

BRAINTREE HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Minutes

Monday, January 29, 2018

Braintree Town Hall – Johnson Chambers

7:00 PM

Present: Elizabeth Mees (Chair) Ron Frazier
Kate Nedelman Herbst Santana Giannino

Absent: Christine Stickney

Meeting convened at 7:02 PM

New Business:

Recognition of member – Paul Carr: Chair Mees expressed that Paul Carr was a member of Braintree Historical Commission since 2009 and was in Historical Society for quite some time before that. Chair Mees expressed that the Historical Commission is grateful for Paul Carr's many years of service.

Ron Frazier reminded the Commission that the Historical Society now needs to nominate someone from the Historical Society to serve on the Historical Commission, as Mr. Carr served in that role. Ms. Giannino, while a member of the Historical Society, serves on the Commission as the realtor representative. The Commission needs individuals in specific slots, each slot having one vote. Ron Frazier feels that we need additional people with historical backgrounds. Chair Mees said the Commission should also have a planning and land use knowledgeable person on the Commission.

7:15PM **Continued Public Hearing – Certificate of Appropriateness
Thayer Academy/campus Pavilion adjacent to running track**

Ron Frazier **MOTION** to open the Public Hearing; seconded by Ms. Giannino; unanimously voted.

Present for the Applicant:

**Bill Stephenson, Business Manager for Thayer Academy
Paul MacNeely, Architect, Eck MacNeely Architects, Inc.**

Paul MacNeely begins the presentation by handing out light fixture information; he explains that, as they discussed at the last meeting, this is a Hospitality Pavilion for Thayer Academy. It consists of two small restrooms and a small concessions area. The concessions will consist of coffee, water, soft drinks, sandwiches, pretzels, potato chips and those kinds of things. Nothing will be cooked onsite. It will be pre-packaged and brought there. The overall size of the roof enclosure is 24X20 feet; the solid structure or actual building is 12X24 feet. The height of the building is 13 feet 6 inches.

From a site plan standpoint, referring to the small site plan, Mr. MacNeely highlights the bordering roads and mentions that the red is the running track. The red dotted box is where they are proposing to place the pavilion. It is located 280 feet from Tremont Street and 571 feet from Central Avenue. Between existing observatory and pavilion they have 207 feet. From a scale standpoint, Mr. MacNeely created an overlay. The grey area is the observatory building; the red dotted structure is the pavilion. You can see the difference in elevation. They added a rendering looking from Tremont Street where you can see visual impact of the observatory and pavilion.

From a material standpoint, the brick of the pavilion will match the brick of the observatory; it will be the same red brick with a red mortar. The wood will be the same wood that they have on the observatory. The metal roofing will match the metal roofing of observatory. The terrace around the pavilion will be a bluestone terrace. Light fixtures have a very restricted cone of light; the light will shine vertically. There will be a fixture on each gable – one on the rear and one underneath the porch shining down on the windows.

Mr. Frazier asks if the layout is any different than presented previously; Mr. MacNeely states it is the same layout.

Ms. Giannino asked if there is any reason the rest rooms couldn't be attached to the observatory because the observatory is close to running track. Why were restrooms and pavilion not attached to the observatory rather than being a stand-alone in the middle of the field? Bill Stephenson explains that it was a matter of convenience to the different sets of players and activities that go on and keeping the Hospitality Pavilion as close as possible to as many different activities. At the moment, people have to go to one of the edges. The idea is to make this a lot better, and having it as convenient as possible is the purpose. Mr. MacNeely explains that it is very central to all of the fields, and they highlight existing field locations. The proposed location is as close as it can be and centralized to each of the fields highlighted. Mr. Stephenson explains that another reason for the location of the pavilion is that homecoming activities in the fall are located in that area on the field, and they want it to be a resource for homecoming activities, as well. They want it to be a gathering place, which is sheltered, out on the field for that event. Ms. Giannino mentioned that a resident on Lakeview Avenue felt that their view was being obscured.

Chair Mees asks about landscaping and whether there was any thought to other kinds of planting, like arborvitae. Mr. MacNeely states that because it needs to be accessible from many directions, they haven't given any thought to landscaping. They have on the Observatory, where they created an enclosure of planting because there is an outdoor classroom there. Chair Mees feels like landscaping might make a difference to neighbors. Chair Mees mentioned some sort of crushed stone and small plantings might be possible, but she also realizes that large bushes might be a security and safety issue. Mr. Stephenson suggests waiting to see how it looks and what might make it more appealing or attractive.

Chair Mees mentions, looking at the photometrics, they have a 30 foot radius and the square is bigger than that. Because the lighting is coming straight down, they won't even go off the platform with lighting. All lights will be a few feet in. She feels comfortable saying it will not illuminate any of the grass area. Mr. MacNeely adds that neighbors will not be looking at a light source, as it is aiming straight down.

Chair Mees asks about security cameras. Mr. MacNeely explains that there is a security camera on each of the gables. Ms. Giannino asked if there were security cameras on the observatory, as well. Mr. MacNeely said there were.

Ms. Nedelman Herbst asks if the bathrooms will be locked; Mr. Stephenson said yes at night and when the fields are not in use. Mr. Stephenson explains that there is security presence on the campus, as well as watching the cameras.

Mr. MacNeely states there was concern about knowing the distance from the street. Chair Mees states the pavilion is pretty far from the street – it is 500 feet from the street. Mr. MacNeely agrees and mentions that the building is just 12 feet tall. Chair Mees mentioned that it is not larger than the observatory – it is the equivalent of a one-stall garage. Mr. Frazier states it does not affect the overall perspective or flavor of the Historic District. Chair Mees is grateful that Thayer thought to respect and imitates the same materials as the observatory so that it is cohesive.

Chair Mees asks about construction trucks and dust. She asks if there is a strategy for that. Mr. MacNeely mentions that there is an access point, and he points out the gated access point. He also mentions there are construction practices to keep the dust under control. Mr. Stephenson states it is at the same time the summer programs are going on, and, compared to what Thayer has done over the last two summers, this is hardly anything at all.

Chair Mees feels they have covered everything, and she reiterates that the purview of the Historical Commission, because this proposed structure is within the historic district, is to confirm that the structure is appropriate and will not have a negative impact on the historic character of the district. Her opinion is that it is such a great setback from the street, it is within keeping with the architectural language of the observatory and it is a small scale.

Ron Frazier **MOTION** that the Pavilion does not affect the overall historic character of the district; seconded by Ms. Giannino; voted 3:0:0 (Kate Nedelman Herbst abstains, as she was not present for the initial Public Hearing for this proposed structure on 12/4/17).

Old Business:

Chair Mees provides an update via the summary notes made available from Director Stickney.

Discussion on the Old Thayer Library Accessibility Alternatives - Chair Mees provided an update that unfortunately this has encountered a setback on the CPA Application. When the application was filed, Chair Linda Raiss had concerns with the proposal; she took those concerns to Chief of Staff – Joe Reynolds. He requested the project be paused so that it could have another look by him, the Commission on Disabilities and possibly the Mayor. Exterior elevators are being looked at now for the buildings. Staff has been instructed to hold off. On a side note, Linda Raiss has resigned from the CPA Committee. Ron Frazier mentions that Dick Fletcher has also resigned from the CPA Committee. Chair Mees mentioned that Director Stickney has sent her concerns that we will lose yet another construction season.

Updates:

Elm Street Cemetery – Construction update – Chair Mees explains that the fence has been removed from the site and is in the shop being worked on and fabricated; the estimated date back is Memorial Day. The contractor for the wall has begun some preliminary work – weather permitting. Derek Manning in the Planning & Community Development office is overseeing the project along with McGinley Kalsow & Associates, as project manager. Ron Frazier adds that they should make sure the temporary fence remains up because it keeps falling down. From a liability perspective, the Town would be liable if someone were walking there and walked off the end of the wall.

Union School Project/Town Councilor Orders – Chair Mees updated that the architectural contract is being circulated for signatures by the Mayor and others. It has a 90 day work time-frame, so they believe they can have the plans & specs done to make this construction season. In addition, the second half of funding (650K) is part of the Mayor’s capital budget that is supposed to be taken up in February. They need this funding to go out to bid.

Demolition Delay Bylaw/Letter to Council – Chair Mees explained that there are three new members on the Council; the Mayor will bring this matter up again with the Council and put it before them. Since we last met, the council and their new members have been sworn in and reorganization for the sub-committees provided. The Chair of Ordinance & Rules is Sean Powers and the other members are David Ringius, Charlie Kokoros and Tim Carey. Chair Mees explains that Director Stickney suggests we send another letter to the new chair asking for an appointment to come in and speak with them regarding the Demolition Delay Ordinance. Chair Mees will send the letter. Ms. Nedelman Herbst will forward the previous version of letter for Chair Mees to modify.

Other – Grove Manor had requested that the Planning & Community Development Department help in finding someone from Braintree Historical Commission to come speak to their residents about historic Braintree. There is a request to contact Kelly Phelan in the Planning & Community Development office or directly to Jill Christie 781 843-3700. No members have stated they are interested.

Administrative:

Minutes 2/6/17 & 12/4/17 –

Ron Frazier **MOTION** to accept the minutes of the 12/4/17 meeting; seconded by Santana Giannino; voted 3:0:0 (Kate Nedelman Herbst abstains, as she was not present for the 12/4/17 meeting).

The minutes for the **2/6/17** meeting were tabled until the next meeting.

Ron Frazier **MOTION** to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Ms. Nedelman Herbst; unanimously voted. Meeting adjourned at 7:36 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Louise Quinlan
Planning & Community Development