



# Town of Carlisle

MASSACHUSETTS 01741

## HISTORICAL COMMISSION

### Minutes

#### **In-Person and Remote Zoom Meeting Clark Room, Town Hall**

Pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order Concerning Open Meeting  
**Wednesday, May 18, 2022 7:00 pm**

#### **Members Present**

Kathy Keller, *Co-Chair*, Annette Lee, *Co-Chair*, Geoff Freeman, Eric Adams

#### **Alternates Present**

Chip Dewing, Jack O'Connor

#### **Others Present**

Steve Hinton, *Municipal Facilities Committee (MFC)*; Bill Risso, *MFC*; Brian Waterson, *Chair, Carlisle Playground Project Committee*; Krissy O'Shea, *Carlisle Historical Commission (CHC) member candidate (Zoom)*; Ben Herter, *CHC member candidate (Zoom)*; Ed Rolfe, *CHC alternate member candidate*; Wanda Avril, *Carlisle Mosquito*; Jennine Blum, *Administrative Assistant*

**6:58 pm** Co-Chair Kathy Keller called the meeting to order.

#### **7:01 pm** Hearing for Application No. 2022-03 for Certificate of Appropriateness, 22 Bedford Street, Gleason Public Library

*Proposed Work:* remove and replace existing low slope and asphalt shingle roof system. The existing slate roof components of the original building are designated to remain. Replace existing copper ridge caps with vent to provide natural ventilation under roof deck.

After acknowledging that the recently delivered sample bundle of shingles were not the correct color, Steven Hinton requested a continuance of the library hearing in June.

Steve did confirm that the two original sample pieces of proposed shingles labeled MV250 were from the same lot/bundle confirming that there is variation in color within a bundle.

Chip Dewing asked for the name of the shingle manufacturer and requested a spec. Steve replied that it might be Certainteed but he is not sure.

Steve concluded that they'll get the correct bundle, have the architect at the next meeting and nail down all the fine points.

#### **7:02 pm** Hearing for Application No. 2022-04 for Certificate of Hardship, 41 Lowell St., Police Station

*Proposed work:* remove existing lift for people who are disabled and replace with ADA-compliant ramp

After a short discussion about the type of certificate requested on the application, it was agreed that Certificate of Appropriateness was more appropriate than Certificate of Hardship. The application will be modified or a new one submitted by Steve Hinton.

Steve presented plans previously designed by the architect at that time (TBA Architects, Inc.) which shows the basic arrangement of the ramp on the south side (driveway side) of the Police Station. Steve mentioned that the Municipal Facilities Committee requested that unpainted aluminum be used so that it will oxidize and turn gray over time. Bill Risso added that there would be no maintenance (painting). Steve noted that there is not much room for landscaping anywhere except for at the platform end given the proximity to the driveway.

Steve described the U-shaped layout of the ramp which runs from the landing at entrance to the building towards the back of the building, then turns away from the building at the platform and returns back towards the entrance and ends there. The highpoint of the land is at the entrance where there is a 51-inch change in elevation. The turning platform would be elevated 25 inches above the ground.

Steve requested approval of the basic layout from the Commission before an architect/designer is engaged to design the ADA-compliant structure.

Chip Dewing noted that this layout avoids the need to move the utilities (gas meter and AC compressor. All are happy with this solution.

Photos of two styles of ramp were presented. One with minimal rails, the other with balusters placed approximately 4 inches apart. Steve indicated that the rail with balusters is being proposed and was chosen because of aesthetic reasons. Eric Adams opined that it's likely we would not have a choice of rail style because of the elevation of the ramp and safety requirements. Chip and Geoff Freeman mentioned that the rail would need an additional horizontal rail to be ADA-compliant which is not shown in photo of the ramp with balusters. Steve assured them that it could be added.

Chip asked what the clearances are for the gas meter and AC Compressor and does the plan meet code. Steve explained that three foot clearances from the gas meter and access panel of condenser are required. Luckily the access panel to the AC compressor is on the side where there is three feet of clearance so the ramp can run alongside the AC compressor with no (or little) clearance.

Ben Herter asked if it was possible to push the ramp further from the driveway. Chip expressed that he would like to see the ramp moved 8-12 inches closer to the building if you can. Ben also asked what structure would be under the turning platform. Steve replied it was unknown at this point. It was suggested it could be concrete pad/Sonotubes and legs. Steve and Bill reminded the members that a design professional familiar with ADA-compliant ramps would be hired to do the final design. Geoff added that it should also be certified once it's in place.

Kathy Keller asked if the ramp is prefabricated or built on site. Steve explained that the components are prefabricated and assembled on site.

Ramp color and finish were further discussed. Choices include unfinished aluminum and anodized color. Chip and Jack O'Connor expressed support for anodized finish. Ben added that black recedes visually the day you install it. Concerns were expressed about maintenance of anodized color especially of the ramp - not so much the rail. It was agreed that the RFP will specify anodized black and when designer is selected we'll ask for guidance.

Members expressed that they would like to see the designer's plans. Steve said he would come back when they get a formal design.

**7:26 pm Hearing for Application No. 2022-02 for Certificate of Appropriateness, 93 Lowell Street, Caitlin and Sam Madden**

*Proposed Work:* Remove existing coal/oil chimney on north side of the house that is no longer in use.

Kathy Keller stated that the Commission had already reviewed and discussed this application at the April 20, 2022 meeting and indicated that the Commission was ready to vote on it.

**Kathy Keller asked for someone to make motion**

**Eric Adams made motion to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for application number 2022-02 for 93 Lowell Street for the removal of the old coal/oil chimney on the north side of the house that is no longer in use and associated repairs to the adjacent areas to match existing.**

**Annette Lee seconded the motion.**

**Roll call vote: Annette Lee – Aye, Eric Adams – Aye, Geoff Freeman – Aye, Kathy Keller – Aye, Chip Dewing (deputized) - Aye.**

**Motion carried 5 to 0**

**7:44 pm Informational Discussion for Application No. 2022-01 for Certificate of Appropriateness, 83 School Street, Carlisle Public School Playground**

Brian Waterson, *Chair of Carlisle Playground Project Committee*, to present modified plans for outdoor classroom within the new playground.

Brian Waterson reported that the landscape architect looked at three different areas – one not in historic district, and two in the historic district. The one not in the historic district is closer to playground in back corner. The new location in the historic district is closer to Church Street and the driveway and is further from the historic district swings and noise than the original site. Brian is looking for feedback on location and the revised and simplified design of outdoor classroom.

Chip Dewing asked about the evolution of outdoor playground - tell us who wants it, who doesn't want it. Brian mentioned that the school requested the classroom along with the playground and field. He hasn't heard of anyone who doesn't want it. The teachers are excited about it as the current amphitheater with its central location can't be used while playground is in use because of noise. They want it more removed from the playground. The other group that is very excited about it is the Council on Aging. They see it as a space where they can host different events when school isn't in session - evenings, weekends, and summer. They sponsored a couple of the tables for the outdoor classroom.

Chip said the ironic twist to this is that you want to move it away from noise of the playground as much as you can so you move it into historic district which provides serenity and quietness, but this is what Historical Commission is trying to preserve. We're at cross purposes. My feelings are a little conflicted - is this the kind of activity to move further into the district?

To be clear, Brian stated that the outdoor classroom can only fit in the historic district. He had the landscape architect consider whether the little corner near School Street would work but it's closer to the playground and closer to the street than the historic district location and there is concern about more noise. The historic district locations are near the fire lane and are more easily accessible from the school. These locations are in the back corner of the historic district.

Eric Adams mentioned that the Red Balloon Nursery School was fully in the district and there was activity there 6 days a week disrupting the quietude. Jack O'Connor, a member of the Commission and a long-time resident of the historic district, hadn't found the small children disruptive and said there was nothing much in the evening going on there. Eric replied that the school had the same hours as Red Balloon and the primary use of the classroom is for the school and added that we're only talking about 50 feet and the playground is already there. Jack expressed concern about the possibility of evening events such as concerts. It's another source of people gathering into a neighborhood and it's nibbling away at the historic district.

Kathy Keller, a commission member as well as a historic district resident, also expressed concern over the chipping away of the little bit the Historical Commission is trying to preserve. She expressed that she didn't want the classroom in the historic district, and she didn't see it as essential given the large school building and would support it being located somewhere else.

Concern was again expressed about the possibility of trees being taken down and felt the wooded area should be preserved. It was mentioned that in the past applicants had promised no trees would be taken down and then went ahead and took them down anyway. Brian again reassured the concerned members that no trees would be taken down aside from one unhealthy tree outside the historic district which had been previously identified as diseased as mentioned in a previous meeting.

Annette Lee asked about locating it within the area that projects from the playground area. Brian replied that area was for the Parkour. Annette asked if that would be less intrusive. Brian replied that it's a completely different use than the classroom. The classroom is just going to be a platform and a couple of benches with tables (about seven of them) scattered around. The Parkour area is harder to get to from an accessibility point of view. When asked about the size of the tables, Brian answered that they are just shy of three feet in diameter.

Chip we're all a bit concerned here. The conflict of objectives here is you're trying to push playground further from playground and we're trying to push it back in. Inherent conflict of objectives, noise in playground and quiet in the classroom. The reason we're even considering this is because the playground has encroached even more into historic district which has pushed the classroom further into it. It seems if it was that important, the classroom should have been part of the master planning.

Brian explained that it was part of the master plan. We had always looked at the proposed areas in the historic district because it's easier to get to for someone in a wheelchair. He also noted that the swings are still in same place – straddling the historic district.

Eric explained that part of reason for the playground sprawl is to make it more inclusive, more accessible, and those components need more area. Specialized equipment for people with special needs didn't exist before - it's not a one for one replacement. Brian and Chip agreed.

Brian expressed that it would be best to do a site walk with the members and Dr. Sidell.

Eric asked if the entire property was considered including the back. Brian explained that there's not great space there with the loading docks and dumpster.

Chip wondered about using the Wilkens-Robbins courtyard for classroom. It would be very quiet and protected from the wind. This is way beyond our purview but we're all looking for alternatives to this conflict between lots of noise on the playground and a peaceful place to conduct a class. These are not sited in a compatible way.

Geoff Freeman also expressed that there is inherent conflict in this location and he's not comfortable with it. It's like an add on that has been pushed back from a design point of view and doesn't fit it. Geoff finds the fixed unnatural classroom elements (tables and benches) difficult to accept when not being used. Chip added that would be 6 months of the year in cooler weather. Geoff added that he finds the unnatural elements very artificial and therefore imposing. Geoff further explained that from a design point of view, it should be part of the landscape which means built from the landforms (integrated into the landscape) – it's done with steps built into the landscape that have some structure, but when you look at it, it looks like part of the landscape element that could then be converted to be used as a classroom. From a design point of view, he sees it as a landscape element which reads as landscape that can be used as a classroom. The current design reads as a classroom sitting in the landscape. He expressed that he felt the designers really hadn't thought about it much.

Chip expressed support for a site visit with whoever is in an admin position to guide us in the dos and don'ts of what this all means. Strictly from a practical point of view I think a classroom is much better suited to a more protected, not so shady environment. I think sun is a premium in this town and a place that was protected and sunny would be a more pleasant place to spend 45 minutes in class outdoors.

Brian stated this was all good feedback and he would encourage designers to make modifications.

Other opinions expressed: Annette expressed that this feels like a very suburban setting and Carlisle I don't define as suburban but of course it is. Eric expressed that the castle now with aged wood patina is very natural looking and has a rustic feel. If the benches were split logs it would represent in nature from nature. He also acknowledged the need for balance regarding the need for accessibility and safety which is challenging. Ben Herter felt there is a question of materiality as well regardless of location. To reiterate Eric's comment, in nature from nature, Ben expressed that's what you want to see out there. When you start introducing bright colors, metals, and plastics, certainly when you're in the historic district, that is calling out a different aesthetic that is not an appropriate palette to use in historic district. Brian clarified that only muted browns and dark greens are being used.

Geoff explained that there is an interesting balance in design between the built form and the natural form. He would like to see a predominance of the natural form. However that's done in materials...and the feeling is, incidentally, it could be used as a classroom. I see the current design as a classroom and the formality and structure of that is not really compatible with the feeling of that landscape. Since it's in the historic district, he would push the designer to come up with something much more creative in using the landscape. And yes, it should satisfy the need as a space for teaching but maybe not as fully from the teachers' point of view in terms of tables, chairs and the rest of it. The current design is fixed and formal and for a large portion of the year it sits there unoccupied. It's a different attitude regarding design. It's a tricky problem. A very hard one. There's a lot at stake here by being in the historic district with the small amount of natural landscape that still exists and having the artificial within that.

Chip inquired if Brian knew whether significantly new sites had been discussed such as in the courtyard or behind Corey. Brian indicated that they definitely looked at a variety of areas. The designer walked around as well. Chip added that the playground company has a singular vision of what their classroom is going to look like so it's more self-serving to suggest it go somewhere else.

Brain stated that the best next step would be to take this feedback to the group and landscape architect and also schedule time to meet with the Commission at the school. Chip expressed it was important to have all decision makers there. Brian will make sure Dr. Sidell is there and the designer in Ithaca will not be due back here until July and will talk to her beforehand.

Brian asked Dr. Sidell to comment on proposed location concerns within the historic district and the questions the members had regarding other locations.

Dr. Sidell explained that other locations were looked at. This is not the first time we've looked at putting in an outdoor classroom. We looked around the Highland building including the back of Highland. We looked behind the school and there really isn't a place around the school other than somewhere below the castle that makes sense.

Chip asked Dr. Sidell what he meant when he said "makes sense." Dr. Sidell said it makes it accessible and easy to get to. It's not near something else [objectionable]. For the Highland building, School Street is a busier road than Church Street. There's more traffic so we can't have it too close to the road. There's not room behind the school between the school and the church. We already have some structures that are put up behind the school where the garden is so there's not another place right there. The other land would be down near the field which is pretty far from the school.

Kathy asked if there were any other comments and thanked Brian. All are looking forward to the site visit.

## **Minutes Approval**

**April 20, 2022**

## **Project Update Reports**

### *FRS Play yard fence:*

- Eric Adams mentioned that Classic Structures (referral to Susan Emmon and Ann James) is interested in talking to the FRS about the project.
- Eric mentioned that the fence is less complicated than he thought in the way the curved cap is applied on top of the pickets.
- Chip Dewing reported that he stopped by to look at the existing fence and confirmed that it was too far gone to repair.

## **Old Business**

### **Member Updates/Inputs**

- Ed Rolfe has expressed interest in continuing to serve on the Historical Commission.

### **Administrative Updates**

- Jennine Blum to submitted letters to the Select Board on behalf of the Co-Chairs to recommend appointments to and transitions within the Historical Commission. Krissy O'Shea and Ben Herter as full members, Ed Rolfe as alternate member, Chip Dewing to transition from alternate to full member and Co-Chair for the remainder of his term which ends in June 2023.
- Discussed strategies to inform historic district property owners about Historical Commission and to encourage them to work with the Commission. Jennine will find letter written last summer to district property owners by Allison, former CHC Administrative Assistant.
- Setup school campus site walk with Brian Waterson and Dr. Sidell.
- Discussed the issues with hybrid meetings (in-person and Zoom). To improve the hybrid meeting experience Ben Herter recommended an Owl system and Kathy Keller recommended training in use of Clark Room equipment. Jennine will investigate these options.

- Jennine offered to take old master plan information that Jack O'Connor has and find a place to store it.

## **Adjournment**

## **Next Meeting**

Wednesday June 15, 2022

## **Documents and Samples Submitted**

- May 18, 2022 Agenda
- 93 Lowell Street, Caitlin and Sam Madden
  - Application for Certificate of Appropriateness No. 2022-02
  - Photo show entire house with north side chimney circled in red
- 41 Lowell Street, Police Station
  - Application for Certificate of Hardship No. 2022-04
  - Informal plan of proposed ramp on south side of Police Station along the driveway
  - Photo of proposed unpainted aluminum ramp with vertical balusters.
  - Photo of south and east sides of the Police Station
  - Plot plan including main entrance and existing lift
- 22 Bedford Road, Gleason Public Library
  - Application for Certificate of Appropriateness No. 2022-03
  - Four-page letter to Steve Bastek, *Facilities Manager, Town of Carlisle*
  - Schematics of various areas and components of the library roofs
  - Aluminum ridge vent diagram
  - Aluminum ridge vent color chart and specs
  - Photos: library, existing and proposed asphalt shingles, aluminum ridge vent sample, color chart and five aluminum color samples
- 83 School Street, Carlisle Public School – Playground Project
  - Application for Certificate of Appropriateness No. 2022-01
  - Schematic – overhead view of CPS campus
  - Schematic of proposed playground design
  - Schematic of proposed playground design – historical district area and elements enlarged
  - Photos of outdoor classroom in Belmont, MA
  - Schematic and specs for Novo picnic table
- April 20, 2022 Minutes