

Minutes: October 4, 2017

Present: R.Tag Carpenter, Vice-Chair, David Amory, Mark Barry, Arthur Evans, and Nicole Walters. Robert C. (Terry) Vose and Molly Curtin was absent.

*Note: the numbering below is chronological and may not correspond to agenda item numbering*

Vice Chairman Carpenter called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

1. **Open Forum.** No discussion
2. **Minutes.** Minutes of the September 20 and September 27, 2017 meetings were unanimously approved.
3. **Public Hearing:** *Battelle Institute Properties: 0 Washington Street (Cottage), 397 Washington Street (Edgar Reed House a.k.a. "Bridge House"), and 401 Washington Street (Hillman House).*

Mr. Carpenter opened the hearing and appropriate sections of the bylaw were read to the audience. Twelve members of the public attended including Robert E. Galvin, Attorney from Galvin & Galvin, PC representing the developer, Diamond/Sinacori. As agreed at the September 6 meeting, each property was considered individually.

a. *0 Washington Street (Cottage).* Ted Nicols, longtime caretaker of the Battelle Properties and resident of the Cottage for 31 years said the building was originally a small cottage that was renovated in 1991. Many researchers from the former Clapp Labs lived or worked there, some of them well-known. Attorney Galvin conceded all structures on the property were historic, but not could remain under the current subdivision planned by Diamond/Sinacori. The developer is willing to move the Cottage if a buyer could be found for it; otherwise it would be demolished. This led to a discussion about ownership of the Battelle Properties and procedures for issuing building permits. Battelle Memorial Institute is the legal owner of the property and the structures on it, and has authorized Merrill Diamond of Diamond/Sinacori to act on their behalf with filing for building permits. Final papers for sale of the property have not yet passed. Mr. Galvin allowed the permit process must proceed so the Planning Board can continue its consideration of the subdivision plan, and present structures on the property interfere with this plan. A member of the audience asked about Diamond/Sinacori's expressed concern about historic preservation in the original plan submitted to Town Meeting in March 2017; Mr. Galvin noted that plan was rejected by the Town and has been replaced by a new plan for subdivision.

b. *397 Washington Street (Edgar Reed House, a.k.a. "Bridge House").* A conflict with the date of construction was discussed; Town records have this as 1830 and the MACRIS listing has it as 1900. Many of the original interior features of this structure

remain intact even though it had been converted for use as office space. Similar concerns to the Cottage (above) regarding ownership were expressed. Attorney Galvin allowed this house could remain if a buyer were found for it.

At this point a member of the audience expressed frustration with the building permit process, particularly the ability of an owner to authorize others to act on their behalf, and urged the DHC or representatives from it to take this concern to the Board of Selectmen.

c. *401 Washington Street (Hillman House)*. Situation is similar to that of the Cottage (above). The structure interferes with the subdivision plan and will be demolished unless a buyer can be found who will have it moved.

Commissioners continued to question the relation of the proposed subdivision to the existing houses on the property, and asked Attorney Galvin if drawings that would clarify this could be provided. He agreed. Commissioners also asked that a representative from Diamond/Sinacori be made available to present these plans to the Commission, a request Mr. Galvin agreed to pass along. With Mr. Galvin's consent, the hearing was continued to the October 18 meeting so commissioners would have the opportunity to review drawings of the proposed subdivision and gain a better understanding of how this will affect the historic structures on the property.

#### **4. Demolition Delays in Effect**

a. *262 Marshall Street*. A vote was taken following the public hearing on September 27. Moved and seconded that while the structure clearly meets the three criteria in the bylaw for a regulated building or structure and can be identified as part of the original Standish Hotel, the proposed renovations appear to be preservationist in nature and therefore no delay should be imposed; the Commission applauds the intent of the new owners to restore and renovate the structure rather than demolish it and ask they be mindful of historic artifacts that may be found on the site in the process of construction and engage experts to evaluate any that are discovered. Motion passed by a 4-1 vote.

#### **5. Adjournment.** Because of the late hour a motion was made to abandon the balance of the agenda and adjourn the meeting. Motion unanimously agreed; adjourned at 9:08PM.