

**MINUTES**  
**EAST GREENWICH HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
**February 14 , 2018 Meeting**  
**Town Council Chambers - 6:00 p.m.**

Present: Kim Balkcom, Chair, Matthew McGeorge, Vice-Chair, Gregory Maxwell, Lauren Drury, Erinn Calise, and Kristen Carron

Absent: Andrew Barkley

Staff: Aaron Lindo, Planning Technician; Andrew Teitz, Legal Counsel.

The Chair convened the meeting at 6:02 PM. She read the meeting procedures into the record and introduced the membership.

**Historic District Commission Hearings – 6:00 PM**

**1. Michele Caprio for property owned by Respro Realty  
413 Main Street; Map 75, Plat 3, Lot 95  
Awning Sign**

The applicant was present to answer any questions the Commission had. Mr. Maxwell commented that the over concept of the awning was agreeable, but he found that the awning was massive in scale as it went along the entire structure. He opined that the awning be broken up into two parts with a gap in between the recessed doorway. There was a discussion amongst the Commission regarding the break in the awning. It was concluded that either a smaller awning or two separate awnings with the break in the door gap would be preferable. The modification could be refereed and there would be no reason to come back to the HDC.

A motion to approve the application with refereed modifications was made by Mr. Maxwell, seconded by Ms. Carron. Motion was unanimously approved.

VOTE: 6-0 in favor of approval of awning sign.

**2. Paul Vespia for owners Mike and Laura Bottaro  
30 Reynolds Street; Map 84 AP 2 Lot 155  
Demolition of Garage/Shed and Construction of New Garage with Portico; Minor Modification  
to Front Porch of Home**

The chair listed the applicable standards. The applicant, Paul Vespia accompanied by owner Laura Bottaro, have been before the Commission on November 8, 2017 for a conceptual hearing regarding the demolition. This is the second required meeting for the demolition approval process. The applicant explained what "lifespan" wood was and noted that the windows will be Anderson Architectural series, 400 series, or equivalent Pella windows. The project has already passed zoning for a height variance and the structure is being pulled off of the property line which is a benefit.

The applicant continued to explain the application. The whole garage will be demolished but the plank wall and wood is going to be salvaged and reused as best as possible. A discussion was held regarding the concept of the demolition and new construction of the garage and it was determined that a vote on the demolition would be held first. Ms. Carron gave the criteria for a demolition in the historic district. There were no challenges for the demolition idea. Ms. Carron made a motion for approval of the demolition and

made the findings of fact. Mr. McGeorge seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

VOTE: 6 – 0 in favor of approving demolition for the existing garage.

The second part of the application was the new construction of a garage. Mr. Maxwell noted that the shed dormer on the garage has no windows which looks very odd. Mr. Vespia stated that the intention was to put windows in at a later time and noted that the back of the garage cannot be seen from anywhere. Mr. Maxwell replied that 1 window would help the elevation on the rear dormer. He continued with another comment about the garage door windows. The windows should be taller than they are wide. There was a discussion regarding the discrepancy between the drawings and the renderings regarding the proportion of the garage doors. It was determined that the new construction match the rendering and not the elevation drawings.

To recap, Ms. Drury noted that the only concerns with the construction of the new garage were the doors and the window in the back of the garage. Mr. McGeorge suggested that the applicant send a sketch to the Planning Department to match the renderings presented. He continued with specifics that need to be modified. Two windows on the back dormer should be shown, modification of the glazing profile of the garage door windows, and make the column dressing consistent with the presentation. The applicant agreed to the conditions for approval and would submit supplemental information to be refereed.

A motion to approve was made by Ms. Carron who made the findings of fact. Mr. McGeorge seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

VOTE: 6 – 0 in favor of approving new construction of a garage.

**3. Twenty Water Street Realty, LLC  
695 Main Street; A.P. 75, Plat 3, Lot 76  
Demolition**

For this application, Ms. Calise recused herself. Attorney Peter Nolan represented the application. There was a brief discussion about the demolition. The standards for demolition were read into the record. There were neither problems nor a discussion regarding the demolition. A motion for approval of the demolition was made by Ms. Carron who made the findings of fact. Mr. McGeorge seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

VOTE: 5 – 0 in favor of approving the demolition.

**4. Jerry Zarrella, Jr. for Union Street, LLC  
9 Union Street; Map 75, Plat 3, Lot 88  
New Construction of a Two-family Dwelling**

For this application, Ms. Calise returned to the dais and Mr. McGeorge recused himself. Ms. Balkcom read the standards and recommendations and noted that this project has come before the Commission for conceptual approval. Attorney Sanford Resnick represented the application. He explained that the applicant has appeared before the Zoning Board who granted the requested relief. Ms. Balkcom commented that there were no materials listed for the project which poses a problem for final approval.

The project architect, George Bennett, presented the Commission with handouts of drawings with materials listed. Mr. Bennett went over the changes from the previous time the applicant came before the Commission and materials that will be used in the project. There will be cedar clapboards on the bottom story with maibec shingles on the second story. The trim work will be primed white cedar, the shingles are architectural grade asphalt shingles, and the windows and doors are Anderson 400 series. The front doors

would be Rouge Valley mahogany door for both units.

Regarding the size of the building, Mr. Bennett asked the Commission to consider that the building to the east is 3 stories. The land pitches up and the proposed structure still wouldn't be as tall as the buildings on Main Street. There was a discussion regarding the view from Main Street. The applicant explained that he did as much as possible to reduce the volume. Ms. Balkcom commented that the structure has more of a suburban look because of the garages. Mr. Zarrella replied that the garages were implemented because there is a parking issue in Town from a zoning perspective.

Mr. Maxwell opined that, given the circumstances, there is less of a problem with overall height. The changes made have helped scale down the project. There was a lengthy discussion of the overall busyness of the structure. After the discussion and a clarification of the renderings, there was a determination that the structure did not seem as overwhelming as previously viewed.

Due to the absence of listed materials, Mr. Teitz advised that the Commission could decide to only approve the footprint of the structure to install the foundation at the applicant's own risk. The applicant would have to reapply to the HDC to obtain approval for the materials being used in the project. The Certificate of Appropriateness for the project is approved for the foundation only to be at the applicant's risk and all work above the foundation sill will be submitted and approved by the full HDC.

Ms. Drury made a motion to approve with the aforementioned conditions which was seconded by Ms. Carron. The motion was unanimously passed by the Commission.

VOTE: 5 – 0 in favor of approving the new construction for foundation only.

**5. Blu on the Water for owner Blu Realty LLC  
20 Water Street; Map 85, Plat 1, Lots 403 and 411  
Addition and Modifications**

Mr. McGeorge rejoined the Commission for this item. Spencer McCombe, the architect for the project, represented the application. Ms. Balkcom read the standards applicable to the application. Mr. McCombe gave an overview of the project, stating that the building was recently purchased by Blu on the Water and now they are able to modify the building the way they would like to. Mr. McCombe described the modifications on the north, south, and east facades. After the presentation, the Commission commented that the project was excellently presented and a significant improvement to the structure.

Mr. McCombe noted that the structure is not from the 1980's as indicated from the state historic survey. The interior structure indicates that the building is old, dating as far back to the 1750's. Staff noted that the state survey was relayed from previous HDC applications for the building. Mr. Teitz commented that the state survey could indeed be wrong.

A motion to approve the project as submitted was made by Ms. Calise, seconded by Mr. McGeorge, and passed unanimously.

VOTE: 6 – 0 in favor of approval of the addition and modification to the structure.

**6. Tim Grenier for property owned by Elaine Currie  
32 Exchange Street; Map 85, AP 1, Lots 87 and 382  
Partial Demolition/Partial Reconstruction – CONCEPTUAL**

Don Powers, the architect for the project from Union Studios, represented the application. Mr.

Powers noted that the project was advertised as a partial demolition but the application states complete demolition and full reconstruction. Mr. Teitz commented for the record that since the hearing is conceptual, it is appropriate to discuss the project as a full demolition. There was a discrepancy between the description and the work category in the application that led to an incorrect advertisement.

Mr. Powers described the application, stating that the original intent was to try and renovate the original building. Upon further structural inspection, it became clear that the building would have to be demolished and instead replicated in the original configuration and foot print. The intent is to construct the building to be period specific. Mr. Powers noted that the original building was smaller than the building currently on the site. The reconstruction would replicate the original building and would be a gateway to the rest of the property behind. The concept of the project is not finalized. The ultimate plan is to put around 10 units in the whole site (including behind the reconstructed building) via a Comprehensive Permit.

The Commission was generally in favor of the concept. The applicant noted that the contract to purchase the property is contingent on HDC approval of demolition. Mr. Teitz commented that if the project is to be a Comprehensive Permit, the Planning Board would take over purview. He continued, saying that if the Commission is comfortable with the amount of information submitted, the current meeting could be considered the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting for the required 2 meetings for a demolition. Ms. Balkcom commented that she would consider the application as complete and felt strongly that it can be considered a full demolition application.

There was a discussion amongst the Commission regarding the application being considered a complete application for a full demolition. It was determined that the Commission would consider the application as complete for a full demolition. More detail on the proposed structure was requested from the applicant for the 2<sup>nd</sup> demolition hearing. A motion was made by Mr. McGeorge to indicate the application as complete for a full demolition, the structure makes a minimal contribution to the historic fabric of the district, and is not valuable for the period of architecture in the district. The motion was seconded by Ms. Carron and passed unanimously.

VOTE: 6 - 0 in favor of the motion.

#### **Historic District Commission Business - After Hearings**

1. MINUTES: Action on the minutes of the January 10, 2018 and December 13, 2017 meetings.

Ms. Drury made a motion to approve the December 13, 2017 minutes, seconded by Mr. McGeorge, and passed unanimously. Ms. Carron made a motion to approve the January 10, 2018 minutes, seconded by Ms. Calise, and passed unanimously.

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.

Motion by Ms. Carron, second by Ms. Calise to adjourn at 8:36 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Planning Staff - for further information, please contact the Department.