

# Duxbury Local Historic District Commission



## **Local Historic District and Meeting – Thursday, April 23, 2020**

Attendees: Renee Mierzewski, chair, Pamela Campbell Smith, Phil Tuck, Janet Ritch, Evelyn Walker, John Bates, Terry Vose, Georgia Taft Pye

**The meeting was called to order at 1:36 p.m.**

Renée Mierzejewski read the preamble and guidelines issued by the town and the state for holding virtual town board or committee meetings.

### **Review of Proposed Renovations and Additions to 47 Surplus Street**

She then referred to a letter received from David Corey to the LHDC seeking advice for a possible renovation plan and new addition of a garage to his property at 47 Surplus Street, which is in a local historic district.

#### **Rules & Regulations / Design Guidelines**

Renee discussed the need for a new look at the Rules and Regulations promulgated for properties in LHD's for use in these circumstances.

Pam Campbell Smith suggested the Commission review the existing rules and regulations that includes some design guidelines and are listed on the Town website for LHD's. Pam volunteered to take a look at these rules and regulations for any updates or changes. She said that the Rules and Regulations should be publicized along with the Commission's willingness to work with owners. Renee suggested an informational brochure for the public be created regarding the Rules and Regulations.

#### **MLS Listing Issue**

Georgia Taft Pye brought up the listing information in MLS for the Corey property that incorrectly states:

*"no building or structure within a district shall be constructed or altered in any way which affects the exterior architectural features visible to the unaided eye from any point on the public way"*

She expressed concern that this type of misconception and misinformation of the LHD rules and regulations will make it difficult to encourage owners of historic properties to place that property in an historic district as there is currently concern that this status will make it harder to sell or renovate and property. Discussion followed that the LHDC is committed to preserving the street scape of historic properties but fully recognizes the need for owners to be able to make their homes meet current day living standards. Georgia made a motion that the LHDC work with David Corey on his proposed plan to have it meet the need to preserve the architectural integrity of the

main part of the home but allow for new construction addition and renovation to the non-historic part of the property.

Evelyn Walker cautioned that the Commission must be careful not to set any precedent of working with owners that doesn't continue to preserve the architectural style and historic aspects of the property. Evelyn felt that in the current set of drawings, the new garage is mimicking the existing home, thereby possibly diminishing the Historic qualities of the existing home, is not set back far enough, or turned, (competing for hierarchy w/the historic structure) and does not establish its own identity. She stated that, if the Commission is not careful, this type of approach could lead to the development of a "formula" for those who have similar renovation needs and Duxbury's historic Architecture was not developed in a formulaic way. The Commission members agreed with Evelyn.

Evelyn also expressed gratitude that David Corey was willing to put his property in an historic district and that he is doing the right thing to seek to work with the Commission on the proposed renovation prior to selling the property, thereby having a better understanding of how the potential buyer might work with the Local Historic District Commission.

Terry Vose stated that David Corey has been a remarkable asset for the LHDC. The motion to work with David Corey on his project was seconded and passed unanimously. Renee said she would be in touch with David Corey to discuss the Commission's decision.

### **Public Outreach**

Renee stated that the Commission should reach out to the Realtor community to make sure there was complete understanding of the rules and regulations of the LHD's. Georgia said she would work on that and also that she would be in touch with the listing agent regarding the listing inaccuracies. Renee mentioned that the Commission has a budget and that some of those funds might be used for the printing of the public brochure. She suggested that Commission members review the website and bring any thoughts for revision, additions, editing for discussion at the meeting in May.

- **Local Historic District Day**
- Pam Campbell Smith brought up the planning for Local Historic District Day, which because of the pandemic is currently on hold.
- Pam also said she has not heard back from Patrick Ahearn and that until the current shelter in place requirement and the ability to hold larger than ten-person gatherings is lifted, we can't plan for this event.

### **TM 2020 & 14 Powder Point Avenue**

Renee brought up the timing for Town Meeting which is currently scheduled for June 13. She mentioned that with several weeks still to go for that date, it might be possible to include the Guitart property on Powder Point Avenue for acceptance in the Warrant article for new LHD's. She mentioned that a public hearing would be necessary before the property could be added to the Warrant and approval from the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Phil Tuck stated that only notice was required, not approval. Terry Vose added that the Historical Commission has done a virtual public hearing so it

could be done in time for inclusion of this property for the Town Meeting vote. Terry also added that the Historical Commission will share a table with the LHDC at Town Meeting and the table has already been located through Tony Kelso.

**Possible Future LHD Property**

Terry Vose mentioned that there is a Powder Point property built in 1890 that should be considered for inclusion in a LHD. He and Pam Campbell Smith will approach the owners of the property.

Pam Campbell Smith moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded and the vote was unanimous.

**The meeting was adjourned at 2:11 pm**