design since the previous meeting, highlighting a change in siding material and the reduced size of dormers on the roof.

Ms. Stein commented that she would prefer if the whole house was sided in Hardie clapboard instead of stone. Mr. Graca commented that he likes to use multiple siding materials in his designs. Commissioners commented that reducing the amount of stone would be preferable. Mr. Graca clarified what the size of the stones used for siding would be. Mr. Schorr commented that he did not like the massing of the proposed design. Mr. Armstrong agreed and commented that he did not think the material choices were right for this design.

The commission tabled this item for further discussion.

15. 28 Chandler Place – Request for Demolition Waiver

Request for Waiver of Demolition Delay

Staff Reported that this is a ca. 1890 Victorian eclectic style house on a well-preserved street.

Jason Li was present to represent the application. Mr. Li gave a presentation using the share screen function to present the updated plans. Mr. Li explained the changes that were made since the item was originally presented to the commission, highlighting window and siding changes.

Ms. Stein commented that she liked the houses that were built in this neighborhood. Mr. Cornelius asked for clarification on the siding material.

There was no public comment.

Ms. Grissom made a motion to waive the demolition delay and approve the plans as drawn. Mr. Armstrong seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on November 21, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 6-0:

RESOLVED to waive the demolition delay and approve the plans as drawn.

Voting in the Affirmative:	**Voting in the Negative:**	**Abstained/Recused:**
AMS		
MA		
JR		
HS		
DC		
NG		

16. 82-84 East Side Parkway – Request for Demolition Waiver

Request for Waiver of Demolition Delay

Staff Reported that this is a 1925 Colonial Revival in an inventoried neighborhood with mixed historic context.

Niko Giallousis was present to represent the application. Mr. Giallousis gave a presentation using the share screen function, first showing pictures of the existing house before showing the proposed plans.

Mr. Cornelius commented that he liked the design, and asked for clarification on the location of the house within the site. Mr. Schorr commented that he liked the design, and especially liked the 3D rendering, but recommended removing the strip of roofline above the garage. Mr. Armstrong commented that he agreed. Ms. Grissom asked for clarification on the location of the driveways. Mr. Giallousis showed the location of the driveways on the site plans.

There was no public comment.

Ms. Stein made a motion to waive the demolition delay and approve the plans as drawn. Mr. Armstrong seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on November 21, 2024, the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 6-0:

RESOLVED to waive the demolition delay and approve the plans as drawn.

Voting in the Affirmative:	**Voting in the Negative:**	**Abstained/Recused:**
AMS		
NG		
MA		
JR		
HS		
DC		

Administrative Discussion:

a) Approval of minutes from the October 24, 2024, meeting

Minutes from the October 24, 2024, hearing were unanimously approved by those in attendance at the hearing.

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote.

Respectfully,

, NHC