

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 p.m.

Present: Steven Collins, Gail Proctor, Gary Crooker, Tom Mitchell, Greg Bohosiewicz of the Board of Adjustment. Helen Ring, taking minutes. Barbara Putnam, Attorney in Fact for Mr. French; Wilson Sullivan, Attny; Mr. and Mrs. Robert L. Collins, potential purchasers of the property; Richard Greeley, Building Inspector; Edward Bushey, Chairman of the Planning Board; and others.

Mr. Sullivan presented a site plan of the Richard French Property; a map of the abutting area on Tremont Street, Park Street, Maple Street and Crescent Street; layout plans for Apartments #1 and #2, which are to be in the main house. The Collins plan to use the smaller back wing of the house for their residence.

A variance is required under Article V, Section C.1, which requires a lot size of one-half acre per dwelling unit. In support of the variance Mr. Sullivan said that the property is very run down. It would be advantageous to the neighborhood to have this house renovated as the Collinses plan to do. Because of the size, cost of heating and upkeep, and condition of the house, it would be difficult or impossible to sell it to a single family.

Surrounding properties include the American Legion Hall, a boarding house, some 2 or 3 family units. Changing this to a 3-apartment house will not create any market change in the neighborhood.

Specific problems include the proximity of the Legion Hall, creating traffic, etc. and an aqueduct which runs under the house. The aqueduct broke a year ago and backed up water which washed away the foundation of the house in places. The whole basement will have to be dug out and renovated at great expense.

In answer to question relative to hardship inherent in the property, Mr. Sullivan said that the hardship is in having a house that is unsaleable under present conditions; if variance is denied the house could become an eyesore.

Mrs. Putnam said that Mr. French is in a nursing home and will never be able to return to this property himself.

Mr. Collins described the renovations and repairs he plans to make. Repairing the damage caused by the aqueduct will be most difficult. An engineer has recommended that the whole cellar floor be taken out and the foundation on the south side of the building removed to check the stones over the aqueduct and refill with crushed stone. Then a new slab and footings will be poured. Part of the building is settled and will need to be jacked up. They plan to lower the ceilings, insulate the floors and walls, rebuild the porch area and use it as a passive solar collector, replace plumbing and wiring. The two apartments will be one on first and one on second floor; they do not plan to use the third floor. Smoke alarms will be installed. There is access from the second floor apartment to two roofs.

Richard Greeley said he understood the fire laws require two exist from a second floor apartment. This will be checked with fire marshal.

Mr. Greeley also wished it to be recorded that damages caused by the aqueduct are the responsibility of whoever owns the property.

In response to question about the 3 apartments plus a home occupation saturating the small lot, Mr. Sullivan pointed out that this is a high density part of town, with the Legion, Beano, boarding house, etc. The house has five bedrooms;

with the change, there would be only 3 bedrooms, one in each apartment.

Five letters from abutters (Mr. and Mrs. Chouinard, Mary Abbott, Mr. & Mrs. Kendall Eckstrom, Walter Brown and James Nelson) were given to the Board. None of these objected to the variance. One letter was received from Suzy Labaugh, an abutter, who did object to the special exception for the home occupation because of noise problems which she felt would make her home unlivable.

The question of the home occupation, requiring a Special Exception under Article V, B, was discussed.

Mr. Collins said that actually most of their work is done in the homes of customers. They make built-in cabinets. They have small equipment such as is used in a home shop as a hobby--table saw, jointer, planer. Their noisiest machine is a shaper which is used perhaps 2 or 8 hours a month. Other machines might be run 8-10 hours a week since most of work is done at customers' homes. The barn will be insulated, further controlling any noise. There will be no electrical interference since each machine is properly wired. There will be a fire control system in the barn as well as the house. Mrs. Collins works with lighting - lead and glass fixtures.

After a brief break, the following motion was made by Tom Mitchell and seconded by Gary Crooker:

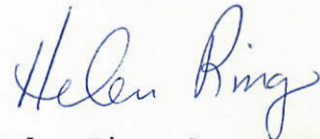
Be it resolved that the application for a variance to convert the French property to a three-unit dwelling be granted.

Steven Collins, Gail Proctor, Gary Crooker and Greg Bohosiewicz voted in the affirmative; Tom Mitchell voted no. The motion was carried.

With regard to the Special Exception for the Home Occupation, the following motion was added:

And further be it resolved that the application for special exception for the home occupation of cabinet making be granted.

This was carried unanimously.



Helen Ring, Secretary