

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MINUTES
November 12, 2014 Meeting
Town Council Chambers – 6:00 PM HDC meeting

Present: Kim Balkcom, Chair; Matthew McGeorge, Vice-Chair; Kristen Carron, Erinn Calise, Kingston Fallon and Andrew Barkley.

Staff: Lea Anthony Hitchen, Assistant Town Planner.

Ms. Kim Balkcom, Chair of the Commission, started the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

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

Historic District Commission Hearings

- 1. Paul A. DiSegna
146 Duke Street; Map 85 A.P. 1 Lot 416
Replace Doors – FINAL**

Ms. Balkcom read the stands that apply to the application, those being 1, 2 and 4. Standard 1 states original materials and architectural features shall be maintained or repaired whenever possible, rather than replaced. 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 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 DiSegna explained that he would like to remove and replace two wooden doors as they are both rotted and not energy efficient; the doors to be replaced are located on the front left and rear facing the train tracks. He asked to replace both doors with a 5-panel Therma Tru Classic Craft fiberglass door.

Ms. Balkcom's only concern was to keep the lite in the door that has an existing lite which is the rear door. She realized the material was slightly different but if the Applicant could keep match both doors with the existing appearance she had no issues with the application.

Mr. DiSegna said he has no issues with matching the back door to the existing door.

Ms. Calise asked it was possible to purchase the doors in wood. Mr. DiSegna noted that was a conversation he did not have with the contractor.

Mr. McGeorge commented that a door is a reversible thing, the profile and dimensions of the requested doors are all decent and it is a commercial building.

The Commissioners wanted their opinion known for the record that considering the structure was commercial in nature they were making a concession on it being a wood door versus if it were a residential property.

With no further questions or comments, Ms. Balkcom asked for a motion.

Ms. Carron made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Paul DiSegna at 146 Duke Street.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District.
- 3) The structure in question is a contributing building; it is representative of a c.1870 Late Victorian with Italianate features.
- 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. Carron to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 146 Duke Street to replace two wooden doors with Thermo-Tru Classic Craft fiberglass doors to match exactly in appearance. This is consistent with Commission Standards #1, 2, and 4.

Seconded by Mr. McGeorge.

VOTE: 6 - 0.

2. Anjan Thapa
26 Main Street; Map 85 A.P. 1 Lot 52
Signage - FINAL

Ms. Balkcom read the standard that applies, being number 5. Signage is a type of new 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.

Mr. Anjan Thapa represented the application and explained he would like to install a new double sided non-illuminated PVC sign on an existing steel bracket.

The Commissioners did not have any issues with the application.

With no further questions or comments, Ms. Balkcom asked for a motion.

Ms. Calise made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Anjan Thapa.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District.
- 3) The structure in question is a noncontributing building; it is representative of a c.1940 typical commercial building.
- 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 for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 26 Main Street for new signage. This is consistent with Commission Standard #5.

Seconded by Ms. Carron.

VOTE: 6 - 0.

**3. Melrose Place Owner's Association, Inc.
37-39 Main Street; Map 85 A.P. 1 Lot 239
Replace Windows, Siding, Minor Modifications, Replace-In-Kind –
FINAL**

Ms. Balkcom noted Commission Standards #7 and # 8 apply to this application. *Standard #7* states exterior siding must be appropriate for the building to which it is applied. Vinyl and other modern composition sidings which may damage historic buildings are not appropriate and shall not be approved. *Standard #8* states that 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. Frederick L. Hobby and Ms. Mary Salvadore, unit owners of Melrose Place, explained and represented the application. Mr. Hobby commented that approval was given five years ago for the windows but due to the death of the prior condo president he was not sure the exact paperwork was required. The Commission explained that if a prior Commission granted approval to replace the 2nd floor windows to match the third floor windows that are still in effect and replace and repair the 1st and 2nd floor trim is considered a replacement in kind project. The only update to the property that would need HDC approval is the change of existing wood siding to cement board siding.

Mr. Hobby explained that the unit owners would like to clean up the property as much as possible. He added the addition was not constructed properly and

needs to be corrected. Mr. Barkley commented that after examining the historic survey, there is nothing historic about the property.

Mr. Hobby stated he would definitely use the Azek for the trim, as it was approved back in 2009.

Mr. McGeorge noted that due to the building not being authentic he has no issues with the project. He described the building as a “Disney building,” creating fake history.

Ms. Balkcom suggested that if the applicant were to move forward with the cement board siding then to go with the smooth side facing out. Mr. Hobby commented he preferred the textured side facing out.

With no further questions or comments, Ms. Balkcom asked for a motion.

Mr. Fallon made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Melrose Place Owner’s Association, Inc.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District.
- 3) The structure in question is a noncontributing building; it is representative of a remodeled c.1965 Commercial building.
- 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 Mr. Fallon to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 37-39 Main Street to replace siding with cement board siding in addition to replacing the second floor windows (with Anderson 200 Series) and replace/repair trim that was approved by HDC in 2009. This is consistent with Commission Standards #7 and 8.

Seconded by Mr. McGeorge.

VOTE: 6 - 0.

**4. Premier Land Development
631 Main Street; Map 75 A.P. 3 Lot 79
Minor Alterations & Signage – FINAL**

Ms. Balkcom stated Commission Standards 4 and 5 apply to the application - *Standard 4* states all architectural changes shall be appropriate to the original design of the building or to later changes which have historic significance of their own. Signage is a type of new construction and thus must comply with Commission *Standard Number 5 which* 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.

Mr. Jim Fortier, owner of the new clothing store, represented the application.

Ms. Balkcom commented that although the building is not architecturally significant her concern is the need for something above the glass doors.

Mr. Barkley questioned if the doors in question were the only means of egress. Mr. Fortier explained the front door is the primary means of egress into the retail space. Mr. McGeorge noted he and Mr. Barkley noticed some code issues but that is not what the HDC is here to review. Considering the submitted door was a basic commercial storefront system, the Commission had no objections and no further questions.

The other component of the application was a request for signage; with no physical submittal to review the HDC decided to referee the signage when the Applicant had it prepared. Mr. McGeorge and Mr. Fallon volunteered to referee the signage.

With no further questions or comments, Ms. Balkcom asked for a motion.

Mr. Fallon made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Premier Land Development.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District.

- 3) The structure in question is a noncontributing building; it is representative of a remodeled c.1965 flat roof Commercial building.
- 4) The building does not 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. Fallon to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 631 Main Street for minor modifications (install door). This is consistent with Commission Standards #4 and 5.

Seconded by Ms. Carron.

VOTE: 6 - 0.

**5. 564 Main Street LLC
564 Main Street; Map 75 A.P. 3 Lot 112
Minor Modifications, Replace Windows & Doors, Roofing and
Siding – FINAL**

Ms. Balkcom reviewed the Commission Standards that apply to the application, those being 4, 7 and 8. *Standard 4* states all architectural changes shall be appropriate to the original design of the building or to later changes which have historic significance of their own. *Standard # 7* notes that exterior siding must be appropriate for the building to which it is applied. Modern composition sidings which may damage historic buildings are not appropriate and shall not be approved. *Standard #8* states that 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. Michael Kent, applicant, and Mr. Frank Karpowitz, architect, represented the application.

Ms. Balkcom commented that the proposal is a significant change to the building and an improvement to the 1970s nonhistoric architecture.

Mr. Karpowitz explained the samples he brought to the hearing starting with the composite slate roof versus the wood shingles. Mr. McGeorge stated he did not prefer the slate roof. Mr. Karpowitz asserted a cedar roof can be used. Mr. Kent added the weight of a real slate roof would be an issue due to the structural cantilevering. Mr. Barkley pointed out that slate roofs are typically on larger and grander buildings, not on a roof such as this. Ms. Balkcom would not call this a true mansard roof. Mr. Kent said he was happy to use wood shingles and thinks it will look great.

Mr. McGeorge questioned the rear elevation as there was no rendering submitted, he asked if it was open to a flat roof. Mr. Kent explained that it would be open and it will remain as it presently exists although it will be cleaned up.

Ms. Carron asked about signage. Mr. Kent commented that signage has not yet been prepared; he noted there is the existing Scramblers internally lit sign which is not planned to be used. He plans to come before the Board when signage is ready; he envisions a 3D wood composite externally lit sign with shadow lights.

Mr. McGeorge stated fundamentally the project is a massive improvement and he did not have any problems with the proposal, he just wanted to make sure the details were discussed.

As for the windows, Mr. Karpowitz explained the team was looking for a fiberglass/wood window to stain in order to match the cedar but did not have any great success with that. Mr. McGeorge commented that this evening the Commission can approve the submitted wood window and if you find a substitute fiberglass window you prefer then simply come back.

Ms. Balkcom's only concern was that either window has the external muntin profile. She added that the windows are such a large part of the project that it would be silly to have vinyl windows or muntins sandwiched between the glass.

With regard to stone work on lower portion of building, Mr. Kent noted it will be real stone not cultured stone and will be indigenous to the area. Mr. McGeorge agreed that cultured stone does not look quite right.

Mr. Kent noted he has two other cigar bars being in Providence and Worcester, MA.

Ms. Hitchen raised the issue with the front doors, noting there has been no discussion thus far. Mr. Kent commented that the doors he plans to use are the same type of door structurally; right now they come in from the side as opposed to the front. He would add windows where the doors were located and noted it would not change the overall appearance of the building and would be handicapped accessible. Mr. Karpowitz stated he would submit a catalog cut of the door.

With no further questions or comments, Ms. Balkcom asked for a motion.

Ms. Carron made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by 564 Main Street, LLC.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District.
- 3) The structure in question is a contributing building; it is representative of a remodeled c.1965 flat roof Commercial building.
- 4) The building does not 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. Carron to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 564 Main Street for minor modifications, window and door replacement, roofing and siding. This is consistent with Commission Standards #4, 7 and 8.

Seconded by Ms. Calise.

VOTE: 6 - 0.

6. Jillian Fain
176 Main Street; Map 85 A.P. 1 Lot 65
Signage – FINAL

Ms. Balkcom read Standard #5 into the record which states that signage must be compatible with the surrounding buildings in size, scale, materials and siting, as well as with the general character of the historic district.

Mr. Charles Delaney, owner of Sign Man Says and Jillian Fain represented the application.

Ms. Balkcom commented the maximum sign area for a projecting sign in the district is 10 square feet while the proposed sign is 12 s.f. Mr. Delaney said he could reduce the size of the sign to conform to regulations.

Mr. Delaney noted the sign will be made of “sign-ply,” or composite material.

With no further questions or comments, Ms. Balkcom asked for a motion.

Mr. Fallon made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Jillian Fain.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District.
- 3) The structure in question is a contributing building; it is representative of a remodeled c.1889 late Victorian building.
- 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 Mr. Fallon to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 176 Main Street for new signage. This is consistent with Commission Standards #5.

Seconded by Mr. Barkley.

VOTE: 6 - 0.

7. Kerri Gotauco
58 Main Street; Map 85 A.P. 1 Lot 55
Signage – FINAL

Ms. Balkcom read Standard #5 into the record which states that signage 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. Balkcom stated she had no issues with the application.

Ms. Calise confirmed there would be an 8' clearance. Ms. Gotauco said yes. She also noted there will be new awnings which will be black and white with paw prints.

With no further questions or comments, Ms. Balkcom asked for a motion.

Ms. Carron made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Kerri Gotauco.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District.
- 3) The structure in question is a contributing building; it is representative of a remodeled c.1770 Colonial building, the "Abraham Greene" house.
- 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. Carron to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 58 Main Street for new signage. This is consistent with Commission Standards #5.

Seconded by Ms. Calise.

8. Thomas Testa
17 Bridge Street; Map 75 A.P. 3 Lot 168
Response to Zoning Ordinance Violation Notice

(Ms. Calise recused herself from the application.)

The Commission queried Mr. Testa the reasoning why the wrong windows were installed. Ms. Balkcom recalled making a compromise when determining the Harvey Majesty windows could be installed due to the structure being altered. She added that the Commission made it very clear that the new windows were to have muntins on the outside, simulated divided lites and have a decent profile.

Mr. McGeorge commented the decision is clearly written on the Certificate of Appropriateness and as far as he is concerned this is a waste of time.

Mr. Testa summarized how the wrong windows were installed – the contractor went to buy the Harvey windows at North East Distributors but did not have Harvey windows available; N.E. Distributors suggested buying the Trimline window according to them was consistent to the Harvey Majesty. He added the Trimline windows were purchased thinking they were comparable to the Harvey Majesty.

Ms. Balkcom probed Mr. Testa further; she wondered when the Trimline windows were delivered to the site the observation was not made that the windows were not consistent with what was supposedly purchased. She went on to say the Trimline windows were installed anyway.

Mr. Testa explained that it was not he who installed the windows but his contractor. He added that he did not pay the money for wood windows to try to pull one over on this Commission.

Ms. Balkcom noted the new installed windows have snap-in muntins. Mr. Fallon's take on the ordeal was the HDC is being backed into a corner since the snap-in windows have already been installed even though all documentation clearly states the proper window that should have been installed.

Mr. McGeorge commented that from his personal sense the Applicant had no idea this happened. Mr. Testa confirmed that he had no idea the wrong

windows were installed and was very surprised when he received a violation; it was not his goal to install something where one could literally walk up with their own eyes and go “This guy’s an idiot, he’s trying to pull one over us.” He reaffirmed that is not the case at all and from the start of the project he has been very cooperative with the HDC.

Ms. Balkcom verified the windows that were installed are not something she would approve. She noted the other issue is the pane configuration – the agreement was 2/1 double hung on the main floors and 6/6 double hung on the basement level – so not only is it not the correct window but it is not the right configuration with a simulated divided light. Ms. Balkcom suggested Mr. Testa go back to North East Distributors and somehow get the correct window installed. Mr. McGeorge suggested having a candid conversation with both his contractor and supplier.

Mr. Testa questioned if the whole window has to be removed or just the sash. Mr. McGeorge commented that technically the windows need to be replaced with what was approved on the Certificate of Appropriateness and the lower windows need to have the 6/6 configuration.

The Commission analyzed the Trimline catalog information, which did note a SDL can be made; in that case, they suggested Mr. Testa ask the manufacturer if the sash can be replaced. Ms. Balkcom advised Mr. Testa to work with contractors who have experience with historic homes on his next flip on a historic house and to be more of a micromanager. Mr. Testa reassured the Commission that he is not an insubordinate house flipper and his reputation is very important.

In summary, Ms. Balkcom recommended Mr. Testa research to see if the Trimline manufacturer can switch out the sashes with 2 lites with tru simulated divided lites (3 components – spacer bar and interior and exterior muntins).

Mr. Testa questioned if he would have to return to the Commission. Mr. McGeorge asserted that if the windows are replaced with what is supposed to be in the openings then there is no need to return to the HDC. Ms. Carron added if the windows are different in any way, then a return to the HDC is a must for approval.

Historic District Commission Business

- 1) MINUTES: Action on the minutes of the July 9, 2014 and October 8, 2014 meetings.

Motion by Mr. Fallon to approve the July 9, 2014 minutes. Seconded by Mr. McGeorge. Approved 4 – 0.

October minutes tabled to December.

- 2) Commissioner Comments/Other

Red Stripe is now open. Ms. Balkcom signed Historic Tax Credit application for 49 Marion Street.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. McGeorge. Seconded by Ms. Carron. Adjourn at 7:35 p.m.

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

Lea Anthony Hitchen, Assistant Town Planner