

Historic District Commission Meeting Minutes 06/202017

Historic District Commission
Minutes
Landuse Meeting Room
June 20, 2017

Members present: Chair Ken Fowler, (KF) Jason Berger, (JB); (PJ); Mark Smith (MS)

Absent without notification: Elaine Steinert, (ES); Kameron Spaulding, (KS)

Absent with notification: Pat Jaouen (PJ)

Staff present: Peggy Ammendola, Land Use Clerk, (PA)

Robert Romeo, 27 Church St., Map 43 Parcel 169, Certificate of Appropriateness for a new sign "Marcelene"-

Presenting the application was Mr. Romeo. The sign will be 2X3 feet, two sided, white background and black letters. The picture shown indicates that the sign is swinging, but it will not be.

JB made a motion to approve the sign as presented with understanding that the sign will not swing. KS seconded the motion and the Commission vote to approve 4-0.

Overlee Property Holdings, LLC, 65 Church St., Map 43 Parcel 179, Certificate of Appropriateness, remodeling-

Rob Murray presented his application. He said that he is bringing the last retail unit at this property up to the building code. There is no landing; steps have different risers which is a safety issue. There will be a new landing and steps in front and a walkway along the building to the back porch. He added that the Building Department is requiring him to make the door handicap accessible door in the rear. There will be ramp railing with balusters and the wood will be pressure treated. It was pointed out that plans submitted called for "composite decking". It was clarified that the decking will be pressure treated wood.

JB made a motion to approve the application as presented with the condition that all of the components of the rail system would be constructed of wood with the exception of the steel pipe handrail and that the parts of the system will be painted white.

Discussion centered on the color of the paint.

JB amended his motion and moved to approve the application as presented with the condition that the rail system and decking be wood with the exception of the steel pipe and that the hand rails parts of the rail system be painted. He said that he doesn't believe that the posts in the rear are visible and if so would not be within the purview of the Commission.

MS seconded the motion and the Commission voted to approve 3-0-1 with KS abstaining.

Joan Ciolfi, 12 Housatonic Street, Map 43 Parcel 171, Certificate of Appropriateness for a new sign-

Ms. Ciolfi was not present. John McNinch, owner of the building was present, but he did not know any details regarding the application.

KS made a motion to approve the sign as presented, but the size is to be no larger than the maximum size allowed of 6 square feet. JB seconded. It was agreed that the sign would not swing, but be stationary. The Commission voted 4-0 to approve.

Rebecca Lilley, 33 Main St., Map 43 Parcel 21, Certificate of Appropriateness for remodeling and landscaping.

Presenting the application was Ms. Lilley. Also present was Anne Selke and Bob White. Ms. Lilley said that they are removing the railing and extending steps. Mr. White said that they will use the same materials. When asked if the building code required railing, Ms. Lilley responded in the negative and said that the Building Inspector has already looked at their proposal. Mr. White added that their intention is to comply with the building code. Ms. Selke said that the landscaping depicted in the photograph is what it will be. The sidewalk is pea stone and will have blue stone pavers.

KS made a motion to approve the application as presented. MS seconded the motion and the Commission voted to approve 4-0.

Violations Follow Up-At their February 21, 2017 meeting, the HDC agreed to advise the Building Department of the following three violations of the Historic District Bylaw:

Brava (27 Housatonic Street) - Neon sign

Gateways Inn (51 Walker Street) - Multiple internally illuminated signs

Sotheby's (34 Church Street) - Internally illuminated sign

Recently JB was advised that the Building Department has contacted Sotheby's and has advised that they will start to fine for non-compliance.

Two additional violations have now been added and they are:
Barnbrook and 413.

Other Business:

Violations-The Building Commissioner is the Enforcement Officer for any violations related to zoning and the Historic District and the Commissioners discussed the best way to establish communication with the Building Department so that violations of the Historic District Bylaw can be dealt with in a consistent manner. Previous Building Commissioners have indicated that they would prefer to have the HDC discuss as a group their concerns regarding violations rather than to have the Chair deal directly with the Building Commissioner, so the Building Commissioners have been invited from time to time to HDC meetings. With regards to the Violations Follow Up item above, the Building Department was advised on February 23, 2017 of the violations noted at HDC meeting of February 21st. Apparently there was a breakdown in communications, resulting in the HDC only recently being informed of action pertaining to one of the reported violations. The consensus of the Commission was that that within the next few months there should be a meeting with the Building Department, the Town Manager and the HDC to discuss the best way to "tighten the process"

Reorganization-It was agreed to put this on the July 18, 2017 agenda. KS reminded everyone that he is willing to continue to serve until someone is willing to replace him.

Scheduling-The Commissioners agreed that in the future all hearings will be scheduled for the same time and no longer staggered.

Future of the Historic District-For some years there has been discussion regarding whether there should be an HDC. The Commissioners discussed and agreed that it is appropriate to have a Historic District which would overlap with the Commercial District. The District is already regulated by the zoning. It was agreed that the vast majority of people want to protect the historic look. KS suggested that perhaps the Guidelines could be converted to "design standards" and an individual could present their project directly to the Building Department. If the proposal met the design standards the Building Department could issue a permit, but if it didn't meet the standards, the applicant could appeal to the ZBA. This would eliminate the need for the Historic District Commission. The Town would have to make the decision as to whether or not they support this idea. The Commissioners are in favor of having this discussion continued at subsequent meetings.

Approve Minutes-June 6, 2017-JB made a motion to approve the minutes. MS seconded the motion with minor edits. The Commission voted to approve as amended 3-0-1. KS abstained as he was not at that meeting.

JB made a motion to adjourn. MS seconded the motion and the Commission voted to agree 4-0. The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Peggy Ammendola