



TOWN OF HINGHAM

Planning Board

NOTICE OF DECISION SITE PLAN REVIEW

IN THE MATTER OF:

Applicant/Owner: Hingham Historical Society
34 Main Street
Hingham, MA 02043

Property: 181 North Street, Hingham, MA 02043

Deed Reference: Plymouth County Registry of Deeds, Book 54113, Page 88

Plan References: "Hingham Historical Society, Benjamin Lincoln House, 181 Lincoln Street, Hingham, MA," prepared by Wilcox Corporation, 36 North Street, Hingham, MA, dated November 13, 2022 and revised through December 16, 2022 (1 Sheet)

"Site Plan, 181 North Street – Hingham," prepared by Cavanaro Consulting, 687 Main Street, P.O. Box 5175, Norwell, MA, dated September 2, 2020 and revised through December 14, 2022 (1 Sheet)

RECEIVED

FEB 15 2023

Town Clerk
Hingham, MA

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

This matter came before the Planning Board (the "Board") on the application of the Hingham Historical Society (the "Applicant") to modify a Site Plan Approval originally issued December 4, 2020 under § I-I of the Zoning By-Law (the "By-Law"), and such other relief as necessary to relocate an accessible parking space and walkway, eliminate one parking space, and make other related improvements at 181 North Street in Residence District A.

The Board opened a duly noticed public hearing on the application at a meeting held remotely on January 9, 2023 via Zoom as an alternate means of public access pursuant to Chapter 107 of the Acts of 2022 temporarily suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law. The hearing was continued to nonsubstantive hearings on January 23, 2023 and February 6, 2023 and a substantive hearing on February 13, 2023. The Board concurrently opened a hearing on a related application for modification of the Special Permit A3, originally issued December 4, 2020. The

Board panel consisted of regular members Judith Sneath, Chair, Rita DaSilva, and Kevin Ellis. Deirdre Anderson, Hingham Historical Society, presented the application to the Board. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Board voted unanimously to grant the Site Plan Approval modification under § I-I of the By-Law with conditions set forth below.

Throughout its deliberations, the Board was mindful of the statements of the Applicant, its representative, and the comments of the general public, all as made or received at the public hearing.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

The subject property, known as the Benjamin Lincoln House property, is located at Fountain Square, at the intersection of North Street and Lincoln Street. The Planning Board issued a Special Permit A3 and Site Plan Approval in 2020 in order to convert the former single-family home into a museum to be owned and operated by the Hingham Historical Society (HHS). The approvals obtained in 2020 permitted 4 total parking spaces, one of which to be designated as an ADA accessible space, for up to 16 people. The approved plan depicted an ADA accessible ramp and parking space adjacent to the accessible entrance in the rear of the house. Among certain dimensional and design waivers for the parking spaces and drive aisle granted through the Special Permit A3, the Board determined that 4 parking spaces, instead of the 5 that would be required under § V-A, would be sufficient to provide for regular museum operations and invitation only fundraising events with no more than 16 people. The decision additionally required the Applicant to provide a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) for any planned events larger than 16 people absent a police detail.

The Applicant now seeks modification of the Site Plan Approval as outlined in the bulleted items below. The Applicant represented that the proposed changes to the parking layout and site would better preserve streetscape views of the historic property and maintain an existing garden and greenspace.

- Relocate the approved ADA accessible entrance and associated ramp from the rear of the house to the front based on input from Historic New England, professional landscapers, the Town of Hingham Historic Administrator, and the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (MAAB). The front entrance provides handicapped visitors with greater access to the interior of the structure.
- Widen the driveway exit onto North Street per the request of the Fire Department.
- Remove two-stemmed Arborvitae tree near the driveway to improve views of the property. The Applicant submitted a letter from a certified arborist detailing the risk of tree failure in the future given the increase in traffic and proximity to the driveway. As a Protected Tree, removal of the two-stemmed Arborvitae (16 caliper inches each for a total of 32 caliper inches) requires mitigation plantings equivalent to 16 caliper inches.

During the course of the hearing, the Board provided questions and comments related to onsite and offsite parking and access, ADA access, future offsite improvements, drop off locations, traffic management, and event scheduling. There was some public comment received in support of this project.

WAIVERS

The Applicant requested a waiver of Site Plan Review, but given the number of revisions to the site between the Special Permit A3 and Site Plan Approval modifications, the Board opted not to grant this waiver and instead reviewed the applicable Design and Performance Standards.

DESIGN AND PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

With the exception of the following, none of the Design and Performance Standards under Section I-I, 6. are applicable to the proposed modification project:

a. Land Disturbance

The proposed ADA accessible walkway and tree removal/plantings will minimally disturb the site and will not alter topography or drainage patterns.

b. Site Design

The proposed relocation of the ADA accessible parking space and access lane will preserve historic views of the site. No new structures are proposed with this modification.

d. Preservation of Existing Vegetation and Protected Trees

The removal of the two-stemmed 32"-caliper Arborvitae is proposed to be mitigated by 16 caliper inches of flowering trees – each tree being at least 3" in caliper.

i. Pedestrian and Vehicular Access; Traffic Management

The proposed changes to the parking layout to allow 3 total spaces is consistent with the Board's 2020 Approval, provided that the number of persons threshold to be considered a large event is reduced from 16 people to 12 people aside from events such as school field trips in which all participants arrive to and depart from the property in a single vehicle. As conditioned by the Special Permit A3 decision, events larger than 12 people will require a police detail until offsite parking and vehicular and pedestrian improvements are completed.

FINDINGS

Based on the information submitted and presented during the review, and the deliberations and discussions of the Board during the hearings, the Board made the following findings in accordance with the Approval Criteria under § I-I,7. of the By-Law:

- a. The proposed development, as conditioned by the Approval, will not adversely affect the health, safety and welfare of the prospective occupants, the occupants of neighboring

properties, and users of the adjoining streets or highways, and the welfare of the Town generally.

- b. The proposed development meets all applicable Design and Performance Standards.

MOTION

Upon a motion made by Kevin Ellis and seconded by Rita DaSilva, the Board voted unanimously to GRANT the application of the Hingham Historical Society to modify a Site Plan Approval, originally issued December 4, 2020 under § I-I of the Zoning By-Law, to relocate an accessible parking space and walkway, eliminate one parking space, and make other related improvements at 181 North Street in Residence District A, subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy, a revised Site Plan shall be submitted to the Community Planning Department showing the location of the proposed tree mitigation plantings. Said trees shall be of native species and each tree shall be at least 3” in caliper.
2. All ongoing conditions of the Site Plan Approval decision shall remain in full force and effect, unless otherwise modified by this Approval.

For the Planning Board,



Judith Sneath
February 15, 2023

In Favor: Judith Sneath, Rita DaSilva, and Kevin Ellis

Opposed: None

This decision shall not take effect until a copy of the decision bearing the certification of the Town Clerk that twenty (20) days have elapsed since the decision has been filed in the office of the Town Clerk and no appeal has been filed, or that if such appeal has been filed, that it has been dismissed or denied, is recorded with the Plymouth County Registry of Deeds and/or the Plymouth County Land Court Registry, and indexed in the grantor index under the name of the record owner or is recorded and noted on the owner’s certificate of title.