

## **TOWN OF TRURO Truro Historical Commission**

### **Truro Historical Commission Hearing and Meeting**

Meeting Location: Truro Public Library, Cobb Room

Date & Time: March 31, 2018, 10:30 am  
Preceded by a Site Visit at 9:30 am

Members Present: Matthew Kiefer, Chair, Historical Commission  
Fred Todd, Secretary  
David Kirchner  
Richard Larkin  
Helen McNeil-Ashton

For the Applicant: Paul Souza  
Sibel Asantugrul/S. A. Architecture

Members of the Public: Maureen Burgess, Board of Selectmen, liaison to Historical Commission

### **Hearing re Demolition Permit for 5 Atwood Road**

At 10:30 AM, Chairman Matthew Kiefer opened a public hearing regarding an application by Paul Souza seeking to demolish an existing house and build a new single family home on property located at 5 Atwood Road. The hearing was preceded by a site visit to view the house in question and the site in general; the site visit was attended by those members listed above as present for the hearing and those representing the applicant.

The application for a demolition permit was referred to the Historical Commission by the Building Commissioner. According to the *Preserving Historic Properties* By-Law, if the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the THC determine the project is historically significant, a public hearing is scheduled to determine it is in the public interest to preserve the building and whether a delay in demolition for a period of up to one year is warranted to afford time to explore alternatives to demolition. According to Paragraph 6-2-1 of the By-Law, a building can be designated significant if it is over 75 years old, or is listed on or part of a pending application for listing on the National or State Register of Historic Places, or is historically or

architecturally significant, or is associated with one or more historic persons or events or with the architectural, cultural, political, economic or social history of the Town.

Mr. Kiefer said that the role of the Historical Commission is to 'hold public hearings on demolition permit applications to determine if the intended demolition would be detrimental to the historical, cultural or architectural heritage of the Town; whether the work proposed will materially diminish the building or structure's significance to the Town's heritage; and to explore alternatives to demolition.'

5 Atwood Road is circa 1845 Greek Revival house, part of what was once a farm with barn and outbuildings, known as the Samuel Smith house. The house is founded on brick and has a small circular cellar. Foundation is deteriorated and open in some locations; where some siding has been removed for observation, sills are rotten. The house has what appear to be the original pine floors and old (if not original) 6/6 double hung windows. The floor plan, particularly on the second floor, results in several small interconnected bedroom spaces. The flooring shows evidence of former partition locations, indicating walls have been moved over time.

The architect for the project, Ms. Asantugrul, accompanied Paul Souza, the owner. Both indicated that their initial intention was to renovate the building, including lifting it, putting a new full-basement foundation under it, and gutting the interior to allow re-building the structure and insulating to current requirements. After working with Mike Rogers of Wood-End Construction, they determined that the cost of renovation would be double that of new construction. Ms. Asantugrul presented plans for the proposed new construction in the same style, mirroring the exterior form and details of the original building. She explained that they proposed salvaging the original flooring (wide pine) and possibly other finish details from the interior.

Chairman Kiefer asked if they had considered other options instead of complete demolition, and whether they had cost estimates to support the decision. Ms. Asantugrul said getting firm estimates would require a full set of plans for each option and that that would involve significant work and cost, so they were relying on the general contractor's assessment and judgement. Helen Ashton-McNeil asked if they had considered a combination of renovation and new construction such as retaining the main section of the house and removing the kitchen 'L' and replacing it with a new addition that would allow a more open floor plan. Paul Souza said that the major part of the expense was in lifting the main section and getting a new foundation under it and that they would still be limited by the old floor layout so it didn't seem worth it. He also noted that the energy code would require window replacement.

Fred Todd said that, in his opinion, the builder has an excellent reputation and a lot of experience in renovation, so his judgement was factor to consider. Mr. Todd also said that the proposed design showed an effort to mirror the look and style of the original, was placed in the same location, and was sympathetic to the traditional landscape when viewed from the public way. Helen Ashton-McNeil referred to the historic resource survey and said that while it mentioned the historical family it did not note anything of particular significance. David Kirchner said while he would prefer to find a way to keep the original, he understood the constraints of cost and was supportive of the proposed design.

We discussed possible moving and/or salvage. Paul Souza said he wants to keep the original flooring in any case, but if someone wanted to move the building, he would be agreeable. Helen suggested asking the applicant to make a photo survey of the existing building and submitting it to the Truro Historical Society as a condition of waiving a demolition delay. Paul Souza said he would be willing to do that.

A motion to waive delay on condition of a photo survey (not to exceed \$1,000) was moved by Helen Ashton-McNeil, seconded by Richard Larkin, and approved unanimously.

### **Old Business:**

1. Minutes from the January 20, 2018 hearing for 12 Ocean Bluff Lane were reviewed and approved as corrected.
2. 12 Ocean Bluff Lane follow-up: We discussed the storm damage to the cottage. It was noted that the 60 day period in which the cottage would be offered for moving to another site expired without any interest. The terms of the agreement regarding demolition require the owner to submit photographic documentation of the cottage, interior and exterior including views out through the windows, and a description of the Small family's relationship to the cottage. Chairman Kiefer will review the status of these items with Attorney Zehnder who represents the owner. He will also refer Jim Summers, Director of the Truro Historical Society, to Atty. Zehnder to coordinate salvage of any items from the cottage for the Museum collection, an additional condition of the demolition agreement.

### **New Business**

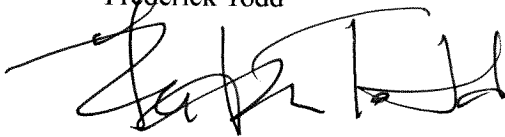
1. 135 South Pamet Road: The circa 1885 Capt. John Rich house at Ballston Beach was partially undercut by the winter storms. The Building Commissioner issued an order of condemnation after determining that the structure was unsafe. As required in the By Law, the Historical Commission was notified. We noted that it would be preferable if the Commission received prior notice in case there were other options. We discussed whether it would be possible to arrange for documentation of the building before demolition or arrange for salvage of any items that the owners did not want to retain. Helen Ashton-McNeil will contact Castle Hill Art Center to see if there is any interest in possible moving of the structure in lieu of demolition.
2. Mass. Historical Commission: The MHC responded to the THC submission of documentation for the Longnook/Higgins Hollow and Pamet districts and the Richard Paine House applications for National Register eligibility determinations. They request updated survey information and photographs. This will require THC to apply to the Community Preservation Committee for funds to hire preservation consultants to complete the work. Chairman Kiefer will contact PAL and Eric Dray to develop a scope of work and budget.
3. Preservation Agreement for Edgewood Farm: MHC wrote a lengthy memo about the Preservation Agreement for the Manuel Corey/Edgewood Farmhouse, noting that MHC would not approve the agreement until it is substantially revised. This is an issue for Castle Hill Art Center to resolve.

6. Building Code & Preservation Issues: We discussed our interest in meeting with the Building Commissioner for an informational session to understand various provisions of the new Residential Building Code and how they apply to typical cases that come to the THC for review.

7. Route 6 Bike Lane: As part of an environmental notification process, MassDOT asked THC for review and comment of a proposed bike lane to be constructed as part of the Route 6 right of way from South Highland Road to the cloverleaf intersection. We agreed that the proposed work did not impact any historical resources and Chairman Kiefer will respond to MassDOT accordingly.

Motion to adjourn was made by Richard Larkin, seconded by David Kirchner and approved unanimously.

Frederick Todd



Secretary

