

**CHESHIRE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEARING AND REGULAR MEETING HELD ON
MONDAY, MARCH 3, 2014 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 and Breina Schain, Alternate.

Commissioners Absent:

John Torello

Staff Present:

Jerry Sitko, Economic Development Coordinator

Others Present:

Paul Bowman of 387 Mount Sanford Road (departed at 8:05 p.m.); Jeff Gebeau of the Record Journal

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 seated alternate Commissioner Schain for voting tonight with the Historic District Commissioners.

IV. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

It was determined that a quorum was present.

V. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

VI. WELCOME NEW COMMISSIONER BREINA SCHAIN

Chairman Pratt Fox and fellow Commissioners welcomed Breina Schain to the Historic District Commission as a new Alternate member. Ms. Schain thanked the members for the welcome and introduced herself stating that she has worked for the State Department of Corrections for 20 years in Cheshire and has been a resident of Cheshire for 7 years. She likes to volunteer in many different areas around Town and she has a wide range of interests. Ms. Schain concluded by saying she looks forward to learning and working with the Historic District Commission.

VII. PUBLIC HEARING

- A. Application for Certificate of Appropriateness - # 2013 – 002C
PABCO, Inc.
168 South Main Street
Re: Construction of New Building (in accord with approval of August 1, 2011)

Mr. Dattilo read the public notice of this Public Hearing as it appeared in the February 20, 2014 Cheshire Herald. Mr. Sitko stated that abutting property owners were notified and written proof was submitted by the applicant. There have been no written comments submitted to the Planning Department regarding this Certificate of Appropriateness Application.

Chairman Pratt Fox reviewed Public Hearing rules and procedures and then opened the Public Hearing of PABCO, Inc. for the construction of a new building at 168 South Main Street. She noted that this project was originally reviewed by the Commission in the Summer of 2011 and received approval for a Certificate of Appropriateness on August 1, 2011. The applicant has re-submitted its original application in the hopes of receiving an approval because the original approval has since expired.

Mr. Bowman of 387 Mount Sanford Road was present on behalf of PABCO, Inc. to discuss this application with the Historic District Commission. He stated that he has re-submitted the same application that was approved by this commission for a Certificate of Appropriateness on August 1, 2011. There really is no change at this time and Mr. Bowman added that he would come back to the Commission in the future if any changes are needed and to address signage for the property. Mr. Bowman also noted that he received no communications on this application re-submission from abutters or anyone else in the community.

Ms. Chesanow commented that the new building will join the existing Keeler house in the back but will not look conjoined in the front. Mr. Bowman noted that the windows and siding on the north side of the Keeler house will remain intact and the connector piece of the new building and existing will appear part of the new building. He also mentioned Benjamin Moore paint color Pale Straw with white accent trim as the potential color for the new building. Ms. Chesanow noted that she would like to see the new building and existing, original building, to be distinguished from each other and thought the slight exterior color change would be a good choice.

Chairman Pratt Fox asked if there would be a set back between the 2 buildings? Mr. Bowman replied that there would be 14-16 feet separation of the front set back between the new and existing buildings, but it will not be too drastic.

Ms. Schain asked about the type of use for the building and Mr. Bowman replied that it would be a multi / mixed use business property, which was approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Mr. Dattilo asked if the back windows will be addressed for the existing building with this application? Chairman Pratt Fox stated that it would be addressed later, separately.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Jeff Gebeau of the Record Journal asked about the timetable for breaking ground and completion of this new building? Mr. Bowman replied that he would like to complete work on the existing building on the property this Summer and projects that the construction on the new building would begin by the end of this year. The construction of the new building will take several months to complete.

MOTION by Joseph Dattilo to close the Historic District Commission Public Hearing for Certificate of Appropriateness - # 2014 – 002C for PABCO, Inc. for construction of a new building (in accord with approval of August 1, 2011) at 7:45 p.m. **SECONDED** by Christine Pittsley.

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

The motion passed 5 – 0

VIII. REGULAR MEETING

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Special Meeting – February 10, 2014 Education / Community Outreach Committee Meeting – February 25, 2014

MOTION by Jeanne Chesanow to accept the February 10, 2013 Historic District Commission Special Meeting minutes with the following correction: Page 2, Communications section, first paragraph should read, "...the January 29, 2014 letter to historic..." **SECONDED** by Joseph Dattilo.

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

The motion passed 4 – 0 - 1.

The vote on the Education / Community Outreach Committee Meeting minutes of February 25, 2014 was tabled until the next Commission meeting.

2. COMMUNICATIONS

None.

3. BUSINESS

- A) Application for Certificate of Appropriateness - #2014-002C
PABCO, Inc.
168 South Main Street
Re: Construction of New Building (in accord with approval of August 1, 2011)

Chairman Pratt Fox commented that this application is the same application that Commission approved on August 1, 2011.

MOTION by Christine Pittsley that the Historic District Commission approves the Certificate of Appropriateness application from PABCO, Inc. for the construction of a new building at 168 South Main Street as submitted. **SECONDED** by Jeanne Chesanow.

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

The motion passed 5 – 0.

MOTION by Elizabeth Pratt Fox to add Window Size Adjustments at existing building at 168 South Main Street to this meeting's agenda. **SECONDED** by Joseph Dattilo.

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

The motion passed 5 – 0.

ADDED: Window Size Adjustments at existing building at 168 South Main Street

Chairman Pratt Fox noted that Old Town Road is a private road and therefore the back of the property at 168 South Main Street is not visible from a public right of way. As a result, this Commission can not regulate the change of the windows on the back of the property but the Historic District Commission can comment and/or make suggestions to the property owner.

Mr. Bowman commented that part of the problem is that while he wants to keep the historic building as original as possible, with some of the rooms being used as bedrooms, current building code has requirements for larger windows as a means of egress. And although because it is a historic building a waiver of the building code could be applied for, Mr. Bowman would hate for a problem to happen with any tenants. As a result, he feels that life safety should be a priority and will be looking to change out a few of the back bedroom windows on the property to meet the 5.77 square feet of window egress that is needed. Mr. Bowman noted that he did not have a specific window picked out yet but he would make sure that they are attractive and symmetric to the existing building. Mr. Bowman noted that the building will have fire suppression sprinklers.

Mr. Dattilo suggested to Mr. Bowman that he look at "Opportunities for Alternate Compliance" for historic buildings. He suggested possibly using a window that looks like a double hung window but is actually a casement window. Mr. Bowman replied that he had not heard of that and stated that he would look into this product.

Chairman Pratt Fox asked if there would be a fire escape on the back of the building and Mr. Bowman replied that there would be an internal stairway that would meet to connect for both buildings.

Ms. Chesanow asked about the door in the front of the property that would be on the connector piece of the new and existing building. She asked if there was not going to be a restaurant in the new building, could that door now swing in? Mr. Bowman replied that he would have to look into it and would let the Historic District know as the project progresses. Ms. Chesanow replied that she and the Commissioners would appreciate the updates throughout the project and also appreciate the thought put into this project.

B) Chairman's Report

Chairman Pratt Fox stated that she had nothing additional to discuss other than the agenda items for this meeting.

C) Committees

1. Education / Community Outreach Committee

a. Plan of Conservation and Development

Ms. Pittsley had sent out links to the Commissioners to review other towns in Connecticut's Plan of Conservation and Development that had good examples of referencing historic property and places in their towns. Chairman Pratt Fox commented that she really liked Mansfield's map and Ridgefield's character resource map was interesting.

Mr. Sitko stated that the Historic District Study Committee had a map with historic buildings locations in Cheshire, which was very useful and enlightening during their work.

Chairman Pratt Fox suggested that the map for the Plan of Conservation and Development in Cheshire could include historic sites, broken down by commercial, public buildings, churches and residences of specific time frames. She would also like to see the historic barn locations on the map. Commissioners also suggested that Federal and State National Registry properties be designated on the map and cemeteries. It was suggested that residences could be broken down by the 18th, 19th & early 20th century.

Mr. Sitko will arrange a meeting with himself, Ms. Pittsley and the Tax Assessor, Mr. Panagrosso to meet and compile the information for the map.

b. Trolley Tour – September 28, 2014

Ms. Chesanow stated that Pat Vida of the Cheshire Historical Society will be securing the trolley rental for the September 28, 2014 tour of historic locations in the Cheshire Street area.

c. Recognition of Property Owners

Ms. Chesanow reported that she is setting up a meeting with Diane Calabro of the Cheshire Historical Society to work on a program to recognize historic property owners in Cheshire that are not part of a Historic District. Mr. Sitko commented that the Town Attorney has looked into any conflict of interest concerns if awards are given out by this group and has stated that there is no conflict because there is no financial gain. Mr. Sitko also suggested that each Commissioner that was interested in helping with this project could rotate through as part of the Committee in property recognition.

2. Regulations / Rules

a. Design Guidelines

Chairman Pratt Fox suggested that starting at the next Commission meeting, Commissioners could start going through the Design Guidelines for review and discussion.

D) Certified Local Government

Mr. Sitko stated that he received an email from Mary Dunne regarding Certified Local Government matching fund grants that Cheshire can now apply for as a Certified Local Government town.

E) Farmington Canal Culvert and Great Fill

Mr. Sitko stated that the W/S Development project design plans were approved by the Planning & Zoning Commission last week. In the design plans, W/S Development is planning to have a historic monument to mark the historic canal site on the property. Mr. Sitko suggested that the Town Historian, Ms. Chesanow, could make a suggestion on the monument and its possible educational wording for the signage. Ms. Chesanow stated that she would be interested in helping out and that she likes the idea of recognizing the historic site. Commissioners also encouraged Ms. Chesanow to reach out to W/S Development on this part of their project.

F) FY 14-15 Budget

Mr. Sitko stated that he had submitted an operating budget of request of \$2,730 for the next fiscal year but the Town Manager is recommending \$2,280 to the Town Council, which is a reduction in secretarial services due to fewer Commission meetings and is in line with the projected spending for this current fiscal year.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Joseph Dattilo to adjourn the March 3, 2014 meeting of the Historic District Commission at 8:40 p.m.; **SECONDED** by Christine Pittsley.

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

The motion passed 5 – 0.

Respectfully submitted:

Tracey M. Kozlowski
Recording Secretary