

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MINUTES
December 10, 2014 Meeting
Town Council Chambers – 6:00 PM HDC meeting

Present: Kim Balkcom, Chair; Erinn Calise, Kingston Fallon and Andrew Barkley.

Absent: Matthew McGeorge, Vice-Chair and Kristen Carron.

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. Second Story Realty, LLC
50 Cliff Street; Map 75 A.P. 3 Lot 36
Minor Alterations, Replace Windows, Fencing, and Awning
Signage – FINAL**

Mr. David Iannuccilli of 982 Frenchtown Road, representing Second Story Realty, LLC, explained 50 Cliff Street is the former home of E.G. Photo and the new tenant, a bridal salon, is looking to give the structure more of a Main Street presence. As part of the change in retail use at the property, the plan is to further enhance the building to fit the needs of a bridal salon - activities include

replacing the two left windows on the secondary entrance elevation (facing Main Street) with a large 14'-1 5/8"x 6'-1 3/8" showcase window.

Mr. Iannuccilli noted the door facing Main Street will remain; it will simply be painted black and planters will be added around the building. He asserted both the Cliff Street and Main Street side of the building will have signage and there will be a mural with lighting and awnings added to the side windows. Mr. Iannuccilli noted the foundation will be painted black as well.

Finally, the existing dumpster will be enclosed by a wooden fence in order to beautify the area according to Mr. Iannuccilli.

Ms. Balkcom confirmed the application and changes look fantastic. Mr. Barkley also stated he liked the renderings.

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 Second Story Realty, LLC (Mr. David Iannuccilli).
- 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. 1965 commercial style structure.
- 4) The building does not contribute to the historic and architectural significance of the district.
- 5) The work proposed by the applicant would improve the character defining elements of the existing building.

Motion by Ms. Calise to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 50 Cliff Street for minor modifications, window replacement, fencing, and awning signage. This is consistent with Commission Standards #4 and 5.

Seconded by Mr. Fallon.

VOTE: 4 - 0.

2. Michael Reid
174 Marlborough Street; Map 75 A.P. 3 Lot 181
Replace Windows – FINAL

Mr. Michael Reid, contractor for the Joanne Aronis, the applicant, represented the application, as she lives in Tennessee. He explained that the windows requesting to be replaced are the first and second floor of the building; the basement windows are a different condominium unit, therefore different owner. Mr. Reid added he is looking to install the Eclipse vinyl replacement windows within the existing frames by just removing the existing sashes and not change anything outside.

Ms. Balkcom explained the basement windows which have vinyl windows were approved by a much earlier commission by in 2000. She was not sure how the vinyl windows were approved in the basement unit considering the structure falls within a condominium association.

Ms. Bakcom stated that although she cannot speak for everyone she has a feeling the Board will not approve a vinyl window. She recommended the homeowner research a replacement window of a different material.

Mr. Reid stated he already had a Plan B, which was the replacing the windows with the Anderson 400 Series. He added there are 14 windows that need to be replaced on the first and second floor; the windows are single paned which makes them hard to be repaired.

Ms. Balkcom commented that the windows do not appear to be in poor condition looking at the submitted pictures.

Mr. Reid asserted the house is very cold and the energy costs are simply skyrocketing with the air coming through the windows.

Mr. Barkley suggested adding storm windows. Mr. Reid stated there are storm windows already affixed on windows as well as on the basement unit windows. Mr. Barkley reiterated that if the single pane existing windows are in good shape they could be salvaged/restored by simply adding a good insulated storm window. Mr. Reid asserted the owner wants new windows for energy efficiency purposes.

Mr. Fallon questioned whether there is insulation in the walls to begin with considering the age of the home. Mr. Barkley was adamant that purchasing a better performing insulated storm window unit is the best way to go; the cost of purchasing a brand new Anderson 400 series window would be far greater.

Mr. Fallon got to the bottom line – he believes there is no insulation in the walls and by replacing the windows will not address the real issue. He went on record saying he would not approve the Eclipse vinyl window but would support the Anderson 400 Series or comparable product.

Mr. Reid voiced that the Applicant is very concerned with the property being vacant and needs to resolve the unit being cold in order to get a decent paying tenant.

The Commission confirmed that if storm windows are installed over the existing windows then he did not need HDC approval. Ms. Balkcom explained that although the Anderson 400 Series has been approved in the past she felt in this case it is someone not knowing any better and it is the windows that are not the source of heat loss.

Ms. Balkcom suggested Mr. Reid inform the homeowner the vinyl windows are completely off the table and she can either install new storm windows or get approval for Anderson 400 Series. Ms. Balkcom noted the homeowner might be more amenable to storm windows and can appreciate the HDCs point of view.

Mr. Fallon strongly recommended not installing the vinyl windows because it will be caught and a violation will be issued. Ms. Balkcom reassured Mr. Reid that the Commission catches all “Weekend Warriors.”

The Commissioners recommended if Mr. Reid wanted to pursue the Anderson 400 windows then the application can be continued to the next meeting in order for him to discuss with the homeowner. Mr. Fallon commented the 400 Series are usually a go to player for the Commission. Ms. Hitchen disclosed it was she that suggested researching the Anderson 400 series or comparable window if the Commission did not approve the vinyl window.

Mr. Reid questioned why he could not get approval for the Anderson 400 series at this evenings meeting. Ms. Balkcom explained that if the application is

approved then the Commission's effort to keep those windows in the house is gone. Ms. Calise emphasized that there is minimal damage with the existing windows. Ms. Balkcom reiterated that the Anderson 400 series has been approved in several cases; she was not confirming whether or not that type of window would or would not be approved at this property but she did confirm this Commission would not be approving the vinyl windows.

Mr. Fallon commented that procedurally, winter is coming and due to that fact he would go on record approving the Anderson 400 Series window. He questioned whether those windows could be refereed. The Commission debated how to resolve the issue without the homeowner being present.

Ms. Calise suggested continuing the application to when more Board members are present although in her opinion the existing windows are in decent condition.

Mr. Reid thought it would be in his best interest to install the storm windows, but the homeowner prefers new windows and he is trying to accommodate her. Ms. Balkcom was hopeful the contractor would explain to the homeowner the importance of keeping the existing windows. He would have to tell her the HDC did not approve the proposed vinyl windows and she would have to pay for a much higher quality window (if that is something the HDC would even consider); then it may be more attractive for her to go with the storm windows and the preservation route.

When Mr. Reid asked where he goes from this point, the Commissioners explained that technically the application is not declined, the Board is "continuing" it. Ms. Balkcom noted the difference between "deny" versus continuing. If the homeowner prefers the Anderson 400 series then Mr. Reid can come back to the following month's meeting although there is no guarantee it will be approved.

Historic District Commission Business

- 1) MINUTES: Action on the minutes of the October 8, 2014 and November 12, 2014 meetings.

Motion by Ms. Calise to approve the October 8, 2014 minutes. Seconded by Mr. Barkley. Unanimously approved.

November 12, 2014 minutes tabled until January 14, 2015 meeting.

2) 2015 Meeting Schedule

Meeting Schedule approved as drafted.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Barkley. Seconded by Ms. Calise. Adjourn at 7:45 p.m.

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

Lea Anthony Hitchen, Assistant Town Planner