

Methuen Historic District Commission
May 22, 2008 at 7:00 P.M.
Second Floor Conference Room – Searles Building
41 Pleasant Street
Methuen, MA 01844

MEETING MINUTES

1. Call to Order of Regular Meeting

Commissioner Dufresne called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

2. Roll Call

Raymond Dufresne, Chair	Present
Martha Welch, Vice Chair	Present
Joseph Bella	Present
Peter Cameron	Present
Robert Fabino	Present
Christine Metzemaekers	Absent
Katherine Robinson, Alternate	Present
David Sigillo, Alternate	Absent

Others in Attendance

Lynn Smiledge, Historic Planner, City of Methuen
Margaret Rourke

3. Acceptance of April 24, 2008 Minutes

MOTION BY Commissioner Bella to accept the minutes of the April 24, 2008 meeting as corrected. Second by Commissioner Welch.

UNANIMOUS VOTE.

Approval of the March 27, 2008 minutes was postponed until the next meeting.

4. New Business

Public Hearing: Margaret Rourke

31 Locust Road: construction of pergola

Ms. Rourke presented drawings of the proposed pergola and described its freestanding position relative to the house entrance. Although the rendering shows six columns, the proposed construction will have five columns - three in front and two in back. The columns will rest on the brick wall, which will be repointed. The total height will be 7 ½ feet tall and end just below the gutter.

Commissioners commented on the disadvantages of the proposed PVC lattice material, including its lack of strength; tendency to bow and distort; and flat, cut-out appearance. Alternative lattice materials, including wood and Azec, were discussed and found acceptable to the applicant.

No one presented comments on the application during the public hearing session.

MOTION by Commissioner Welch to approve the application with the following condition:

- The open lattice will be constructed of wood or Azec building material.

Second by Commissioner Bella.

UNANIMOUS VOTE.

5. Other Business

Violations: Commissioners discussed a number of sign and banner issues, including grandfathering and the triggering mechanism for HDC review. Ms. Smiledge will ask Methuen Family Restaurant and Vintage Rose Florist to remove/turn off their neon open signs; she will follow up with the 1859 House, Wise Guys, and Taekwondo America about their temporary banners. Ms. Smiledge will produce an annual photographic inventory, including dimensions, of all signs in the historic district so that signage can be better and more consistently policed.

270 Lawrence Street: Ms. Smiledge reported that the work underway at 270 Lawrence Street was not consistent with what was approved by the commission. The windows are white (versus dark green), the Hardi-Plank siding is textured (versus smooth), and the new transom is outside the scope of work.

MOTION by Commissioner Robinson to ask the Building Inspector to order the owner to cease and desist and require him to comply or return with an application to the Historic District Commission. Second by Commissioner Bella.

UNANIMOUS VOTE.

Miscellaneous: Commissioners voted unanimously to approve the Window Fact Sheet for use with applicants (motion by Commissioner Robinson, second by Commissioner Welch.) Ms. Smiledge will determine the cost of new walking tour markers and explore funding options. She and Ray Dufresne plan to meet soon with a prospective new candidate for the commission. Commissioner Fabino proposed recognizing Enterprise Bank with an award for sensitive new construction.

MOTION BY Commissioner Fabino to adjourn the meeting. Second by Commissioner Welch.

UNANIMOUS VOTE.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Lynn Smiledge