

FRAMINGHAM HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Minutes of the MEETING of Tuesday, September 7, 1999

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

Guests: David and Bob Dipietri, Rosewood Construction; Roger Dowd, Attorney for same; George King, Town Manager; Valerie Mulvey, Selectman; Betty Muto, Town Meeting Member; Anita De Felice, Neighborhood activist; Anatol Zuckerman

Old Business: Preserving Dennison Bldgs #2 & #9 - The Chair reviewed recent events: Receipt of letter from New England Cranberry Co.; receipt of letter from Town Manager proposing compromise holding partial demolition of Bldg #2; receipt of Town Counsel proposed agreement preserving Bldgs #1, #4, #5, 18, and 2/3 of #2 for as long as Rosewood owns property; letter from Chris Berglund of EDIC. The Chair then quoted pertinent parts of the Demolition Delay bylaw.

David Dipietri then proposed taking down the eastern 1/3 of Bldg #2, which he said was in the worst structural condition and posed the most potential danger of fire; demolition of this part of Bldg #2 would provide enough parking and would allow Bldg #5 to be occupied. He referred to a major concern about the danger of fire in Bldg #9, with its need for complex sprinkler system and structural issues. He noted that four times in the past few days demolition had damaged underground water pipes. He said Bldg #3 was now half demolished and would be fully demolished within 60 days. He then mentioned withdrawing the application for demolition of Bldg #9; then the demolition delay for #2 would expire November 24 and there would be six months from that date to start demolition.

Insert
Gerry's
Correction

G. Couto suggested Rosewood agree to discuss the need for demolition of Bldg #9 with the Commission. L. Evans-Daly suggested that Bldg 2B and 2C be included in paragraph #3 of the proposed agreement.

Rosewood then stated it was willing to grant a facade easement on all bldgs except #9.

It was then moved that, contingent on a satisfactory legal document produced and agreed upon, Bldg #9 would be deleted from paragraph #1 of the agreement; paragraph #2 would be amended to indicate that ~~withdrawal~~ for demolition of the remainder of Bldg #2 would include all but Bldg 2A as on an accompanying schematic drawing; a paragraph #4 would be added indicating that consultation with the Commission would take place before going forward with demolition of Bldg #9, and that there'd be a facade easement on Bldgs #1, #2, #4, and #5.

Ted Welte of the local Chamber of Commerce then stated that he was very pleased with the progress; he felt that a partial compromise would take care of the fire safety issues.

W. Lyon then expressed his concerns: that the alleged \$14M tax break should have been explored thoroughly prior to any demolition application; that the present demolition delay bylaw should provide for a delay longer than six months, as the present process has not worked well; that the Fire Chief acted by himself precipitously without negotiation with tenants who were kicked out; that there were no winners, only losers, in the process, especially as far as preservation was concerned; and that Rosewood should have informed the Commission as to the presence of the N.E. Cranberry Co. as a tenant. He also noted that it was peculiar to hear that the wooden floors were a fire hazard but they were to be shipped to England to build fine houses. He also stated that it was not a compromise as preservationists were losing 7/9 of the three bldgs at issue (but if Bldg #9 is saved, this is not accurate).

Anatol Zuckerman said he wanted to save all the bldgs. The Chair stated that he felt a lot of compromising had occurred.

M. Murphy felt the compromise was good. L. Evans-Daly expressed herself as pleased with the compromise and hoped that part of Bldg #9 can be saved.

G. Couto said it had been a long hard process - everyone gave a little. Reference was made to the site plan of 8/10/99 which shows how much of Bldg #2 would be retained.

The Chair noted that the process followed had included an original vote that all three bldgs (#2, #3, and #9) were historically significant, and the present agreement, if voted, would preserve #2 and #9. The process validates the work with the community and has satisfied the economic needs of the developer; the Commission is not relinquishing its responsibility to preserve. The vote of the motion was 4 in favor (Couto, Evans-Daly, Herring, and Murphy) and one abstaining (Lyon).

Anita DeFelice commented favorably; George King stated that the Commission had worked diligently in the best interests of the Town; he also appreciated the assistance of L. Evans-Daly in the staff meetings on the issue.

Note: all members of audience departed at this time.

Other Old Business: Historic Marker program is proceeding well - there was a nice article in the paper, with good positive feedback.

There have been further requests for Historic House signs.

Watch List: Annie Dennett House has a new addition.

F.S.C. President's House - S. Herwig presented a review of his research on this house.

Rugg-Gates House - there was a feature article in the Daily News on witches, Salem End, etc.

New Business: Grace Church telecommunications tower - an obelisk has been designed to sit on top of the flat-top tower. THE Mass. Historical Commission is fighting it but does not have veto power.

Edwards Church telecommunications tower - proposal to replace the corner finials by telecom tower seems entirely satisfactory to Mass. Historical Commission.

Barn at 65 Gates Street - Proposal to demolish the barn behind the Hartley-Dennett House (Which will not be demolished) in order to create a road leading to some proposed houses. This is in a 20K Sq ft zoning area; a hearing will probably be needed before the Planning Board.

Note that six regular members and six alternates, a full complement, have been appointed to the Historic District Commission.

Next meeting will be scheduled when amended agreement ready for review.

Next regular meeting scheduled tentatively for WED. October 6 (but this is in conflict with monthly meeting of Historical Society).

Respectfully submitted,



Waldo B. Lyon, Secretary