

Martin, Jason

From: arriabilodeau@aol.com
Sent: Friday, February 18, 2022 2:06 PM
To: Martin, Jason
Subject: 6 John Street/HDC

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Jason Martin
Historic District Commission
Providence

Dear Jason,

I'm writing in support of the Conceptual Proposal for new construction of a house at 6 John Street, in the historic district.

As a neighbor in the local historic district I'm particularly mindful of how new construction in the area conforms to the historic district guidelines. I support the continued observance of this zoning, and believe it contributes both to the quality of our built environment and to the economic vitality of our city.

I have seen the conceptual plans of JP Couture for 6 John Street, and believe that they meet the intent and purpose of the historic zoning.

The scheme is extraordinarily sensitive to the scale and style of the housing stock in the area, as well as fitting in handsomely with the renovated Hoppin house and grounds. By absorbing parking underneath the building, the architect has almost incorporated the new house into the grounds of the Hopping house, avoiding additional pavement and parked vehicles. The elevated base of the house is in keeping with nearby buildings on the north of the block, such as the Lippitt-Green house. And the 2-1/2 stories comfortably reflects the scale of earlier buildings on the street.

I recommend approval by the HDC of this proposal.

Arria C. Bilodeau
137 Power Street

Providence Historic District Commission
Date: 27 February 2022
Regarding: 67 Williams and 6 John Street
From: Susan Costello, 13 John Street

Beyond the loss of a unique urban refuge, the two most disheartening parts of this process has been the shutting down of public voices in this public forum and the single consistent driving force behind the development of these parcels, making money at the expense of all else.

There is the opportunity to build a modest, graceful house set within a garden on these sites. There is the opportunity to add to this incredibly beautiful area of the Historic District, by not maximizing footprint, hardscape and heights and instead leaving much needed open space and gardens. There is the opportunity to take advantage of the sense of footprint to open space in this particular area of the Historic District and to build sustainably, acknowledge stewardship of the land as the current owners of historic homes and gardens do.

Instead the proposals push all kinds of boundaries and definitions.

6 John Street:

What is a two family house?

This two family house is designed as though it was two side by side townhouses. This would require 10,000. square feet - not the square footage of the site. And does not resemble an historic two family. It is a confusing reference on John Street as there are side by side Town Houses on the street.

67 Williams and 6 John Street:

The use of attached or integral garages. This seems to allow zoning privileges not associated with a detached garage. And references suburban typology, not historic urban.

In the case of **6 John Street**, the siting of the building revolves around an underground garage. Conceptual Approval should be withheld until the

garage is resolved, as the the massing and height may change and are dependent upon the resolution of entry and exit from the garage,

6 John Street:

The house presents a long, high wall to anyone entering from Benefit Street. It appears too high and too long. I am concerned about the eye level view of a pedestrian on John Street. What will they see? The foundation wall?

67 Williams Street:

This building is too high as well. The balcony/widows walk is peculiar to historic homes originally owned by wealthy merchants, generally connected to the sea in Providence. It is inappropriate and detracts from the massing of the building.

The porte-cochere, projecting forward towards the driveway also detracts from the Williams Street Elevation and massing.

Thank your for your time, efforts and consideration.

Susan

Martin, Jason

From: Lily Bogosian <lilybogosian@mac.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 27, 2022 5:32 PM
To: Martin, Jason
Subject: 67 Williams Street and 6 John Street

February 27, 2022

Dear HDC Members,

67 Williams Street:

It is hoped that applicant Hirsch fully complies with the excellent recommendations made by the HDC during the sub-committee meeting, some of which appear on the new application, and many that do not. It is also hoped that sensitivity to the neighborhood's expressed concerns will be incorporated by the HDC.

The elimination of inappropriate structural components and materials proposed so far by Mr Hirsch, such as asphalt roofing, the head house on the roof and its balustrade, the porte cochere and its incoherent roof lines, and other elements like the PVC already rejected, that are neither historical nor attractive would go far in reducing neighborhood dissatisfaction prior to conceptual approval.

As noted by the commission, the developer Furtado's property wall in front of the cottage has long been planned to be either reduced or eliminated. This wall connects with the developer Hirsch's wall. It is no coincidence that the Ledbetter wall and garden, described by its installers as a Furtado project, appears continually in the application by Hirsch in spite of the request to amend the wall. Like many of the requests recommended by the HDC, this one has not been addressed and the charge that the historic wall is "elitist" is lodged by a person who has no understand or respect for the history of the neighborhood.

Frankly, the commission may wonder why the neighbors wish to speak up about the disregard for and attempted destruction of these seemingly insignificant details; but all of us are taxpayers who bought into this neighborhood because of the careful design and workmanship that went into the homes and gardens, including the fences and walls that we cherish.

Hirsch continually claims under oath that his will be the second-smallest house on the block (disregarding the yellow 1-story house that sits just one house away to the east of the cottage.) The yellow house is omitted from Hirsch's application, even on his map with arrows pointing to the selectively large square footage of houses in the area. Additionally, comparing his square footage to 2-family and multi-family houses is not a fair comparison to R-1 residences. Despite the many improvements to date, the applicant is not yet enhancing or integrating his contiguous neighbors to the east, nor the neighborhood in general.

6 John Street

The John Street application is considered favorable as an architectural presentation. However, it is a massive house for a small lot size, covering every inch of buildable space, and doing so with a siting that is forceably close to the street (presumably to make the easement accessible for underground garages.) Given the easement that is zoned for pedestrian and traffic to enter the yard, one would hope to see the house moved to the north. Doing so would also enable a grand entrance without cutting the circa 1800 wall that winds its way around from Benefit Street. It is a beautiful wall, and while the architect hopes to have an entrance from the street, the house should enjoy the benefit of retaining the fabric of history in its front yard.

One additional concern; the grade of the lot is challenging. Architect Couture has slightly elevated an already steep grade in the south, and grading it to lower the proposed structure will rectify the concerns that many neighbors have about the imposing structure. By addressing these two issues, grade and placement, these changes would lessen the impact of the new property as it relates to other historic homes in its surrounds.

Conceptual drawings that include the Moses Lippitt /TF Green house at 14 John Street would be desirable in order to

demonstrate the massing of the home when approaching from the east, which will effectively block the Hoppin House views. From the west, the view of the Lippett house will also be diminished; the conceptual drawings do not indicate the degree to which these properties are diminished.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Lily Bogosian
14 John Street