

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MINUTES

May 13, 2020 Meeting

VIRTUAL – Convened at 6:30 PM via the ZOOM Remote Meeting Platform

Present: Kristen Carron, Chair; Matthew McGeorge, Vice-Chair; Gregory Maxwell, Erinn Calise and Andrew Barkley.

Absent: Nicole D’Amato.

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

Ms. Kristen 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.

In housekeeping matters, Ms. Hitchen noted application #7, Centennial Properties, has since withdrawn their application. Additionally, Mr. Maxwell of 49 Marion Street has requested a continuance to June 10th.

Ms. Carron motioned to continue to June 10th, seconded by Mr. Barkley.
VOTE: 4 – 0.

Historic District Commission Hearings

- 1. Peter D. Nolan**
108-110 Spring Street; Map 85 AP 2 Lot 173

Proposed Work: Minor Modification (Install a Portico Over Rear Entry Door) – FINAL

(Ms. Calise recused herself from the application.)

Ms. Carron stated Commission Standard 4 applies to this application. *Standard 4* states that proposals for architectural changes or alterations shall be appropriate to the original design of the building or to later changes that have acquired significance of their own.

Mr. Peter D. Nolan, owner of 108 Spring Street, represented the application. He explained the request is to install an overhang above the rear entry door which is the main access point for all three tenants of the building. Mr. Nolan wanted to add the overhang for aesthetic purposes as well as to protect the tenants from inclement weather. He referred to Exhibit #1, and noted the proposed metal standing seam gable roof will have a 12:12 pitch roof with 2'-6" "fypon" decorative support brackets. At this point he was not sure about the lighting situation was assumed the lighting will follow the design on the plans which will be moved to under the overhang.

Ms. Carron had no objections to the application and was of the opinion it met standard #4.

Mr. McGeorge agreed with Ms. Carron although had reservations about the "fypon" product.

Mr. Barkley also pointed out the use of the proposed "fypon" product as it is not in keeping with the original design of the building; he suggested using a wood material. Mr. Nolan had no objection to using wood.

Mr. Barkley commented the recent renovation looks fantastic.

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

Mr. McGeorge made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Mr. Peter D. Nolan.

- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District, specifically 108-110 Spring Street.
- 3) The property in question is a contributing structure, being a c.1920 Princess-Anne, late-Victorian structure.
- 4) The building contributes 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. McGeorge to approve the application as submitted at 108-110 Spring Street for the installation of a portico over the rear entry door with the condition the synthetic “Fypon” material will be changed to real wood. This is consistent with Commission standard #4.

Seconded by Mr. Barkley.

VOTE: 4 – 0.

2. Robert Jordan
59 Marion Street; Map 85 AP 1 Lot 391
Proposed Work: New Construction of a 12’x8’ Shed – FINAL

(Mr. Maxwell recused himself from the application).

Ms. Carron stated Commission *Standard 5* requires that new construction be compatible with surrounding buildings in size, scale, materials and siting and with the general character of the historic district.

Mr. Robert Jordan of 59 Marion Street represented the application. He explained his nonhistoric c.1956 home does not have a garage thus he is requesting to construct a shed to store lawn equipment which will meet zoning setbacks.

Ms. Hitchen explained the proposed Cape Cod style shed will be 12’x8’ in size and be located in the southwest corner of the property. The shed will have a gable roof, architectural roof shingles, vinyl Perma-Trim double entrance doors,

5/8” Dura Temp siding with two 18”x27” windows and will be painted a pale yellow to match the house color.

Ms. Carron had no objections to the application considering it fits well with the house and is appropriate in terms of size, scale and materials.

Mr. McGeorge noted there is lots of precedence with this type of application considering he himself went through the exact situation. He found the application completely acceptable and will be voting in favor of it.

Mr. Barkley agreed with the Commissioner’s comments.

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

Mr. McGeorge made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Mr. Robert Jordan.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District, specifically 59 Marion Street.
- 3) The property in question is a noncontributing structure, being a c.1956 mid-late Twentieth century building.
- 4) The building contributes 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. McGeorge to approve the application as submitted at 59 Marion Street for the construction of a 12’x8’ shed. This is consistent with Commission standard #5.

Seconded by Mr. Barkley.

VOTE: 4 – 0.

3. Peter and Bonnie Marks

759 Tillinghast Road; Map 22 AP 19 Lot 79

Proposed Work: Addition of a 10’x16’ Rear Screened Porch – FINAL

Ms. Carron stated Commission *Standard 5* requires that new construction be compatible with surrounding buildings in size, scale, materials and siting and with the general character of the historic district.

Ms. Bonnie Marks, property owner, represented the application. She explained her request is to construct a 10'x16' screened porch off of the rear of the garage; the new porch roof will have a 5/12 pitch, a typical deck detail with 2"x6" top rails, 2"x2" balusters, 4"x4" posts and a landing a steps leading to the backyard. She confirmed the existing rear steps will be removed to make way for the new screened-in porch.

Mr. McGeorge found the project to be a perfect solution which will provide a great space and will maintain within scale and proportion of the existing home as well as not be visible from the street. Additionally he felt the addition to be a natural progression and benign development of the structure. Mr. Maxwell echoed the same comments as Mr. McGeorge as he too felt the screened-in porch was of an appropriate scale and had no issues with 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 Peter and Bonnie Marks.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic Tillinghast Road District, specifically 759 Tillinghast Road.
- 3) The property in question is a noncontributing structure, being a c.1950s ranch style home.
- 4) The building contributes 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 as submitted at 759 Tillinghast Road to construct a 10'x16' screened porch off the rear of the garage. This is consistent with Commission standard #5.

Seconded by Mr. McGeorge.

VOTE: 5 – 0.

4. Joseph Colaluca
104 Duke Street; Map 85 AP 1 Lot 415
Proposed Work: Complete Demolition - FIRST HEARING

(Mr. Barkley recused himself from the hearing.)

Ms. Carron stated Commission Standard of Review Number 9 applies to this application which states demolition shall only be acceptable provided it would significantly benefit the Town, would serve the greater interest of the community as a whole, and that there are no alternatives to demolition available. Demolitions shall not result in a significant threat or loss of an historic and/or architectural resource to the Town, State or nation.

Mr. Joseph Colaluca, owner of 104 Duke Street, explained he has owned the property for well over a year and has gone back and forth as to how to renovate the building with restoration being the original route to take but he has found there are many issues with the property as he moves along. Mr. Colaluca stated there is no structural value remaining and he asserted he made an honest attempt to keep and restore the structure. He has been advised from his structural engineer the building is unsafe and should be knocked down. Mr. Colaluca realizes there are many zoning variances required should he start new as the current structure is an illegal six unit building, it encroaches onto Town property and there are many outstanding issues but in the long run it is a hazard to contractors and neighbors. Mr. Colaluca referred to a prior conversation with Ms. Hitchen and Mr. Marinaro who seem to be in support of a demolition after hearing the litany of issues and realizing the building is a huge liability.

Ms. Carron discussed the demolition process, noting it requires two hearings (with this evening being the first hearing). She noted the Commission must decide if the structure is contributing to the Town and if it is contributing then determine if the application is complete. Once that is done then the Applicant can move onto the second hearing.

Mr. McGeorge found the application itself to be very thorough; first he did not have a problem supporting the demolition given he did not think there was an

alternative to demolition in this particular case given the poor condition of the structure. He pointed out there are a couple of code deficiencies on the proposed plan which he warned the designer could pose ethical violations down the road; with that aside Mr. McGeorge was of the opinion the application meets the standard for demolition.

Atty. Teitz expressed his concern that it would be highly unlikely that all the relief would be achieved if demolition is granted; he assumed something much smaller will have to go on the parcel. He was of the opinion there might be some relief granted from the setback he could not imagine any degree of relief from what is currently there. He questioned if there was a less expensive way to shore the building up.

Mr. McGeorge commented the owner needs to decide at what point does a demolition become more cost beneficial versus a restoration when 99 percent of the building is being replaced. Mr. Eric Engle, project architect, noted an attempt can be made to salvage some of the original building by reinforcement but expected about 80-90 percent of the structure to be replaced to bring it up to structural adequacy.

Mr. Bill Porter, of C.A. Pretzer, explained the north and south walls are currently not attached to foundations and are significantly bowed. The west wall is non-perpendicular to the north and south walls and not tied correctly to the floor diaphragms and the floor diaphragms are not framed in a way that they could adequately brace the wall. Additionally, the second floor has significant fire damage and will need to be replaced and the roof has raised collar ties on top of a knee wall which has long term damage from loads rusting out, permanent creep damage in the rafters and studs. Mr. Porter noted the north and south walls will need to be completely replaced along with the roof rafters, the entire second floor, and a good portion of the third floor in order to adequately brace the western wall. He added the foundation may not be suitable for the structure so the scope of work will require removing walls and building a new foundation, building new walls while also building a new roof. The project will essentially be a rebuild if we are to “maintain” it according to Mr. Porter, noting there will be a very low percent of useful structure to be maintained.

Atty. Teitz pointed out the structure cannot be rebuilt as is considering there are existing encroachments onto the street.

There was much discussion between the Commission members and Applicant regarding the idea of keeping the existing structure and restoring it versus a demolition and new construction.

Mr. Colaluca pointed out he wants to maintain the fabric of the neighborhood. Mr. McGeorge insinuated that can still be achieved since new construction does not need to be a replica, it just must meet standard #5, that a structure be compatible with the surrounding buildings in size, scale, materials and siting and the general character of the neighborhood.

Mr. Maxwell inquired if there were any other structural concerns the Commission should be aware of. Mr. Porter suggested the building is best to be looked at from the outside although it is okay to enter the first floor carefully but the 2nd floor is off limits; the first floor is stable as long as there is no snow.

Ms. Calise commented she found the application to be complete as well as found the building to be contributing. She noted with a demolition it provides an opportunity to be creative and do something interesting with the site. There was further conversation as to what the HDC would want to see for a new construction project.

Ms. Carron asserted she preferred to not rush the project along and felt a site visit would be very beneficial in this particular case.

Ms. Carron motioned to find that 104 Duke Street is a contributing structure. Seconded by Ms. Calise. VOTE: 4-0.

Ms. Carron motioned to find the submitted application is complete. Seconded by Mr. McGeorge. VOTE: 4-0.

Ms. Carron noted for the second hearing she would anticipate seeing renderings for the intended proposed replacement if demolition is the route the Applicant takes.

The majority of the Commission members felt a site visit was in order for due diligence purposes. Site visit set for Wednesday, May 20th at 12 noon.

**5. Angel Winpenny, MMLSAJK, Inc. d/b/a The Patio
431 Main Street; Map 75 AP 3 Lot 97
Proposed Work: Construction of a 12'x18' Pergola & Exterior
Countertop on South side Existing Concrete Pad; Remediate
Zoning Violations Issued for Installed Signage and Fencing without
Appropriate Approvals - FINAL**

Ms. Carron stated signage, fencing and the pergola are types of new construction that 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. Angel Winpenny represented the application; she explained she is requesting to construct a 12'x 18' pergola over the existing concrete slab where the former restaurant had outdoor seating. She explained the ledge on the existing patio area is a liability issue and is therefore is trying to define the area more.

Mr. McGeorge commented if the pergola material were changed from pressure treated wood to cedar wood he would not have any fundamental issues but it clearly lacks details and is not near final level design, meaning it needs true dimensions, but based on the submitted photograph on what it could look like he supported the idea of a pergola being installed.

Based on the information that was submitted, Mr. Maxwell felt the design was heavy looking and required more information.

Mr. Barkley said he had a hard time getting his bearing as to where the pergola was going to be located based on the sketch submitted. Ms. Carron agreed. The Commission agreed a scaled drawing with dimensioned drawings of the pergola would need to be submitted and this portion of the application would be continued to the following meeting.

Moving onto the sign violation, Mr. McGeorge stated he did not necessarily have any issues with the sign providing it meets the zoning ordinance. Additionally he did not have problems with the design of the sign but recommended the Applicant submit full dimensions of the sign. Mr. Barkley agreed.

With regard to the faux grass greenery fence/ appurtenance installed around the ledge Atty. Teitz agreed the Town has jurisdiction over it due to the way it is attached to the ground and it not being portable.

Mr. McGeorge commented that aesthetically he did not have a problem with the faux fence but it appeared there were more attractive options. Ms. Carron found the faux boxwood fence odd looking and makes the patio space enclosed and uninviting. She was not in disagreement that something should be installed but did not think the faux boxwood fence was the right choice.

Mr. Barkley shared the same opinion as Ms. Carron noting the frame of the installed fence is not horrible but suggested a shadow fence or another option so the area is not as enclosed. Mr. Maxwell commented by using a portable device will provide the Applicant design freedom for allowing additional creative opportunities. Mr. Maxwell noted that in the meantime the Applicant should provide additional drawings, sketches and more detailed information in lieu of the faux boxwood fence.

Atty. Teitz asserted that it might make sense to continue the whole application in order to deal with it all at once noting that he would agree on behalf of the Town to stay enforcement of the issued violations (sign and fence) through the next HDC meeting, being June 10th.

Regarding the stockade fence around the dumpster, Mr. McGeorge stated a stockade style fence is not allowed in the district but did not mind the corrugated metal fence that is on the left side of the dumpster. He suggested the fence has to be something more realistic and holistic that screens the dumpster area. Ms. Carron emphasized the Applicant needs to find a more suitable fence that will fit in better with the surroundings.

Mr. Peter Casale confirmed he had received enough feedback, clarification and input from the Commission members in order to submit additional information for next month's hearing.

Motion by Mr. McGeorge to continue the application to June 10th. Seconded by Ms. Carron. VOTE: 5 – 0.

6. Jeffrey Lynch

68 Friendship Street; Map 75 AP 2 Lot 214

Proposed Work: Minor Modification (two “overhang” additions located on the east & west elevations of home; installation of an overhang on the side door; and small shed located at end of driveway). WORK IS ALREADY COMPLETED

Ms. Carron stated Commission standards apply to the application, those being #4 and 5. *Standard 4* states that 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.

Mr. Jeff Lynch, owner of 68 Friendship Street, represented the application. Mr. Lynch apologized for doing the work beforehand but installed the bumpouts as there was water infiltrating into the basement windows. Additionally the side “slats” helps eliminate leaves and debris from getting into the basement window well area. He confirmed there is no door to access the basement but cover basement windows.

Although quirky, Mr. Maxwell did not have any objections to the bumpouts/window coverings considering the Applicant used all appropriate materials and the structure is not necessarily historically significant. He was more concerned with the bumpouts being a safety concern. Mr. Lynch confirmed the bumpout “door” swings out both ways. Mr. McGeorge echoed Mr. Maxwell’s comments noting he had no issues with the bumpouts. Ms. Carron commented the bumpouts were not necessarily something she would consider doing but she saw the project as being removable without harming the fabric of the main structure therefore she did not have objections to the bumpouts.

The Commission had no objections to the overhang/portico above the side entry door as well as the trash enclosure located at the end of the driveway.

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 Jeffrey Lynch.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District, specifically 68 Friendship Street.
- 3) The property in question is a noncontributing structure, being a c.1950s ranch style home.
- 4) The building contributes 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 as submitted at 68 Friendship Street to allow two “overhang” bumpout additions located on the east and west elevations of the home; the installation of an overhang above the side door and the construction of a small trash shed at the end of the driveway. This is consistent with Commission standards #4 and 5.

Seconded by Ms. Calise.

VOTE: 5 – 0.

Historic District Commission Business - After Hearings

1. Minutes: Review and approval of the November 13, 2019, January 8, 2020, February 12, 2020, February 26, 2020, and March 11, 2020 meeting minutes.

Minutes tabled until the following meeting.

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.

No Commissioner comments.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. McGeorge. Seconded by Mr. Barkley. VOTE: 5 - 0

Adjourned at 8:45 pm.

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

Lea Anthony Hitchen, Assistant Town Planner