

FRAMINGHAM HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Minutes of the Meeting of Wednesday, August 11, 1999

Members Present: S. Herring, Chair; L. Evans-Daly, Vice Chair; W. Lyon, Secretary;
M. Murphy; G. Couto

Guests: David Depietri, Rosewood Construction; Roger Dowd, Attorney for same; Fire Chief Smith; Town Manager George King; Richard Daly, Malvin Schulze, Town Meeting Members; Todd Robecki, Ann Welles, Historic District Commission; John Stasik, State Representative; Philip Ottaviani, Zoning Board of Appeals; Chris, Preservation Trust; Chris Bergeron, MetroWest Daily News
Walsh

Old Business: Preserving Dennison Bldgs #2 & #9 - Roger Dowd spoke of difficulty in providing adequate parking. There's been some progress in planning for temporary parking, but this is only temporary. No progress in getting parking in outside perimeter. The proposal is to demolish Bldg #9 and 1/3 of Bldg #2, leaving Bldgs #1, #4, #5, and 2/3 of #2. Would like to use greenspace between Howard Street and the railroad tracks. Fire Dept doesn't like parking on Clinton Street. Still a little bit short to meet Zoning Bylaw parking requirements. Would like to use Beaver Street parking for 1½ years. No parking inside complex allowed until demolition done. Bldg #3 now 40% demolished. Wish to amortize by keeping as much as possible of property. Fact is that most people drive to work in their own cars - proposed tenants want nearby parking. It's by no means ideal to cross Waverly Street (and tracks) at night in the dark. To provide for ameliorating the danger of fighting a fire, we propose demolishing the east end of Bldg #2 to gain access (and provide more parking space) while retaining western 2/3 of #2. We should be on stream and operating in 1½ to 2 years. Rosewood needs a variance on parking and the Beaver Street plot to bring Bldg #2 on line. There've been no other alternatives presented; all suggestions are controversial; Rosewood faces intransigence of Avery-Dennison and lack of large neighborhood parcels for parking.

G. Couto remarked that Rosewood is short by 140 to 150 spaces of the 600 spaces needed for parking - this includes 324 spaces on site and the Northeast Construction site. The request is to demolish, to meet both parking and safety needs.

S. Herring suggested leaving Bldgs #9 and #2 as is - this would provide only 160 parking spaces, and 58 on Clinton Street diagonally, a total of 102 spaces on public streets. Also space available between Howard Street and the RR tracks.

G. Couto suggested using part of Bldg #9; he doesn't want to lose any part of Bldg #2 but allows losing part of #9. He said he was glad to see Chief Smith and Town Manager King and Representative Stasik at this hearing; he has been very critical of the Town as not entirely cooperative; the public sees the Commission as the bad people. Roger Dowd responded that Rosewood has not been mistreated by anyone and can't complain about the Town.

G. Couto asked if there have been any creative plans? L. Evans-Daly countered by asking if there have been any not-so-creative plans, such as utilizing the huge parking lot(s) across Waverly Street? She remarked that there is much open space black-topped not being used. Roger Dowd noted the problem of bringing people across Waverly Street (and the tracks).

M. Murphy noted that the corrugated bldg had been taken down 2/99 - what was the plan at that time? Response was consideration of a parking garage and/or a 2,000 car parking lot at the Big D site - but there was no State money for that, nor for two bridges across RR and Waverly Street - so plans were changed to reduce the rentable space.

Town Mgr George King stated that the Town is working very closely with developers - he didn't know that the Commission is a scapegoat - the Town administration shouldn't influence actions of Planning Board or the Commission. There are meetings with the developers every Tuesday morning - Town respects actions of

the Commission. It seems that Bldg #9 is problematic for renovation. The plan presented by Rosewood is a good compromise. It removes a bldg that Chief Smith is concerned about. George King recommended the Commission accept the developer's plan and let them go forward; thus 2/3 of Bldg #2 would be saved (which would be gone 11/24 when the six months expire). King expressed wish that we could move forward!

S. Herring stated that the Town is willing to sacrifice the gross square footage of Bldg #9 to allow expediting the process; he asked why the Town wouldn't want to fight for as much space as possible?

George King said the area south of the RR tracks seem close - but they're not really close. He noted the struggle to get the MBTA to asphalt a 60-car parking lot. He noted that Chief Smith would not allow occupancy of Bldg #5 until demolition completed. Roger Dowd noted that local residents were concerned about parking. He further noted concern about an empty bldg with wood impregnated with chemicals.

M. Murphy raised the issue of the economic viability of the project...

Chief Smith then spoke, stating that Mr Couto made the statement that the Fire Chief seemed to be adverse to the project. He stated that he's charged with implementing the Fire Code. It was a big nightmare when Dennison left - the complex is similar to Marston Mills and the fire in Grafton. Avery-Dennison was very smart - they got rid of the bldgs without adequate parking. He said he didn't know what Rosewood was doing; the Code said they should submit a plan to the Fire Chief but there was no plan. This left the Fire Dept in an awkward position - he said "we're historic" too. He felt the fire couldn't be stopped if it got going - #9 ^{should} be taken down, it's 100 years old and can't be compartmentalized. He feels that, in case of fire, he can't get his fire truck in there - it would be like the Franklin Street fire, radiant heat across the street would spread the fire further. He said that his department has tried to assist the developer. There's also the problem of cold weather in winter..

Issue raised about Avery-Dennison releasing space (for parking).

L. Evans-Daly asked why the Fire Chief didn't condemn the bldgs if he felt so strongly? Response was that everyone was kicked out; he didn't condemn the bldgs because they weren't structurally unsound. *and are fully sprinkled*

W. Lyon asked about the feasibility of constructing a parking garage. Essentially it fell through - the parking garage across Waverly Street as well as the one in the complex. Rosewood is trying to keep the best of the bldgs. W. Lyon read the Chair's letter to the Commission stating that demolition of Bldg #3 removed all chance the state would recommend the Federal tax relief for historic preservation - the Dept of the Interior said informally this would be most unlikely.

Chris Walsh said he'd met with John Bok of Historic Mass., Inc., and John Stasik, receiving the same message that the Park Service would not recommend the tax relief if any bldg were taken down.

W. Lyon persisted, inquiring if intercession with Joan Bok of Avery-Dennison Board had been positive? John Stasik noted (parenthetically) that conference with MBTA on downtown parking had been unproductive. But Stasik felt that not every angle had been explored - he said he wishes to be involved. He wondered if it's possible to reduce the parking requirement - but this would take time! the State budget's not to be passed until after Labor Day. Stasik said he was very nervous about losing the entire area. Although it's not his district, he's not ready yet to close all doors.

W. Lyon's inquiry about Joan Bok and Dwight Allison, the two former Dennison Board directors on the Avery-Dennison Board, was not answered.

Philip Ottaviani of the ZBA said there would be no parking on Clinton Street - Rosewood needed to get the parking space. He urged the Commission not to delay further, stating that David Depettri has compromised already.

Town Manager George King stated that, even if decision delayed the full six months (to Nov. 24), and none of the good ideas come to fruition - none are close now. He's spoken with Avery-Dennison and finds them extremely uncooperative. They are looking to subdivide and get rid of the property -

renovated

they would keep the chemical operation. They're taking down a bldg at the end of Lawrence Street. Chief Smith added that A-D has redesigned the entire power plant - they're not leaving but they did take down a portion of the power plant.

Chris Walsh said he had spoken with the Planning Board, which liked the concept of offsite parking - they didn't want to go against Officer Donnelly - Chris thought the crossing of Waverly Street not that bad (if signals fixed for pedestrians). He remarked that, as an architect, he had found that bldgs get torn down and a solution is found afterwards. He recalled a proposal to tear down bldgs in Framingham Centre "and all Route 9 traffic problems would be solved." He felt that taking bldgs down for parking is the worst thing that can happen. He felt the Planning Board shouldn't have the same (parking) requirements downtown as at 9-90.

Malvin Schulze noted that "we're talking about three months - nothing will be done." He'd like to see the Commission go along with the proposal.

Ann Welles said she heard conjecture about the Planning Board - there should be a response from them as well as from the Fire Chief and Town Manager.

Roger Dowd said the Planning Board had issued a 20-page advice.

Dick Daly suggested the parking garage near the Registry should be used wholly by Town residents; also there are two more spaces south of Waverly Street available.

Todd Robecki noted that there is a lot of Town-owned property which the Planning Board and Planning Dept could explore as alternatives.

George King said there was not a lot of Town-owned land in the area.

Ann Welles asked about using mitigation funds to buy lots for parking?

George King said that Esther Hopkins is looking into that issue.

Todd Robecki said he wants to save the Town's cultural heritage - he'd like to see the demolition delay five years, not six months. He felt that the applicant has done what was asked of them.

Phil Ottaviani asked if the Town owns the land south of Long's Cadillac (on Waverly Street?/

L. Evans-Daly asked if the new Planning Director could take another look at the whole issue? George King responded that she can be made available, but none of the senior planning posts have been filled..

David Dipietri said Rosewood has spent \$300K to try to solve this problem - they've spoken to all State officials.. Roger Dowd said they've had a lot of people looking at this issue for a long time, from Butterworth Park to the Sherborn line - they've talked with 40 owners.

.. Chief Smith said the mill structures were built with a purpose - they had their own fire brigade in each bldg - we looked at the code we have to meet - in a fire, bricks collapse (on fire fighters). We wouldn't have built bldgs like these nowadays..

At this point the Chair said there'd been an excellent exchange of views (and now he'd proceed to the vote). The process would be to call for a motion on Bldg #9 and then on half on Bldg #2.

G. Couto moved the demolition delay be terminated for Bldg. #9. This was seconded by the Chair. W. Lyon moved to table the motion until other motions made. This was not seconded, and the vote was taken. Couto and Herring voted "Yes." On call from the audience for the Nays, LYON and Murphy and Evans-Daly voted "No."

Prior to the vote, Couto spoke of growing up in Fall River and seeing a mill fire from five miles away. He said he respected the opinions of the Fire Chief - it's a very dangerous job - he had changed his mind in Bldg. #9 tonight - Attorney Dowd has done more historic preservation than anyone else here - he (Couto) has to go with what is best.

The Chair called for a motion on Bldg #2. There was none.

Evans-Daly requested of the Chair that the Planning Board/Dept meet with the Commission. George KING asked what is the purpose? Request was made for the report on parking from the Planning Dept. George KING NOTED THE NEW Planning Director presently lacks knowledge about this issue. Chris Walsh said there were only two issues = safety and parking, and only the Planning BOARD/dept

has dealt with the parking issue.

Old Business: Dennison Bldg #1 - new entrance - Rosewood submitted plans for a new entrance to Bldg #1 with handicapped ramp. Some change in height and materials necessary. Chair stated he'd like to retain as much as possible of current architectural motif. M. Murphy moved and W. Lyon seconded acceptance, with Commissions list of preferences appended. Passed 4-0 with Couto abstaining. Preference for frame to be colored white, and facing on ramp to be brick. (audience participated in discussion).

Old Business: Lustron House - Framingham Preservation Trust has gained its 501(c)(3) letter so can now write letter to owner, who will need a third party appraiser. Thinking of storing material on vacant barns on Wittenborg property.

Watch List: Rugg-Gates House - Preservation TRust getting bids.

Minutes of meeting of July 13 accepted as amended.

Letter from Massachusetts Historical Commission on 538 UNION Avenue found no adverse effect from its use as parking lot for State College students.

Correspondence: Letter from owner of Irving Square Historic Property requesting right to place bronze plaque on Horatio Twombly Building. MOTION TO accept proposal passed 5-0.

Watch List: FSC President's House - Betty Muto, CHair of Pct. 12 Town Meeting members, wrote supporting letter to Acting President FSC Helen Heineman.

Old BUiness: Historic MArker Program - The street signs are going up on Edmands ROAD, Water STreet, Old Connecticut PAtH (STreets on 1699 map).

Watch List: Eames House - it's being worked on, and the Eames Family is having a reunion in Framingham this year.

Next Meeting date: Tuesday, SEptember 7. Vote to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,



Waldo B. Lyon, Secretary