

## **Ipswich Historical Commission Minutes**

Meeting April 13, 2021  
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

**Present:** Members Bill Effner, Lee Hathaway, Linda Grimes, Gordon Harris, Laura Gresh, Steve Miles, Jamie Novak; Nancy Carlisle and Chris Morse of APDC; Kristen Grubbs Town Planner

Residents: Kathleen Hegarty – Lord Square, Toni Moradd – Central Street, Matt Cummings – Central Street

### **March 8, 2021 Minutes**

Steve moved to accept the March minutes. Linda seconded the motion. All members voted in favor.

**Citizens Query:** none

### **Density of Development/Relationship to Historic Neighborhoods:**

Gordon proposed possibly adding Central St. and neighboring streets to the Architectural Preservation District (APD).

Gordon and Lee met with Ethan and Kristen to discuss both 40B and 40R of the zoning by-laws. Kristen said the town boards are discussing the density issue and how historic neighborhoods are being affected by in-town development. The Planning Board can propose changes to the existing zoning by-laws at Town Meeting.

On April 22<sup>nd</sup> there will be a Planning Board meeting to discuss these issues. Changes would be proposed at the Special Town Meeting in the fall.

There are different perspectives offered to remedy this issue. Kristen said “the hope in to convene a working group with representatives from each board to meet weekly bringing information back to various boards. The working group would include town staff and volunteer board members.”

The immediate developments proposals that concern the IHC are the projects on High Street, Pleasant Street, and Central Street.

83 High Street (within the APD) has been approved for seven units.

Footnote 11 of the Zoning by-law allows for higher density of dwellings in town. The goal of this footnote was to encourage multi-family development close to the amenities of the downtown.

Proposed development of 4 units at 87 High Street has smaller one-bedroom units and includes 1 apartment that meets affordable housing criteria and 1 handicapped accessible apartment. Note there are already 3 units on the existing lot. Addition of proposed units would make a total of 7 units on the property, and requires a special permit from the town.

Chris expressed the need to limit this kind of development within the APD for future proposed projects. The Architectural Preservation District Commission (APDC) has authority regarding design of new construction in the APD, and Chris suggested that the size of buildings needs to be regulated as well.

Kathleen Hegarty said she and her husband have restored their home on High Street. She said the main building at 83 High Street was to be restored as a stipulation of getting the special permit and the house appears to be gutted.

The builder has promised to preserve certain period feature, including paneling for reinstallation and the entry.

Gordon suggested creating an overlay district for the APD that would make it exempt from density requirements in Footnote 11. The Planning Board would need to change zoning by-laws to do this. It was also suggested that the APDC may already have the power to say “no” to this kind of development.

Architect, Matt Cummings said the next 40 years will determine the fate of Ipswich’s historic structures and neighborhoods. He commented that parking should not be under the buildings as plans for these new townhouses have shown, as it is not similar or cohesive to the historic buildings surrounding them.

Toni Moradd mentioned the proposed addition of 6-units on the lot at 108 Central Street behind the existing Victorian mansard roof single-family house. The design of proposed 6 units does not add to or complement the historic character of the neighborhood.

Lee agreed to update his draft statement on the IHC’s stance on multiple building development on lots in historic neighborhoods which was emailed before the meeting. Gordon asked IHC members to edit and/or offer suggestions, and Lee will incorporate them into his revision.

IHC members agreed to meet again in one week – on April 20<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. to finalize this statement.

Linda suggested using social media to post this statement.

Toni started a petition against this 6-unit development on Central Street and has 600 signatures. The petition is being shared on social media through Change.org, including the Historic Ipswich website.

Jamie said she would be willing to work with neighbors to include Mineral and Manning Streets within the APD or to create a separate neighborhood conservation district.

The consensus of the meeting was that we will make recommendations for updates to the Zoning Bylaws, the APDC bylaw, and recommend adding the Central Street Victorian to the APD.

Lee made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Linda seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

Laura Gresh  
Secretary, Ipswich Historical Commission

**MINUTES APPROVED 042021**