

**CHESHIRE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEARING AND SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON
MONDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2016 AT 7:30 P.M.
CHESHIRE TOWN HALL – 84 SOUTH MAIN STREET
ROOM 210**

Commissioners Present:

Chairman Elizabeth Pratt Fox, James Vibert, Sr., and Joseph Dattilo

Commissioners Absent:

Jeanné Chesanow, Christine Pittsley, Alternates Elizabeth Ryducha and John Torello

Staff Present:

Jerry Sitko, Economic Development Coordinator

Other Staff Present:

Walter Gancarz, George Noewatne, and Keith Baron

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 and a quorum was present.

III. SEATING OF ALTERNATES

Chairman Pratt Fox did not seat any Alternate Commissioners for voting tonight with the Historic District Commission.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

MOTION by James Vibert to move Item D of Business to the front of the order.

SECONDED by Joseph Dattilo

VOTE: In Favor – Pratt Fox
Opposed - None

The motion passed 3-0

D. Certificate of Appropriateness 2016-009C**Claire Boiano****96 Cornwall Avenue****Miscellaneous changes including picket fence, storm door, shutters, mail box and porch lights.**

Claire Boiano owns the property at 96 Cornwall Avenue. Ms. Boiano is requesting approval for changes including the addition of a white vinyl picket fence measuring 23 – 25 feet wide and 4 feet high. The fence will be placed far from the road and close to the end of the home's addition on the west side of the property. A map will be sent to show the location. In keeping with the style of the home, Ms. Boiano is requesting the addition of hardware including a wall mounted antique copper mailbox measuring 14.6" wide x 11-1/8" high x 3-3/4" deep. She is also requesting replacing the porch lights to Craftmade Z5222 Winslow 2 Light

Outdoor Wall Scone in Oiled Bronze measuring 12.6" high x 10.4" wide x 4" deep and Progress Lighting P5629 Arts and Crafts 1 Light in Weathered Bronze measuring 15.8" high x 10" wide x 4" deep.

In addition, Ms. Boiano is requesting replace of the front storm door to a Larson "Screen Away" door in black. The door has a separation bar in the middle for screen mobility.

Ms. Boiano would like to have a carpenter repair and repaint the home's shutters.

Ms. Boiano provided pictures and measurements of the above mentioned and was advised to provide as much information as possible prior to the Public Hearing.

MOTION by Joseph Dattilo that the Historic District Commission send Certificate of Appropriateness 2016-009C to public hearing on October 17, 2016 at 7:30 p.m. at Cheshire Town Hall, 84 South Main Street, Cheshire.

SECONDED by James Vibert

VOTE: In Favor – Pratt Fox

Opposed – None

The motion passed 3-0

V. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Certificate of Appropriateness 2016-006C Town of Cheshire Public Works and Engineering South Brooksvale Road Public Safety Road Improvements

Mr. Sitko read the Certificate of Appropriateness and the notice for this public hearing as it appeared in the Cheshire Herald on September 22, 2016 and he stated that notarized, written proof that the abutting property owners were notified has been received by the Planning Department. Two letters were received on October 3 in relative to this application.

Mr. Gancarz, Town Engineer, presented the scope of the project including drawings of the proposed road work which he stated is strictly road work and stays within the existing right-of-way. He said that 37 accidents over the past 10 years have been documented at this location and that safety is the driving force of this project. For clarification, Mr. Gancarz explained that the project (Phase 1) begins at South Brooksvale Road and continues 3,700 feet and terminates in front of Property 568 which is approximately 140 ft. from the existing ridge on Mt. Sanford Road. Phase 1 is the topic of tonight's discussion.

Ms. Pratt Fox asked how many accidents occurred on the curve and how many on the bridge. Mr. Gancarz will have the accidents separated for Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the project because the bridge is part of Phase 2. The HDC later learned that for Phase 1, 25 accidents occurred over a 10-year period.

Another concern is that there is a significant flooding problem south of the intersection at Mt. Sanford Road. The third issue is that the condition of the pavement is poor and would be subject to milling and paving as part of the Town's regular maintenance.

A LOTCIP Grant for has been approved for \$1.1M with 100% funding. Mr. Gancarz received an email today stating that funding for this project can begin. This is being funded through the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments.

Ms. Pratt Fox is concerned that there was no pre-application discussion with the commissioners. She feels that it is better for all concerned that there be a discussion so that everyone is informed.

Mr. Gancarz said that there was a very short window of time (approximately 1 week) to proceed with submittal of the application. This was confirmed by Mr. Sitko along with discussions having taken place with homeowners in the area.

The repaving of the roads will stay within the current footprint. Discussions with the State Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Naugatuck Valley Council have asked what can be done to make the bend in the road safer so that there will be fewer accidents.

Mr. Gancarz discussed what is planned to address these concerns. He said that fog lines are being proposed on the side of the road. Currently there is a center line. When there is poor visibility it is difficult to see. The addition of the fog lines will help with this. A solar light is proposed coming into the curve to be mounted on a utility pole which is already in place. The light is similar to what is on Cheshire Street. It will make people aware that they are coming to the curve which is in a dark area. He pointed out the areas northbound and southbound that the solar light will cover.

Accident reports have recorded that cars have gone off the road and into trees. What is being proposed is "Merritt Parkway" wooden guardrail which is environmental and historic sensitive.

The geometry of the road will be improved. It will be moved several feet away from the Stone House.

Ms. Pratt Fox asked if rumble strips were considered so that the integrity of the road would not be disturbed.

Mr. Sitko said that a rumble strip notifies that you have left the road. Cars need to be protected from running off the road. The road elevation will be brought up 1 foot to help people to slow down and not go off the road.

Ms. Pratt Fox is concerned that the changes being proposed will turn the historic road into a parkway. Anything new will hinder the historic charm and ambiance.

Mr. Vibert commented that people drive at speeds where they feel safe and that these changes will encourage people to drive faster. He asked the engineers to figure out ways to slow the traffic down without upsetting the environment.

Ms. Pratt Fox agreed after stating that she has done research on roads and that findings show that increasing a road between 10 and 12 inches will increase driving speeds.

Mr. Gancarz said that while Phase 2 is not part of tonight's discussion, an intersection with a stop sign will be proposed that will slow down traffic when that phase begins. People will have to slow down when making right and left turns.

Mr. Datillo asked that out of the proposals mentioned, which of these will be accepted by the Historic District Commission. If everything except the Merritt Parkway guardrail were agreed on, would the road reflectors, slight banking of the road, solar light, etc., be accepted.

Mrs. McKee stated that a former mill, now a swimming pool, has rocks there that can be driven into. Trees that are there are a barrier to the ravine. She also feels that the Merritt guardrail is too low; that it should be at fender height. The guardrail is approximately 24 inches and has been crash tested. All and all, Mrs. McKee said the guardrail was needed.

Ms. Pratt Fox asked what can be done to soften the barrier. Can Mountain Laurel or similar be planted.

Mr. Gancarz suggested putting in a 5 ft. berm behind the barrier and planting vegetation not deciduous trees to soften the appearance. It will also provide an extra layer of protection.

Ms. Pratt Fox suggested that a dangerous curve sign be installed at Bethany Mountain into South Brooksvale to slow down traffic.

Mr. Vibert asked what the cost is for Phase 1. The answer is \$1.1M which will be for repaving Bethany Mountain Road with catch basins along the way. There will be divergence of drainage from the low sag area at Bethany Mountain Road to the north.

Public Comment

Margaret Jean McKee of 532 South Brooksvale Road stated that she was surprised when she read an article in the Cheshire Herald where she believes to have been misquoted. She emphasized that there has been no agreement nor approval to the proposed improvements. She requested a copy of the tape from the public hearing held in the Council Chambers. Ms. McKee also stated that when the bridge was built it should echo the stone walls on the road. She also emphasized that the curve is dangerous as is the speed of the traffic between 6:00am – 9:00am. She made it clear that she is not responsible for the steep drop (ravine). Ms. McKee provided a spreadsheet listing the number of accidents which have occurred from 2006 through 2015 and the number of motor vehicles that were involved. She suggested that a sign be installed indicating that there is an upcoming turn at Mt. Sanford and South Brooksvale. This will warn people ahead of time. Ms. McKee suggested slowing traffic down with installation of rumble strips or similar.

Edward Dillman of 875 Wolf Hill Road stated that he has been a resident in this area since 1951 and asked about Phase 1 meeting Phase 2 and is Phase 2 the same width. Mr. Gancarz showed on the map where the two roads meet. He said that it is the same width. Mr. Dillman commented that beyond that near the bridge the road is more narrow which Mr. Gancarz affirmed. Mr. Gillman said that he has a problem with the way the roads are managed in town and that people drive too fast. He said that a depression in the road, not very large, will slow traffic down.

MOTION by James Vibert to close the Public Hearing for Certificate of Appropriateness 2016-006C, Town of Cheshire Public Works and Engineering, South Brooksvale Road Public Safety Road Improvements.

SECONDED by Joseph Dattilo

VOTE: In Favor – Pratt Fox
Opposed - None
The motion passed 3-0

**B. Certificate of Appropriateness 2016-007C
Eddie Rabbit, LLC
166-168 South Main Street
Signage and Lattice**

Mr. Sitko read the notice for this public hearing as it appeared in the Cheshire Herald on September 22, 2016 and he stated that notarized, written proof that the abutting property owners were notified has been received by the Planning Department.

Eddie Rabbit, LLC owns the property at 166-168 South Main Street. It is applying for signage (attached and detached) for these properties. There are four signs being requested and are noted in the application along with illustrations that identify the size and where they will be placed. Sign materials are the same as the other historic signs in town. Eddie Rabbit, LLC is also requesting Western Red Cedar Lattice Panel on the northern most section of 166 South Main Street. This is at the entrance of a residential apartment.

Ms. Pratt Fox would like to see Front Signage A at 166 South Main Street framed out so that it is in keeping with the historic character of the building. She would also like to see the Old Towne Road sign straightened which is adjacent to the Historic District Cornwall Avenue Town Center sign.

Discussion

Chairman Pratt Fox opened up the Public Hearing for discussion. The Commissioners reviewed and discussed the proposed application.

Public Comment

There was no comment from the public.

MOTION by Joseph Dattilo to close the Public Hearing for Certificate of Appropriateness 2016-007C, Eddie Rabbit, LLC, 166-168 South Main Street,

Signage and Lattice.

SECONDED by James Vibert

VOTE: In Favor – Pratt Fox
Opposed - None
The motion passed 3-0

**C. Certificate of Appropriateness 2016-008C
Town of Cheshire Public Works and Engineering
84 South Main Street
Window Replacement**

Mr. Sitko read the notice for this public hearing as it appeared in the Cheshire Herald on September 22, 2016 and he stated that notarized, written proof that the abutting property owners were notified has been received by the Planning Department.

George Noewatne, Director of Public Works, is applying for window replacement for Cheshire Town Hall at 84 South Main Street. The replacements are a Marvin Retrofit Kit with double pane glass. The current windows have reached their life expectancy of 30 years with balances that are failing. There is also leakage as a result of usage. The current windows are also Marvin. The historic “round window” will not be touched. Mr. Noewatne presented a sample of the window being proposed.

Some of the current windows are operable while others are not. The life expectancy of the Marvin Retrofit Kit is 30 – 50 years. The Kit includes screens which will be ½ screens for easy access.

Discussion

Chairman Pratt Fox opened up the public hearing for discussion. The Commissioners reviewed and discussed the proposed application.

Public Comment

There was no comment from the public.

MOTION by Joseph Dattilo to close the Public Hearing for Certificate of Appropriateness 2016-008C, Town of Cheshire Public Works and Engineering, c/o George Noewatne, 84 South Main Street, Window Replacement

SECONDED by James Vibert

VOTE: In Favor – Pratt Fox
Opposed - None
The motion passed 3-0

VI. REGULAR MEETING

1. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting – September 6, 2016

MOTION by Joseph Dattilo to approve the Regular Meeting minutes of September 6, 2016.

SECONDED by James Vibert
VOTE: In Favor – Pratt Fox
Opposed - None
The motion passed 3-0

2. Business

A. Certificate of Appropriateness 2016-006C Town of Cheshire Public Works and Engineering South Brooksvale Road Public Safety Road Improvements

MOTION by James Vibert to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness 2016-006C, Town of Cheshire Public Works and Engineering, South Brooksvale Road Public Safety Road Improvements.

Motion approved with requested changes/additions to be made as discussed during the Public Hearing. These include construction of a berm to soften appearance of the guardrail and landscaping with consideration for Mountain Laurel, installation of a warning sign (s) about the curve and installation of a rumble strip across South Brooksvale Road.

SECONDED by Joseph Dattilo

VOTE: In Favor – Pratt Fox

Opposed - None

B. Certificate of Appropriateness 2016-007C

**Eddie Rabbit, LLC
166-168 South Main Street
Signage and Lattice**

MOTION by Joseph Dattilo to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness 2016-007C, Eddie Rabbit, LLC, 166-168 South Main Street, Signage and Lattice.

Motion approved with requirement that Front Signage A at 166 South Main Street will be framed 2 ½" to keep with the historic character of the building. The suggested color for the frame is black.

SECONDED by James Vibert

VOTE: In Favor – Pratt Fox
Opposed - None
The motion passed 3-0

C. Certificate of Appropriateness 2016-008C

**Town of Cheshire Public Works and Engineering
84 South Main Street
Window Replacement**

MOTION by James Vibert to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness 2016-008C, Town of Cheshire Public Works and Engineering, c/o George Noewatne, 84 South Main Street, Window Replacement.

Motion approved with requirement that no historic windows will be replaced.

SECONDED by Joseph Dattilo

VOTE: In Favor – Pratt Fox
Opposed - None
The motion passed 3-0

3. Committees

1. Education/Community Outreach
2. Regulations/Rules
 - a. Design Guidelines
3. Trolley Tour

Trolley Tour was a great success with a good turnout.

4. Chairman's Report

Ms. Pratt Fox said that the designs for the new linear trail signs look very nice.

Acquisition of the Chapman property passed at referendum and the environmental report should be completed at the end of next week. Ms. Pratt Fox said that she will work to see if the 1872 house can be restored and used. She has received no comment yet from an email sent to the town council liaison and may proceed to reach out to the entire council. She asked for the approval of the Historic District Commission to do so. The commission is in agreement.

VII. Adjournment

MOTION made by James Vibert to adjourn at 9:25 p.m.

SECONDED by Joseph Dattilo

VOTE: In Favor – Pratt Fox

Opposed - None

The motion passed 3-0

Attest:

Dawn Guite, Interim Clerk
Historic District Commission