

## **HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MINUTES**

**January 13, 2021 Meeting**

**VIRTUAL – Convened at 6:30 PM via the ZOOM Remote Meeting Platform**

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

Absent: Gregory Maxwell.

Staff: Lea Anthony Hitchen, Assistant Town Planner and Andrew Teitz, Town Solicitor.

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Ms. Kristen Carron, Chair of the Commission, started the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Ms. Carron 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. Carron 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. Carron 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. Carron introduced the Board members and Staff present and read the application items into the record.

#### Historic District Commission Hearings

- 1. East Greenwich Cove Builders, LLC  
11 Lion Street; Map 85 AP 1 Lot 395  
Proposed Work: Complete Demolition of Structure – First Hearing**

The Applicant has requested to continue the hearing to the following meeting due to them recently retaining an attorney who needed additional time to study the matter.

Motion by Ms. Carron to continue the application to the February 10, 2021 meeting. Seconded by Mr. Barkley.

Roll Call Vote: Ms. Calise: Yes, Mr. McGeorge: Yes, Mr. Barkley: Yes, and Ms. Carron: Yes. (VOTE: 4– 0).

Staff updated the Commission in regards to the peer review study noting she reached out to three separate companies one of which was interested in participating in the job. The subject company was available for a site visit on January 6<sup>th</sup> but unfortunately there was no one from East Greenwich Cove Builders, LLC available to let him in. The Commission also presented a couple of dates that were amenable to them for a site visit of the property. Staff would reach out to the Applicant to determine the date and time of the site visit even though the Applicant has not contacted Staff since the last meeting considering the Applicant emphasized the importance of the building being demolished.

**2. Pamela Unwin-Barkley for John & Andrea O'Connor  
93 Prospect Street; Map 74 AP 2 Lot 191  
Proposed Work: Partial demo of existing rear porch; Complete  
demo of detached garage; New Construction; Replace the Existing  
detached garage with a 2-bay Attached Garage – CONCEPTUAL**

Due to a quorum issue the Applicant requested a continuance to February 10, 2021. Motion by Ms. Carron to continue the application to February 10, 2021. Seconded by Mr. McGeorge.

Roll Call Vote: Ms. Calise: Yes, Mr. McGeorge: Yes, Mr. Barkley: Yes, and Ms. Carron: Yes. (VOTE: 4– 0).

**3. Dean Benjamin  
94 West Street; Map 84 AP 2 Lot 104  
Proposed Work: New Construction of a 8'x6' Shed – FINAL**

Ms. Carron stated Commission *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. Dean Benjamin of 94 West Street represented the application. He explained the request is to install a prefabricated 8'x6' wood shed to be located on the south side and adjacent to the detached garage. The shed will have a simple

wood-grain siding, asphalt roof shingles with a front double door and black hinges. Mr. Benjamin noted the back of the shed will align with the garage which is 7' from the rear property line and not requires any dimensional relief.

Mr. McGeorge found the application very straightforward and did not have any objections. Mr. Barkley also commented the shed will be complimentary to the property and the materials meets the standards.

Mr. McGeorge made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Dean Benjamin.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District, specifically 94 West Street.
- 3) The property in question is a contributing structure, being a c.1895 late-Victorian building.
- 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 the construction of a prefabricated 8'x6' garden shed to be located on the south side and adjacent to the detached garage. This is consistent with Commission Standard #5.  
Seconded by Ms. Calise.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Barkley: Yes, Ms. Calise: Yes, Mr. McGeorge: Yes, and Ms. Carron: Yes. (VOTE: 4 – 0).

**4. Paula Maddalena**  
**53 Castle Street; Map 75 AP 1 Lot 129**  
**Proposed Work: Addition to the West Side of the Structure**  
**(mudroom, bath & 1-car attached garage) – CONCEPTUAL**

Ms. Carron stated Commission Standards 4 and 5 apply to the application. *Standard 4* states all proposals for additions and architectural changes shall be appropriate to the original design of the building or to later changes which have historic significance of their own. *Standard 5* 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.

Ms. Paula Maddalena explained she has an existing home that she is requesting to construct a two-floor addition to the west side of the structure. The project will consist of a mudroom and full bathroom as well as a one vehicle garage on the first floor along with a front covered porch. The second floor layout is to be determined but the exterior will continue with the gambrel style roof.

Fundamentally speaking, Mr. McGeorge did not have any objections to the application as it is a respectful addition to the primary structure and is conceptually in favor to the project. He found conceptually the flavor of the design is fine as he can see the disconnects but can also see the overall intent. He has no issues with the massing as proposed but there needs to be some additional resolution which will be flushed out as the details progress. Mr. McGeorge stressed the importance of incorporating either an architect or draftsman into the project by creating proper elevations and floor plans.

Ms. Carron agreed with Mr. McGeorge's comments as she too was also in favor of the application as she found the project to compliment the property and the district but simply wanted more specifics.

Mr. McGeorge suggested as the project gains additional details to submit for another conceptual review, at no cost, and the HDC can review once additional time, but at this point it appears the design looks tasteful with proper massing.

### **Historic District Commission Business**

1. Minutes: Review and approval of the August 12, 2020, September 12, 2020, and October 14, 2020 meeting minutes and May 20, 2020 site visit minutes of 104 Duke Street.

Motion by Ms. Carron to approve the August 12, 2020 minutes as drafted.  
Seconded by Mr. McGeorge.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Barkley: Yes, Ms. Calise: Yes, Mr. McGeorge: Yes, and Ms. Carron: Yes. (VOTE: 4 – 0).

Motion by Ms. Carron to approve the September 12, 2020 minutes as drafted.  
Seconded by Mr. Barkley.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Barkley: Yes, Ms. Calise: Yes, Mr. McGeorge: Yes, and Ms. Carron: Yes. (VOTE: 4 – 0).

The minutes October 14, 2020 meeting minutes and May 20, 2020 site visit minutes of 104 Duke Street. were tabled to the following month.

2. COMMISSIONER REPORTS: Commission members may report on cases where they have been appointed as Referee, and refer observations or possible violations that they have observed to staff. Any substantive discussion of any such Report shall require addition to the Agenda by motion.

Motion by Mr. McGeorge to add for discussion Karl Megules. Seconded by Ms. Carron.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Barkley: Yes, Ms. Calise: Yes, Mr. McGeorge: Yes, and Ms. Carron: Yes. (VOTE: 4 – 0).

Mr. McGeorge and Ms. Carron explained they recently met Ms. Carron's new neighbor, Mr. Karl Megules, who is a contractor and has an interest in getting active in the community, particularly with the HDC. They suggested to Mr. Megules he submit an application to become a member of the HDC considering his background as he would be a great asset to the Commission and would bring a different perspective to the commission.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. McGeorge. Seconded by Mr. Calise. VOTE: 4 – 0

**Adjourned at 7:15 pm.**

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

Lea Anthony Hitchen, Assistant Town Planner