Northampton Historical Commission
Minutes

DATE:  Monday, March 11, 2019
TIME:  5:30 PM
PLACE: City Hall Hearing Room, 210 Main Street

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Present</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David Drake – Chair</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>Martha Lyon – Vice Chair</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barbara Blumenthal</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>Pauline Fogel</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dylan Gaffney</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>AIA Nominee - vacant</td>
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<td>Craig Della Penna</td>
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<td>Sarah LaValley - staff</td>
<td>X</td>
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Chairman Drake called the meeting to Order, 5:32 PM

Public Comment
None

5:30 PM – Public Hearing: To determine whether the building at 43 Finn Street, map ID 24D-202 should be determined "Preferably Preserved" pursuant to the Northampton Demolition Review Ordinance, Chapter 161 of the General Code.

Ellen Bartosz, Delap Real Estate and buyers agent for the property, stated that she was unaware of the Demolition Review Ordinance, and noted that the addition in the rear of the structure is late 20th Century.
Liz Gaudet, Warfield Place, noted that the neighborhood is primarily period houses and expressed concern about demolition.
Chairman Drake stated that demolition review applies citywide, is different from a Local Historic District, and is intended to protect individual historic resources and neighborhoods. Review does not include consideration of use or interior space.
Lois Ahrens, Warfield Place, noted that the existing residence provides several affordable units and would be a loss to the neighborhood and the City.
Ms. Lyon noted that all documents considered as part of the demolition review are available on the City website. A single family home is currently proposed as the replacement structure.
Jay Heilman, builder, stated that structurally the existing building does not meet current standards. The original porch has been altered multiple times, and original features are deteriorating. The foundation has cracked and been repaired, and lead paint and asbestos are present. The interior has been divided into four units, which would be difficult to salvage in conversion to a single family home. Demolition will include a full abatement and will be complete in a few days. Construction of the new home will take approximately six months.
Drs. Neil Dwung and Shirsten Killup stated that there are health risks of living with lead and Asbestos present in a home.
Liz Gaudet, Warfield place, suggested that there are abatement alternatives that would not require demolition.
Ms. Fogel noted that there are lead abatement laws and requirements, and buyers would have been aware prior to purchase.
Jay Heilman stated that the intent of the purchasers was always to demolish the structure, so an independent inspection was not completed.
Carla Ness, Delap broker, suggested that there are other examples of the same type of building in Northampton, many in better condition.
Jaya Agrawal, owner, stated that her family has been looking to relocate to the Finn Street area for some time. Her plan was always to demolish, and hired an architect to design a house to fit into the neighborhood. Her family has asthma challenges that would be exacerbated by an old house. If demolition is not possible the house would be boarded until the delay expires.
Chairman Drake noted that structures proposed for demolition are considered both for their own historic value, and as part of the broader neighborhood and City.
Mr. Gaffney provided some additional history of the house, including a Howes Brothers photograph showing the original appearance. The original owner was fire chief and manager of the Academy of Music.
Chairman Drake noted that older houses routinely have remediation issues and concerns, and that the Commission’s role includes consideration of historic fabric and protection of vernacular buildings as well as homes that are important and unique on their own.
Ms. Blumenthal noted that the role of the building in the neighborhood and streetscape was an important factor in the Commission’s determining the building ‘significant.’
Mr. Heilman stated that many of the detail pieces of the exterior have been lost, and suggested that state building code changes have made renovating old houses more difficult. Any original siding remaining underneath the asbestos siding will be damaged during remediation.
Chairman Drake stated that the Commission will need to determine whether the building is ‘preferably preserved,’ and whether any delay should be established. An alternate plan which would also serve the intent of the Ordinance could also be approved.
Mr. Heilman suggested that design elements from the old house could be incorporated into design for new construction.
Chairman Drake noted that the proposed design is a Georgian Colonial, which is not in keeping with the rest of the neighborhood.
Ms. LaValley stated that if the Commission has all needed information to determine whether the building should be and the applicant has presented all relevant materials, the hearing can be closed. Discussion regarding a possible Alternate Plan can be held on an as-needed basis during any resulting delay period.
Ms. Blumenthal moved to find the building to be preferably preserved, and institute a one-year demolition delay. Seconded by Ms. Lyon, the motion carried 4-1, with one abstention.

**Determination of Significance Pursuant to Demolition Review Ordinance – 47 Chapel Street**

Ms. Blumenthal stated that the house was owned by the Elliott family for many years, and has been considered unfit for human habitation since 2018. The Commission discussed association with the state hospital. Ms. LaValley noted that although condition is not part of the criteria for a discussion of significance, it should be considered during the public hearing.
Ms. Lyon moved to determine the structure ‘Significant.’ Seconded by Ms. Blumenthal, the motion carried unanimously.
Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM