

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

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

Absent: Erinn Calise 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. 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 the Board members and Staff present and read the application items into the record. She noted that the applicants for 69 Rector Street have asked to continue the hearing to the August 13<sup>th</sup> docket.

Historic District Commission Hearings

**1. Stephen McGinn for Karma Couture  
591 Main Street; Map 75 A.P. 3 Lot 82  
Signage (Awning Installation) – FINAL**

Ms. Balkcom read Standard #5 into the record as it applies to the application; it states that signage is a type of new construction and 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. Steve McGinn of the Awning Factory represented the application for Karma Couture.

Ms. Balkcom noted the only verification needed was the clearance from the bottom of the awning to the sidewalk will be at least 8'. Mr. McGinn confirmed the new awning will meet those criteria.

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 Stephen McGinn for Karma Couture.
- 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 an altered c.1883 late Victorian.
- 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 591 Main Street for the installation of an awning sign. This is consistent with Commission Standard #5.

Seconded by Mr. McGeorge.

VOTE: 4 – 0.

**2. Nelson and Sandra Niles**  
**136 Spring Street; Map 85 A.P. 2 Lot 171**  
**Replace Door – Final**

Mr. Eric Scheibenflug, the contractor for the Niles, represented the application.

Ms. Balkcom read into the record the standards that apply to the application, being Standards # 2 and 4. *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 that all proposals for architectural changes shall be appropriate to the original design of the building.

Ms. Balkcom noted there is some history to the front door and is glad to see it replaced.

Mr. McGeorge commented that the front door has been changed numerous times as the older photo submitted shows a replacement front door. He noted that the proposed door is an improvement than what is there today.

Ms. Balkcom stated that she has been inside the subject home and can see why the applicant would want a door that provides for a lot of light.

The contractor confirmed that the existing door was installed improperly as well.

The Commissioners had no issues with the application.

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

Ms. Carron made the following findings of fact:

1. A written application has been submitted by Nelson and Sandra Niles of 136 Spring 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.1890 late Victorian.
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 136 Spring Street to replace the front door. This is consistent with Commission Standard #2 and 4.

Seconded by Mr. Mr. McGeorge.

VOTE: 4 – 0.

**3. Kristina Stark**  
**56 Somerset Street; Map 85 A.P. 2 Lot 204**  
**Minor Modifications – Final**  
**Architectural Style – c. 1928 early Twentieth century**

Ms. Stark explained that she was before the HDC a month ago for conceptual approval and she has since received ZBR approval for the in-law apartment and is now before the HDC for final plan approval for the back door and stairs. She was also hoping that she could add another element to the project that would require the HDC to approve.

Ms. Balkcom did not have any problems with the project or the proposed door to be used. Ms. Stark advised the door proposed is the closest door she could find to match the existing back door.

The Commissioners were all in agreement that the submitted project raised no issues of concern.

Ms. Stark explained the new proposed amendment that has recently come up is in regards to the east side of the house and the layout of the proposed kitchen. The proposed change includes eliminating a window and installing a slider in order to walkout onto a new proposed deck.

Ms. Balkcom explained that procedurally the HDC does not allow an applicant to add new changes at the meeting as the members like to have to review it. Additionally in this situation there may be the need for ZBR approval for the new deck. She felt comfortable giving conceptual approval for the side deck and swapping the window to a door – this meant the idea of replacing the window to a door in order to have access to the outside and a subsequent deck addition is conceptually fine but more details are needed in order to receive final plan approval.

Mr. McGeorge agreed and noted that it should be confirmed whether or not zoning relief will be needed for the proposed deck.

If zoning relief is not required the Commission unanimously allowed the final plan to be refereed as it is a straightforward change. The referees that volunteered include Mr. McGeorge and Mr. Fallon as long as the applicant submits detailed plans including materials and elevations.

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 Kristina Stark.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District, located at 56 Somerset Street.
- 3) The structure in question is a contributing building; it is representative of a c.1928 early Twentieth 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. Fallon to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 56 Somerset Street for a window to back door exchange and addition of new rear staircase. There is also conceptual approval to change a window to a door on east side (kitchen area) and addition of side deck; project to be refereed upon zoning approval. This is consistent with Commission Standards #2 and 4.

Seconded by Mr. McGeorge.

VOTE: 4 – 0.

**4. Thomas Testa**  
**17 Bridge Street; Map 75 A.P. 3 Lot 168**  
**New Construction, Minor Modification – FINAL**

Mr. McGeorge commented that the last hearing was very productive; he noted by code handrails are required on the side of the stairs – the drawing only shows railings on the landing. Mr. Testa said that could easily be added.

Mr. McGeorge reminded the Applicant about possibly adding something over the front door as was discussed at the last meeting. Mr. Testa commented that his contractor suggested installing a metal drip cap versus adding an overhang.

Ms. Balkcom noted that once the project is finished it will appear that something is missing if there is nothing added above the door; she strongly recommended a pediment or overhang be installed.

Mr. McGeorge suggested several examples of how to add a detail over the front door in order to provide the finished element the structure needs; 6” overhang will give mass while it will serve both function and be aesthetically improving.

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

Ms. Carron made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Thomas Testa.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District, located at 17 Bridge Street.
- 3) The structure in question is a contributing building; it is representative of a c.1870 early Victorian style 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. Carron to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 17 Bridge Street for a new 3’x6’ wood stoop at the front entrance with the addition of handrails and the integration of a “door hood.” This is consistent with Commission Standard #4.

Seconded by Mr. McGeorge.

VOTE: 4 – 0.

### **Historic District Commission Business**

- 1) MINUTES: Action on the minutes of the June 11, 2014 meetings.

Minutes continued to August due to lack of quorum to vote.

- 2) Commissioner Comments/Other

Ms. Balkcom informed the Commission that Allison Carcieri moved back to East Greenwich and possibly looking to be on a board or commission.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. MGeorge. Seconded by Ms. Carron. Adjourn at 7:02 p.m.

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

Lea Anthony Hitchen, Assistant Town Planner