

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MINUTES
May 13, 2015 Meeting
Town Council Chambers – 6:00 PM HDC meeting

Present: Kim Balkcom, Chair; Matthew McGeorge, Vice-Chair, Gregory Maxwell, Kristen Carron, Lauren Drury, Erin Calise (arrived at 6:20 pm) and Andrew Barkley (arrived at 6:37 pm).

Absent: Kingston Fallon.

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. Scott Hubbard**
2 Castle Street; Map 85 A.P. 1 Lot 114
New Construction (Shed) - FINAL

Ms. Balkcom read the applicable standard into the record, being commission number 5. It 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.

Mr. Scott Hubbard, owner and applicant, represented the application. He explained the proposal is straight forward – one-story storage shed which will meet the zoning setbacks and measure 7' wide x 12' long x 10' in height.

Mr. McGeorge had no issues with the project as he too had to go through the same process.

Mr. Maxwell inquired if there will be clapboards on all four sides. Mr. Hubbard said two front and rear sides of the shed will have clapboard siding while the other two sides will be shingle sided but the entire shed material will consist of all wood which he will construct himself.

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 Scott Hubbard.
- 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. 1895 late Victorian.
- 4) The building does contribute to the historic and architectural significance of the district.
- 5) The work proposed by the applicant does not affect the character defining elements of the existing building.

Motion by Ms. Carron to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 2 Castle Street to construct a new shed. This is consistent with Commission Standard #5.

Seconded by Mr. McGeorge.

VOTE: 5 - 0.

**2. Karen Taylor/East Greenwich Free Library Association
82 Peirce Street; Map 85 A.P. 1 Lot 216
Extension of Previous Approval, Replace Door – FINAL**

Ms. Cecelia Hallahan, architect for the project, represented the application. She explained the request is to replace the north side entry door facing Church Street. The current door is an aluminum clad wood door installed as part of the later addition to the building, constructed in 2001. Ms. Hallahan noted the existing door has multiple issues including an under-sized active door leaf, drainage of the exterior slab is towards the doors and the threshold is not set properly - these combined issues cause the door to not function properly for egress and water enters the building. In order to improve the situation, Ms. Hallahan asserted the concrete slab outside of the door will be replaced to drain away from the door and the entire door unit will be replaced with a code compliant unit. The new Portal door will be a custom commercial grade aluminum door to match the existing profiles – the only difference is the active leaf will increase in size from 2'-10" to 3'-0" while the fixed leaf will decrease in size from 2'-10" to 2'-8".

Ms. Balkcom stated Commission Standards # 2 and 4 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.

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

Mr. Maxwell made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Karen Taylor/East Greenwich Free Library Association.
- 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. 1914 Richardsonian Romanesque architecture.
- 4) The building does contribute to the historic and architectural significance of the district.

- 5) The work proposed by the applicant does not affect the character defining elements of the existing building.

Motion by Mr. Maxwell to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 82 Peirce Street to replace the north side door. This is consistent with Commission Standards #2 and 4.

Seconded by Mr. McGeorge.

VOTE: 5 - 0.

3. Kerci and Scott Stroud
43 Reynolds Street; Map 84 A.P. 3 Lot 150
Addition and Modification – FINAL

Ms. Mary Meagher, designer and architect and Mr. Scott Stroud, owner of the property, represented the application.

Ms. Balkcom read the standards that apply to the application, being #4 and 5. Standard of Review Number 4 requires all proposals for additions or architectural changes to be appropriate to the original design of the building or to later changes that have acquired significance of their own. Standard 5 requires that new construction, including additions, be compatible with surrounding buildings in size, scale, materials and siting and with the general character of the historic district.

Mr. Maxwell questioned the reuse of the existing replacement windows. Ms. Meagher noted the replacement windows were approved by the Commission in 1998; the new Anderson 400 windows will match the existing in terms of details.

Mr. Maxwell commented that he liked the size and scale of the addition; he found the new addition to look like an add-on but that was fine with him.

Mr. McGeorge stated the attention to details and mass is phenomenal and has been taken into careful consideration – he has no objections to the application. He added the original porch is being maintained, there is a sense of entry as well as a sense of evolution to the home.

Ms. Meagher commented the existing brackets will be reused and the trim and clapboards will match the existing.

Mr. Maxwell inquired about the furnace and removal of chimney. Ms. Meagher asserted that a false chimney from the roof up will be constructed – currently she and the owner are trying to move around the interior which includes a staircase; at this point it may not happen. Mr. McGeorge pointed out that if there is no evidence the chimney was tied to an original fireplace of great meaning or a substantial piece of masonry work he felt the chimney could be removed and not require a false chimney be installed. As far as Ms. Meagher was aware the chimney has only been associated with the boiler.

Mr. Maxwell was of the opinion the external rooftop chimney adds character. Mr. McGeorge would agree to remove the chimney altogether or to rebuild the chimney from the roof up if that is what the Applicant desired since it appears definite the chimney is not associated with a fireplace.

Ms. Balkcom was of the opinion that the chimney was not prominent in any way and clearly not a center chimney therefore she did not have any issues with removing it altogether. Ms. Carron added that it appears the chimney is not visible from the front.

Ms. Hitchen questioned if the addition and deck will be in the 15' side setback. Ms. Meagher said no.

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

Mr. McGeorge made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Kerci and Scott Stroud.
- 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 Princess Anne late Victorian.
- 4) The building does contribute to the historic and architectural significance of the district.
- 5) The work proposed by the applicant does not affect the character defining elements of the existing building.

Motion by Mr. McGeorge to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 43 Reynolds Street for an addition and modification to the existing house. This is consistent with Commission Standards # 4 and 5.

Seconded by Ms. Calise.

VOTE: 6 - 0.

4. Michael Kent
564 Main Street; Map 75 A.P. 3 Lot 112
Signage - FINAL

Ms. Balkcom noted the Standard that applies is number 5 as signage is a type of new construction. 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.

Ms. Hitchen explained the sign has been modified since the packet was mailed; the new sign has a “hanging cigar” and pillars at the base of the sign (sign was modified due to pulling out of Bridge Street purposes.)

Mr. Kent mentioned the cigar would be carved or 3-dimensional, the sign will be cedar as it most durable and will match the siding on the building.

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 Michael Kent.
- 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.1970 commercial building.
- 4) The building does not contribute to the historic and architectural significance of the district.
- 5) The work proposed by the applicant does 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 new signage. This is consistent with Commission Standard #5.

Seconded by Ms. Calise.

VOTE: 6 – 0.

**5. Allen B. Gammons Jr.
74 London Street; Map 75 A.P. 1 Lot 339
Complete Renovation: Addition, Minor Alterations, Replace
Windows/Doors, Repair/Replace-in-Kind, Roofing and Siding -
FINAL**

Mr. Michael DellaGrotta represented the application.

Ms. Balkcom reminded those present the Commission granted the project conceptual approval at last month's meeting.

Ms. Balkcom read the Standards that apply to this application being #4, 5, 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. 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. *Standard 7* states exterior siding must be appropriate for the building to which it applied. *Standard 8* states all original 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.

Mr. McGeorge commented that the proposed shed dormer along the front façade is more appealing as well as more appropriate than three individual gable dormers.

As for the rear elevation, there was concern amongst Commission members about the lack of window or door openings. Mr. DellaGrotta explained there are currently no existing fenestrations and noted the backyard is less than 3 feet

deep as it is a very steep ledge. He added the intent is to focus outdoor activities within the front yard considering the rear yard cannot be utilized – they plan to add a bluestone patio in the front.

The architect for the project explained the windows and skylights will provide enough natural light into the structure and make up for the lack of openings at the back of the home.

The Commissioners reviewed the door and window schedule as well as materials to be used of which there were no issues.

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

Mr. Maxwell made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Michael DellaGrotta and Allen Gammons.
- 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.1865 non-contributing structure.
- 4) The building does not contribute to the historic and architectural significance of the district.
- 5) The work proposed by the applicant does not affect the character defining elements of the existing building.

Motion by Mr. Maxwell to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 74 London Street for a complete renovation which includes an addition, minor alterations, replacement of windows and doors, roofing and siding – with the condition the shed dormer option is used. This is consistent with Commission Standards #4, 5, 7 and 8.

Seconded by Ms. Carron.

VOTE: 7 – 0.

6. Christopher Keimig
63 King Street; Map 85 A.P. 1 Lot 84
Replace Windows, Minor Modifications, Replace-In-Kind – FINAL

Ms. Balkcom asked how long the applicant has owned the property. Mr. Keimig said one day.

Ms. Balkcom stated Standards 2, 4, and 8 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 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.

Ms. Balkcom noted the Applicant provided a detailed “argument” as to why the 12/12 windows should be replaced with 6/6 windows.

Mr. Keimig asserted the structure received a renovation in 1980 when there was an intention to reproduce the original type of 12/12 windows; he was confident the windows in the existing structure are not original to the building.

Mr. McGeorge commented that what would have been in the window openings originally was a 12/12 window based on age of the building and size and technology of glazing.

Mr. Keimig asserted at the same time it is easy to make the argument to go from a 6/6 window to a 12/ 12 window if the last particular owner at the time happened to like the style of the 12/12 window. He noted that in his application there are pictures of the Old Jail which was restored by the East Greenwich Preservation Society – the original windows were 6/6 and 2/2, which was built within a few years of his house; now the restored jail has 12/12 windows. He concluded that it is not to say that 12/12 was a significant to 1794 and not to say that those were the original windows. Mr. Keimig commented that he was quite sure based on his research the windows are not original.

Mr. McGeorge noted that if the Commission were to allow replacement at all, the semantics of 6/6 or 12/12 would be a limiting factor; he would have less of a strong approval because the 6/6 window is certainly not without precedent for a building in this neighborhood, height and scale. For him, it is not something he felt strongly about – if all original 12/12 windows were still in the building and the Applicant was proposing to take them out on what we knew for a fact are actually original windows then he would object but under the circumstances of there being a conglomeration of different windows some of which are even proven to be replacement he had no objection to the application.

Mr. Keimig confirmed over 1/3rd of the original windows are missing and all of the first floor windows have low quality replacement windows. Mr. McGeorge stated in this case, based on the existing conditions and evidence that there are windows that have been replaced in the 1980s as a compromise for a 6/6 window is appropriate.

Mr. Barkley commented that for a house constructed in the late 1700s the windows might have been replaced up to three different occasions over the course of its lifetime. Mr. Keimig acknowledged Mr. Barkley's assumption and noted that upon his research he found the house was rebuilt in 1873.

Ms. Calise asked if the 12/12 windows are more expensive than the 6/6 windows. Mr. Keimig stated there are a total of 32 windows to be replaced to which there is a couple hundred dollars difference in cost. He added that there is also a significant amount of restoration he plans to perform to the exterior of the house in order to improve the aesthetics. If he has to put all his money towards the windows the other restoration plans could not be incorporated into the overall project.

Ms. Balkcom acknowledged the Applicant was proposing to use a good quality window and the HDC welcomes great positive changes that will also improve the district – this is an example of a compromise that we are willing to make even though a few of the HDC members feel as though the windows were most likely 12/12.

Mr. Maxwell asked if any of the remaining windows predate 1980 and whether the Applicant knew when the trim was added. Mr. Keimig stated the trim was added in 1980 but the entire window frames are now rotting.

Mr. Keimig commented that he struggled with the trim profile as to how to convey what he was trying to do. He explained there are these giant head casings along the top of the windows – he would like to reduce the size of them and square them off.

Mr. McGeorge verified the request is not inappropriate but considering the Applicant did not have a specific design for the trim this portion of the application should be refereed.

Mr. Keimig said he was fine with this portion being refereed as he rushed submitting the application and did not definitively know yet what trim he wanted. He clarified the trim will be very consistent with the era of the structure.

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

Mr. McGeorge made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Christopher Keimig.
- 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.1796 Federal Colonial.
- 4) The building does contribute to the historic and architectural significance of the district.
- 5) The work proposed by the applicant does not affect the character defining elements of the existing building.

Motion by Mr. McGeorge to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 63 King Street for window replacements (Marvin Integrity simulated divided lites with a 6/6 configuration). This is consistent with Commission Standards #8.

Seconded by Mr. Barkley.

The window trim will be refereed by Mr. McGeorge and Mr. Maxwell when Applicant has markup of size and materials.

VOTE: 7 – 0.

7. Glenn Chelo
20 Water Street: Map 85 A.P. 1 Lot 403
Minor Modifications - FINAL

Ms. Balkcom read the standards that apply to this application into the record, those being 1 and 4. *Standard 1* requires that original materials and architectural features shall be maintained or repaired whenever possible rather than replaced. *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.

Ms. Balkcom confirmed the Applicant is requesting to replace the north side staircase.

Mr. Glenn Chelo, owner of Blu on the Water Restaurant and Mr. Craig DePetrillo, project manager & consultant for the Chelo's Corporation represented the application.

Mr. DePetrillo explained there was originally two steps that needed to be replaced then the contractor found out the stringers were falling apart. He noted there is a total of 12 steps with a total of 3 rotted stringers. Mr. DePetrillo verified there was miscommunication between the contractor Tony Florio and the B/Z Official as well as with the landlord who thought the stairs were not to code – he noted the building code has changed since the stairs were originally built. Mr. DePetrillo also noted the B/Z Official asked the Applicant to comply with any and all CRMC regulations which that request is being honored. He also confirmed the new material is wood, a replacement in kind material.

Mr. McGeorge stated he considered this project a repair in kind which simply needs permitting. Mr. Maxwell agreed.

Ms. Hitchen advised that the HDC should approve the project and make a motion but if there is anything held up she would not record the Certificate of Appropriateness until all paperwork is submitted, including an application signed by the property owner.

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 Glenn Chelo.
- 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.1970 structure.
- 4) The building does not contribute to the historic and architectural significance of the district.
- 5) The work proposed by the applicant does not affect the character defining elements of the existing building.

Motion by Ms. Calise to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 20 Water Street to replace north side staircase. This is consistent with Commission Standards #1 and 4.

Seconded by Mr. McGeorge.

VOTE: 7 – 0.

Historic District Commission Business

1. MINUTES: Action on the minutes of the December 10, 2014, January 14, 2015, February 11, 2015, March 11, 2015, and April 8, 2015 meetings.

Motion by Ms. Calise, seconded Mr. Barkley to approve the December 10, 2014 minutes. VOTE: 4 – 0.

Motion by Ms. Calise, seconded Mr. McGeorge to approve the January 14, 2015 minutes. VOTE: 5 – 0.

Motion by Ms. Carron, seconded by Mr. McGeorge to approve the February 11, 2015 minutes. VOTE: 4 – 0.

2. Main Street Crosswalk Discussion

Staff informed the Commission that the Town Council is looking for ideas and thoughts on ways to improve Main Street and specifically crosswalks in the downtown area. Back in 2000 faux stamped concrete crosswalks were installed – they are now in need of fixing. The HDC would like to see granite set stone for all the crosswalks but knowing granite is expensive they would prefer that all crosswalks be consistent no matter the material used. The Commission also recommended improving the street lighting.

3. Historic Tax Credit Application: 27 King Street

Ms. Balkcom approved and signed the tax credit application for a repainting job at 27 King Street. Staff will submit application to Tax Assessor.

4. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS/OTHER: Commission members are invited to comment on any observations they have made within the District, ask questions about past approvals, request updates on violations, etc.

Ms. Balkcom commented there are currently numerous store vacancies along Main Street.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Barkley. Seconded by Ms. Calise. Adjourn at 8:00 p.m.

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

Lea Anthony Hitchen, Assistant Town Planner