

May 18, 2009

7:30PM, Selectmen's Office

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Chute, Mr. Kerr, Mr. Smith, Mr. Talbot

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ms. Gilchrist

ALTERNATES PRESENT: Mrs. Boyer, Mrs. Mills

ALTERNATES ABSENT: Mr. Tilden

STAFF PRESENT: Mrs. Shade

OTHERS PRESENT: Mr. James, Ms. Demetriades, Mr. Walker, Mr. Woodward, Mrs. Canning, Mr. and Mrs. Bass

REGULAR MEETING

Mr. Kerr opened the regular meeting at 7:30PM, seated the members and Alternate Boyer for Ms. Gilchrist.

James /175 Calhoun Street /Discussion – Outdoor lighting.

Mr. James, 175 Calhoun Street, was present to discuss his proposal for outdoor lighting. He said he would like to place light poles along his driveway. The poles would be lower (about 5ft) at the driveway cut. The rest of the poles would be taller (8 to 10ft) to avoid snow plow damage. Lights will be shielded and pointed downward to be focused on the driveway and stay out of driver's eyes. Mr. James said the lights are required for safety due to the fact that his driveway is curvy, dark and dangerous and his house sits behind an outcropping of rocks.

The members looked at photos of the driveway (dated 2/1/09), taken at night by Mr. Talbot, showing trees and rocks along the driveway lighted up. Mrs. Boyer asked Mr. James if the lights in the trees and rocks as shown in the photos had been removed. He replied the lights had been removed after he received notice from the Zoning Enforcement Officer. Mr. James said he preferred the lights installed on the trees and rocks because the installation was not as visible as a metal light pole. He noted the driveway is a very dark area. Mr. Talbot commented, this is the country and that is the nature of all driveways in the Calhoun-Ives area. Mr. Chute added this is an area where the Commission would like to see the rural, small farm atmosphere preserved. He said he is having difficulty with lights in this area. Mrs. Boyer observed that the lights on the trees and rocks were very visible to neighbors across the way and drivers on the road. Mr. James told the members that he is a weekend resident and the lights that were in the trees had only spotty use such as when they had guests.

Mrs. Mills suggested to Mr. James that he have a look at the driveway lights at 128 Calhoun Street. This house has a long driveway. The lights are motion sensitive and are not bright. Mr. Chute added, the lights are shielded downward, not tall and just mark the driveway. Mrs. Boyer said the lights are beautiful and agreed it would be worthwhile for Mr. James to have a look at them. Mr. James said he would go see them.

Mr. Chute noted that a lot of residents in the district are not weekenders like Mr. James, and so the

Commission is trying to preserve the rural nature of this area. Mr. James replied that he understands and he also appreciates the rural, historic nature of the district. He said he is not happy about installing light poles either and would rather install the lights in trees because it is least offensive from an appearance standpoint.

Mr. Talbot noted that the lights came to the attention of the Commission because they would be left on for an entire week and added significant light to a district where this kind of lighting is inappropriate. The goal is to come up with something that will accomplish what you need to light the driveway; shielded lights to just give a glow. Mr. James said he never intended to leave the lights on day and night. If they were on for a whole week, it was by accident.

Mr. Talbot said the goal from the standpoint of Zoning would be to maintain the dark skies, including in the back yard. Install lighting that will be low level. From the standpoint of the HDC, very low level, minimal lighting on the driveway as you enter and to light turns in the driveway.

Mr. James said his goal is to light the driveway so people can see to drive up and down. He said he is not trying to light every portion of the driveway. He just wants to have enough lights to clearly show where the driveway is. Mr. Talbot stated it is possible to achieve the same purpose with a low level light which creates just a glow. He said tall poles or lights mounted in trees are not necessarily the solution.

Mr. James asked Mr. Talbot if he could contact him to ask additional questions about lighting. Mr. Talbot said yes he could and perhaps they could get together with the ZEO to review some lighting issues.

Mr. James thanked the Commission for their time and feedback.

Wexler /157 Calhoun Street /Continued Discussion – Alterations & additions

Elizabeth Demetriades and Patrick Walker were present to continue the discussion on behalf of Mr. Wexler. Ms. Demetriades noted that some of the members were not present at the April meeting, so she went over some highlights from last month's discussion. She showed the members the survey map and the site plan. Mrs. Canning, a resident at 119 Calhoun Street, said she thinks it is misleading to characterize this project on the Agenda as alterations and additions. Ms. Demetriades replied that is exactly what it is; an expansion of an existing house. There is a porch added on either end.

Ms. Demetriades showed the members some photos to give them an idea of how the house is set back from the road. She read a description of their project and said they used the HDC Guidelines to help them.

They would like to change the driveway to where it used to be. This would eliminate the intrusion of the old driveway through the field. They also propose adding a kink in the new driveway to cover the addition of a privacy gate.

Ms. Demetriades presented two drawings(rec'd 5/18/09). One of the south elevation. The other; an overlay showing a comparison of the profiles of the existing house and the proposed additions. She said they are keeping the existing foundation and the existing floor framing. They are keeping the second story space but elevating the height from within. The changes are in the roof profile. Ms. Demetriades said they got their inspiration for the curved roof from the rolling landscape. The footprint of the house will be enlarged by about 400sqft, most of which is screened porch area. Total interior square footage will be increased by less than 1000sqft.

Mrs. Mills asked about the roof materials. The roof is to be weathered copper with a titanium alloy

coating. Ms. Demetriades said she knows the Commission does not have jurisdiction over color but she wants them to know the house will be a darker color to recede into the landscape. Mr. Talbot commented that this is an interesting plan and the curved roof massing is intriguing but he is still concerned about the flatness of the façade. He said he is trying to understand how much will be visible from the road, although the color will help it recede into the landscape. Mr. Kerr asked if the roof could be pitched downward. A discussion ensued regarding the pitch of the roof, ridge line and height. Ms. Demetriades said their objective is to keep the building long and low. She is not sure how much farther the roof can be brought down. She offered to put story poles in place for the Commission.

Mr. Smith said he was a proponent of breaking up what looked like a large mass, but he is not certain that something of this architectural style should be made to look like an old farmhouse that has been added on to over the years. Mrs. Boyer also noted that applicants should not try and duplicate old houses. Mr. Chute said it's obviously a modern house, but it looks simpler and less obtrusive. Ms. Demetriades said the project is still in development. She discussed the floor plans with the Commission. Mr. Talbot asked about the possibility of extending the stone veneer portion of the wall outward and putting a roof over it, to break up the flatness of the facade. Mrs. Boyer agreed that Mr. Talbot's idea was a very good one. The flatness of the wall and curve of the roof give it the look of an airplane hangar. Mr. Kerr agreed – anything to give it less of an aircraft facility look.

Ms. Demetriades said the question is – how much will be visible from Calhoun Street. Mr. Talbot replied the Commission had some concerns about window and eave detail of another house in the district that sits far back from the road. As fleeting as it is, you do read the massing on this house as you drive by. It is amazing how visible it all is from the road. He stated the proportion and scale of the plans for Mr. Wexler's house will read - bold and strong. More shadows should be developed in it – break down the massing in some form.

Bass /75 Green Hill Road /Progress update.

Mr. and Mrs. Bass were present to give the members an update on Certificates of Appropriateness they received over the past few years. Some of the work has not been completed. Mr. Smith asked if there are to be any changes to any of the C of A's; other things that have not been approved by the Commission. No. Mrs. Bass replied there is nothing new here. No changes – the only changes will be the dates of completion.

Mr. and Mrs. Bass will complete an application along with a list of items to be completed along with completion dates. They will be on the agenda for a public hearing June 15th.

Correspondence

Mr. Kerr read a letter from Michael Ajello, ZEO to Reverend Balmer regarding lighting issues at St. John's Episcopal Church.

MOTION: To discuss Mr. Talbot's e-mail. By Mr. Smith, seconded by Mrs. Boyer and passed 5-0.

MOTION: To accept the 4/20/09 minutes as written. By Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Chute and passed 5-0.

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting. By Mr. Talbot.

Mr. Kerr adjourned the meeting at 9:55PM.

FILED SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

Respectfully Submitted,
Martha T. Shade, Secretary