

**CHESHIRE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON  
MONDAY, JULY 17, 2012 AT 7:30 P.M.  
CHESHIRE TOWN HALL – 84 SOUTH MAIN ST.  
ROOM 210**

Commissioners Present:

Chairman Elizabeth Pratt Fox, Jeanne Chesanow, Joseph Dattilo and John Torello

Commissioners Absent:

Christine Pittsley

Staff Present:

Jerry Sitko, Economic Development Coordinator

Others Present:

Sylvia Nichols, Town Council Liaison

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Pratt Fox called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

**II. ROLL CALL**

The roll was taken for the meeting.

**III. SEATING OF ALTERNATES**

Chairman Pratt Fox seated alternate John Torello for voting during this meeting.

**IV. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM**

It was determined that a quorum was present.

**V. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – June 4, 2012 Public Hearing and Regular Meeting**

**MOTION** by Jeanne Chesanow to accept the minutes of the June 4, 2012 public hearing and regular meeting with the correction on Page 6, second paragraph, first sentence should read, "Chairman Pratt Fox stated that she and Mr. Votto..."; **SECONDED** by Joseph Dattilo.

**VOTE:** In Favor – Chesanow, Dattilo, Pratt Fox and Torello  
Opposed – None

The motion passed 4 – 0.

## **VII. COMMUNICATIONS**

Ms. Chesanow stated that she recently had a conversation with Maryellen Kania of the Cheshire Historical Society regarding the rear, northwest door, near the kitchen on the Hitchcock Phillips House. She noted that the door is considered visible from a public way. The outer door is installed in the storm door trim so there is no place to install an exterior storm door. Ms. Chesanow has suggested using a type of roll up door to help reduce heat loss through that doorway. Mr. Dattilo commented that it would be a minor job to fix the doorway to make it more airtight, if it were done by a preservation carpenter. Councilwoman Nichols noted that it is a Town building and is the Town's responsibility to fix.

Mr. Sitko stated that he would put a work order request in and would talk to Mr. Noewatne of the Town's Public Works Department.

Chairman Pratt Fox asked if there had been any talk about the fire escape work for the rear of the house that had been approved in a Certificate of Appropriateness? Ms. Chesanow stated that in previous conversations with Mr. Noewatne, he had said they were planning to have the work done but she may have heard that the contractor had been injured so the project may be delayed. It was noted that with the new Regulations, all Certificate of Appropriateness approvals are for 2 years.

## **VIII. BUSINESS**

### **A) Chairman's Report**

Chairman Pratt Fox informed the Commission that a new member, Christine Pittsley, has been appointed by the Town Council at their last meeting to replace Mr. Anderson. Ms. Pittsley has not yet been sworn in but Chairman Pratt Fox believed she will be by the next meeting. Mr. Dattilo stated that he may have a contact for another position on the Commission.

Chairman Pratt Fox mentioned that 5 barns in Cheshire have been nominated to the State Registry of Historic buildings and will now be eligible for the Federal Registry. The 4 barns are Drazen farm barn, a barn on Harrison Road, the Rochford barn on West Main Street, Val Joyce's barn on Academy Road and Levenworth barn on Coleman Road.

Chairman Pratt Fox informed the Commissioners that Mary Dunn will be attending the October 1<sup>st</sup> Historic District Commission meeting to talk about the Certified Local Government program.

B) Regulations / Rules Committee

Mr. Sitko stated that the Rules of Procedure are with Town Attorney Al Smith and should be ready to move forward at the next meeting. Chairman Pratt Fox asked that the Regulations be sent to all the Commissioners, via email. Mr. Sitko stated that he would send them out and noted that they are also available online in the Historic District Commission section of the Town web site.

C) Plan of Conservation and Development

Chairman Pratt Fox noted that Ms. Chesanow has been doing a lot of work and research on the Plan of Conservation and Development. Mr. Sitko noted that he spoke with the Town Planner and he is very interested in the historic preservation information for the Plan and is not looking to have it presented in any specific form at this time.

Ms. Chesanow stated that when the Town last reviewed the Plan of Conservation and Development 10 years ago, she and Mr. Anderson worked on suggestions for the report regarding historic preservation. The information was sent to the Planning and Zoning Commission but it never was included in the final Plan of Conservation and Development for Cheshire.

Ms. Chesanow reviewed some of the historic preservation information she had prepared for the Plan. It was noted that the Town Council and Environmental Commission will review the Town's open space. It is hoped that the final draft of the Plan of Conservation and Development will be a collaboration of the Town Committees / Commissions.

Commissioners talked about the possible expanding to another Historic District in Cheshire, possible in the area of Maple Avenue up to West Main Street. Mr. Torello stated that he thinks there is a general interest in a historic district with the neighborhood.

It was agreed that Mr. Sitko and Chairman Pratt Fox would draft a letter by July 24<sup>th</sup> to the Town Planner with notes and suggestions gathered by Ms. Chesanow, regarding the Plan of Conservation and Development.

D) Education / Community Outreach Committee

Chairman Pratt Fox informed the Commission that at a recent Cheshire Historical Society meeting they approved the co-sponsorship of a historic trolley tour for Cheshire. She noted that a lot of people will be needed to organize the event, between the Historic District Commission and Historical Society so planning should be starting as soon as possible if the event is going to be ready for next year.

E) Demolition Delay Ordinance

Chairman Pratt Fox stated that Ms. Chesanow has been working on a draft Demolition Delay Ordinance for Cheshire, using the Plainville, CT Demolition Delay Ordinance as an example. It was noted that the basic information was presented to the Ordinance Committee at their last meeting for buildings in Cheshire that are 100 years or older or on the Federal Registry of Historic places or part of the 1986 Inventory report. The dates of buildings will be based on the Assessor's Office records.

Councilwoman Nichols stated that the procedure if an Ordinance is going to be approved by the Town Council is that a draft specific to Cheshire would be reviewed by the Ordinance Committee, and then it would go to the Town Attorney for review then back to the Ordinance Committee. If the Committee approves it, they will send it to the full Town Council to decide on.

Councilman Nichols noted that the Ordinance Committee and the Town Council will need facts as to why the Demolition Delay Ordinance should be done with clear details. Ms. Chesanow noted that she is trying to keep the proposed Ordinance as brief and uncomplicated as possible and she is also proposing to keep the application fees not greater than what there is now; the same with the penalty fee.

Councilwoman Nichols asked when the final draft would be ready for review by the Ordinance Committee? Ms. Chesanow stated that she would have the draft Ordinance ready by the next Ordinance Committee meeting, which will be set in September. Mr. Sitko stated that he would have the Town Attorney review Ms. Chesanow's draft before it goes to the Ordinance Committee. Ms. Chesanow agreed that she would have it ready in early August so that it will be ready by early September for the Ordinance Committee to move forward with the proposal.

F) Sign for Cornwall Avenue / Town Center Historic District

Mr. Sitko stated that there has been a reserve of \$3,000 for signs for many years in the Town budget. This is not enough money to do the South Brooksvale Historic District signs so Mr. Sitko has received a price for the 4<sup>th</sup> and final Cornwall Avenue / Town Center Historic District sign, which will come in just under the \$3,000. Chairman Pratt Fox noted that the sign will be installed near the Preston Terrace / Cornwall Avenue intersection. She suggested that a celebration be held to break ground for the sign with the Historic District.

G) August Meeting

Mr. Sitko and Mr. Dattilo both stated that they would not be available for the August 6<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting. Commissioners agreed that August 14<sup>th</sup> would be a better date in August to meet, after checking their schedules.

## IX. ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION** by Joe Dattilo to adjourn the July 17, 2012 meeting of the Historic District Commission at 9:00 p.m.; **SECONDED** by Jeanne Chesanow.

VOTE: In Favor – Chesanow, Dattilo, Pratt Fox and Torello  
Opposed – None

The motion passed 4 – 0.

Respectfully submitted:

Tracey M. Kozlowski  
Recording Secretary