

HPC Review – Early Consultation
for 15 The Circle

HPC2017-1-17-01

Homeowner Taunton Paine came to the regular meeting of the HPC on Tuesday, January 17, along with builder David Weimer of Rocky Gorge Construction, to present an overview of plans for alterations to 15 The Circle, Bittersweet Cottage, which he recently inherited from his late father, George T. Paine.

It is Taunton's intention to sell the property in 2017.

Adequacy of the Documents Submitted: The materials presented were adequate for the scope of the early consultation. They consisted of some 20 pages of existing condition photographs of various elevations of the property, as well as some interior photographs of the kitchen and family room areas. A photograph of the cottage from the early 1900s was also included.

General Scope of Project: The most recent 1½ story addition to the home (family room/loft) and decks, which date to the 1970s (building permit 072497 issued 1976, according to House Histories), are in badly deteriorated condition, and would likely not pass a homebuyer's inspection. It is planned to demolish the family room addition as well as the deck that faces The Circle.

Redlined photographs included in the presentation gave a clear visual of the areas to be demolished.

The back deck and stairs off the existing kitchen will be repaired or rebuilt.

A new deck is proposed to be built on the foundation of the demolished family room. It would face both Grove Road and The Circle. A new entrance door would open onto the new deck. The existing kitchen at the rear of the house is composed of two early, stepped-down, somewhat telescoped additions. The portion closest to Grove Road likely had been a porch that was later enclosed. As depicted in the redlined photographs, it is planned to extend the higher roofline of the existing kitchen (i.e., the portion immediately behind the "enclosed porch") to a new exterior wall on the north elevation of the home (facing 403 6th Avenue).

Where new siding is needed, wood tongue-in-groove siding, as exists on the oldest part of the house, will most likely be used.

(Note: Taunton also explained that additional interior repairs are contemplated due to damage caused by a burst pipe in the kitchen earlier this winter.)

Visibility from public ways: Bittersweet Cottage enjoys a prominent position in the historic center of Town, facing the "Sacred Circle," site of the original open-air Tabernacle.

The proposed changes to Bittersweet Cottage will be visible from The Circle, 6th Avenue, 5th Avenue, 3rd Avenue, and Grove Road.

Contributing Structure: The residence, one of the original cottages, is identified as c. 1875-1885 in the Town's list of Contributing and Non-Contributing Resources, and is a contributing resource.

Nearby Contributing structures: Bittersweet Cottage is surrounded by contributing resources, namely 1, 2, 6, 8, 12, 13 and 17 The Circle. At least twenty additional contributing resources are located in close proximity along The Circle's arterials—namely, 1st Avenue, 5th Avenue, 6th Avenue, Grove Avenue and Acorn Lane.

Compatibility with the historic district and/or existing structure: The proposed changes— as explained, though still in an early stage of development—are compatible with the historic district and with the existing structure.

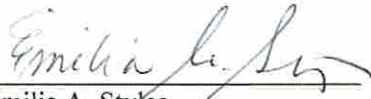
HPC Recommendations: Taunton was unaware of the front porch encroachment onto Town property at The Circle. The permanent easement application process was discussed with him, as he will likely wish to resolve this issue before putting the property on the market.

Georgette Cole, Town Council liaison to HPC, was in attendance at the meeting; she was able to confirm that a recent boundary survey that Taunton’s father had ordered is on file in the Town Office. Georgette offered to provide additional documentation about the easement process; Taunton’s request for easement will need to be filed through the Town Office.

The homeowner was also advised that his proposed plans will require both a demolition permit and a building permit, and it was suggested that he make early contact with Peter Nagrod, Chair of the Planning Commission, to gain a clearer understanding of the process as it will apply to his project.

A PDF of Taunton’s presentation was received January 24; it is attached hereto.

Taunton will return to a scheduled meeting of HPC when drawings for the new exterior walls/windows/doors—and deck—are developed.


Emilia A. Styles
for the Historic Preservation Commission

1-30-2017
Date: January 30, 2017

cc: HPC Binder Planning Commission Members
HPC members Mayor Joli McCathran
Web site, Bill Saar Town Clerk, Kathy Lehman

Please note that the Historic Preservation Commission acts only in an advisory capacity to both applicants and the Planning Commission. The reviews undertaken are designed to assist homeowners in their projects, to provide input to deliberations of the Planning Commission and, more generally, to contribute to historic preservation in Washington Grove.

Further information regarding the scope, powers, duties, and structure of the Historic Preservation Commission may be found in Article XV of the Code of Ordinances of the Town of Washington Grove. Section 5 (a) of Article XV describes the powers and duties of the Historic Preservation Commission in the building permit process. This section reads as follows:

The Commission shall review all applications for building permits filed with the Town Planning Commission which would involve any change to a structure or site visible from any public way for historical accuracy, integrity, or compatibility with the neighborhood and improvements therein. The Commission may recommend to an applicant alternative historical designs, materials and sources for the same which may be more historically compatible. The Commission shall forward its recommendations regarding the same, if any, in an advisory capacity, to the Planning Commission for consideration by the Planning Commission within thirty (30) days from the Commission's receipt of the application from the Planning Commission.