

MINUTES
TOWN OF GROTON
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
JULY 16, 2013 - 7:00 P.M.
GROTON TOWN HALL ANNEX - COMMUNITY ROOM 2

Members Present: Moriarty, Somers, Everett, Brady, Kimenker
Alternates Present: Ackerman, Brewer
Absent:
Staff: Vandenbosh, Galetta

Chairperson Moriarty called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

MOTION: To waive the reading of the hearing procedure.

Motion made by Kimenker, seconded by Somers, so voted unanimously.

Brady read the call of the hearing.

I. PUBLIC HEARINGS

HDC 13-21 – 84 Library Street; Elaine & Andrew Chertoff, owners/applicants; Renovations & windows. PIN #261917204886

Neither the applicant nor a representative was present at the public hearing. The Commission recommended that the hearing be continued.

The public hearing portion of the meeting was closed at 7:03 p.m.

II. DISCUSSION ON ITEMS OF PUBLIC HEARING

HDC 13-21 – 84 Library Street

MOTION: To continue the hearing to next regularly scheduled public hearing.

Motion made by Kimenker seconded by Somers, so voted unanimously.

III. PRE-APPLICATION HEARINGS

Jane Engelke appeared before the Commission to represent her daughter Laura Jamison who is the owner of 2 West Mystic Avenue. The property presently has a long gravel driveway which is made up of gray stone. During inclement weather the rain washes the gravel out of the drive. The applicant would like to repair the driveway and add a more substantial surface while maintaining the integrity of house. She is proposing a paved, stone and chip surface using the same color stone. The Commission will only have jurisdiction if the driveway is over 11'. The drive is 11' at the street but widens up to 15' near the house. Commissioner Everett disclosed that he resides next door to the subject property. The Commission was not concerned with the nature of the application and recommended photographs for the public hearing.

Architect Rusty Sargent appeared before the Commission on behalf of Mystic Art Center which is the process of buying the Emporium building at 15 Water Street. The building is a mixed use property that the Art Center is buying as an investment. Dan Meiser, owner of

Oyster Club, is interested in creating a wine bar in the basement as well as a butcher shop on the main floor. The upper two floors will provide three apartments for residential living. Commissioner Brady disclosed that he lives next door to the subject property and owns an adjoining driveway that provides parking for the subject building. One of the bigger issues being encountered is access to the upper apartments. They are currently served by a single staircase but the renovation plans will attempt direct access from the upper floors out to the ledge in the back of the property. Egress from the second and third floors is under discussion with the fire marshal. They are also attempting to simplify number of doors. The plan is to change the entrance door to the building, block out a door and create windows. Phase 2 of the Streetscape Project will impact the property and may require reconfiguring the entrance location. The applicants propose replacing the windows in front, which are not original, but will be replaced in kind. The proposal also includes replacing the body of the building because the exterior boards are in such bad shape. Cement board siding will be used but all the existing trim and columns will be kept. Surprisingly, the building has a flat roof and a cupola, which will be replaced with a monitor. The applicant stated that the siding, windows, and exterior front changes are the scope of the project at this time; however, a stair going from the Power House driveway will need to be dealt with. The Art Center is trying to keep maintenance costs down and may request to remove the existing shutters on the second floor. The applicant requested feedback from the Commission with regard to this. Commission discussed how removing the shutters would impact the look of the building which is an icon in downtown Mystic and very visible from New London Road. The building may have enough ornamentation of its own so that removing the shutters may not be an issue. Sargent will prepare some drawings for further discussion.

IV. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS – None

V. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF July 2, 2013

MOTION: To approve the minutes of July 2, 2013.

Motion made by Kimenker, seconded by Everett, 4 in favor, 1 abstention (Somers). Motion passed

VI. OLD BUSINESS

Commissioner Everett introduced the topic of the proposed 51 Clift Street demolition for discussion and comments. The house is approximately 150 years old. Everett provided information that the house is on the roster of historic houses and was in existence during the heyday of whaling in Mystic. He feels that a proposal to completely demolish an actual historic building is a serious one to consider. The Commission will look to Staff to provide regulations or information about the record or justification required to make a decision such as this. Chairperson Moriarty stated that the only criteria needed is that the change cannot be incongruent with the environment. Staff has noted previously that the first application for a COA will be for the demolition after which the application for a COA for the new house will be heard. The Commission felt an argument could be made to keep the structure as it is representative of a certain architectural style. Staff may want to mention to the applicants that another pre-application hearing would be beneficial to iron out some of the details for the proposed new dwelling.

VII. NEW BUSINESS – None

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

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Motion to adjourn at 8:05 p.m. made by Moriarty, seconded by Kimenker, so voted unanimously.

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Prepared by Lynda Galetta, Office Assistant II