

**VILLAGE OF PITTSFORD**  
**Historic Preservation Board**  
**Monday December 14, 2020 at 6:00 pm**

**PRESENT:**

**Members:** William McBride  
Lisa Cove  
Ken Morrow  
Mark Harrington  
Virginia Searl

**Village Attorney:** Jeff Turner  
**Village Clerk:** Dorothea Ciccarelli  
**Recording Secretary:** Linda Habeeb

Chairperson Cove called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

The Clerk read the following statement:

“Pursuant to Governor Cuomo’s recent Executive Orders 202.1, and due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the Village Hall is closed to the public during official meetings. The members of the HPB and the applicants for this meeting will participate in the HPB meeting from their homes for this meeting. This HPB meeting will be made available to the public for viewing through videoconferencing link if they so choose, which is identified on the Village website.”

**Conflict of Interest Disclosure:** Board members had no conflicts to declare.

**Newcomb Properties, LLC, 2 Monroe Avenue ~ Fence**

**Present:** Michael Newcomb, Owner

**Application: Submitted, date-stamped, and Building Inspector reviewed on 11/29/20.**

**Discussion:** The applicant stated that he is proposing installing a small fence to enclose mechanical equipment and screen it from view. He explained that the proposed fence is 3 feet high and will be mounted 6 inches off the ground. The top of the fence is straight across, and the posts will be behind the fence and not visible. There will be a gate on the southwest corner of the fence, which is depicted on the drawing submitted to the Board.

**Motion:** Chairperson Cove made a motion, seconded by Member McBride, to approve, as submitted, the application made by Michael Newcomb for installation of a fence at 2 Monroe Avenue.

**Vote:** McBride – yes; Cove – yes; Morrow - yes; Searl – yes; Harrington - yes. The decision was filed in the office of the Village Clerk on December 14, 2020.

**Peter Coons, 44 Lincoln Avenue ~ Pillars**

**Present:** Peter Coons, Homeowner

**Application: Submitted, date-stamped, and Building Inspector reviewed on 11/20/20.**

**Discussion:** The applicant stated that he is proposing installing two pillars in the front of the house at 44 Lincoln Avenue. The proposed pillars will be 30 inches high, with a two-foot concrete footer, and capped with blue stone. The brick veneer will closely match the color of the foundation brick. The applicant submitted documentation with dimensions and photographs of the proposed pillars.

**Motion:** Chairperson Cove made a motion, seconded by Member Harrington, to approve the application, made by Peter Coons, for installation of two pillars 44 Lincoln Avenue, as submitted.

**Vote: McBride – yes; Cove – yes; Morrow - yes; Searl – yes; Harrington - yes. The decision was filed in the office of the Village Clerk on December 14, 2020.**

**Elizabeth Mohd Sani, 9 Green Hill Lane ~ Windows**

**Present:** Elizabeth Mohd Sani, Homeowner

**Application: Submitted, date-stamped, and Building Inspector reviewed on 10/28/20.**

**Discussion:** The applicant is proposing replacing three double-hung wood kitchen windows with vinyl windows in the same style as the existing windows. She explained that the house is a post-war home built in 1968, and that the existing windows are in disrepair and are not energy efficient. At the November HPB meeting, Board members requested that the applicant research either repairing the existing windows or replacing the windows with wood windows.

The applicant explained that she contacted the consultant, Jim Liebel, as recommended by the Board. Mr. Liebel visited her house to evaluate the existing windows. He gave her quotes for wooden double-hung replacement windows, which are similar to the existing windows. Member McBride questioned the applicant as to whether the consultant had discussed repairing the existing windows. She stated that they discussed repairing the windows, but Mr. Liebel said that the cost of the repair would be prohibitive. Member Searl commented that the applicant needs to submit a brief letter from Mr. Liebel, for the record, stating that the applicant sought appropriate professional advice regarding the windows, and that he feels that the replacement of the windows is an appropriate alternative.

Member Cove pointed out that if the Board approves the wood replacement windows, it will have to be an exact replication of the existing windows, in wood. Ms. Searl pointed out that the existing windows are single-pane windows with storm windows. In replacing the single-pane glazing with double-pane glass, because there are two panes of glass, the muntins

need to be more substantial in order to support the added thickness and the added weight of the glass. Member Cove stated that the Board will need to have the specific details of the new windows. Currently, the application is incomplete without the details of the new windows. The application will remain open until the applicant provides the letter from the consultant stating the reasons for replacing, rather than repairing the windows, and also the specific details of the proposed windows.

**James Brooks, 22 Boughton Ave ~ Basement windows**

**Present:** James Brooks, Homeowner

**Application: Submitted, date-stamped, and Building Inspector reviewed on 11/08/20.**

**Discussion:** The applicant stated that he is proposing replacing three basement windows with glass block windows. He explained that the wood and surrounding frame are rotted. The foundation around the windows is also eroding due to water exposure and holes allow groundwater to enter the foundation and basement from outside.

Member Searl commented that the sill of the window on the far east side is almost in the dirt. The middle window has more air space between the wood of the window sill and the grade, but is close. The window that is the farthest west has an evergreen shrub growing near to it. She explained that having the basement windows so close to grade is going to be problem. If the mortar is not well taken care of, there will continue to be water damage. The Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation and the Village of Pittsford Design Guidelines require repairing instead of replacing. If they cannot be repaired, then replacement in-kind is the appropriate means of replacement. She also suggested that the applicant purchase galvanized metal window wells. That allows the wood of the window to be separated from the damp earth.

Member Cove questioned the applicant as to whether he would be willing to have a consultant examine the windows to see if they can be rebuilt and repaired and have the grate moved and the window wells installed, and thereby save the original windows. The applicant stated that he would be willing to do that.

The Board will keep this application open so that the applicant can look into the window well situation, as well as having the windows repaired in-kind.

➤ **Jonathan & Caroline Murray, 29 South Street ~ *Information only***

Chairperson Cove explained that the last item is not a formal HPB application. The application was sent to the HPB from the Planning & Zoning Board to have a discussion about an application that was presented to them regarding a proposed addition at 29 South Street. The PZBA sent specific questions for the HPB to consider: the proposed mass and scale of the addition; the compatibility of the addition with the surrounding community and neighborhood character; and the view shed impacts on neighboring properties.

Member McBride commented that the HPB is not being asked to make a judgment on mass and scale, because they don't have before them the details that would be needed for that. The Board can comment on the building footprint and the scale of the building for the surrounding neighborhood. The rule in the Village is that in historic properties, you should not exceed 25% of the square footage of your property with a footprint. They already have 30% and what this proposal is calling for is 37%. The elevation drawings do not show the existing house in its entirety.

Member Searl stated that the HPB has been asked to comment on the setting, and preservation has a specific definition for setting. According to the National Park Service, which regulates all things preservation, "Setting is the physical environment of a historic property where its location refers to the specific place where a property was built or an event occurred; setting refers to the character of the place in which the property played its historic role." Member Searl stated that the Board is looking at the smaller homes in that neighborhood of the Village. Ms. Searl further commented that the Village of Pittsford Design Guidelines regarding additions states that "the mass of the addition should be secondary to the main mass of the building." She expressed her opinion that the proposed addition is too large. It's two stories, and given the parameters of the site and the size and massing of the existing house, having two stories does not make the addition subordinate enough to the existing house. The footprint is also too large, because it will take up almost all of the back yard, and in a village setting, backyards are important. The addition would be improved if both the size of the footprint and the height of the addition were reduced. The addition will be visible from both South Street and Maple Street.

Member Cove asked the applicant if there was already an addition added to the house. Mr. Murray stated that the original portion of the house closest to South Street was an addition put on in the 1970's. She stated that she visited the site and in her opinion, the existing addition is quite substantial, and if another addition is added to this property, there will be very little land left for landscaping or greenspace. It will just be this massive structure that's going to sit on the corner, which will overshadow the whole neighborhood. The intention of that neighborhood is a quaint, canalside neighborhood, with sweet little structured houses, and the addition takes away all of that.

Member McBride stated that he is in agreement with that assessment. A major addition to the house will dominate the property and is inconsistent with the character of the neighborhood. Member Searl commented that all through the Village are homes with yards, and the large-scale addition eliminates the view of the yard along South Street. Member Morrow stated his opinion that the addition, as proposed, would be too large for the property. Member Cove stated that a way to mitigate this impact would be to work with the existing addition on the house and modify it to meet their needs. Member Searl concurred, stating that the Board's guidelines indicate that it is not recommended to construct an addition when the new use for the addition could be met by altering existing interior space. Member Harrington proposed conducting a site visit to review the proposal. Board members said they would be willing to meet at the site.

The applicant commented that he has lived in the house for 20 years and is extremely interested in preserving the character of the neighborhood. He further stated that he disagrees with the Board's assessment of the proposal. Mr. Burrows, the architect for the project, stated that he respects the opinions of the Board members, which make sense, and he understands that the Board exists to protect the Village. He expressed that there could have been better communication between the two boards and the Building Inspector and the applicant. He stated that he will discuss modifying the plans with the applicants.

Chairperson Cove explained that the disconnect between the Board is intentional because each board has a very specific charge. The PZBA does completely different work than what the HPB does. So it is intentionally kept separate, because we are very separate entities.

Member Cove stated that she has composed a draft formal proposal to the PZBA, which she will forward to Board members and the Village Attorney to review.

**Member Items:**

**Motion:** Chairperson Cove made a motion, seconded by Member Harrington, to approve the application November 11, 2020 minutes, as drafted.

**Vote: McBride – yes; Cove – yes; Morrow - yes; Searl – yes; Harrington - yes.**

**Motion:** Chairperson Cove made a motion, seconded by Member McBride, to approve the 2021 meeting schedule.

**Vote: McBride – yes; Cove – yes; Morrow - yes; Searl – yes; Harrington - yes.**

**Motion:** Member McBride made a motion, seconded by Member Cove, to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 pm.

**Vote: McBride – yes; Cove – yes; Morrow - yes; Searl – yes; Harrington - yes.**