

Royalston Historic District Commission

Royalston, Massachusetts, 01368

Meeting Minutes

Date: May 16th, 2013

Attendees: Peter Kraniak (Chair), Andy West, Clarence Rabideau, Pierre Humblet (Secretary). All were active voters.

Public Hearing

At 7:40 Peter opened the public hearing on the application 2012-12-1 to install gas tanks in the back of 11 N.E. Fitzwilliam Rd. Two abutters, Roger O'Donnell and Daniel Schodek, had sent generally negative comments about the current location of the tanks but were open to alternate solutions. The owner, Jim Barclay, was present. He agreed that the current location was not suitable (it was selected without his knowledge) and he has been considering other solutions, generally involving the demolition of existing structures and the construction of a larger building, which would hide the tanks. One early estimate was above 90,000 \$. He will seek other proposals.

In answer to a question, he also explained that the fan light above the front door had been removed before he bought the house and that he intended to recreate it.

Pierre made a motion to close the public hearing. Andy seconded. All voted in favor Peter closed the public hearing and opened the regular meeting.

Regular meeting

Old applications

2013-04-01, application by Mark Smith to erect wooden stairs to the deck in the back of 7 S. Royalston Rd. Pierre stated that timely notices had been sent to the abutters and that none had requested a public hearing. Mark Smith was present and answered some questions from Andy, who was not familiar with the application. It was generally felt that this application was about a small but necessary addition to the deck that was approved in October 2005. As it would be barely visible from public ways it would not hurt the character of the district. Pierre made a motion to issue a certificate of appropriateness. Andy seconded. All voted in favor.

Pierre then gave Mark a copy of the past applications about 7 S. Royalston St he had found in the files, as he had said he would at a meeting in 2012. There are references to applications for vinyl windows in the back, and one on the East side, but none in the front. Mark admitted the work in the front may have been done without permission about 10 years ago, but that he was under the impression that the then chair of the commission, John Divoll, thought that changes to windows were allowed by the bylaw (although changes in wording made at the 1989 Regular Town Meeting clearly specify otherwise). Given the passage of the time and the fact the HDC itself had provided an obsolete bylaw, the commission did not feel it should take any action.

2012-12-01, after the fact application by Jim Barclay to install gas tanks in the back of 11 N.E. Fitzwilliam Rd.

This had been discussed at the public hearing earlier in the evening. It was mentioned that one of the buildings considered for demolition in the back of the house was the former Post Office.

The HDC noted that the application was ambiguous, as it mentioned both the current situation and future plans. The discussion and decision concern only the current situation, which everyone,

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including the owner, found to be inappropriate. There was some worry that the owner would let the situation linger.

Andy motioned to reject the application and to send a letter to the owner stating that the tanks must be removed by August 15 and encouraging him to come up with other proposals in a timely manner. Clarence seconded. All voted in favor.

Minutes.

The members read the minutes of the April meeting. Andy motioned to accept them as submitted. Clarence seconded. All voted in favor.

New applications

Kevin McGuire had sent an application for the barn at 18 on the Common, finalizing the discussions that had taken place at the March and April meetings. The work proposed for the S, W and N side was substantially similar to that proposed in April. With respect to the East side, the new proposal includes a hayloft opening on the third floor, with a recessed door/window not visible from a public way and a glass barrier to prevent falls. The 1st and 2nd floors would each have 3 windows in the style of those already installed on the S side. The commission thought that this was a significant improvement from the previous proposals, although some members felt that a well-trained architect would have produced a more elegant design.

The application appeared to be substantially complete, except that the proposed glazing for some windows was not specified. Andy moved to accept the application for consideration with a public hearing to be held at the regular June meeting and to ask the applicant to fully specify the proposed glazing. Pierre seconded. All voted in favor. Application 2013-05-1.

Other commission matters:

Historic District boundary signs: Linda Alger had communicated that she would bring the matter to the Special Town Meeting at the end of June. The commission thought the article should be phrased carefully to address the administrative issues but not the past decision of the Regular Town Meeting. Andy and Pierre will work on a proposal and send it to Linda.

Common restoration: Clarence reported that the restoration of the monument would probably involve the removal of the flagpole from the top of the monument and the installation of a flagpole (possibly the old one) behind the monument.

Meeting adjourned

On a motion made by Andy, seconded by Clarence and unanimously approved, Peter closed the meeting at 9:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Pierre A. Humblet,
Secretary