

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MINUTES

September 9, 2020 Meeting

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

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

Absent: Kristen Carron, Chair; and Nicole D’Amato.

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

Mr. Matthew McGeorge, Vice-Chair, and Acting-Chair of the Commission, started the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Mr. McGeorge 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.

Mr. McGeorge 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. Mr. McGeorge explained the sequence for review of applications and its helpfulness to understand how the process works before the Board hears the applications. He 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.

Mr. McGeorge introduced the Board members and Staff present and read the application items into the record.

Historic District Commission Hearings

Mr. McGeorge explained due to quorum issues the following agenda items listed on the docket had to be continued to the October 14, 2020 meeting:

- 1. Peter D. Nolan Trust
108-110 Spring Street; Map 85 AP 2 Lot 173
Proposed Work: Construction of a 3' stone wall along front yard
perimeter – FINAL**

Motion by Mr. Barkley to continue the application to the October 14, 2020 meeting. Second by Mr. Maxwell.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Maxwell: Yes, Mr. Barkley: Yes, Mr. McGeorge: Yes. (VOTE: 3 – 0). (Ms. Calise recused from the application.)

2. Robert Euston

24 Somerset Street; Map 75 AP 3 Lot 1

**Proposed Work: Addition to rear Southeast corner of home;
Addition of a Second Vehicle Garage to Northwest corner of home;
and Modification to Roofline – FINAL**

Motion by Mr. Barkley to continue the application to the October 14, 2020 meeting. Second by Mr. Maxwell.

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

3. Joe Colaluca of Blue Star Realty, LLC

104 Duke Street; Map 85 AP 1 Lot 415

**Proposed Work: Extensive Structural Repair & Replacement in
Kind of Existing Structure - CONCEPTUAL**

Motion by Mr. Barkley to continue the application to the October 14, 2020 meeting. Second by Mr. Maxwell.

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

4. Gaiane Martirosian

7 Friendship Street; Map 75 AP 3 Lot 82

Proposed Work: New Signage – FINAL

Mr. McGeorge stated 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.

Ms. Gaiane Martirosian, a new tenant at the subject location, explained she is moving her business called “Intention Acupuncture” into the small commercial space located on the Friendship Street side of the mixed-use building. She noted the request is to install wall signage in the existing wall frame. The sign background will be brown with green and white lettering.

The Commission members did not have any objections to the request as it was in line with the other signs at the subject location.

With no further comments Mr. McGeorge asked for a motion.

Ms. Calise made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Gaiane Martirosian.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District, specifically 7 Friendship Street.
- 3) The property in question is a contributing structure, being an altered c.1883 late Victorian.
- 4) The building contributes 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 as submitted for new signage, specifically “Intention Acupuncture.” This is consistent with Commission standard #5. Seconded by Mr. Maxwell.

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

**5. Adam Vanacore for Ann Metzger
100 Crompton Avenue; Map 75 AP 3 Lot 244
Proposed Work: New Construction of a 26’Wx26’Dx21’-4”H
Detached Garage on South Side of Property – CONCEPTUAL**

Mr. McGeorge stated Commission Standard #5 applies to the application which 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. Adam Vanacore, architect for the property owner, being Ann Metzger, represented the application. Mr. Vanacore explained he worked with Ms. Metzger a couple of years ago to perform interior and exterior renovations to the primary structure; that construction is now complete and he has been rehired to design a detached two-vehicle garage to be located on the south side of the property in order to compliment the home. He noted the existing basement has an old rubble foundation which is not conducive for storage in addition to being musty and having a fairly small footprint. Additionally, he added there is minimal storage in the house with the exception of a small storage area in the attic. His client would like the opportunity to have a dry storage area above the garage as well as have her vehicles in an enclosed space with the ability to store lawn equipment, etc. The request is to construct a 26'W x 26'D x 21'-4"H garage to include features to match those on the existing dwelling. There will be an exterior staircase with balustrade system to match that on the house to access the second-floor storage area. The siding will be gray wood clapboard along with wood trim, corner boards, fascia and soffit to match the existing dwelling. The main roof pitch is 9 1/2/12 while the shed dormers are proposed to have a 3 1/2 pitch. The garage overhead door will be one large carriage style door to be wood or a composite material. The garage will consist of multiple Anderson Woodwright 400 Series double hung 2/2 windows to match those in the house with two Anderson wood entry doors.

Mr. Vanacore stated the existing primary structure is a historic Victorian with a steep roof line. He went through several different iterations of drawings and designs of the proposed garage and realized it did not fit in well with a 3 or 4 pitch roof making him extend the roof higher which ended up encroaching into the 15' height restriction for an accessory structure. Mr. Vanacore explained how he tried to limit the height as much as possible while also trying to achieve a blend of aesthetic of garage, house and neighborhood compatibility. The end result would put the garage height at 21'-4" therefore Mr. Vanacore will also need to go to the Zoning Board of Review for height relief.

Mr. McGeorge felt the plans presented was a solid design solution and the proposed garage complimented not only the primary structure but also the neighborhood. He had no objections to the application.

Mr. Barkley was also impressed with the overall design of the garage and had no issues with the presentation. Mr. Maxwell was happy to see the garage was given its own space as opposed to being attached to the primary structure. He too had no objections to the application and felt the conceptual plan was very detailed and close to being a “final” plan.

The Commission conceptually approved the plan as submitted and provided a positive recommendation in support of the overall design and height of the garage.

**6. Robert Nemitz of Advanced Development Solutions for Mark & Patricia Murtagh
45 Spring Street; Map 85 AP 1 Lot 303
Proposed Work: Northwest Rear Addition – FINAL**

Mr. McGeorge stated Commission Standards #4 and 5 apply to this 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.

Mr. Robert Nemitz of Advanced Development Solutions represented Mark and Patricia Murtagh, the property owners. Mr. Nemitz explained he was before the HDC in July in which he received conceptual approval for the subject plans and has since received the necessary zoning board approval in July. Mr. Nemitz noted the Commission requested he create a “step-in”/bump in order to distinguish the original structure from the new addition in lieu of the addition being flush with the existing home which he has since modified to the final plan.

Mr. Nemitz made reference to all the materials that were to be used on the addition, primarily materials that are already on the existing house – wood clapboard siding, porch railings, and trim details will match that already on the structure. He referred to a cut sheet of a casement/awning window to be installed on three elevations, being west, east and north of the new addition. The Commissioners felt additional information was needed on the window and suggested the window be refereed as to not hold up the whole project.

Mr. McGeorge felt the project was in harmony with the existing structure and its setting. Mr. Maxwell was comfortable in terms of the siting and the new addition being located to the rear of the home and not being visible from the street. Mr. Barkley noted the scale of the addition is subordinate to the primary building and is set back and tucked in from the primary structure providing a differentiating point between the new and old construction.

Other than refereeing the window specification the Commission members had no objection to approving the application as submitted.

With no further comments Mr. McGeorge asked for a motion.

Mr. Maxwell made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Robert Nemitz of Advanced Development Solutions for Mark and Patricia Murtagh.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District, specifically 45 Spring Street.
- 3) The property in question is a contributing structure, being an c.1840 Greek Revival structure.
- 4) The building contributes 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 as submitted for an addition to the northwest corner of the existing house with the condition the final window specification be refereed. This is consistent with Commission Standards #4 and 5. Seconded by Mr. Barkley.

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

7. Hill & Harbor Design + Build
47 Melrose Street; Map 85 AP 1 Lot 248
Proposed Work: Demolition of Existing East Side Sunroom to be replaced with an Addition to include In-law Apt. and Master Suite – CONCEPTUAL

Mr. McGeorge stated Commission Standards #4, 5 and 9 apply to this 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. *Standard 9* states that partial demolition shall only be acceptable provided it would significantly benefit the Town, would serve the greater interest of the community as a whole, and there are no available alternatives to demolition. Demolition shall not result in a significant threat to or loss of an historic and or architectural resource to the Town, State, or Nation.

Mr. Paul Vespia of Hill and Harbor Design and Build represented Rosario Navarro, the property owner. Mr. Vespia explained the owner's mother-in-law will be living with them and they would like to demo the existing east side located sunroom/porch to make way for a 24'x20' two-floor addition which will accommodate an in-law unit on the first floor and a master bedroom suite on the second floor.

Considering the application is a conceptual design Mr. McGeorge did not have any fundamental concerns and pointed out the project required front, rear and side zoning relief before it could return to the HDC for final plan approval.

Mr. Maxwell commented the scale of the proposed addition is large and the Applicant should consider scaling it back slightly. He was also had concerns

about the hipped roof on the addition and suggested showing alternative roof styles such as a gable style roof.

Mr. Barkley said he had the same reaction to the addition as Mr. Maxwell; the scale and roof appear to be out of place.

Now that he had some more time to review the plan, Mr. McGeorge commented some additional thought should be given to the fenestration pattern, particularly given the massive blank wall on the eastern side of the addition.

Mr. McGeorge said overall the conceptual plan was approved but there were definitely some modifications that needed to take place before it could receive final plan approval.

7. Karen Buttenbaum

27 Brayton Street; Map 85 AP 2 Lot 120

Proposed Work: Rehab existing rear outbuilding to include replacement of window and door; construct 2-level bluestone patio; install fencing; and replace in kind the existing bulkhead - FINAL

Mr. McGeorge stated Commission Standards #1, 2, and 4. *Standard 1* states original materials and architectural features shall be maintained or repaired whenever possible rather than replaced, *Standard 2* notes that if existing materials have deteriorated beyond repair the new materials shall match the originals in composition, design, texture and other visual qualities. *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.

Mr. Paul St. Armand represented the application for his client, being Karen Buttenbaum, property owner of 27 Brayton Street. Mr. St. Armand explained the overall application which includes the construction of a two-level bluestone patio, the first level being 13'x14' in size with a granite curb (saved from the Brayton Street rehab paving project) used as a step up to the second level patio to be 12'x11' in size and located in the northwest corner of the property (specifically will wrap around the shed to be rehabbed). In fact six other large pieces of granite curbing from Brayton Street will be incorporated into the patio perimeter.

The second small project Mr. St. Armond discussed is in regards to the 10'-4" x 14'-6" rear shed located behind the house which has an existing slider door and one window with deteriorating siding. He would like to remove the existing slider and install a divided lite double door, similar to that in the submission packet; the existing west elevation window will be replaced to match the windows in the primary structure (being a 2/2 configuration). All of the existing rotted wood trim and wood clapboards on the shed will be replaced to match that on the home.

The third project consists of replacing the existing bulkhead located at the rear of the home which has rotted beyond replacement. Mr. St. Armond said the intent is to rebuild and replace as it currently is which he considers a replacement in kind.

Finally, Mr. St. Armond noted the property owner is requesting to install approximately fifty (50) feet of new fencing which will wrap around the northwest corner of property to enclose the garbage/recycling area as well as the new patio space. The fencing will be an appropriately styled solid vertical board wood fence with boxed posts and will be located in the side and rear property lines.

Mr. Maxwell stated he had no issues with the entire application as a portion of the proposed projects are considered replacement in kind and the remaining projects will substantially improve the exterior and grounds of the property.

Mr. McGeorge suggested refereeing the specification of the door to be installed.

Mr. Barkley commented the "shed" is most likely a former "wash house" as this property is in an area of town where Swedes settled; it was their "trade" so to speak to wash clothing for people in the area. Mr. Barkley added he has a neighbor with a similar "wash house" in their backyard.

Mr. McGeorge was happy to see the curbing being reused.

With no further comments Mr. McGeorge asked for a motion.

Ms. Calise made the following findings of fact:

- 1) A written application has been submitted by Karen Buttanbaum.
- 2) The property in question is located within the East Greenwich Historic District, specifically 27 Brayton Street.
- 3) The property in question is a contributing structure, being an c.1888 late Victorian building.
- 4) The building contributes 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 as submitted for the rehabilitation of an existing outbuilding to include the replacement of windows and a door; construct a 2-level bluestone patio; install fencing and replace an existing bulkhead. The new fence will be between 6"-12" from the property line. The new door in shed will be refereed by Commissioners Mr. McGeorge and Mr. Maxwell. This is consistent with Commission Standards #1, 2 and 4. Seconded by Mr. McGeorge

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

Historic District Commission Business

1. Minutes: Review and approval of the May 13, 2020, June 10, 2020, July 15, 2020 and August 12, 2020 meeting minutes and May 20, 2020 site visit minutes of 104 Duke Street.

Motion by Mr. McGeorge to approve the May 13, 2020 and June 10, 2020 minutes as written. Seconded by Ms. Calise.

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

Remaining minutes tabled to the following agenda.

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.

No Commissioner comments.

Adjourned at 7:37 pm.

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

Lea Anthony Hitchen, Assistant Town Planner