

**CHESHIRE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2013 AT 7:30 P.M.
CHESHIRE TOWN HALL – 84 SOUTH MAIN ST.
ROOM 210**

Commissioners Present:

Chairman Elizabeth Pratt Fox, Jeanne Chesanow, Joseph Dattilo, Christine Pittsley (arrived at 7:35 p.m.) and John Torello (arrived at 7:45 p.m.)

Commissioners Absent:

None

Staff Present:

Jerry Sitko, Economic Development Coordinator

Others Present:

Sylvia Nichols, Town Council Liaison; Lewis Bower, owner of Marbridge Retirement Center (departed at 8:15 p.m.); Matt Williams and Diane Nazarko representing Marbridge Retirement Center (departed at 8:15 p.m.)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Pratt Fox called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

The roll was taken for the meeting.

III. SEATING OF ALTERNATES

Chairman Pratt Fox stated that there are currently no alternate Historic District Commissioners to seat for voting.

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 – Special Meeting – August 13, 2013

MOTION by Jeanne Chesanow to accept the June 17, 2013 Historic District Commission Special Meeting minutes with the correction of: Page 6, item F, second paragraph, first sentence should read, "...that the building that is erroneously referred to as the "Foote House" located at 366 South Main Street had its front porch...". **SECONDED** by Joseph Dattilo.

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

The motion passed 3 – 0.

VII. COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Sitko informed the Commission that around August 30th the Town Manager's office received copies of letters from the State Historic Preservation Officer stating that the following properties were nominated to the State Registry of Historic Places:

William Brooks Farmstead located at 376 Academy Road
Stephen Lawton Farmstead located at 795 West Main Street
Amasa & Harrison Ives Farmstead located at 42 Harrison Road

In addition, a letter was also received that stated that the Ball & Socket property located at 493 West Main Street will be nominated on September 4th for consideration to the State Registry of Historic Places.

VIII. BUSINESS

A) Marbridge Retirement Center

Lewis Bower, owner of Marbridge Retirement Center was present to address the Commission again about the possible demolition and rebuild of Marbridge. Also in attendance regarding this project were Diane Nazarko and Matt Williams of Williams Architects.

Mr. Williams thanked Commissioners for the productive discuss at the last Commission meeting regarding this proposed project. He explained that as a result of the input from the Commission he has changed the exterior a little on the "barn" style building as well as the outside terrace area. Mr. Williams is proposing to use an existing stone foundation and wall on the property to "hide" the utility area and generator for the property. He would also like to replicate the front portico as close to the original in the rebuild.

Mr. Williams is also looking at adding a silo looking effect to the rebuilt section, which will hold the elevator and will add to the old barn style feel of the proposed project.

Ms. Nazarko talked to the Commission about color combination options for the proposed project. One combination was to use a putty / grey tone for the majority of the building with some burgundy accent to go with a darker asphalt roof. A second color combination could be neutral beige with a forest green accent. Mr. Lewis commented that he is not looking for this rebuild to stand out; they would like it to be elegant, subdued and tasteful.

Mr. Williams talked about the shed dormers and cupola that would be on the main rebuild section.

Mr. Torello commented that he felt the massing is most important on a project like this and Mr. Torello stated that he felt Mr. Williams has accomplished that with this proposal. Mr. Torello added that the color choices will come together as the project develops and evolves during this process.

Ms. Nichols commented that she like the darker grey or green color combination better than the burgundy, which she felt was "too distracting". Mr. Dattilo commented that there will be 2 different perspectives to consider in the color choice, the perspective of those that pass by and the perspective of those that live there. He added that he didn't think the burgundy was a big deal, adding that he felt it was a "subdued red".

Mr. Williams went on to explain that the Carter Lane side of the project will look very similar to what is there now, except for the new barn and parking / drop off area.

When asked, Mr. Lewis and Mr. Williams stated that they were trying to get the application with schematic plans in to Planning & Zoning for their September 16th meeting.

Commissioners stated that if a variance is needed to keep the stonewall for the shelter for the utility and generator area, the Historic District Commission would be happy to do what ever they could to help.

Mr. Sitko asked if the Commission wanted to submit a letter to the Planning & Zoning Commission regarding this project? Chairman Pratt Fox stated that this Commission could draft a letter that they have reviewed the proposed project and would like to see the stonewall and foundation on the property kept.

Mr. Torello noted that a building permit is needed for any structure over 120 square feet, depending on the size of the utility and generator area, they may not need to get a building permit.

B) Yankee Gas / Center Parklet

Mr. Sitko explained that the Yankee Gas vaults located in the center of Town parklet are having flooding problems so the regulators will need to be raised. They are currently 6 feet deep, in the ground. The regulators will be raised but will still be below grade. In addition, the pavers around the vaults will be extended for easier access, which will result in the removal of some plants and a couple of sprinkler heads. Planters, similar to those on West Main Street, are being proposed to be added to the parklet and possible a bench. It was noted that the bench would be considered a permanent structure and would have to go before this Commission because the property is in a Historic District.

Commissioners reviewed the proposed parklet revision plans submitted by Yankee Gas and all agreed that they did not like the look of the cement balls, as it reminded them of what they see in front of Target stores.

C) Non Contributing Buildings at Cheshire Academy

Commissioners reviewed the listing of 6 non-contributing buildings at Cheshire Academy, which was part of the Historic District Study Committee Report. Ms. Chesanow suggested that if Cheshire becomes a Certified Local Government designated town, they will receive a \$30,000 grant that can be used to do a historic property inventory and the non-contributing buildings could be re-evaluated. She also mentioned a building on Jean McKee's property on North Brooksvale that is listed in that report as non-contributing maybe should also be re-evaluated.

D) Town Hall / Center Sidewalks

Commissioners agreed that the new sidewalk brick paver pattern looked nice in the center of Town, adding that Mr. Noewatne and his crew are doing a nice job.

E) Cliff's Pizza

Mr. Sitko stated that he will follow up with Cliff Podaras, Jr. regarding the Cliff's Pizza sign that was recently installed at 7 South Main Street. Although the sign had been installed many years ago, it has been down for a number of years and will need approval from this Commission for the sign's re-installation.

Ms. Chesanow questioned if the Commission should address the smaller, temporary signs like sandwich board signs and Mr. Sitko noted that those types of signs are Zoning Enforcement Office issues. He noted that according to the Sign Regulations, those types of sign are allowed to be put out 4 times a year for 2 weeks at a time. Mr. Torello commented that these types of signs are an issue everywhere, not just in Cheshire.

F) Chairman's Report

Chairman Pratt Fox had nothing additional to add, other than the agenda item discussions.

G) Committees

1. Education / Community Outreach Committee

a. Plan of Conservation and Development

There was nothing new to report on the Plan of Conservation and Development for Cheshire at this time.

b. Trolley Tour

Ms. Chesanow stated that the Trolley Tour scheduled for Sunday, September 29th 2013 is now sold out for all 3 tours. Ms. Pittsley is working on the map of the Trolley Tour for the booklet and tour handout. The Tour script is a working draft as she and the narrator work through it as well as fact checking for the booklet.

Ms. Chesanow noted that almost 50% of the Trolley Tour tickets have been sold, without much advertising being done so far.

c. Recognition of property owners

Chairman Pratt Fox stated that the Committee will be moving forward with plans to recognize historic property owners in Cheshire after the Trolley Tour. She noted that the Committee will be planning for an annual recognition of historic properties in May during preservation month.

2. Regulations / Rules

a. Design Guidelines

The Regulations / Rules Committee would like to have a bus tour in October to take photographs for the Design Guidelines. Commissioners suggested October 19th at 9 am, departing from Town Hall. Mr. Sitko stated that he would help to make the vehicle arrangements for the tour.

H) Certified Local Government

Commissioners reviewed Chairman Pratt Fox's draft letter to the Town Council regarding the Certified Local Government application for the Town of Cheshire at the request of the Historic District Commission. Council Liaison Nichols commented that

she didn't see why the Town Council would need to send this application to a subcommittee of the Town Council as it seems pretty cut and dry. Commissioners were hopeful the application approval would be on the Town Council by mid October. Mr. Sitko will notify the Historic District Commissioners when the Town Council will review the application.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Joseph Dattilo to adjourn the September 3, 2013 meeting of the Historic District Commission at 8:57 p.m.; **SECONDED** by Jeanne Chesanow.

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

The motion passed 3 – 0.

Respectfully submitted:

Tracey M. Kozlowski
Recording Secretary