

Meeting Minutes
Roxbury Historic Preservation Commission
Monthly Meeting, February 21, 2011
Roxbury Town Hall

In attendance:
Robert Cucinotta
Karina Walker
William Allison

Also present but unable to participate until he takes his oath was commission member Douglas Kadow

Meeting opened at 7:00 pm, Karina Walker called the meeting to order.

Old Business

Karina Walker moved to approve the December 2010 minutes, Robert Cucinotta seconded, all in favor. Douglas Kadow will send a digitalized copy to all commission members of the October 18, 2010 minutes to review before the March 2011 meeting.

Ms. Walker reported on the status of the Lerner Gallery sign. She has not been able to reach Mr. Lerner. She will ask the Community Resources clerk to call Mr. Lerner to set up a time he may be able to meet with commission members so that they may do a walk through and discuss his gallery sign.

Ms. Walker provided an update to the status of William Pollien / Simona David's window replacement. No application for a Certificate of Compatibility has been filed with the Town Clerk, Diane Pickett as of this date. Ms. Pickett stated that the homeowners had been in to talk to her and she got the impression that they did not feel they were required to file an application due to their interpretation of the guidelines.

Ms. Walker said RHPC is hoping to adapt a policy that anyone doing work in the Historic District should fill out an application. It would then be up to the RHPC to decide if it's something they should review. Ms. Pickett indicated she would be agreeable to this policy.

Mr. Cucinotta asked if Mr. Pollien and Ms. David had any reaction to the letter RHPC sent to them dated January 19, 2011. Ms. Walker said she believes that is why they stopped in the Town Office. Mr. Cucinotta then asked if Mr. Pollien and Ms. David obtained a building permit for the windows, Ms. Walker responded that a building permit was obtained for the entire home project, then the homeowners were asked to check with the RHPC retroactively.

Mr. Cucinotta states that we have a Historic Preservation Law and the issues set out in it are the issues we are concerned with. He feels we can't really go back to Mr. Pollien and Ms. David. At this point you are "closing the door after the horse is out".

Mr. Cucinotta said the RHPC, the building inspector and the homeowner all need to be on the same page.

Mr. Cucinotta suggested the possibility of adding a short form to the building permit that all homeowners need to fill out with the RHPC to see if they are in the Historic District. . This would then be part of the process of applying for a permit.

Ms. Walker agrees, this way no one is singled out. Then the commission would only review a project if its exterior, not interior, and it falls under their review as being in the Historic District. An open discussion then took place by commission members as to deciding how quickly they could review an application, could they e-mail each other to complete the review process? Homeowners need to be aware that it will take 30 days for the commission to review in most cases.

Ms. Walker then mentioned that the Town Assessor, Kim Cammer has repeatedly offered to put together a Historic District map that would be better for the RHPC than the one being used now. Ms. Walker thinks that Ms. Cammer is putting together a packet to go with her assessor information that tells prospective property buyers that they are in the Historic District, and as such must file an application for the RHPC to review before any structural changes to the exterior of a building is done. The names of the commission members would also be included. This way people moving in to the district would be forewarned.

Current property owners were notified when the Historic Preservation Law was implemented by mail and through public hearings so ignorance is not an excuse.

Ms. Walker believes this will help clear up interpretation of the Preservation Law before a project starts so that homeowners will know the RHPC's position, if the work falls with in the preservation guidelines or not.

Ms. Walker feels this is what happened in the William Pollien / Simona David case. The homeowners interpreted the work on their house as not falling under the committee's review. The RHPC interprets the work as falling under their review. It should have been made clear at the start that everyone within the district must come through the RHPC first.

Ms. David feels the guidelines don't apply because she and Mr. Pollien are changing the size of an existing window that a previous homeowner changed, back to the window size that was original to the house. Mr. Cucinotta states that according to the photos, the windows they put in were historically correct and a beautiful job was done.

All commission members agree that they would like to see this type of situation avoided in the future.

Ms. Walker suggests and committee members agree to state that at this time, homeowners have been contacted but an RHPC Certificate of Compatibility application has not been filed by Mr. Pollien and Ms. David . Committee members agree to table this matter for one year and then review.

The next item for review is the status of the PR packet development by Ms. Ellsworth. Ms. Ellsworth is not in attendance tonight. Ms. Walker suggests Community Resource Clerk, Sue George contact Ms. Ellsworth to see what information is needed from the commission, if any to complete this packet. All agree.

The last item of old business is approval of new letterhead for the RHPC. Mr. Kadow states he will bring some graphic designs to the March meeting to add to the current draft of the new letterhead. All approve this idea.

New Business

Ms. Walker suggests that a data base of resources for homeowners to use might be helpful to supply. She also wonders if an annual fair where contractors, window dealers floor restorers etc. could set up booths at a sidewalk festival to make homeowners aware of what can be done and at what cost. Ms. Walker volunteered to investigate the possibilities with the Community Resources Clerk, Sue George.

Mr. Cucinotta states this is an idea the commission should revisit.

Mr. Allison made a motion to adjourn at 7:48pm, Seconded by Mr. Cucinotta.