

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MINUTES
May 8, 2019 Meeting
Town Council Chambers – 6:30 PM HDC meeting

Present: Kristen Carron, Chair; Matthew McGeorge, Vice-Chair, Erinn Calise, Gregory Maxwell, and Nicole D'Amato.

Absent: Andrew Barkley and Lauren Drury.

Staff: Lea Anthony Hitchen, Assistant Town Planner and Andy Teitz, Town Solicitor.

Ms. Carron, Chair of the Commission, started the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Ms. Carron 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. Carron 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. Carron 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. Carron introduced the Board members and Staff present and read the application items into the record.

Historic District Commission Hearings

- 1. Bethany and Erik Wilcox
33 Bridge Street; Map 75 AP 3 Lot 213
Addition of a Shed Dormer on North Elevation - FINAL**

Ms. Carron stated Commission Standards 4 and 5 apply to the application *Standard 4* states all proposals for additions and architectural changes 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.

Ms. Bethany Wilcox, property owner of 33 Bridge Street, represented the application. She explained her request is to construct a shed dormer along the north front elevation. The new shed dormer will match the 12:1.75 slope of the existing two dormers located on the back of the house. A total of six Anderson 400 Series awning windows will be installed, with the center windows being slightly smaller than the end windows. In terms of materials all trim, rake and soffit details will match the existing.

Mr. McGeorge felt the proposal was relatively simple and a normal evolutionary element to the type of house – he therefore had no issues with the project. Mr. McGeorge did question the fenestration rhythm/window pattern and asked if the “A” window unit should be changed to a “B” unit. Ms. Wilcox liked that suggestion as she wanted contiguous windows. Mr. Maxwell liked the fenestration layout and was willing to approve the layout as is. After looking at the interior layout it appeared the window layout as proposed would have to remain as is due to closet space. In terms of materials Ms. Wilcox stated the materials will match existing. Mr. Maxwell confirmed the new materials will be wood and not synthetic products.

Ms. Hitchen commented she has been assisting the Applicant with preparing a zoning application since it also requires dimensional relief. Atty. Teitz added once a nonconforming use is intensified in the setback area it triggers zoning approval; if the proposed dormers were set two feet back relief would not be required. He also suggested approving the HDC application subject to ZBR approval.

With no further comments Ms. Carron asked for a motion.

Mr. Maxwell made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Bethany and Erik Wilcox.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District, specifically 33 Bridge Street.

- 3) The property in question is a contributing structure; it is representative of a c.1895 early Victorian cottage.
- 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 given precedent there are existing dormers on the rear of the house.

Motion by Mr. Maxwell to approve the application at 33 Bridge Street for the addition of a shed dormer on the north elevation subject to zoning board approval. This is consistent with Commission standards 4 and 5.

Seconded by Mr. McGeorge.

VOTE: 5 – 0.

**2. Janice O’Connell for Sprigs
555 Main Street; Map 75 AP 3 Lot 84
Signage - FINAL**

Ms. Carron 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.

Ms. Janice O’Connell, owner of Sprigs Flower Shop, represented the application. She explained her shop is currently located at 442 Main Street and will be is relocating to the East Greenwich Commons Plaza and therefore needs new signage. The new sign will be mounted onto the building; there will be no signage on the freestanding sign. She noted the wall sign will consist of green non illuminated letters and will meet the requirements of the plaza standards. The Commission members found the proposal to be consistent with past approved signs in the plaza and had no objections to the application.

With no further comments Ms. Carron asked for a motion.

Ms. Calise made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Janice O'Connell of Sprigs.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District, specifically 555 Main Street.
- 3) The property in question is a noncontributing structure; it is representative of a c.1950 commercial shopping plaza.
- 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 at 555 Main Street for Sprigs signage. This is consistent with Commission standard 5.

Seconded by Mr. McGeorge.

VOTE: 5 – 0.

Discussion Items

1. Minutes: Review and approval of the March 13, 2019 meeting minutes.

Motion to approve the March 13, 2019 meeting minutes by Ms. Carron.
Seconded by Ms. Calise. VOTE: 5 – 0.

2. COMMISSIONER REPORTS: Commission members may report on cases where they have been appointed as Referee, and refer observations or possible violations that they have observed to staff. Any substantive discussion of any such Report shall require addition to the Agenda by motion.

Motion to adjourn by Ms. Calise. Seconded by Ms. D'Amato. Approved 5 – 0.

Adjourn at 7:26 pm.

For additional information, please contact the Planning Department.

Respectfully submitted by:

Lea Anthony Hitchen, Assistant Town Planner