

**CHESHIRE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON
MONDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2015 AT 7:30 P.M.
CHESHIRE TOWN HALL – 84 SOUTH MAIN ST.
ROOM 210**

Commissioners Present:

Jeanne Chesanow, Joseph Dattilo, Christine Pittsley, John Torello and James Vibert, Sr., Voting Alternate

Commissioners Absent:

Chairman Elizabeth Pratt Fox and Elizabeth Ryducha, Alternate

Staff Present:

Jerry Sitko, Economic Development Coordinator

Others Present:

Edward (Ted) Holtzman of First Congregational Church (departed at 7:50 p.m.) and former member Briana Schain

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Pratt Fox called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

The roll was taken for the meeting.

III. SEATING OF ALTERNATES

Chairman Pratt Fox seated alternate Commissioner James Vibert 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. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

MOTION by Christine Pittsley to nominate for reelection the current Officers of the Historic District Commission; Elizabeth Pratt Fox as Chairman, Jeanne Chesanow as Vice Chairman and Joseph Dattilo as Secretary. **SECONDED** by Joseph Dattilo.

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

The motion passed 5 - 0.

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Regular Meeting October 5 2015

MOTION by James Vibert to approved the Regular Meeting minutes of October 5, 2015 with the following correction: the correct spelling of the First Congregational Church representative is Edward Holtzman. **SECONDED** by Joseph Dattilo.

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

The motion passed 5 - 0.

VIII. COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Sitko reminded Commissioners of their invitation to the Boards and Commissions Volunteers Holiday Party scheduled for Wednesday December 16th from 5pm to 7pm in Council Chambers. He asked that members RSVP to Catherine by Friday.

Mr. Sitko stated that the new Town Council Liaisons will be appointed tonight during the Council's organizational meeting.

Mr. Dattilo asked about adding a section to the next agenda entitled "Other" as a means to discuss items not included on the agenda that may come up. He stated that he would like to follow up on the Lewis window project, which was originally not done with a Certificate of Approval from the Commission. Mr. Sitko noted that he has been in contact with Mr. Lewis recently and would add the follow up to the January 2016 agenda.

IX. BUSINESS

- A. Certificate of Appropriateness 2015-011C
Town of Cheshire Public Works
Town Green
Re: Construction of base around Civil War Monument

Mr. Sitko explained that the Town Public Works Department has submitted an application for work to be done in preparation for the Civil War Monument 150th Anniversary Celebration being planned for this coming Summer. The Public Works Department would like to hire Arisco Landscaping to install a bluestone apron around the Civil War Monument on the Town Green and will have a Belgium block border. Mr. Sitko explained that they will excavate about 2.5 feet down, put in a granular fill to help with water drainage and then raise the level a little by bringing in some fill.

There was some question as to if a Public Hearing is required for this project but Commissioners agreed that this will be permanent and visible from a public right of way and therefore require a Public Hearing.

Mr. Holtzman of the First Congregational Church was present and stated that the Church owns the property that the monument and this project will be on; he stated that the First Congregational Church gives its full support for this project and it's only concern is that this project does not create a hardship for the Church. It was agreed that this project as proposed will require very little maintenance needed for upkeep of the Civil War Monument area of the Town Green.

Mr. Torello expressed some concern about the proposed herringbone pattern for installing the bluestone, shown in the application because of the smaller sections that would need to be cut to make that pattern and then may heave. He noted that bluestone tends to work better in larger pieces and suggested that maybe a random pattern could be used at installation. It was noted that concrete is not proposed in the installation process.

MOTION by Joseph Dattilo to accept the application from the Town of Cheshire for a bluestone apron around the Civil War Monument on the Town Green and set the application for a Public Hearing on Monday, January 4, 2016. **SECONDED** by Christine Pittsley.

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

The motion passed 5 - 0.

Mr. Sitko noted that the Town will notify abutters for the Public Hearing.

B. Marbridge Retirement Center Expansion

Mr. Sitko reviewed the new proposed plans for the expansion of Marbridge Retirement Center at 655 and 665 West Main Street and 29 Carter Lane. The new 12,000 square foot expansion is a change from the proposal in 2013 that the Commission had provided some input on. Mr. Sitko explained that the owners of Marbridge have purchased 2 properties surrounding the existing property for this expansion. He noted that the new plans do still keep the old barn foundation on the neighboring property that was included

in the original expansion plan 2 years ago. Mr. Sitko stated that the property owner and developer held neighborhood meetings to help with the expansion planning before going ahead with their application to the Planning & Zoning Commission. He also noted that the existing building is out of code and many families are looking for single bedrooms for the residents, which now are double rooms.

Mr. Vibert noted that he was disappointed that the original structure will not be saved in the new expansion plans; Mr. Torello and Mr. Dattilo agreed.

Commissioners thanked Mr. Sitko for bringing the new expansion plans at Marbridge Retirement Center to the Commission's attention.

C. Committees

1. Education / Community Outreach

a. Plan of Conservation and Development

Vice Chairman Chesanow commented that Ms. Pittsley's maps were a great addition to the Plan of Conservation and Development for Cheshire. Mr. Sitko stated that the Plan was forwarded to the Town Council for their approval.

Vice Chairman Chesanow expressed her concern with the wording used to describe the Town Center of Cheshire. She stated that she sees the Town Center as highly walk-able and can be even more pedestrian friendly if crosswalks are added at the South Main Street and Cornwall Avenue intersection. She will be submitting comments for the Town to consider for edits to the Plan's description of the Town Center.

2. Regulations / Rules

Mr. Sitko noted that former Historic District Commission member Briana Schain has gone through the Commission's Regulations and made suggestions for edits that can be reviewed at a future meeting.

a. Design Guidelines

The Design Guidelines are a continued work in progress by Chairman Pratt Fox and will be presented to the Commission once they are completed.

D. Grant Application for South Brooksvale Historic District Signs

The State Historic Preservation Office has approved Cheshire's application for a \$3,035 Historic Preservation Enhancement Grant, under the Certified Local Government program for the South Brooksvale Historic District signs. Once the sign locations are approved, they can be installed, but likely not until the coming Spring.

E. Chairman's Report

Chairman Pratt Fox was not present at this meeting but asked Vice Chairman Chesanow to report on the 2016 Goals for the Historic District Commission, which include the installation of the South Brooksvale Historic District signs, a 2016 Trolley Tour of the South Brooksvale Historic District, finalizing the Design Guidelines and Planning for the Historic Resource Survey.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Joseph Dattilo to adjourn the December 7, 2015 Regular Meeting of the Historic District Commission at 8:23 p.m. **SECONDED** by Christine Pittsley.

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

The motion passed 5 - 0.

Respectfully submitted:

Tracey M. Kozlowski
Recording Secretary