

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MINUTES
January 13, 2016 Meeting
Town Council Chambers – 6:00 PM HDC meeting

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

Absent: Lauren Drury.

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. Joseph Gelineau
88 King Street; Map 85 A.P. 1 Lot 2
Replace Doors & Siding – FINAL
(Continued from the December 9, 2015 meeting)**

Ms. Balkcom read the applicable standard into the record, being commission number 4 and 7. *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 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.

Mr. Joseph Gelineau explained his home has been barraged with noise and low frequency bass vibrations coming from Blu on the Water and other restaurants on the waterfront; the thumping noises tend to bounce off the Shore Mill Residences which exacerbate the problem which is typically from 8:30 PM to 12:30 AM Thursday through Sunday during the summer season. He has worked with several acoustical engineers, the owners of Blu and Town Staff to reduce the problem. Mr. Gelineau asked to remove the existing wood clapboard on the east and south side of the house only and replace with Certainteed fiber cement clapboard. Additionally the six-lite door with side lites located on the east side is requested to be replaced with a solid fiberglass door with side lites. Mr. Gelineau noted that back in 1997 he received HDC approval for 6/6 vinyl clad windows; as part of the noise reduction procedure he is replacing the windows with a Harvey acoustical level noise reduction 6/6 vinyl window which he requested to be considered replacement-in-kind.

Mr. Maxwell asked if sound is the main issue. Mr. Gelineau confirmed it is low frequency bass thumping sounds until 12:30 AM. He needs to add mass to the dwelling to reduce and/or eliminate the noise. Mr. Gelineau explained the process includes taking off the existing siding and sheathing, add on mass loading vinyl before adding the cement fiberboard. He has to make sure there are no vapor issues which can trap moisture as the dwelling has to be completely sealed.

Mr. McGeorge stated he did not have any objections to the application but was just trying to understand the technical side a bit more so the Applicant was not doing all this work for nothing. Mr. McGeorge stated that he too has dealt with sound engineers and this particular situation in mill buildings; the issue has to be fixed perfectly on the acoustical side or problems will still persist. Mr. McGeorge recommended an acoustical engineer from Cambridge, MA.

Mr. Maxwell commented that he was worried about the sheathing being removed. Mr. Barkley noted "Z-Bat" and his only concern is fiberboard is denser and could be like the skin of a drum where it could take the frequency and allow it to transmit it through so it has to have thick enough mass so that it absorbs and not reflects.

Mr. McGeorge stated that in the context of the application – based on the location of the house, the technical issue aside, he did have any issues with the application.

Ms. Balkcom asked if there is any obligation from the restaurants to stay within their parameters. Ms. Hitchen noted the police have been to the restaurants numerous times to take noise measurements. Furthermore the Town Staff, restaurant owners and Mr. Gelineau have been meeting about the issue for a long time. (Mr. Gelineau commented everyone has been meeting for over 6 years.)

Mr. Gelineau stated the issue is easy to fix at the source – install barriers at Blu, but the Chelo brothers want a see through system. A problem is the noise meters do not measure bass.

The Commissioners suggested using a high density spray foam insulation in the wall cavity as opposed to putting a fiber wall back in because it is denser; therefore absorbing more frequency.

Mr. Maxwell questioned the door. Mr. Gelineau explained the existing side door has glass panels; the new door is a solid door.

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

Mr. McGeorge made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Joseph Gelineau.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District, specifically 88 King Street.
- 3) The structure in question is a contributing building; it is representative of a c. 1850 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 not affect the character defining elements of the existing building.

Motion by Mr. McGeorge to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 88 King Street for replacing siding and side door. This is consistent with Commission Standard #4 & 7.

Seconded by Mr. Barkley.

No discussion on the motion.

VOTE: 6 – 0.

2. Andrew Gough
31 Peirce Street; Map 85 A.P. 1 Lot 253
Replace Windows & Bulkhead – FINAL

Ms. Balkcom read the applicable standard into the record, being commission number 4 and 8. *Standard 4* states that all proposals 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. 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. Andrew Gough, property owner and Mr. Mark Shrerer, general contractor, represented the application.

Mr. Gough informed the Commission that he obtained a quote to repair the existing windows. When questioned by the Commission who quoted the restoration of window work, the Applicant stated Mr. Ron Barrows; the same person who would also be replacing the windows if that was approved. Mr. Shrerer confirmed Mr. Barrows is not a historic restoration contractor. Ms. Balkcom did not feel as though the quote was too reliable.

Mr. Gough confirmed he was the homeowner and would be living in the second and third floors of the structure.

Mr. McGeorge stated the issue of the bulkhead is a non-issue for him. As for the window portion of the application, the wood for wood window can be considered replacement in kind, but the issue for him personally is the muntin profile – that is critical and the light configuration so as long as it is a 6/6 and get the muntin profile to match what is existing.

Mr. Shrerer stated he just contacted the supplier to see if they offer the muntin in a 5/8” width profile. Mr. McGeorge said if the distributor can do that then you do not technically have to get approval from the HDC.

Ms. Hitchen raised the issue about an email from Dan Hamilton, the window distributor, to Allen Gammons regarding the muntin width – in that the width proposed would be 1-1/8” wide which made staff think this is what the Applicant desired or the window company could not make a smaller profile.

Mr. McGeorge was curious as to why the Applicant chose an acoustical soundproofed window. Mr. Scherer noted that the proposed window is a tru-divided lite window; we did originally look into using the Anderson window but went with the Larson due to it being a tru-divided lite.

Mr. McGeorge was impressed and acknowledged that it is a very good proposed window in that it is a real tru-divided lite, it is not a spacer bar applied window.

Ms. Hitchen reiterated that the proposed muntin is to be 1-1/8” wide. Mr. McGeorge said that is where the problem lies. Mr. McGeorge suggested refereeing the window portion of the application as he personally would reject the application with that proposed 1-1/8” muntin width.

Ms. Hitchen asked the size of the existing muntin. Mr. Maxwell guessed 3/4” width muntin.

The Commissioners were in agreement to call a motion on the bulkhead portion of the application while refereeing the windows so the Applicant had time to find out from the distributor if the muntins are made in a smaller width.

Ms. Calise asked about the material for the bulkhead. Mr. Gough confirmed the bulkhead will be metal.

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

Mr. Maxwell made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Andrew Gough (31 Peirce Street LLC).
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District, specifically 31 Peirce Street.
- 3) The structure in question is a contributing building; it is representative of a c. 1865 late Greek 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. Maxwell to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 31 Peirce Street to replace the rotting bulkhead only; the windows will be refereed – the window muntin must be between $\frac{3}{4}$ "-5/8" profile width. This is consistent with Commission Standard #4.

Seconded by Mr. McGeorge.

The HDC referees will be Mr. McGeorge and Mr. Maxwell.

No discussion on the motion.

VOTE: 6 – 0.

3. Raymond Keough
34 Rocky Hollow Road; Map 75 A.P. 3 Lot 299
Minor Modification, Replace Windows & Door, Fencing, Siding,
Replace in Kind – CONCEPTUAL

Ms. Balkcom read the applicable standard into the record, being commission numbers 2, 4, 7 and 8. *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

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* 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 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. Curran Keough and Mr. Matthew St. Ours represented the application.

Ms. Hitchen summarized the application, noting there will be no addition to the existing footprint but the owner does plan to reopen the enclosed rear porch.

Mr. Maxwell asked if the asbestos siding will be removed and the underlying siding will be repaired. Mr. Keough said the plan is to remove the asbestos siding and use dip wood shingles on top and wood clapboard on the bottom.

Mr. McGeorge asked if there was any rot with the wood trim it would be replaced in kind with a cedar wood. Mr. Keough confirmed yes.

Mr. McGeorge overall thought the drawings looked great. Mr. Keough commented the proposed window that will be used to replace the existing windows is the Anderson 400 Series double hung.

Mr. Maxwell inquired about the window above the kitchen sink, asking if it has been shortened. Mr. Keough explained the designer has proposed a modern kitchen and there are two shorter windows planned to which we are requesting the HDC to approve – essentially the windows will still be double hung but be more stout/square as opposed to rectangular.

Mr. McGeorge suggested the rear kitchen windows be casement windows but then changed his mind and decided they should be double hung windows that could be reduced in size to accommodate an interior kitchen counter. Mr. Maxwell commented that due to the structure being given 10 out of 38 possible

points for architectural value he was fine with the windows being shortened and would vote in favor of it.

Ms. Carron questioned that it appeared some of the windows have already been shortened. Mr. Keough explained the only two to be shortened are the rear kitchen windows.

Ms. Balkcom questioned the balusters on the front porch and inquired if they would be staying. Mr. Keough noted the balusters are in fairly good shape. She commented that the baluster detail should remain if it is descent shape. Mr. McGeorge asserted the building code only requires a baluster if it is 30” above grade. Ms. Carron pointed out the porch railings have been replaced with 2x4s which indicates there might have been nothing there originally.

Mr. McGeorge recommended bringing a cut sheet of the proposed doors to the final plan hearing.

Ms. Balkcom explained the HDC approved the conceptual plan and the Applicant can move forward with the submission of a final plan. She noted the Commission has almost never approved the shortening of windows but in this particular circumstance, due to the location (rear facing and not being located on the original structure but on a later addition) they felt the window reduction was appropriate.

**4. The Division Group
1727 Division Road; Map 79 A.P. 12 Lot 86
Complete Demolition– FINAL
(Continued from the September 9, October 14, November 11, 2015 ,
and December 9, 2015 meetings)**

(Applicant has requested a 90 day extension from the HDC)

Motion by Mr. McGeorge to continue the hearing for 90 days, with no further extensions. Seconded by Ms. Carron.

VOTE: 6 – 0.

Historic District Commission Business

1. MINUTES: Action on the minutes of the October 14, 2015 and November 18, 2015.

Motion by Mr. Maxwell to approve the November 18, 2015 minutes as written. Seconded by Mr. Barkley. Approved 5 – 0.

October minutes were tabled until the next meeting.

2. Tax Credit Approval – 441 Cedar Avenue

Ms. Balkcom approved and signed the tax credit application submitted for 441 Cedar Avenue although questioned where the proof of payment was considering the applicant paid by cash.

3. 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. Hitchen asked Mr. McGeorge and Mr. Maxwell to referee the 63 King Street window trim as the owner has a sample on the east side ready to be reviewed.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Maxwell. Seconded by Ms. Carron. Adjourn at 7:30 p.m.

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

Lea Anthony Hitchen, Assistant Town Planner