

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MINUTES
November 9, 2016 Meeting
Town Council Chambers – 6:00 PM HDC meeting

Present: Kim Balkcom, Chair, Erinn Calise, Kristen Carron, Gregory Maxwell, Lauren Drury, and Andrew Barkley (arrived at 6:35 pm).

Absent: Matthew McGeorge, Vice-Chair.

Staff: Lea Anthony Hitchen, Assistant Town Planner.

Ms. Balkcom, Chair of the Commission, started the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

Ms. Balkcom read the procedures into the record as follows: Each person addressing the Commission will state his/her name for the record. Although the Commission does not generally swear in applicants or their representatives, all witnesses are responsible for providing the HDC with true, accurate, and complete information. The applicant or the applicant's representative shall present the request before the Commission along with arguments and material in support of the application. HDC members will then have the opportunity to discuss the proposal and ask questions which are pertinent to the application. All other persons wishing to speak in favor of or against the application will then be asked to do so. All speakers are asked to avoid repetitive comments and confine their comments to those which are relevant to the application at hand. Cross examination by the general public may be allowed only if the Commission feels it would be appropriate and useful. All questions from the floor will be directed through the Chair only. After all of the relevant facts have been heard, the Chair will call for a motion. Once the motion has been made and seconded, the HDC only will discuss the motion followed by the Chair's call for a vote. Only active members of the Commission shall vote. The alternate will sit as an active member with full voting rights only when a regular member is unable to serve at any meeting. During the discussion among voting members, no further testimony from the floor will be accepted unless specifically requested by a Board member. Every effort will be made to render a decision this evening. The minutes of this meeting will be on file in the Planning Department within 14 days. Certificates of Appropriateness granted this evening will be available in the Planning Department within two (2) days of this hearing. The hearing of any

HDC application which has not yet started before 10:30 p.m. will not be heard this evening and a special hearing date will be scheduled. This rule, however, may be waived by a majority vote of the Commission. All decisions of the HDC are final and legally binding under the authority of Article XI of the East Greenwich Zoning Ordinance and Article 45, Section 24.1 of the RIGL. All decisions of this Commission may be appealed to the Zoning Board of Review.

Ms. Balkcom added the HDC considers local standards as well as Federal guidelines when reviewing applications and noted this is a collaborative process between the Board and the applicant. Ms. Balkcom explained the sequence for review of applications and its helpfulness to understand how the process works before the Board hears the applications. She noted each application is reviewed in of itself; the Commissioners receive the applications prior to the actual meeting in order for each Board member to review the content. The Board members identify properties and character defining features and historical and architecturally significant to the district that are taken into consideration. When applicants come before the Board there is a discussion in order to better understand the project at hand and answer questions that arise. The Board determines the standards that apply; hearing applications in this type of forum allows the Board to discuss alternatives, offer suggestions and provide support for the applicant to hopefully have a successful outcome and possibly save money.

Ms. Balkcom introduced the Board members and Staff present and read the application items into the record, noting application #2 (Vensel, 137 Peirce Street) has been continued to the following month.

Historic District Commission Hearings

**1. Donald & Suzanne Carcieri
83 Friendship Street; Map 75 AP 2 Lot 216
Window & Door Replacement – FINAL**

Ms. Balkcom read standards # 4 and 8 into the record as they are applicable to the application. *Standard 4* states all proposals for architectural changes shall be appropriate to the original design of the building or to later changes which have historic significance of their own. *Standard 8* states original window sashes can usually be repaired and retained. In the event that a window sash must be

replaced the replacement shall match the original in size, operation, materials, configuration, number of lights, muntin width and profile. Window manufacturers today offer a wide variety of factory-made windows appropriate for installation in historic buildings.

Mr. Donald Carcieri represented the application as owner of the property. He explained nothing has changed since he appeared before the Commission last month. He plans to replace the front entry door with a more appropriate style door. The door will be replaced with a Smooth-Star S151 series half oval lite with 2 panels. Mr. Carcieri requested to replace the rear double hung bathroom window with a 24"x16" casement window for improved privacy and circulation. Lastly three (3) existing storm door will be replaced with full lite glass storm doors which Mr. Carcieri realized was exempt from HDC review but wanted to include it in the application.

Considering the Applicant had given a detailed description of the work proposed at the conceptual hearing the Commissioners did not have any questions.

Ms. Balkcom asked for a motion.

Ms. Calise made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Donald & Suzanne Carcieri.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District, specifically 83 Friendship Street.
- 3) The structure in question is a noncontributing building; it is representative of a c. 1950 mid-Twentieth, Ranch structure.
- 4) The building does not contribute to the historic and architectural significance of the district.
- 5) The work proposed by the applicant would not affect the character defining elements of the existing building.

Motion by Ms. Calise to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 83 Friendship Street for door replacement and rear window replacement. This is consistent with Commission Standard #4 & 8.

Seconded by Ms. Carron.

VOTE: 5 – 0.

**2. Phipps Realty, Inc. (Ron Phipps)
111 Main Street; Map 85 AP 1 Lot 229
Signage – FINAL**

Ms. Balkcom stated signage is a new type of construction and thus must comply with Commission Standard *Number 5*. It states that such work must be compatible with the surrounding buildings in size, scale, materials and siting, as well as with the general character of the historic district.

Mr. Ron Phipps of Phipps Realty, Inc. represented the application. Mr. Phipps explained the sign is a green stripe on the building while keeping with custom tradition and will have raised white acrylic letters which will not require painting.

Ms. Balkcom noted signage is removable and the Commission does not ever request a company's branding be altered but questioned if there is enough signage. Mr. Maxwell added that the signage is very discreet. Mr. Phipps wanted a subtle look due to the location of the building noting that his plan is to appropriately light the interior making it a happy space.

With no further questions or comments regarding the application Ms. Balkcom asked for a motion.

Mr. Maxwell made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Phipps Realty, Inc. (Ron Phipps).
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District, specifically 111 Main Street.
- 3) The structure in question is a contributing building; it is representative of a c.1875 late Victorian mixed-use building .
- 4) The building does contribute to the historic and architectural significance of the district.
- 5) The work proposed by the applicant would not affect the character defining elements of the existing building.

Motion by Mr. Maxwell to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 111 Main Street for signage. This is consistent with Commission Standard #5.

Seconded by Ms. Carron.

VOTE: 5 – 0.

3. Randy Lynch
17 Revolution Street; Map 85 AP 1 Lot 379
Window Replacement – FINAL

Ms. Balkcom noted Commission Standard 8 applies to this application. Standard #8 states original window sashes can usually be repaired and retained. In the event that a window sash must be replaced the replacement shall match the original in size, operation, materials, configuration, number of lights, muntin width and profile. Window manufacturers today offer a wide variety of factory-made windows appropriate for installation in historic buildings.

Ms. Balkcom noted the Applicant received a Zoning Violation Notice from the Building Official/Zoning Enforcement Officer on October 6, 2016 due to not receiving HDC approval and not obtaining a building permit.

Mr. Randy Lynch of 17 Revolution Street, owner of the property represented the application. He stated that a few of the windows that were replaced were replaced with vinyl windows (those in the bathroom, kitchen and bedroom) – those windows were replaced with vinyl because they were already existing vinyl windows. He bought the home from Keelin and Joe Petrone in 2011. He noted the kitchen had an aluminum frame with sash and two small windows in the rear that were vinyl.

Mr. Maxwell said it sounds as though it was a mixture of window replacements. Mr. Lynch confirmed that he replaced vinyl windows with vinyl windows and wood windows with wood windows.

Mr. Lynch confirmed the two bathroom windows he kept as vinyl windows, kitchen windows were replaced with vinyl windows and two small windows in

the back of the house were also replaced with vinyl windows. He submitted a spec sheet to the Commission to which Mr. Maxwell noted the window is a wood window with vinyl clad on the exterior.

When asked to explain the grill setup, Mr. Lynch noted the grill is not sandwiched between the glass but is held in place by a clip to the interior of the window which can be removed. He explained he changed out the windows over a three year span, replacing two windows at a time.

Ms. Balkcom commented if these vinyl windows were presented to the Commission requesting approval they are definitely a product she would not approve as the installed vinyl window does not come close to meeting the standard; there are other windows that come closer to representing an original window. She reiterated the Applicant is telling the Board that many of the windows were already vinyl when Mr. Lynch purchased the house. Mr. Lynch said there were at least 8 vinyl windows when he bought the house.

Ms. Calise asked how many windows have been replaced. Mr. Lynch said all but one; the one remaining the window going up the staircase which an ornate, unique detailed window has not been replaced but it needs work since it is leaking and rotting.

Ms. Drury wanted to know how many windows were wood vs vinyl. She asked Mr. Lynch to circle the windows in the staff report pictures those windows that were vinyl. Mr. Lynch pointed out the vinyl windows as being one bedroom window along the driveway side, the bedroom window on the other side of the house, two windows on the back of the house, the bathroom window upstairs and bathroom window downstairs and two kitchen windows that were not vinyl but were some sort of replacement window.

Mr. Maxwell suggested a storm unit for the unique original window. He did not realize what a “mess” the window situation was.

Ms. Balkcom questioned the Applicant that if the windows had to be replaced why he wouldn't have replaced the windows with something that is more appropriate as far as material and quality. Mr. Lynch pointed out when he received the violation letter in the mail he had a pit in his stomach as he thought

he was doing something positive. He said he did the window replacement work himself with a friend and did not realize a building permit was required.

Ms. Balkcom admitted she had been in the subject house and does not have a recollection if the windows were vinyl or wood so the Commission has no choice but to take the Applicant's word for it. She understood the owner's desire for consistency and wanting to have the same window and in that case the Commission is usually willing to compromise in that situation but a vinyl window would generally not get approved and especially not a window with snap-on grills.

When questioned how many of the replaced windows are of the Anderson 400 Series, Mr. Lynch stated about 15 windows.

Ms. Drury did not necessarily disagree with Ms. Balkcom but it is very random as to what windows have been replaced with vinyl, very piecemeal which leads her to think they replaced windows probably were vinyl.

Ms. Calise commented that given the structure is not colonial in style she asked if the windows would look better with no grids in them at all.

Mr. Barkley pointed out in the submitted photos it is very difficult to decipher the configuration of the windows noting there are windows that are 6/1, 6/2, 2/1, 1/1, etc. Mr. Lynch explained that when he replaced the windows he went with the preexisting configuration.

Ms. Carron asked if the vinyl windows have a grille sandwiched between the glass. Mr. Lynch confirmed yes.

Mr. Lynch asserted the only original remaining windows are the round-top side windows and basement windows. The Commission made it clear to not replace the round-top window without HDC permission but to also consider a storm window for that window opening.

Ms. Balkcom asked the Applicant if it would be an option to do research and find a better quality window and replace them in the entire house. Mr. Lynch was of the opinion that probably not at the moment he is not financially ready and he would not be able to change out the windows all at once considering he

was only able to replace a couple of the existing windows at a time over a three year period.

Ms. Drury noted she was torn on the situation since there were already vinyl windows in the home and the Commission cannot do anything about that; the only question is regarding the Anderson 400 Series windows.

Ms. Balkcom commented she wishes some consistency had been given because now no window is the same as there are snap-in grid, grid sandwiched between the glass, vinyl, wood clad in vinyl, etc.

Mr. Barkley questioned if an external muntin can be put in place as a permanent fix to the situation.

Ms. Balkcom explained the procedural process if the application is approved, continued, denied, appealed, withdrawn.

Ms. Calise felt as though the application packet was not complete and requested more detail. Specifically the Commission asked for more specific close-up photos of the different types of windows; a list of vinyl vs. how many were replaced with vinyl, how many were wood replaced with Anderson 400 Series – understanding the end result is still a mishmash of windows. Ms. Drury noted regardless of the application the new information would be helpful for town records.

Upon further discussion the question was raised of simply removing the snap-in grills. Mr. Barkley did not think that was a good idea considering the snap-ins make the window look closer to what a historical window would be than with no grids. Ms. Balkcom disagreed. The point was made that a 1/1 window pattern was not appropriate to this style house and architecture time period.

Ms. Carron recommended for Mr. Lynch to research whether an external grill can be applied to the subject window aftermarket.

Ms. Balkcom suggested continuing the application to next month. In the meantime Mr. Lynch should see if the window dealer can do anything short of installing brand new windows (she added the other extreme is not doing

anything to rectify the situation) and maybe a compromise can happen between what information is provided by next month.

Ms. Drury was in favor of continuing the application as long as the Applicant explored window options but also identified which windows are of which type (especially if the Applicant replaced a vinyl for an Anderson 400 Series); she suggested going to Douglas Lumber and asking for their recommendation in this unique situation; she asked to submit pictures of each elevation (side) and note which window is true vinyl vs wood clad with vinyl.

Ms. Balkcom stated that for any window on the rear of the house she may be willing to leave as is.

Mr. Lynch went as far as opening his house for a site visit to let the Commissioners inspect for themselves the existing windows. The Commissioners indicated they have done site visits but Ms. Drury said she still wanted a written record of the status of each window. A site visit could be an option following the next meeting.

Application was continued to December 14, 2016.

**4. Barlo Signs, Carol Bugbee for Jersey Mike's
555 Main Street; Map 75 AP 3 Lot 84
Signage – FINAL**

Ms. Balkcom noted Commission Standard 5 applies to this application. Signage is a new type of construction and thus must comply with Commission Standard *Number 5*. It states that such work must be compatible with the surrounding buildings in size, scale, materials and siting, as well as with the general character of the historic district.

Ms. Carol Bugbee of Barlo Signs, represented the application. She noted the new signage for “Jersey Mike’s Subs” will be mounted on the building as well as on the freestanding sign – the lettering and logo will be attached directly to the wall with exterior gooseneck lighting mounted above. The subject wall sign will consist of red lexon lettering, letters to be 1’5” and 1’3” tall with an overall size

of 2'10"x10'1". There will also be a correlating vinyl graphic applied to the freestanding pylon sign.

With no further questions or comments regarding the application Ms. Balkcom asked for a motion on just the window replacement.

Ms. Calise made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Barlo Signs for Jersey Mike's.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District, specifically 555 Main Street.
- 3) The structure in question is a non-contributing building; it is representative of a mid-century shopping plaza.
- 4) The building does not contribute to the historic and architectural significance of the district.
- 5) The work proposed by the applicant would not affect the character defining elements of the existing building.

Motion by Ms. Calise to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 555 Main Street for signage specific to "Mike's Jersey Subs". This is consistent with Commission Standard #5.

Seconded by Mr. Barkley.

No discussion on the motion.

VOTE: 6 – 0.

Historic District Commission Business

1. MINUTES: Action on the minutes of the August 10, 2016, September 14, 2016 and October 12, 2016 meetings

Ms. Drury motioned to approve the August 10, 2016 minutes as written. Seconded by Ms. Calise. Approved 4 – 0.

Ms. Drury motioned to approve the September 14, 2016 minutes as written. Seconded by Ms. Calise. Approved 5 – 0.

Ms. Calise motioned to approve the October 12, 2016 minutes as written. Seconded by Ms. Carron. Approved 5 – 0.

2. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS/OTHER: Commission members are invited to comment on any observations they have made within the District, ask questions about past approvals, request updates on violations, etc.

The Commissioners who attended the site visit at 15 Castle Street were pleased with the walk through and glad the home will be incorporated into the new development.

Motion to adjourn by Ms. Carron. Seconded by Ms. Calise. Adjourn at 7:25 p.m.

For additional information, please contact the Planning Department.
Respectfully submitted by:

Lea Anthony Hitchen, Assistant Town Planner