

Town of Ipswich Architectural Preservation District Commission
Regular Meeting
February 8, 2021
Zoom Meeting ID: 873 3092 7670 - Remote

Minutes

Members Present: Nancy Carlisle, John Fiske, Peter Bubriski, Chris Morse, and Will Thompson

Alternate Members Present: Susan Hill Dolan and Joe Bourneuf

Staff Present: Kristen Grubbs, Ipswich Town Planner

Others Present: Gordon Harris, Town Historian

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM.

CITIZENS QUERIES: None.

MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING: Ms. Carlisle designated Ms. Hill Dolan and Mr. Bourneuf as voting members for purposes of approving the previous minutes, and requested a motion to adopt them. Mr. Bubriski moved to accept the January 11, 2021 meeting minutes and Bourneuf seconded. The vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Documents: Draft minutes of January 11, 2021 meeting

DISCUSSION RELATIVE TO SECTION 7 OF THE APDC BYLAW.

Ms. Carlisle began by summarizing the intents of Section 1 and Section 7. She highlighted the concern of some board members, that from time to time, the language of Section 7 had allowed projects to go forward with permitting without an APDC advisory review. Carlisle posited that with the current Bylaw language, the board does not have the teeth to do its best in terms of architectural review and education. She opened discussion by asking the members whether the APDC could be put in a position to do more to support the objectives of Section 1.

Mr. Fiske suggested that, at the time it was crafted, the committee that developed the Bylaw overestimated public opposition. He provided an overview of the process, which emphasized education and advisory functions over enforcement. Fiske believed that people became truly excited about preservation, which culminated with the Bylaw brief at Town Meeting being met with no voiced opposition, two-thirds majority approval, and a standing ovation.

Mr. Harris provided an overview of other preservation attempts dating back to 1975, to include four attempts to establish an historic district. From Harris' point of view, there were neighborhood concerns that the establishment of the APDC would lead to mission creep and increased enforcement. Carlisle expressed appreciation for the benefits of holding meetings within the APD given any attempt to adjust the Bylaw language at a future Town Meeting.

Harris continued by providing an overview of the Historic Ipswich website that he operates, and invited the APDC to contribute content. He added that it typically receives 460,000 views annually.

Carlisle continued by suggesting Fiske found the Bylaw development process more favorable than Harris. Fiske suggested that they identify what the problems are and then discuss language to resolve. Carlisle responded by summarizing the installation of the metal roof at 4 Water St, and Mr. Thompson commented on the 11 County St Building Permit application omissions and resulting exterior work that went beyond what was expressed in the application. Carlisle added that the issue stemmed from these and similar projects falling under the *recommended* advisory review under the Bylaw, and that neither owner elected to do so.

Fiske offered that one possibility would be to make an advisory meeting a requirement. Harris commented that community members expressed concerns over regulating colors and windows. Discussion ensued around the review and implementation of the windows incorporated in the 24 Summer St addition project.

Ms. Grubbs added that many questions come to her office that revolve around this *recommended* aspect of the Bylaw, specifically as relates to window replacements, which are prevalent.

Fiske iterated that the recommended advisory review be made a requirement. Carlisle replied that refining the language appropriately would be of the utmost importance, and that the resulting language should be made more specific with regard to project particulars. She recommended shifting the discussion to how to move forward with suggesting language modifications. Fiske suggested Carlisle and Grubbs propose draft language to focus the discussion at the next meeting. Carlisle agreed and offered to initiate the first draft.

14 EAST STREET: Modifications to previously approved Certificate to Alter.

Thompson gave an update relative to Building Inspector requested design changes including the removal of one window and replacement of cedar clapboards with cement fiber siding on the East elevation. The intent of which is to provide fire resistance to the exterior wall, which will be located less than three feet from the property boundary. Thompson explained that once approved, he would supply the Chair with the material list and updated elevations. Carlisle expressed intent to review and supply a letter of support for the changes upon submission.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Bubriski proposed further discussion relative to making the APDC more well-known and accessible to the community through education. He proposed board members consider developing video shorts relative to various design aspects, materials, etc., to raise awareness of the APD's roles and members, while providing improved reference materials for property owners to consider.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting was scheduled for March 1, 2021.

ADJOURNMENT: Thompson moved to adjourn the meeting. Fiske seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.