

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MINUTES
June 12, 2019 Meeting
Town Council Chambers – 6:30 PM HDC meeting

Present: Kristen Carron, Chair; Erinn Calise, Lauren Drury, Andrew Barkley and Nicole D’Amato.

Absent: Matthew McGeorge, Vice-Chair and Gregory Maxwell.

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. Tyler Gammons
14 London Street; Map 75 A.P. 1 Lot 184
Blanket Window Replacement – FINAL**

Ms. Carron stated *Standard 8* applies to the application. It 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. Storm windows of appropriate design are also available and should be installed to be as unobtrusive as possible.

Mr. Tyler Gammons of 14 London Street, owner of the property, represented the application. Mr. Gammons explained that although he is requesting blanket window replacement he will replace the windows one side at a time. He noted most of the windows are rotted or painted shut and one of the rear windows has fallen out. The new windows will maintain the 2/2 double hung configuration. Mr. Gammons believes the existing windows are not original to the house and has estimated the current windows to have been installed in the early 1900s. Staff agreed with this statement as a home built in c.1750 would most likely have a 6/6 or 9/9 window configuration which this house does not have.

Mr. Barkley inquired about the Harvey replacement window as being aluminum clad or vinyl clad. Mr. Gammons was not sure as his contractor selected the replacement window.

When asked if the replacement will be a true divided light Mr. Gammons said the Harvey Majesty is a simulated window but has the muntins on the interior and exterior with spacer bar in the middle.

The Commission requested the Applicant submit additional information confirming the material for the replacement window; the preference was either full wood or an aluminum clad exterior but not a vinyl exterior. The suggestion was made to referee the additional information.

When questioned if the front octagon window would also be replaced Mr. Gammons said that window is located in the attic space and is in better condition than the double hung windows so he most likely will not be replacing the octagon window.

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

Ms. D'Amato made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Tyler Gammons.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District, specifically 14 London Street.

- 3) The property in question is a contributing structure; it is representative of a c. 1750 Colonial/Federal style home.
- 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. D'Amato to approve the application at 14 London Street for the blanket window replacement excluding the front octagon window. This approval is for the Harvey Majesty window; additional specific window selection must be refereed in terms of exterior material – the material can be aluminum clad or wood, not vinyl and muntins must be interior and exterior with spacer bar. This is consistent with Commission standard #8.

Seconded by Ms. Calise.

Referees to be Mr. Barkley and Ms. Carron

VOTE: 5 – 0.

2. Red Stripe Holdings, LLC
455 Main Street; Map 75 AP 3 Lot 87
Replace Front Entry Door – FINAL

Ms. Carron stated *Standard 4* applies to the application which 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. Paul Conforti represented Red Stripe Holdings, LLC. He explained he is requesting to replace the existing front entry wood double doors that were installed when Black and Blue Steakhouse renovated the building and he therefore inherited the doors. Mr. Conforti asserted the existing doors are problematic in terms of constant repairs and maintenance and are also extremely heavy to open for patrons and employees when serving customers outside. He requested to change the wood doors to a single swing glass doors with side lights and a transom; the new door will have the same design and have the same black frame to complement the black framed folding windows.

By reading the Staff report Mr. Conforti said he was pleasantly surprised to learn the door being proposed is very similar to a door that was once in place when The Indian Club resided at the premises.

Given the structure is a noncontributing to the district Ms. Carron did not have any objections to the applications.

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 Red Stripe Holdings, LLC.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District, specifically 455 Main Street.
- 3) The property in question is a contributing structure; it is representative of a c.1950 non-historic commercial 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. Calise to approve the application at 455 Main Street for replacing the front entry door. This is consistent with Commission standard 4.

Seconded by Ms. Drury.

VOTE: 5 – 0.

**3. Pastor Linda Forsberg of the First Lutheran Church
110 Division Street; Map 85 AP 1 Lot 273
Addition of Front Entrance Handrails – FINAL**

Ms. Carron stated Standard Number 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.

Pastor Linda Forsberg clarified the subject property is 110 Division Street, which is the property to the east of the First Lutheran Church on Division Street. She

explained she is requesting to install simple black wrought iron handrails on both sides of the front entrance steps of the property. The property owner, being Mr. Clint Gardener and herself are jointly in the process of obtaining a special use permit from the Zoning Board of Review in order to run a church thrift shop out of the subject property and the railings are to provide easier and safer access for visitors to the thrift shop.

Pastor Forsburg said she was interested in replicating the railings that exist on the church property.

Mr. Barkley commented that he preferred the railings to be of a simple design considering the structure is very simple.

When questioned of the material to be used Pastor Forsburg said she was looking to use wrought iron. Mr. Barkley noted the railings can also be made out of aluminum which can be powder coated which can provide the same look as wrought iron. Once the paint cracks on iron it will rust where aluminum will last longer - both products will look very similar.

The Commission suggested allowing both options for approval.

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

Ms. Drury made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Pastor Linda Forsburg.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District, specifically 110 Division Street.
- 3) The property in question is a contributing structure; it is representative of a c. 1840 early Victorian 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. Drury to approve the application at 110 Division Street for the addition of front entrance handrails. This is consistent with Commission standard 4.

Seconded by Ms. Calise.

VOTE: 5 – 0.

**4. Elizabeth Bancroft and Dan Pettersson
162 Peirce Street; Map 75 AP 1 Lot 190
Modification of Previous Approved Final Plan (Alteration of
Window Layout); and Rear Entry Door for New Garage – FINAL**

Ms. Carron stated *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. Libby Bancroft, owner of the property, represented the application. She reminded the Commission approval was granted approval to demo the existing garage and construct a new garage in April – the original plans called for four (4) double hung windows on each side of the garage for a total of eight (8) windows. After much consideration Ms. Bancroft requested to reduce the total number of windows to four (4), two on each side in order to have some privacy since the garage is located on a corner. Mr. Barkley recommended some ideas in terms of casing trim modifications to the finished windows.

Additionally, a portion of the project that was left to be refereed was the garage rear entry door; Ms. Bancroft indicated she has since chosen a door being a Therma-Tru Smooth Star half lite 2 panel flush glazed door.

The Commissioners did not have any objections to the selected door due to it being located in new construction and it would not be visible from the street.

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

Mr. Barkley made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Elizabeth “Libby” Bancroft.

- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District, specifically 162 Peirce Street.
- 3) The primary structure in question is a contributing structure; it is representative of a c.1873 late-Victorian, Italianate style. The secondary structure, being the new garage is new construction and is to be built in the near future.
- 4) The primary 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. Barkley to approve the application at 162 Peirce Street for the modification of the previous approved final plan granted in April 2019, being an alteration of the window layout. The approval is granted reducing eight windows (4 on each side) to 4 (2 on each side). Additionally a Therma-Tru Smooth Star half lite 2 panel flush glazed style # S2100 door is approved for the garage rear entry door. This is consistent with Commission standard 5.

Seconded by Ms. D'Amato.

VOTE: 5 – 0.

5. Mercedes McAndrew
55 Greene Street; Map 75 AP 3 Lot 5
Modification to Exterior Rear Deck – CONCEPTUAL

Ms. Carron stated Standard Number 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.

Ms. Mercedes McAndrew, property owner, represented the application. She explained the existing conditions of the rear located deck and noted the intent is to redesign the back deck to have a better connection to the yard which currently does not exist. The intent is to replace in kind with the same deck material but change the railings to cable rail system. There will also be deck skirting lattice added to match the lattice that is along the front of the house.

Ms. McAndrew asserted the new rear deck will not interfere with any of the character defining elements of the house and it will mostly be attached to the newer addition of the home.

Ms. Drury did not have any objections with the expansion of the deck but did take issue with the cable rail as it goes against the character of the house. Mr. Barkley noted the cable rail is not a historic material; in fact it is a very contemporary that did not exist until the 1980s. He appreciated the style in that one can see through it but it is not in keeping with the style of the home but neither is the existing vinyl railing that is on the deck now. Mr. Barkley also had no objections to the tiering deck proposal.

Mr. Barkley questioned what the lower section of the deck was as it looked like clapboard. Ms. McAndrew indicated it is a proposed planter; it is to tie in with the lattice piece and to be a decorative piece. Mr. Barkley noted the person who drew the plan has a nice hand but it is not showing what the materials are; the cross section is not the same as the plan – nothing is matching in terms of materials.

Ms. Carron confirmed the Commission will want a drawing that accurately shows the materials to be used.

Ms. Hitchen said she was getting the sense the Board would most likely object to the use of the cable rail. Mr. Barkley confirmed that he did not particularly like it but that was his opinion. Ms. Drury also commented that she did not think the cable rail is the best material for the structure; she did not want to say it was a hard no but as currently presented it appears very modern and contemporary it looks jarring especially on a historic house.

Ms. Carron reread standard number 4: 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. She was of the opinion that the addition to the house is compatible to the original structure, meaning the addition is similar to and continuity of the original structure; the Commission should examine whether the proposed change fits in with the architectural style of the house as a whole.

Ms. Carron informed the Applicant that an approval requires a majority of the Board approval. She recommended a detailed drawing will assist in better portraying what is proposed at the next meeting. Overall there are no objections to expanding the deck itself, just more details as to the overall appearance as a whole, more details on railings, screening, wall/features, etc.

**6. Pamela Unwin Barkley for Christopher Feisthamel
24 Bicknell Avenue; Map 85 AP 1 Lot 11
Partial Demolition & Rebuild of New Front Porch & Stairs –
CONCEPTUAL**

(Mr. Barkley recused himself from the application.)

Ms. Carron stated Standards 2, 4, and 9 apply to the application. *Standard 2* states if existing materials have deteriorated beyond repair, the new materials shall match the original in composition, design, texture, and other visual qualities. *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. *Standard 9* states partial 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. Demolition shall not result in a significant threat or loss of an historic and/or architectural resource to the Town, State or nation.

Ms. Pam Unwin Barkley, architect for the project, and Mr. Chris Feisthamel, property owner, represented the application. Ms. Unwin Barkley explained the project consists of restoring the front porch as existing conditions are extremely deteriorated. The intent is to remove the front shed-roofed porch and left set of stairs which will be replaced with new stairs to be relocated to the right side in order to improve flow and connect to the driveway. Although the renderings show a standing seam metal roof they no longer are going to pursue the roof idea but just want to have a stoop and railings. Considering the home's foundation is stone the intent is to construct the stairs out of stone. There are some front setback issues and a property survey is necessary with a zoning variance most likely. Additionally there is a phase two to the overall project consisting of an expansion to the roof by adding two dormers to the front elevation; this will also require dimensional relief. The Applicant was aware of

the two step process of obtaining the necessary zoning relief then returning to the HDC for final approval.

The Commission members had no objections to the conceptual application.

7. Mary-Elizabeth Barton
102 Spring Street; Map 85 AP 2 LOT 202
Replace Garage Doors – FINAL

(Ms. Calise recused herself from the application.)

Ms. Carron stated Commission Standards # 2 and 4 apply to this application. *Standard 2* states if existing materials have deteriorated beyond repair, the new materials shall match the original in composition, design, texture, and other visual qualities. *Standard 4* states all proposals for architectural changes shall be appropriate to the original design of the building or to later changes that have acquired historic significance of their own.

Ms. Mary-Elizabeth Barton, property owner, represented the application. She explained the automatic garage doors on her detached garage are not functional and snow blows into the garage from openings in the buckled doors during the winter months. Each fiberboard door has deteriorated and cracked over the years and are broken beyond repair. She asserted the original doors from 1920 swung out therefore the existing roll-up doors are not original. Ms. Barton submitted a Clopay Door specification garage steel door from the Classic collection with traditional short panels and the top section will have arched architectural grilles; there will be no hardware on the garage doors.

Mr. Barkley commented that he preferred a straight and square window as opposed to the arched window but considering the existing door is not original and garage is set back from the house he did not have objections to the application.

Ms. Carron also noted the garage door selection was not her favorite but did not necessarily stand out as being objectionable or over the top in design; the garage doors will be located on a freestanding structure and will not be attached to the primary structure and the new doors will be the third set of doors on the garage.

Additionally the proportion will be different and the arched windows will help in making the garage doors fit the overall garage.

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

Ms. D'Amato made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Mary-Elizabeth Barton.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District, specifically 102 Spring Street
- 3) The property in question is a contributing structure; it is representative of a c. 1854 Late Greek Revival/Italianate 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. D'Amato to approve the application at 102 Spring Street for the replacement of garage doors. This is consistent with Commission standards 2 and 4.

Seconded by Ms. Calise.

VOTE: 3 – 1 (Ms. Drury denied).

Historic District Commission Business – After Hearings

1. HDC Advisory Opinion to the Planning Board regarding the proposed 12-unit residential Major Land Development at **32 Exchange Street**, being Map 85 AP 1 Lots 87 and 382 proposed by Grenier Properties, LLC. The proposed work includes the complete demolition of the existing building and construction of two (2) new residential buildings along with associated parking, landscaping, water management, and common amenities including a shared courtyard area. The parcel is 0.47 acres in size and zoned R-6, High Density Residential; 25 percent of the proposed units will be “affordable” and is proceeding as a Comprehensive Permit application.

Mr. Ian Manier of Union Studio Architects, represented the application. He explained the demolition of the existing building has already been approved and explained the existing conditions of the site as well as how the application progressed through the conceptual and master levels of the Planning Board process. Mr. Manier said the approach is to have the proposed front building emulate the historic building in form, scale, detail and material but is reduced in size by half the width of the building. He believes there is evidence that the existing building was built in a phase of that nature so the portion that would not be rebuilt is the later portion to allow a driveway to come through for the necessary 18 parking spaces. The front building will be held to the street while the rear building is to be built in modules to form a quasi-court, being a space for people to share. There has been an attempt to soften the “sea of parking” to create an aesthetic experience with cobble material toward the street to soften the walk along the edge. The parking spaces themselves will be a cellular gravel and there will be landscaping and trees throughout and islands as well as pavers to create the best possible aesthetic experience in terms of parking.

In terms of buffering from the neighbors, Mr. Manier explained there will be a wood board fence along the railway which is higher and more substantial plantings, code required lighting, and no overhead lights to avoid light pollution onto the abutting residential neighbors.

With regard to the front building Mr. Manier was clear the intent was not trying to replicate but pay honor to the building that was there. The form, detailing and traditional lintel over window casing, the classic entablature entry over the door, the vertical fenestration of 6/6 is the design that will be maintained and he concluded this can be achieved in a way that is handsome and simple as the existing structure is a simple type of building. The approach is to use wood siding, wood trim in order to have a traditional looking building. The windows will have the Anderson 400 Series 6/6 with the interior/exterior grille with spacer bar between the glass and have either a bronze or black frame. Mr. Manier added the front building will also have a chimney which may be faux up to the ridge. The entry doors will be a simple six panel wood door with lights at the top. The only non-wood material expected will be a composite deck material for the proposed stoops. The cornice is a single crown molding vernacular to sit proud of the window.

As for the rear building, Mr. Manier explained it is not intended to directly emulate a particular period or style but have general sensitivity to the vernacular traditional form and vertical fenestration. The rear building will be two stories tall to the nearest neighbors and three stories tall against the railroad tracks. He felt the building is sized and scaled appropriately and is styled to a warehouse building, meaning one would typically see this style building near a railway or river. The building will have simple rhythmic windows with a lower pitched 5:12 roof and deeper eaves and has a more contemporary appearance. In terms of materials wood clapboards, cedar shingles, wood trim and 2/2 Anderson 400 Series windows will be used. Mr. Manier asserted the main entry door will be a single panel door, there will be vertical elements and steel and concrete stairs with aluminum railings and a very simple profile overall.

Mr. Manier explained included in the project will be four affordable units within the development in a spot that is currently disused and making use of a space against the railway that allows increased density in the neighborhood by having virtually no visible effect to the character on the street.

Mr. Barkley compared the rear building to that of the Water Rower Company in Warren. He said he liked the scale of the back building, the gathering of facades and design of the mini quads.

Mr. Manier noted the intent was to be sensitive and traditional but also differentiate from the other buildings.

Ms. Hitchen questioned if the Applicant has put the proposed rendered design in the neighborhood to see the scale of the project compared to the neighboring homes from a street perspective. Mr. Manier confirmed he had not yet done so because the rear building is so far back from the street but he certainly could do so. Ms. Hitchen recommended a street view showing just how far back the new building would sit might work to the Applicant's benefit since a "bird eye view" as shown is not what people will ever see. Mr. Manier asserted that when it comes time for final plan approval at the Planning Board he will establish a street view.

With regard to the front building Ms. Calise recommended a true stone step in front and not a cement slab. Mr. Barkley agreed a stone step with a single rail in

front would look more attractive. Mr. Manier confirmed he would make that alteration.

As for the rear building the Commission members did not have any objections and no major concerns about its design. They liked the simple and clean design, simplicity and material quality which will set it apart from a fancier design.

Ms. Carron was of the opinion the new front building as designed definitely meets Standard #5 as it fits into the district, it is appropriately sized and scaled and the design is appropriate to the neighborhood and the district. As for the rear building the design also fits in with the neighborhood as it is so simplistic even though it is larger it is simple which makes it compatible to the building in front even with the neighborhood and street itself the existing homes are relatively simple in design. As far as the scale is concerned, the size of the property itself is larger than other surrounding parcels therefore it is not being squeezed into a small area; the rear building is set back and there is sufficient land to accommodate the size of the proposed building. Additionally the buffer around the rear building helps maintain the overall size and it is not on top of the neighbors as the existing homes are now. Finally, there will be a nice buffer to the neighbor to the north.

Motion by Ms. Carron to have Staff submit an HDC Advisory Opinion to the Planning Board regarding the proposed 12-unit residential Major Land Development at 32 Exchange Street with a finding of compatibility with Commission Standard #5. Seconded by Mr. Barkley.

VOTE: 5 – 0.

2. Minutes: Review and approval of the April 10, 2019 and May 8, 2019 meeting minutes.

Tabled to July meeting.

3. 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.

Atty. Teitz suggested having a joint workshop with the Bristol HDC on Monday, September 23, 2019. The time and place is to be determined.

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

Adjourn at 8:40 pm.

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

Lea Anthony Hitchen, Assistant Town Planner