

MINUTES  
TOWN OF GROTON  
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION  
SEPTEMBER 7, 2010 - 7:00 P.M.  
GROTON TOWN HALL ANNEX - COMMUNITY ROOM 2

Members Present: Nado, Sarasin, Mitchell, Cole, Vaughn (7:10)  
Alternates Present: None  
Staff: Quinn, Galetta

Chairman Nado called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Cole read the Call of the Hearing.

MOTION: To add to the HDC Agenda for September 7, 2010 executive session for the purpose of discussing potential litigation: 81 High Street.

Motion made by Mitchell, seconded by Cole, so voted unanimously.

I. EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS POTENTIAL LITIGATION: 81 HIGH STREET

MOTION: To enter executive session at 7:06 p.m. for the purpose of discussing potential litigation: 81 High Street.

Motion made by Cole, seconded by Mitchell, so voted unanimously.

Invited to be in attendance for the executive session were Commissioners Nado, Mitchell, Sarasin, Cole and Vaughn. Staff members invited to attend to offer testimony or opinions were Kevin A. Quinn, Manager of Inspection Services and Michael P. Carey, Esq., Town Attorney.

Chairman Nado noted that the executive session ended at 7:25 p.m. and that there were no votes taken during the executive session. Chairman Nado also noted that Kristin Vaughn joined the session at 7:10 p.m.

MOTION: To add to the HDC Agenda for September 7, 2010 discussion and action regarding violations at 81 High Street.

Motion made by Vaughn, seconded by Sarasin, so voted unanimously.

II. DISCUSSION AND ACTION REGARDING VIOLATIONS: 81 HIGH STREET

MOTION: To request the Town Attorney to commence legal action to eliminate the Historic District violations at 81 High Street.

Motion made by Cole, seconded by Mitchell, so voted unanimously.

Chairman Nado re-opened the public hearing at 7:40 p.m.

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS

HDC 10-42 – 27 Gravel Street; Michael Sarasin & Renee Mattison, owners/applicants; Replace siding. PIN #26191842209

Commission Member Michael Sarasin recused himself and presented to the Commission regarding siding on his cottage, which is the building that is behind the main house. The structure was built sometime in the 1960's. It was originally an outbuilding that was converted to a living space and had a porch addition. There is a limited public view of the building as it is somewhat hidden by the main house. The structure is deemed to have limited historic value. The applicant is proposing to remove the existing cedar clapboard and replace it with Hardie plank siding. The color choice is Alpine Frost, which will be factory applied. The applicant has chosen the color to diminish the look of the building. The corner boards will be replaced like for like.

The following exhibits were presented:

- Photographs
- Plot plan
- Siding color chart

Chairman Nado asked for comments in favor or against and there were none. The public hearing closed at 8:06 p.m.

HDC 10-43 – 17 Ashby Street; Jeffrey & Susan Blevens, owners/applicants; Garage. PIN #261918209011

Peter Springsteel presented to the Commission along with Jeffrey & Susan Blevens who are the owners of 17 Ashby Street. The applicants are proposing to add a detached, two-bay, single story garage to their property. The gable end of the structure will be visible from the historic district. Various elevations of the structure were reviewed with the Commission. The Blevens are proposing to use vertical Ship Lap rough sawn wood siding, Certainteed "weathered wood" architectural shingles and Brosco 6-lite windows. The structure will have an overhead garage door with false hinges, a swinging garage door and a loft door with strap hinges, and a 9-lite painted wood door and frame. The siding will be stained. The garage will be set back approximately 150 feet from the public way.

The following exhibits were presented:

- Plot plan
- Photographs
- Architectural drawing

Chairman Nado asked for comments in favor or against and there were none. The public hearing closed at 7:41 p.m.

HDC 10-44 – 12 Water Street; Factory Square LLC, owner; Frances Harkins, applicant; Signage. PIN #261918305500

Frances Harkins presented to the Commission regarding signage for her art gallery, Courtyard Gallery, located at 12 Water Street. There has been some turnover in businesses located in the building, which has allowed for additional signage availability. She has purchased an existing sign from another business and will have it refaced to use

for her gallery. The sign company has made a template to make sure that existing bracket holes may be used for the new sign. The Commission is always concerned with protecting the masonry of the buildings in the district. They are in favor of the reuse of an existing sign and bracket holes.

The following exhibits were presented:

- Sign graphic
- Photographs

Chairman Nado asked for comments in favor or against and there were none. The public hearing closed at 7:46 p.m.

HDC 10-45 – 2 Fort Rachel Place; Elizabeth Lutz & Nick Pettinati & Catherine Lutz, owners/applicants; Siding. PIN #261806393531

Steve Craig of the Roofing Store presented to the Commission on behalf of the Lutz' and Mr. Pettinati who are the owners of 2 Fort Rachel Place. The applicant is proposing to remove the remaining clapboard siding that was left exposed after the removal of asbestos siding from the house. Upon removal of the asbestos siding it was discovered that the structure was not only un-insulated but did not have any sheathing under the clapboards. The owners would like to replace the clapboards with a Hardie plank smooth vinyl siding in a factory applied color. The color choice is Light Mist and the trim will be white. Trim will be removed only to put up siding. The bottom sill and top trim will not be disturbed. The trim will pop approximately 1/8" due to the addition of sheathing and insulation. The Commission felt that this particular house was in danger of being lost entirely if not for the efforts of the owner to rehabilitate it. The Commission is always concerned about the wholesale removal of clapboard siding but considering that the house was not properly built originally this proposal seems appropriate.

The following exhibits were presented:

- Siding color chart
- Photographs

Chairman Nado asked for comments in favor or against and there were none. The public hearing closed at 7:53 p.m.

HDC 10-46 – 23 Gravel Street; Robert C. Danaher, owner/applicant; Surface driveway. PIN # 261918412990

Robert Danaher, owner of 23 Gravel Street, presented to the Commission regarding putting a hard surface down on his driveway. His proposal is to pave 2½ bays of his 3 bay garage coming out to 11' at the road. He will use 3/8" chip stone imbedded in hot oil as the paving method. The Commission is always very concerned about the surface treatments in the district. The method that the applicant is proposing seems appropriate for his property and will help to keep a residential feel to it. The Commission was in favor of increasing the driveway surface to cover all three bays completely.

The following exhibits were presented:

- Photographs
- Driveway dimensions

Chairman Nado asked for comments in favor or against and there were none. The public hearing closed at 8:00 p.m.

Chairman Nado closed the public hearing at 8:08 pm.

#### IV. DISCUSSION ON ITEMS OF PUBLIC HEARING

HDC 10-42 – 27 Gravel Street

MOTION: To grant a Certificate of Appropriateness as submitted.

Motion made by Cole, seconded by Mitchell, Motion made by Mitchell, seconded by Cole, 4 in favor, 1 abstention (Sarasin). Motion passed. Issued Certificate of Appropriateness #1767.

HDC 10-43 – 17 Ashby Street

MOTION: To grant a Certificate of Appropriateness with stipulations.

Motion made by Vaughn, seconded by Mitchell, so voted unanimously. Issued Certificate of Appropriateness #1763.

HDC 10-44 – 12 Water Street

MOTION: To grant a Certificate of Appropriateness as submitted.

Motion made by Mitchell, seconded by Sarasin, so voted unanimously. Issued Certificate of Appropriateness #1764.

HDC 10-45 – 2 Fort Rachel Place

MOTION: To grant a Certificate of Appropriateness as submitted.

Motion made by Sarasin, seconded by Mitchell, so voted unanimously. Issued Certificate of Appropriateness #1765.

HDC 10-46 – 23 Gravel Street

MOTION: To grant a Certificate of Appropriateness as submitted.

Motion made by Vaughn, seconded by Cole, so voted unanimously. Issued Certificate of Appropriateness #1766.

Chairman Nado recessed the meeting at 8:12 p.m. The Chairman reopened the public hearing at 8:17 p.m.

#### V. PRE-APPLICATION HEARINGS

Bill Bertsche, of Mercer & Bertsche, appeared before the Commission along with Denise Wakim who is the owner of 27 High Street. The architects have reworked the plans for the garage and connector. The current presentation shows a plan for 3 additions. There will be a stand alone garage, an addition off main house, and a porch which will act as a connector. Working, bi-folding shutters will be added for hurricane winds. Additionally, the window sashes are currently being rebuilt. The proposed garage will have two overhead doors, each with 8' openings, that will look like hinged doors. The applicant is trying for a less formal tongue & groove look. The pitch has been lowered but the elevations will remain the same. The porch will be unheated and have storm doors. The plan for the garage is to use a granite façade to match the granite on the house. The Commission felt the applicants have done a tremendous job in diminishing the addition. However, the parking area for the two car garage is still a concern. The Commission felt that having a combination driveway and parking area would start to take up too much of the historic look to the grounds surrounding the house. The architect stated that due to the 14% driveway grade they must request an asphalt driveway, but the asphalt might be reduced by an additional stone walkway Mr. Bertsche added that getting into the house under cover is what his client would like to accomplish and the current version has achieved this. Additionally, the owner would like to remove asbestos siding on the ends of the house and replace it with a Hardie plank siding. The Commission felt the asbestos siding should be removed initially in order to view what is underneath and determine if the clapboard siding can be saved. Azek trim would be preferred by the applicant. The Commission felt there may be problems with the use of Azek because the trim weathers differently than the siding. The Commission also felt that it would be better to keep the trim on the garage the same as that on the house. Although the Commission feels the current proposal is better than the original presentation, there is a dissonance to the garage and the house. The Commission has concerns about having a two car garage so close to the road with such a large driveway. The feeling is that the addition would give a modern look to a very traditional, historic cape. The Commission feels that the garage detracts from the main house and it is not in favor of the current presentation. Mr. Bertsche poled the Commissioners regarding their individual issues with the proposed addition project.

Dwight Olmsted appeared before the Commission representing Eric and Marlynn Benker who own 10 Orchard Street. The property is a 3-family rental unit. The Fire Marshall has done an inspection and determined that the structure will need an indoor sprinkler system or an external egress. Currently there is a staircase going down the back of the house, but it is undersized, very steep and has a large drop at the bottom. The owners would like to propose an external egress on the back of the house with the addition of a deck. The Commission felt that an external egress should be kept minimal and utilitarian. The Commission will individually visit the property to see what is visible from the public way.

Steven Karlson appeared before the Commission representing Water Street Real Estate LLC which owns 44 Water Street. The property is Fort Rachel Marina. There is a house on the property which currently sits in the middle of what is the marina parking lot. The concrete foundation needs significant work. The owners are proposing to move the structure to a different location. One concept is to purchase an available lot next to the marina and move the house to that site. The area where the house currently sits will be graveled and become part of the parking lot. The Commission feels that the proposal is an appropriate one and saving the house is desirable.

Don Armstrong appeared before the Commission for Deborah and Paul Bied, owners of 7 Burrows Street. They are installing a new boiler and will need to add a chimney liner and granite cap to the front chimney. They are also proposing to remove the rear chimney which is not original to the structure. The Commission felt that the impact to the district will be insignificant.

Scott Beaulieu owner of 219 Library Street appeared before the Commission regarding changes to an approved single family dwelling under construction. The sills and trim are in the process of being fixed. Shingled frieze board returns are still an issue to the Commission and they need to be dealt with. The Commission felt that painting the returns to match the siding rather than leaving them white would make them disappear from the view of the public way. The fact that the house is very removed from the public view is beneficial to fixing the issues easily. The Commission feels that the homeowner has made very good progress in fixing the unauthorized changes. The Commission still has issues with three ganged windows that give the house an extremely modern look. The Commission requested picture documentation for the public hearing.

VI. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS – None

VII. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF August 17, 2010

MOTION: To approve the minutes of August 17, 2010

Motion made by Mitchell, seconded by Vaughn, so voted unanimously.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS – None

IX. NEW BUSINESS

The Commission made Staff aware that unpermitted work may be occurring at 306 Packer Road, which is owned by Scott Waring.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 10:13 p.m. made by Vaughn, seconded by Cole, so voted unanimously.

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Elaine Cole, Secretary  
Historic District Commission

Prepared by Lynda C. Galetta, Office Assistant II