

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MINUTES
December 14, 2016 Meeting
Town Council Chambers – 6:00 PM HDC meeting

Present: Kim Balkcom, Chair, Matthew McGeorge, Vice-Chair, Erinn Calise (arrived at 6:10 pm), Kristen Carron and Gregory Maxwell.

Absent: Lauren Drury and Andrew Barkley.

Staff: Lea Anthony Hitchen, Assistant Town Planner.

Ms. Balkcom, Chair of the Commission, started the meeting at 6:0 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.

Historic District Commission Hearings

- 1. Feast Sandwich Company**
431 Main Street; 75 AP 3 Lot 97
Signage – FINAL

Ms. Balkcom read Standard #5 into the record as it is applicable to the 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.

Mr. John Sepulveda, owner of Feast Sandwich Company, represented the application. He explained the new signs will be installed at an existing freestanding roadside sign using the existing sign posts and there will be a wall sign above the front window as well as an awning sign above the entry door.

Mr. McGeorge commented the proposed signage aesthetically looks great, is appropriate and meets standard #5. Ms. Carron agreed with Mr. McGeorge.

Mr. Sepulveda noted if all goes well at the Town Council meeting and he receives his victualing license he plans to open the restaurant tomorrow.

Ms. Balkcom asked for a motion.

Ms. Carron made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Feast Sandwich Company.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District, specifically 431 Main Street.
- 3) The structure in question is a contributing building; it is representative of a c. 1840 Greek Revival structure.
- 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 Ms. Carron to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 431 Main Street for new signage. This is consistent with Commission Standard #5.

Seconded by Mr. McGeorge.

VOTE: 5 – 0.

- 2. Randy Lynch**
17 Revolution Street; Map 85 AP 1 Lot 379
Window Replacement – FINAL
(Continued from the November 9th meeting)

Ms. Balkcom stated Commission Standard 8 applies to the 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 summarized the previous month's meeting by noting it was continued in order for Mr. Lynch to explore alternative options for the existing installed windows. She noted the Applicant has since submitted a new quote from Douglas Lumber to replace the existing sashes.

Mr. Lynch explained he inquired with Douglas Lumber about applying an exterior grill to the exterior window units; unfortunately Anderson will not provide the grille kits as there is a great chance the grilles will fall off within a year and inserting the units is a trick in itself.

Mr. Lynch submitted detailed photos of the windows as was asked of him at the prior month's meeting. Mr. Lynch reminded the Commission the windows are vinyl clad wood windows, with wood on the inside.

Ms. Balkcom asked for clarification regarding whether Mr. Lynch was requesting approval for replacement of the sashes. Mr. Lynch said he was looking for approval on whatever the HDC recommends he needs.

Mr. Maxwell was happy to see the consistency that has been followed with the window replacement; the Applicant kept the window configuration the same when he replaced all the windows.

When asked about the material of the new sashes, Mr. Lynch said it would be the same, a fibrex clad wood sash with a wood interior and there would be exterior muntins this time.

Mr. Maxwell felt this was a tricky situation considering the Commission was asking the Applicant to replace replacement windows.

Mr. McGeorge thought a compromise was in order on the more important sashes, particularly the sashes that face the street. The Commissioners noted only the top sash would have to be replaced if the window was a 6/1 or 2/1.

Mr. McGeorge suggested that in order to not set a bad precedent and there is a reason why the HDC exists but to also work with residents of the district and not have to force the Applicant to replace all the windows in the house; noting however the Commission has that ability since the windows technically do not meet the standard at all. He recommended due to the way the house is positioned that the front and right sides (that faces the driveway) of the structure which have the most view should have the windows replaced with the fibrex clad wood sash with a wood interior as submitted by the Applicant.

Mr. Maxwell agreed with Mr. McGeorge's recommendation noting that it would be a good compromise. Ms. Balkcom agreed as well acknowledging she thought the Applicant was sincere in that the Applicant thought he was going to chip away at this project window by window and some of them had already been replaced. She thought the solution is a reasonable compromise; additionally the two sides (front and right) are the most visible especially because the house is located on a hill. Ms. Balkcom recommended giving Mr. Lynch blanket window sash replacement approval for the entire house so he can eventually work around the house to replace the other window sashes and he will not have to come before us again.

Mr. Maxwell noted on the positive side the Applicant only had to replace the sash and not the whole window.

Mr. McGeorge recommended stipulating in the Certificate of Appropriateness that the sashes must be replaced within 1 calendar year. Ms. Calise thought it was appropriate that the original windows remaining, those being the basement windows and the stairway window remain as is.

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 Randy Lynch.

- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District, specifically 17 Revolution Street.
- 3) The structure in question is a contributing building; it is representative of a c.1885 late Victorian/Shingle style 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 17 Revolution Street. This is consistent with Commission Standard #8. The conditions are as follows: the Applicant agrees to replace the street and right side windows with “true divided” sashes. Blanket approval is given to replace all the windows except the original basement and stairway window on the left side and be treated independently. This resolution shall be completed within one calendar year.

Seconded by Ms. Calise.

VOTE: 5 – 0.

3. John Vensel
137 Peirce Street; Map 85 AP 1 Lot 307
Minor Modification – FINAL
(Continued from the November 9th meeting)

Ms. Balkcom stated Commission Standard # 4 applies to this 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.

Mr. Vensel, owner of the property, represented the application.

Ms. Balkcom stated the installed railing system is not appropriate to the style of the house as the home is Greek Revival. She thought the ballusters in between the railing system are square then the post should also be square.

Mr. Maxwell noted the posts are very Victorian looking although the violation is not a hugely egregious error.

Mr. Vensel noted there used to large bushes where he installed the posts & rails himself; he simply wanted to have the railings for safety. He tried to match the railings as closely to what was already existing. Mr. Vensel indicated the finial was part of the whole railing.

Ms. Balkcom suggested changing out the posts to a more appropriate Greek Revival style. Mr. Vensel felt it was an easy fix and would simply remove the finials. He requested if he could wait until the spring or early summer to fix the mistake to which the HDC agreed.

Mr. McGeorge suggested refereeing the project. Mr. Vensel said he would replace the post with something more square, not ornate on top and very simple looking.

Staff recommended putting the project on hold with Mr. Vensel returning on his own will this spring/early summer.

**4. Main Street Restaurant Group, LLC
219 Main Street; Map 85 AP 1 Lot 212
Replace Windows, Doors & Siding, Signage – FINAL**

Ms. Calise recused herself from the application and left the dais.

Ms. Balkcom read the standards that apply 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. 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. *Standard 7* says exterior siding must be appropriate for the building to which it is applied. Vinyl and other modern composition sidings which may damage historic buildings are not appropriate and shall not be approved. *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.

Attorney Peter Nolan, Mr. Rocco Quattrocchi and contractor Paul Okolowicz represented the application.

The Commissioners agreed the signage was aesthetically pleasing along with the awning. When asked about the color, Mr. Quattrocchi said the sign was 3'x5' in size and will be red, gold and black and the awning will say "Rocco's Bistro."

There will be no lighting changed on the exterior of the building.

Mr. Quattrocchi explained above the awning there is existing plywood which needs to be replaced with more appropriate wood clapboard; the clapboards will be installed all the way to the top of the ceiling.

The HDC members debated the looks and style of the existing façade. Ms. Balkcom recalled the prior owner specifically requested smaller window openings due to the business being a chocolate shop and the sun played a role in the smaller window openings. All Commissioners agreed the parcel was a noncontributing property and anything the current petition does will be an improvement.

Mr. Okolowicz indicated the existing front door is nonfunctioning and needs to be replaced although he did try to save the door. He added the other half side is non-operational therefore it is narrow to allow two people to get through.

Mr. Okolowicz verified that most of the details will remain as is such as the raised panel boxes.

In terms of the windows Mr. Okolowicz confirmed the existing windows are plate glass windows which he is requesting to change to vinyl rolling windows which will be slightly wider. Mr. McGeorge admitted his only issue was the windows being a vinyl material, he suggested an aluminum clad bronze or black anodized versus a vinyl painted window. Mr. Okolowicz said the aluminum clad window would definitely work.

As for the door, Mr. Maxwell noted it is a faux wood with veneer finish. Mr. Okolowicz said it is a fiberglass insulated door with gel stain. Mr. Maxwell said he would rather see a smooth finish such as the Therma-Tru Smooth Star door.

Mr. McGeorge recommended refereeing the final window and door specification and approving the siding and signage/awning. The other HDC members agreed to that suggestion.

Mr. McGeorge and Mr. Maxwell volunteered to referee the window and door specs.

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

Ms. Carron made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Main Street Restaurant Group, LLC (Mr. Rocco Quattrocchi).
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District, specifically 219 Main Street.
- 3) The structure in question is a noncontributing building; it is representative of a c.1934 commercial building .
- 4) The building does not contribute to the historic and architectural significance of the district.
- 5) The work proposed by the applicant would improve the character defining elements of the existing building.

Motion by Ms. Carron to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 219 Main Street for signage, awning and siding. The final specifications of the windows and doors will be refereed. This is consistent with Commission Standards #4, 5, 7, and 8.

Seconded by Mr. McGeorge.

VOTE: 4 – 0.

**5. Jennifer & Peter Carney
30 Reynolds Street; Map 84 AP 2 Lot 155
Addition – FINAL**

Ms. Balkcom stated the project must comply with Commission Standards #4 and 5. *Standard #4* states all proposals for additions shall be appropriate to the original design of the building or to later changes which have historic significance of their own. *Standard #5* states new construction includes substantial additions or modifications to the exterior of existing buildings. The design of new construction need not be an exact or modified copy of historic styles and could be totally different in concept. However, all proposals for new construction shall be compatible with the surrounding buildings in size, scale, materials and siting, as well as with the general character of the historic district

Mr. McGeorge felt as though the changes made are a massive improvement to the project. Mr. Maxwell agreed.

Mr. Maxwell questioned if all the windows and doors will be the same as in the existing home. Ms. Carney said yes, she had received approval to replace 12 of the 13 original windows in October and will be using the same Pella Architectural window for the new addition. Ms. Carney noted the plans call for 4 windows and 2 French doors in the back and will remain black muntins.

Ms. Carney recalled that the original plan was for a flat roof on the rear addition; the new plan calls for the kitchen peak to continue through the addition. The doors which were originally on the north and south elevation are now on the east elevation.

Mr. McGeorge asserted the new proposal is a massive improvement; the only detail he is unsure of at this point is the gas fireplace external gable in the back as it appears to look like a doghouse. He thought it could be flusher. Ms. Carney agreed.

There was also an agreement to bring the rear stone porch together to make it one continuous platform instead of two.

The Commissioners unanimously agreed the project will look amazing when complete.

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

Ms. Calise made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Jennifer & Peter Carney.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District, specifically 30 Reynolds Street.
- 3) The structure in question is a contributing building; it is representative of a c.1890 late Victorian homestead 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 Ms. Calise to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 30 Reynolds Street for a rear addition. This is consistent with Commission Standard #5.

Seconded by Ms. Carron.

VOTE: 5 – 0.

Historic District Commission Business

1. MINUTES: Action on the minutes of the November 9, 2016 meeting.

Ms. Calise motioned to approve the November 9, 2016 minutes as written.
Seconded by Mr. Maxwell. Approved 5 – 0.

2. Tax Credit Approval – Curado, 441 Cedar Avenue; Map 73 AP 9 Lot 81

Ms. Balkcom approved and signed above tax credit application.

3. 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.

Ms. Balkcom took a picture of a vinyl railing installed in the vicinity of Rocky Hollow – she will submit picture to Staff.

Hill & Harbour Group real estate has installed signage without HDC approval – a violation will be issued.

The owners of The White Elephant create plaques and are willing to prepare a few examples for owners in the Historic District who are interested in purchasing them.

Motion to adjourn by Ms. Carron. Seconded by Ms. Calise. Adjourn at 7:20 p.m.

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

Lea Anthony Hitchen, Assistant Town Planner