



Historical Commission

Regular

~ Minutes ~

36 Court Street
Springfield, MA 01103
<http://www.springfieldcityhall.com>

Alvin Allen
(413) 787-6020

Thursday, January 26, 2023

5:30 PM

City Hall -- Room 205

I. Call to Order

5:30 PM Meeting called to order on January 26, 2023 at City Hall -- Room 205, 36 Court Street, Springfield, MA.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Thomas Belton		Absent	
Vincent Walsh	Chair	Present	
Alfonso Nardi	Vice-Chair	Present	
Judith Crowell	CPC Representative	Present	
William Duquette		Present	
Bryan Mcfarland		Present	
Walter Kroll	Alternate	Present	

II. Acceptance of Minutes

III. New Public Hearings

IV. Preservation Restrictions

V. Environmental Review

VI. Preservation of Historically Significant Buildings

VII. Other Matters Properly Before the Commission

1. Informational (ID # 7199)

Discussion: Guidelines for New Construction

Discussion: Guidelines for New Construction

COMMENTS - Current Meeting:

Commissioner Walsh discussed portions of the materials reviewed that were resourceful, including, but not limited to Northampton & Arlington guidelines among other portions of other municipalities' guidelines.

Commissioner Nardi asked Attorney Shewchuk whether the Commission could require or suggest considering working with a licensed architect who could provide site plans, drawings or elevations.

Commissioner Kroll recommended speaking with the Building Commissioner in formulating the application.

Commissioner Nardi recommended 3 subcommittees be formed to further discuss in greater detail different aspects of new construction guidelines.

Subcommittee #1 - Commissioners Walsh, Kroll & Nardi will focus on the New Construction Application & the application process. The first meeting was scheduled for 2/13/2023 at 10am at 70 Tapley Street.

Subcommittee #2 - Commissioners McFarland & Crowell will focus on the Character of Historic Neighborhoods. The first meeting was scheduled for 2/20/2023 at 4:00pm at 70 Tapley Street.

Subcommittee #3 - Commissioners Nardi & Kroll will focus on Architectural Detail & Construction. The first meeting was scheduled for 2/22/2023 at 10am at 70 Tapley Street.

2. Informational (ID # 7200)

Public Speak-Out Session

Public Speak-Out Session

COMMENTS - Current Meeting:

Public Comment:

Jim Boone of 97 Florida Street commended the Commission for dealing with the new construction guidelines as current guidelines do not include new construction guidance. He recommended the "Springfield Design guidelines for the Residential Architecture of Springfield" prepared by Dietz as a helpful resource.

Deborah Shea of 342 Forest Park Avenue spoke in favor of the Dietz document, but voiced concern regarding the recommended list of plantings included as she finds several suggested plantings to be invasive and perhaps there are native plantings that perhaps are more appropriate for the neighborhood.

Harry Seymour of 68 Washington Road spoke on behalf of the Forest Park Civic Association stating they stand firmly behind the Commission's efforts to create the new construction guidelines and offered help if needed.

Jennifer Rao of 29 Ingersoll Grove spoke as both a homeowner and a board member to the Springfield Preservation Trust. She spoke in support of creating new construction guidelines, because it protects the historic districts. She voiced concern over the disparate impact on those who have existing properties and are subject to a set of guidelines and those constructing new residences, where there are no current guidelines in place. The guidelines will help to maintain the same level of protection that other jurisdictions have.

David Gaby of 1105 Worthington Street spoke as a resident of McKnight and a member of the McKnight District Improvement Association. Feels the Commission is on a noble mission to provide a guide for developers and a protection for homeowners. He voiced concerns about the lack of direction some developers are coming in with and experience in more modern suburban developments. He wants to ensure that it is being conveyed to developers what design conventions, architectural vocabulary we want them to use. He also voiced concerns about architectural details being used across the board throughout all historic districts. Each one of the historic districts has its own traditions and vocabulary. He does not want a prototypical guide.

Carl Moccia of 14 Cherryvale Avenue inquired about abutter notifications for new construction work.

Public Comment Reopened:

Jim Boone of 97 Florida Street discussed some concerns. In the current guidelines for historic districts there are some things that are not controlled. Commissioner Walsh indicated the guidelines will differentiate what is required from what is recommended or suggested.

Harry Seymour of 68 Washington Road wanted to discuss the low turnout at the meeting as a result of a major speak-out via zoom on litter tonight.

Jennifer Rao of 29 Ingersoll Grove provided some clarity on her submission on behalf of the Springfield Preservation Trust. She also had concerns regarding variances being sought for confirming historic standards being burdensome. She also inquired about whether the abutter notices could be expanded. She also asked to have the Springfield Design guidelines for the Residential Architecture of Springfield to be available on the web page.

David Gaby of 1105 Worthington Street spoke in favor of Commissioner Nardi's thoughts about standards for submissions. He thinks there should be alternatives to utilizing a licensed architect as he does not hold a license, but has designed property. He also voiced objection to referring to zoning. He suggested a possible overlay district. He wants to ensure the historic heritage is preserved.

Carl Moccia of 14 Cherryvale Avenue is concerned about properties being built surrounding 200 year old properties and suggesting they be held to the same guidelines.

RESULT: RECEIVED THE REPORT-PASSED
--