

**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**April 9, 2014 Meeting**  
**Town Council Chambers – 6:00 PM HDC meeting**

Present: Kim Balkcom, Chair; Matthew McGeorge, Vice-Chair; Erinn Calise, Andrew Barkley, and Kingston Fallon (arrived at 6:35).

Absent: Kristen Carron.

Staff: Lea Anthony Hitchen, Assistant Town Planner.

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

Ms. Balkcom read the procedures into the record. She 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. All applications can be appealed to the Zoning Board of Review. Ms. Balkcom added that each application is reviewed in of itself.

Ms. Balkcom introduced Commission members and Staff and reviewed agenda noting the first application for 17 Bridge Street has asked for a continuance to May.

Historic District Commission Hearings

**1) Annmarie Therriault  
30 Main Street; Map 85 A.P. 1 Lot 52  
Modification, Window Replacement - CONCEPTUAL**

Ms. Balkcom read into the record the standards that apply to this application, those being Standards #4 & 8. 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 and Standard # 8 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 offer a wide variety of factory-made windows appropriate design are also available and should be installed to be as unobtrusive as possible.

Ms. Annmarie Therriault of Couture Bridal was present asking that changes be made with regard to the front windows so that they appear bigger to look like storefront windows.

Mr. TJ Martucci, owner of the building, said he recently purchased the property and is new to the historic district. He was interested to see what he could do with the structure without wasting anyone's time.

Ms. Balkcom noted she understood what the intention of the application was trying to accomplish but this building has always been a single family home and to turn double hung windows into large commercial windows does not meet the standards. She added that most other storefronts along Main Street have always been commercial storefronts. Mr. Martucci said that the property is zoned commercial.

Mr. McGeorge commented that this Board is not questioning the use but changing the composition of the structure falls under the jurisdiction of this Board. He noted it is irrelevant how other buildings have changed over the years – each structure has to be considered individually. Mr. McGeorge stated that the HDC will not approve this application conceptually.

Mr. Martucci said he would have the only first floor residential structure on Main Street. Ms. Balkcom noted that the Board is not suggesting that the Applicant keep it a residence. Mr. Martucci noted that he is trying to beautify the building. Mr. McGeorge said if he was trying to beautify the structure then he would restore it back to its original state; that would be beautification.

Ms. Balkcom asked when the building was purchased and if the realtor explained that the structure was in the historic district which meant and exterior changes had to be reviewed by the HDC. Mr. Martucci asserted he purchased the property in November 2013 and his realtor explained that it was in the historic district.

Mr. McGeorge stated that this Board is here to uphold the standards – all proposals for architectural changes shall be appropriate to the original design of the building – this application simply does not conform to Standard #4.

Mr. Martucci said he was expecting this answer but he finds it frustrating and now has to go find a lawyer to prove that the Guitar Store and Kristina Richards, etc. were all modified – everything has been modified on Main Street. Ms. Balkcom reassured Mr. Martucci that not everything has been modified on Main Street.

Ms. Calise added that the denial of plate glass windows does not mean the Applicant cannot have a successful business at this location.

Mr. McGeorge reiterated that there are 10 standards that the HDC has to uphold; if the Board were to approve this application it would clearly be a violation of the standards – therefore he cannot support the application.

Mr. Barkley added that it is difficult to see how the building could be modified while maintaining the quality of pattern as the structure has a very strong façade and it is also intact. He thought it would be a challenge to make it something other than what it already is.

Mr. McGeorge suggested that if the owner were to restore the building it would be a signature piece on Main Street; it could really “stick out” by refurbishing it and adding a decent coat of paint to it which would not take too much effort.

Mr. Martucci explained that it just does not make sense from a financial standpoint if he cannot get a high end tenant in the building if they cannot advertise their products with plate glass windows. He noted there is a lot of junk on Main Street and he is trying to fix up the building. Mr. McGeorge and Ms. Balkcom in unison stated that was their point and they did not want to add more junk to Main Street. Ms. Balkcom added that the structure has always been residential and it was never intended to have large plate glass commercial style windows on the first floor. She noted that the other buildings the Applicant keeps referring to have most always been storefronts, some of which have been altered prior to when the HDC was created; and some have been altered in good ways and some in not good ways.

Ms. Balkcom explained that this is a conceptual application there will be no formal vote; if the Applicant were to come back for a final application with the same request she has a feeling that it would be denied. She informed Mr. Martucci that if the application is denied he would have to wait one year before he could file the same application.

Ms. Hitchen inquired whether a wall and/or projecting sign or certain lighting would benefit Ms. Therriault's business. Ms. Therriault explained she has large windows at her current shop and she needs large visual displays for her bridal business to survive. Mr. McGeorge recommended that with nice lighting effects, a merchandising plan, a nice sign, and a less is more approach will create a fabulous "pop" to the façade. Ms. Therriault further explained her business style and needs and if the windows could not be enlarged it would be problematic to be located at this spot.

Mr. Barkley noted that the structure has an "antiqueness" to it which draws him in and reminds him of being in Wickford. He reiterated that if there was good lighting added there would be many possible retail stores that could locate here.

Mr. Martucci stated that he will have to leave the building as it currently is.

There were no further comments from the Commission. There was no vote taken since this was a conceptual hearing.

**2) West Bay Community Action, Inc.  
41-45 Marlborough Street; Map 85 A.P. 1 Lot 45  
Minor Modification – Final**

Ms. Balkcom read into the record the standard that applies to this application, being Standard #4 which states that 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 Salera represented the application and explained the only portion of the application that he believes requires HDC approval is the installation of three basement window wells on the western side of the building as the other projects are replacement in kind. He noted the existing window wells are rotted and need to be replaced. Mr. McGeorge had no issues with the project and if the wells are not replaced it will lead to further problems.

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

Mr. Barkley made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by West Bay Community Action, Inc. of 41-45 Marlborough 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.1900 late-Victorian, early-20<sup>th</sup> Century 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 Mr. Barkley to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 41-45 Marlborough Street to replace and install three new basement window wells to the western side of the building. This is consistent with Commission Standard #4.

Seconded by Ms. Calise.

VOTE: 4 – 0.

**3) Denis Marchand**  
**240-242 Main Street; Map 85 A.P. 1 Lot 45**  
**Addition – Final**

Ms. Balkcom read into the record the standards that apply to this application, being Standards #4 and 5 which states that 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 and 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. McGeorge commented that the only thing that he did not see from the conceptual discussion was bringing in the addition in from the sides, which he thought was a minor issue.

Mr. David Spaziano, representing the application and owner of the Greenwich Oyster Bar, noted that one of the submitted elevations does show that the addition bumps in on the sides. Mr. McGeorge asserted that as long as the new construction bumps in he has no objection to the application as he perceives the project as a normal addition.

Ms. Balkcom asked when Mr. Spaziano will return to the Zoning Board. Mr. Spaziano replied that he will ask the ZBR for a reconsideration at the end of May.

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

Ms. Calise made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Denis Marchand and David Spaziano.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District, located at 240-242 Main Street.
- 3) The structure in question is a contributing building; it is representative of a c.1842 Greek Revival mixed use 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 for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 240-242 Main Street to construct a 10'x 21.5' addition to the rear of the building, conditional on a 24" setback from the existing north and south elevations. This is consistent with Commission Standard #4 and 5.

Seconded by Mr. McGeorge.

VOTE: 5 – 0.

**4) Brian Morris**  
**55 Greene Street; Map 75 A.P. 3 Lot 5**  
**New Construction, Addition, and Modification - Final**

Mr. Morris first addressed the right side, east elevation which was to have three windows on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor and now has 2 windows. Mr. David Riganese of DLR Dimensions clarified that one of the discussion points at the last conceptual meeting was that both parties agreed to allow three full sized windows on the first floor and two on the second floor – just for clarification.

Mr. McGeorge commented that from the beginning of the project to this point the application and plan has improved; he believed that if one is on Greene Street the gutterline will only be visible and not the roof. He asserted that the Applicant has accommodated the HDC requests and a fair compromise has been made to get to this point although in hindsight had he been here from the original hearing he probably would not be in support of the application but after three hearings and all of the compromises he can approve the application at this point.

Mr. Morris noted that the HDC ladies would understand “Pinterest” better than he could; the woman who is purchasing the home has been forwarding him “Greek Revival” pictures from Pinterest of styles and features she wants in this house. He added that he would only be able to add them if the HDC allowed it; those features being shingles at the top part of the house she asked for the front

porch to look more like a front porch – she would rather have the stairs come down on the side and not the front. Mr. Morris noted the stairs are not drawn on the plan however but will be similar to all the other homes in the area; about 4'-4 1/2' wide – almost as wide as the deck and will go straight down. Mr. McGeorge asked if there will be railings. Mr. Riganese confirmed there will be railings. Mr. McGeorge suggested that a simpler square column on front porch would be better.

Mr. Barkley asked about the original style column by the front door. Mr. Morris said the original columns by the front door are square however Pinterest has many round style columns. Mr. Barkley and Ms. Balkcom recommended sticking with the existing style columns. Mr. Morris stated that was his plan although he added that the original porch has to be rebuilt. Mr. Barkley commented that according to the original elevation the original porch base is wider than the stairs; now it appears as if the entry is narrower than it was.

Mr. Morris stated that he wants to be very specific about certain things because he did not want anybody to come by and say 'that is not like what we saw on the plans.' Mr. McGeorge noted that theoretically the Applicant could use any Greek style column.

Mr. Morris asserted that the buyer had an additional request which was to make the roof more flat since she has seen this style on other homes in the district and in Westerly; essentially by about 6 inches less and without changing the footprint. Mr. McGeorge did not take issue to the reduced pitch as long as the footprint was not being altered.

One last request the buyer had according to Mr. Morris was for a bow/bay window. The Commissioners agreed that was not appropriate on the east elevation. The Commissioners and Applicant further discussed the head and window trim in detail.

Mr. McGeorge read the draft conditions, those being no bay window on the east elevation; the existing footprint of front porch and roof to remain; the right side elevation porch extended to window; and the consideration of the eye brow detail.



Ms. Balkcom asked Mr. Morris if he had any specifications or catalog cut for the doors (material list indicate “Therma-Tru” doors and slider). Mr. Riganese stated the front door is being restored. Mr. Morris said he plans to match the new doors with the front door to whatever Therma-Tru has. Mr. Morris added all the existing lattice will be reused; it is being sent out to a company who will sandblast it.

As for the proposed slider in the rear, which will also be a Therma-Tru according to Mr. Morris, he was not planning on having any grills. He then asked the HDC architects their opinion and preference if he were to install grids, what pattern it should be.

Mr. McGeorge suggested a 5 grid horizontal muntin on top would make sense. Mr. Morris thought that would look clean.

Mr. Barkley raised the topic again of square columns; he suggested using PermaCast Square columns as he knows PermaCast makes square columns. Mr. Morris commented that he was under the impression the Commission was allowing him to use round columns. Mr. McGeorge asserted that his preference would be to use square columns as well but technically it would not be inappropriate to have round columns in a Greek Revival house. Mr. Morris acknowledged that he too would like to have the square columns but he will inform the buyer that she has the option. He thought that the square columns looks better anyway.

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

Mr. Fallon made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Brian Morris.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District, located at 55 Greene Street.
- 3) The structure in question is a contributing building; it is representative of a c.1852 late Greek Revival structure.
- 4) The building does contribute to the historic and architectural significance of the district.
- 5) The work proposed by the applicant would repair and improve the character defining elements of the existing building.

Motion by Mr. Fallon to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 55 Greene Street for the new construction, addition, modifications, and partial demolition with the following conditions: no bay window at the east elevation; existing footprint of front porch and roof to remain with pitch being reduced; right side elevation porch extended to clear the first floor east window; and consider the eye brow shingle detail. This is consistent with Commission Standard #1, 4, 5, 8 and 9.

Seconded by Mr. McGeorge.

VOTE: 5 – 0.

Mr. Morris thanked the Board for their help.

### **Historic District Commission Business**

- 1) MINUTES: Action on the minutes of the March 12, 2014 meeting.

Staff noted minutes were not complete.

- 2) Commissioner Comments/Other

Ms. Balkcom inquired about 51 Cliff Street as to whether new windows had recently been installed. Staff was of the opinion the windows have been existing since the owners had recently moved in; if the windows were replaced it might have been done by the previous owners who flipped the house.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. McGeorge. Seconded by Ms. Calise. Adjourn at 7:20 p.m.

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

Lea Anthony Hitchen, Assistant Town Planner