

Town of Lenox
Historic District Commission

Meeting Minutes

June 7th, 2022

Town of Lenox

Members present: Jason Berger, Pat Jaouen, Kimberly Duval

Also present: Gwen Miller, Jeff Lynch

Jeff Lynch presented the request from Shots Café to install a maroon-colored awning limited to the face of their storefront window that would project over the sidewalk where they have seating on Housatonic Street. There would be a valance. It will shade the customers sitting outside and will shade those sitting in the front window indoors. This will benefit customers and employees. The Heritage down the street also installed an awning like this, it will be similar color and material.

JB confirmed there will be a valance and asked about hardware displayed in the mock-up. JL said the valance will cover the hardware.

KD said she was able to find a Form B showing awnings in the 20th century; she thinks the awning proposed should be historically appropriate and mirror the awnings depicted in historic photographs. KD said she will not vote for this unless they come back with a historically appropriate awning. She hoped the business owner would negotiate with the landlord to add three (3) awnings.

The group reviewed historic photographs provided by KD and the library depicting historic awnings, as well as the Form B.

KD said the Form B needs to be referenced for a rigorous historic preservation review; she felt that certain items in the district had been neglected over time and not gotten the appropriate permissions from the Historic District Commission.

The group looked at a historic photograph and KD explained the difference between the 20th century awning and the awning proposed by Shots in 2022. JB said the building with Shots in it was an addition to the building and wasn't even in the historic photographs.

KD said this was the role of the Commission—to have this rigorous review of historical appropriateness. There was some discussion regarding the age of the building, and how it has changed since its original construction in the 18th century.

KD reiterated that she did the research to find what turn-of-the-century awnings looked like so new awnings in the district can replicate that look.

JL asked what is the point of reference for historic buildings in the Lenox historic district—1820s or 1920s? PJ clarified that there hasn't been a definitive answer on this. Discussion continued as to what reference for the building is the most accurate reference given the building has changed so much over time.

JL pointed out the expense of the awning for the business owner, and that to make the process longer and more difficult for her is not very equitable. With supply chain issues and timing, she will have a challenging time installing the awning already this season; substantial changes will create a longer timeline and greater expense. He pointed out Shots was a reliable business open all year.

There was further discussion on the mock-up of the awning provided by the vendor and what version of the models presented was going to be the "final version". KD suggested the petitioner come back with a final version reflective of their comments—hidden mechanical components, and what it will look like when it is retracted. The group agreed to see a final version before approving it. JL said they could have a shop drawing ready June 21st or a model in-use elsewhere to serve as an example. PJ moved to continue until June 21st. KD seconded. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned.