

**TOWN OF GROTON  
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION  
NOVEMBER 1, 2005 - 7:00 P.M.  
GROTON TOWN HALL ANNEX - COMMUNITY ROOM 2**

Members Present: C. Nado, E. Cole and R. Seager  
Members Absent: K. Vaughn and R. Keyes  
Alternates Present: R. Boardman, D. Madden  
Staff: K. Quinn, S. Discordia

Chairman Nado called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. Seager read the Call of the Hearing as it appeared in The Day.

Chairman Nado appointed Boardman and Madden as a voting member.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

HDC 05-59 – 12 Water Street; Factory Square LLC, owner; Todd F. Brady, applicant; new railings. PIN #

Todd Brady presented to the Commission. He stated that the prior ramp and stairs did not have any rails. Mr. Brady submitted 3 drawings of different types of railings. The first is a typical pipe rail; the second is a pipe rail with pickets through it. The third is a combination of an aluminum picket fence and a pipe rail attached to the inside.

Seager stated that this is a commercial use building. He would prefer the pipe rail but wasn't opposed to any of them. Madden and Boardman did not have a preference to any of the three. Chairman Nado stated that he thought alternative three was more appropriate as it looked like a fence. Cole stated that she preferred the pipe rail.

Mr. Brady decided to submit the pipe railing as his final choice.

Chairman Nado asked for public comments and there were none.

The following exhibits were presented:

- 4 pictures
- 1 drawing

Chairman Nado closed the public hearings at 7:15 p.m.

**DISCUSSION ON ITEMS OF PUBLIC HEARING**

HDC 05-59 – 12 Water Street

MOTION: To grant a Certificate of Appropriateness as submitted.

Motion made by Seager, seconded by Madden, so voted unanimously.

## **PRE-APPLICATION HEARINGS**

Andy Gross represented the owners, Chelsea Groton Bank. Mr. Gross presented drawings to the Commission regarding changing the back of the bank. Mr. Gross stated they would move the back entrance to make it resemble the front entrance. The same materials would be used in construction.

Mr. Gross displayed plans to the Commission. He explained where the entrance was and where they plan to move it. The Commission suggested he bring back photographs of the front and back of the building as it is now. Mr. Gross stated that the back door would be wood.

Boardman stated it would be an improvement over what is there now. Madden, Cole and Seager stated that it looked fine. Chairman Nado requested the applicant bring photos and materials to the public hearing.

Rod Desmaris represented the owners for 18-22 West Main Street. Mr. Desmaris presented a full 3 dimensional model of downtown Mystic and raised it to eye level. He gave square footage of lots adjacent to the proposed building. He showed historic pictures to the Commission of the previous buildings before they burnt down.

Mr. Desmaris stated the scale of this model is 0.75 or  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch equals 10 feet. He submitted fire maps showing the earlier buildings. Mr. Desmaris stated that although the earlier buildings were not as deep, the buildings beside it now are larger than before, therefore the relationship to what is proposed and what was originally there are the same. The average depth of a building in downtown Mystic is 80 feet. Mr. Desmaris stated that the proposed building is 65 feet deep.

Mr. Desmaris stated that the square footage of the building is important to them and that they cannot reduce the size. He asked the Commission to comment on the size and mass of the model and if it was something they could work with.

Chairman Nado has concerns about how the proposed building fits with its local environs. He felt it dwarfs the adjacent buildings and does not fit into the historic fabric of downtown. Chairman Nado is very concerned about the depth and height of the proposed building.

Cole thought the depth and height could work as long as the design of the facades was appropriate. She felt a building of this size is in keeping with the fabric of downtown. Cole asked about dumpster enclosures and their locations. Mr. Desmaris stated they would address that when they get further into the building design.

Boardman had concerns about the size and mass, but thought he could support it as proposed.

Madden was okay with the size and mass, his concerns were with the covered walkway at the rear of the building and how that would look.

Seager was getting very close to being comfortable with the size and mass. He thought it would be important to articulate the front and back of the building the same. Seager also had concerns about the covered walkway, but felt with the right design you could minimize its appearance.

Mark Comeau presented some rendered sketches to show how the stories of the building would carry through. Mr. Comeau felt that with the right architectural treatment you could reduce the perceived height of the building. He spoke about the heavy bandings at the first floor and how brick would work with that. At this point, he was only working on the front façade, but had ideas about how to carry the design around the building.

Seager liked the simplistic look of one of the sketches and thought it could work to their advantage by carrying the same design around the building.

Chairman Nado thought the use of different materials on the building could help and stepping back the fourth floor could minimize the height.

Boardman preferred the simpler design to the more complex and thought that the materials should be consistent and not mixed.

Madden stated the mix of materials could work overall and he liked the simpler design.

Cole stated she would prefer clapboard to brick. She thought the brick may look too heavy and had concerns about another large brick building.

Chairman Nado asked members of the audience to view the materials shown to the Commission. Merchants from downtown Mystic viewed the materials. They expressed that they like the sketch of the previously proposed building with dormers. Many of the merchants felt that a brick building could give the appearance of a mill town and not a seaside village. The majority of the merchants stated that they thought clapboard would be more appropriate.

Peter Springsteel represented the owners of 15 Grove Avenue. The owners would like to subdivide their property and build a new dwelling. Mr. Springsteel showed drawings of the proposed house. The Commission felt too much detail was being carried over from the existing house and that it was very large and long.

Mr. Springsteel stated that the footprint had been staked out and taped off to show the location. The Commission stated they would drive by and view it.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

A letter was read from Thomas Aalund, the owner of Trade Winds Gallery in downtown Mystic, regarding the proposed new building at 18-22 West Main Street. A letter was also read from Mr. & Mrs. Jaccarino, owners of Fripperies regarding the same proposed building.

The Commission also discussed a CLG grant application and what they could use the funds for.

Historic District Commission

November 1, 2005

Page 4

## **MINUTES**

MOTION: To approve the minutes of October 18, 2005

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

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Staff stated that there was a conflict with the previously approved meeting schedule as the first Tuesday in November 2006 was election day and the Annex building was being used for voting. The Commission will address the issue at a later date.

**NEW BUSINESS** - None

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn at 10:00 p.m. made by Seager, seconded by Cole, so voted unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

---

Elaine Cole, Secretary