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HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Orleans Historical Commission
Town Hall, 19 School Road, Orleans, MA 02653
February 8, 2023 at 3:30 PM
Minutes

Present: Ron Petersen, Charles Ellis, Bill Wibel and Edmund Marcarelli (alternate)
Present electronically: Eric Dray (part time) Preservation consultant, Joan Nix
Also Present: Andrea Reed (Selectboard Member), Ned Collier (ICON Architecture)

Absent: John Harter

(00:01) Mr. Petersen called the meeting to order at 3:30 PM.

CPC application review

Mr. Petersen reviewed what the role of the OHC regarding the CPC application:

- A. Determine the historic significance of a project
- B. Determine if the project as described meets Secretary of Interior (SOI) Standards
- C. In accordance without charge, render an advisory opinion to the CPC and other boards as appropriate.

Mr. Petersen noted that a finding by a prior vote of the Historical Commission, determined that The Old Firehouse property was historically significant, thus making it eligible for CPC funding.

Mr. Petersen went on to say that the Historical Commission is called upon to determine whether the project meets the Department of Interior Standards and lastly, under our charge we can render advisory opinions to the CPC and other boards.

Mr. Ellis, CPC Liaison, reported that the OHC is down to one outstanding application. Mr. Ellis also noted that the OHC has rendered opinions on all the applications that have become before it.

(6:00) Old Firehouse presentation

Mr. Collier made a PowerPoint presentation of plans, updating those with a print date of February 2, 2023.

(15:05) Discussion and possible vote on Old Firehouse Presentation

Upon conclusion of Mr. Collier's presentation Ms. Nix asked questions related to the conditions as presented. Mr. Collier answered as appropriate to questions posed:

1. Windows – Mr. Collier eventually determined that the double hung windows were proposed to be painted wood with exterior aluminum muntins.
2. Garage Door – Mr. Collier explained that both Main Street doors were proposed to be overhead ceiling doors made of composite wood. Mr. Collier further explained that the door details of the rails and stiles could be more historically appropriate if the Commission required it.



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3. Theresa's Way door/window arrangement – Mr. Collier explained that he could move the door near Main Street if the Commission required it, but there were programmatic reasons for the proposed location.
4. Siding – Mr. Collier explained the drawings were in error and that the drawings should be updated to delete any reference to painted cedar siding.

Mr. Marcarelli asked about the overhead door and whether the use would be hampered by a door; Ms. Reed answered that the door position on the side of the building would enhance easier access.

Mr. Dray spoke to the side door and its placement, opining that the side door be placed in the middle of the wall with two windows on either side. Ms. Nix concurred with this opinion. Mr. Dray further opined that according to the newest Department of Interior Standards non-wood windows are allowed.

Mr. Ellis spoke to the matter of SOI compliance and that most of the matters have been resolved.

Mr. Ellis said the OHC could report back to the CPC that the project was either Compliant, Non-compliant or that there are some outstanding matters. Mr. Ellis suggested that we could report back that it is approaching compliant. Mr. Wibel and Ms. Nix suggested that it is nearly compliant.

Mr. Ellis noted that any recommendation we make be incorporated into the decisions that the CPC makes. Mr. Ellis suggested that we need to vote on this.

Mr. Ellis went on to speak to the about the financial implications of the project. Mr. Ellis noted that each and every year for the next 20 years \$120,000 would be earmarked from historical preservation funds to support the bond.

A discussion ensued as to whether an advisory opinion regarding the financial impact of the project should be given. Mr. Ellis, Ms. Nix, Mr. Wibel and Mr. Petersen agreed that offering an advisory opinion to the CPC is appropriate relative of this project's finances against other future historic preservation projects.

Ms. Reed responded that the primary function of the OHC was to determine if the project met the SOI Standards and that it is was not appropriate to weigh in on the financial implications of the project. Ms. Reed strongly urged the OHC to respond to the CPC on the SOI Standards and not the finances.

Ms. Reed spoke to the amount of scrutiny the project received that in her opinion has not been applied to any other project. She asked that we advise on the SOI Standards stating that the funding mechanism is the role of the CPC and Town Meeting.

Mr. Petersen responded to Ms. Reed, noting that indeed the project had received a lot of scrutiny because of the nature and size of the project and the condition of the application.



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Mr. Ellis asked that going forward we respond in two ways. Is it compliant and secondly is it an appropriate use of historic preservation resources?

(1:02:00) Mr. Ellis moved, Mr. Marcarelli seconded, a motion to read as follows: The Historical Commission finds that the Old Firehouse application can be deemed nearly compliant with the SOI Standards. The applicant has committed to addressing the outstanding issues, and our finding is contingent on these issues being resolved. This opinion is based on drawings dated 3/11/2022 with a print date of 2/2/2023 as amended by the presentation to the Historical Commission on 2/8/2023. Roll Call: Ellis, Marcarelli, Wibel, Petersen, Nix “aye”. Vote 5-0-0

Mr. Petersen moved, Mr. Ellis seconded that the Historical Commission offer an advisory opinion to the CPC on the financial implication of the grant. The advisory opinion reads as follows: **Historical Commission would like to express our deep concern about the size of the grant request (2.4 million) to the relative historic preservation value of the project and the impact of funding this project would have on future historic preservation applications.**

Roll Call: Ellis, Marcarelli, Wibel, Petersen, Nix “aye”. Vote 5-0-0.

Recap and status of remaining CPC 2024 Applications

There are other projects that may come to the Commission for review, such as the Academy Playhouse and others.

Review/Approve Minutes

There were no minutes for review.

(1:30:00) Discussion/review of Historic District Project. Plans for Next Steps

A discussion occurred regarding the charge of the study committee as it pertains to the Select Board’s appointment of such. Mr. Petersen spoke about the Select Board being pleased that individual members of the Historical Commission are happy to serve on the board.

Review of other Commission projects

Mr. Petersen noted that both the Survey and Form B are being worked on, and that he and Ms. Nix have met about outreach.

Survey

District Form B

At 5:06 PM Mr. Ellis moved, Mr. Marcarelli seconded a motion to adjourn. Roll Call: Ellis, Marcarelli, Wibel, Petersen, Nix “aye”. Vote 5-0-0

Respectfully submitted:

William H. Wibel, OHC Clerk