

**WETHERSFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
**PUBLIC HEARING**  
**May 22, 2007**

The Wethersfield Historic District Commission held a Public Hearing on May 22, 2007 in Room F-3 at the Pitkin Community Center, 30 Greenfield Street, Wethersfield, Connecticut.

Members Present:

Susan O'Brien, Chairperson  
Vacek Miglus, Vice Chairperson  
Jennifer Wolf, Clerk  
Robert Garrey  
Bette Botticello, Alternate  
Eric Hart, Alternate  
John Maycock, Alternate

Members Absent:

Gary McLeod

Also Present:

Kristin Stearley, Historic District Coordinator

Commissioner Wolf, Clerk, called the meeting to order at 7:36PM, and read the opening comments. She read the legal notice as it appeared in *The Hartford Courant* on May 11, 2007.

**APPLICATION NO. 3485-07.** Tom and Christy Cantwell seeking to 1) construct a 6' x 24' 2nd floor addition with full shed dormer added to the rear and, 2) construct an 8' deep covered porch behind the existing sunroom at 14 Avalon Place.

Gary Vivian of Cactus Design, 43 Old Pewter Lane Wethersfield, appeared before the commission on behalf of the applicants. Mr. Vivian is the architect of the project. He distributed design information indicating that the only change made to material submitted with the application were railings that were added to the rear.

The south elevation shows the 6' of structure and one window. The west side shows the most dramatic change in the structure in that the peak over the sunroom will be removed, and the end of the dormer on the addition is visible. There are three new windows on that side, and a covered porch that wraps around from the rear to the west side is also visible.

The rear of the house is not visible. The east elevation is not changing, but the end of the dormer is visible.

The proposed windows are wood vinyl clad Andersen 400 Series windows. They will be 6/6 double hung windows to match existing. The windows on the west elevation must be larger because they are located in a sleeping area. They will be 3'2" x 4'8". Commissioner Miglus noted that the current asymmetry of the windows will be lost by using the proposed larger windows located in that one elevation. There was some discussion about whether other windows were considered.

A different size can be used if casement windows were used.

All the existing trim and roof will be matched. The railing will match existing. A wood column with a simple cap is proposed.

Commissioner Wolf asked whether there was anyone else wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to the application. There being no one, this portion of the hearing was closed.

**APPLICATION NO. 3486-07.** Edward A. Chesky Jr. seeking to replace the existing garage doors at 234 & 236 Broad Street.

Edward Chesky of 234 Broad Street appeared before the commission. He displayed photographs of the existing carriage house doors and explained that the doors are deteriorating and do not match.

Mr. Chesky indicated that he wishes to replace the current doors with a roll-up door made to look like carriage house doors. The proposed door is steel. Commissioner Miglus asked whether the applicant wanted lights on the top of the door as displayed in a picture of the proposed door. He explained that the door would appear more authentic without the lights. Mr. Chesky indicated that he proposed lights only because the current door has lights. However, he indicated that the new door does not have to have lights.

Commissioner Wolf asked whether there was anyone else wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to the application.

Elaine Walsh of 238-240 Broad Street appeared before the commission to speak in favor of the application.

Commissioner Wolf asked whether there was anyone else wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to the application. There being no one, this portion of the hearing was closed.

**APPLICATION NO. 3487-07.** Curt Ebner seeking to install fencing and a gate at 18 Kenwood Road.

Curt Ebner of 18 Kenwood Road appeared before the commission. He provided a plot plan showing the location of the proposed fence.

The fence will be installed flush with the house and to the back property line. The back yard is already fenced. The proposed fence is a 4' high Cape Cod picket fence. There will be an arbor gate to match the arbor pattern over the front door of the house. Copper caps on each post are proposed.

Commissioner Wolf asked whether there was anyone else wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to the application. There being no one, this portion of the hearing was closed.

**APPLICATION NO. 3484-07.** Michelle Ahern seeking to install replacement windows at 2 Wilcox Street (Tabled from the May 8, 2007 meeting the hearing left open - last date to act on is June 26, 2007).

George Urbanik of 2 Wilcox Street appeared before the commission. He is the homeowner.

Mr. Urbanik indicated that he would like to install Harvey replacement aluminum clad windows in the front of the house. On the sides and back he would like to install vinyl windows. There are twenty windows in all.

Commissioner Wolf asked whether there was anyone else wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to the application. There being no one, this portion of the hearing was closed.

**APPLICATION NO. 3476-07.** Old Town Café seeking to construct an outdoor patio and storage shed in back of the building and change lighting and signage in front of building at 181-189 Main Street. (Tabled from the April 10, 2007 & April 24, 2007 meetings with the Hearing left open - last date to act on is May 22, 2007).

The applicant did not appear, nor did he contact Kristin Stearley about whether he would appear at the meeting.

**APPLICATION NO. 3481-07.** C-P Equity Holdings LLC seeking to 1) renovate the Comstock Ferre Building, 2) construct two new buildings on site and 3) convert to a mixed use retail, office and residential complex at 249-263 Main Street (Tabled from the May 8, 2007 meeting with the Hearing left open - last date to act on is May 22, 2007).

Jack Gilmartin of Hewitt Engineering 470 New Britain Road, Berlin appeared before the commission. He began by stating that he resides in Wethersfield's historic district, and served on the HDC including some time as its Chairperson. He stated he has worked with the developer on other projects and knows the developer has a genuine

interest in maintaining the historic significance of the property.

Mr. Gilmartin described some of the changes from previous designs. He displayed drawings showing the parking area on the Main Street side located where it currently exists. He mentioned that there is a ten-year agreement that the space will continue to be used for the nursery business. Therefore, when plantings are available the parking area will be used to display them as is done currently. The number of parking spaces has been reduced to 58. There will be 2000 sf of blacktop.

There will be two-way access to the property from Main Street only. There will be no entrance from Church Street as previously proposed. Building 4 located on Church Street will be residential only. The driveway next to that building has been reduced to 16'.

There will be two screened garbage dumpsters on the property. Chipseal will still be used as previously noted. Sidewalks will be concrete. However, the bumps in the crosswalks that were proposed to control traffic have been removed because of concerns about drainage.

Craig Laliberte of Craig A. Laliberte Architects of Ivoryton appeared before the commission to discuss the project's design changes.

Buildings 1 and 2 will receive only minor exterior work.

The existing barn encroaches 2-3 inches over the property line. The plan is still to rebuild the barn.

The design of the building is similar to the design previously proposed. The roofline is unchanged, and a 6' cupola is still proposed. However, it will now be 5' from the property line. Previously, a larger area in the back of the building was created to accommodate deliveries to the businesses. An interior hallway has been designed for that purpose allowing for the building to be closer to the property line. The exterior lighting planned for the back of the barn has been removed. A 48' wing will be added to the barn, which will be set back 10' from the property line. There will be 7980 sf of retail space on the first floor and eleven residential units (9 one-bedroom and 2 two-bedroom units) on the second floor of the structure.

Building 4 has been redesigned in a more Victorian style and is more compatible with the other Victorian homes in the neighborhood. The proposed building is 46' wide rather than 40' wide as previously designed. The building will be 4500 sf and contain 6 one-bedroom units. There will be two parking spaces per residential unit. Windows will be wood with grills attached to the inside and outside of the windows. Light patterns will be 2/2.

Gazebos will be installed at each end of the walkway. Plantings will be placed along the walkway. All lighting will be buffered by buildings or a 6' fence.

Tom Coccoma of 24 Norton Lane Berlin presented a structural engineer's report. Marc D'Amore of Berlin did the evaluation and report. Mr. Coccoma read the summary of the report into the record. An assessment of the property concluded that it is in fair to poor condition.

Commissioner Wolf asked whether there was anyone else wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to the application. She reminded those wishing to speak that all previous comments and documents from the public remain on file. She asked that, in the interest of time and in consideration for those applicants wishing to hear the outcome of their applications, comments be limited to aspects and issues not previously discussed or proposed.

Betty Rosania of 88 Desmond Drive appeared before the commission to speak in favor of the application. She indicated that the present condition of the barn and property should be of more concern than the proposed use of the space.

Pamela Molochko of 37 Church Street appeared before the commission to speak against the application stating that the design of Building 4 is inappropriate for the neighborhood.

Jim Woodworth of 5 River Road appeared before the commission. He indicated that at least part of the barn is historic and should be given its due historic respect. He stated a professional historic evaluation should be done. He also suggested that the HDC require an environmental study.

Debra Cohen of 73 Church Street appeared before the commission to speak in opposition to the application. She indicated that Building 4 should be a single-family dwelling.

Paul Langdon of 37 Church Street appeared before the commission to speak in opposition of the application. He also stated that Building 4 is inappropriate for a residential area.

Phil Lohman of 434 Main Street appeared before the commission to present his design for the property.

Howard Willard of 141 Main Street appeared before the commission to speak in opposition of the application. He stated that any design for the property should not include the demolition of the barn.

Maureen Hayes of 29 Hartford Avenue appeared before the commission to speak in opposition of the application. She stated the project is out of proportion, and agreed that the barn should not be demolished.

Barbara Vicino of 24 Church Street appeared before the commission. She stated her opposition to having an apartment complex in the neighborhood.

Brian and Jane Freeman of 59 Church Street appeared before the commission to speak in opposition to the application. They expressed concerns about the size of Building 4 and about having an apartment building on Church Street.

Robert Smart of 62 Church Street appeared before the commission to speak in opposition to the project. He stated the scale of the project is inappropriate for the neighborhood. He agreed that the barn should be restored rather than demolished.

Jim Mayo of 349 Main Street appeared before the commission to suggest that the developers consider saving at minimum the onion barn. He also expressed concern about the size of the project and the resulting increase in traffic.

Leigh Standish appeared before the commission to speak in opposition of the project. As several others had, he asked the commissioners to give the application the scrutiny they have given other applications that have come before the HDC. He stated many homeowners have not been allowed to make minor changes to their property because of the impact the commission thought the changes would make to the district. He voiced concern that the HDC was not giving the Comstock application the same scrutiny. Commissioner Wolf adamantly disagreed saying the commission was reviewing the application and requiring the same documentation as it would with any application.

Barbara Ruhe of 79 Main Street appeared before the commission to speak in opposition to the application.

Andy Wizner of 100 Center Street appeared before the commission to ask that the commission deny the application.

Ann Kuckro of 471 Main Street appeared before the commission to ask that the commission carefully scrutinize the application before making a decision.

Letters written in opposition to the application from the following residents were read into the record:

- Patricia Rust of 16 Meggat Part dated May 20, 2007,
- Peter Garbow of 60 Griswold Road dated May 22, 2007, and
- Carol Szymanski of 18 Meggat Park dated May 21, 2007.

Upon motion by Commissioner Garrey, and seconded by Commissioner Miglus and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to close the public hearing on the discussed applications, except application 3481-07, and to open the public meeting on those applications.

Aye: Garrey, Maycock, Miglus, O'Brien, Wolf

**WETHERSFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION  
PUBLIC MEETING  
May 22, 2007**

**APPLICATION NO. 3485-07.** Tom and Christy Cantwell seeking to 1) construct a 6' x 24' 2nd floor addition with full shed dormer added to the rear and, 2) construct an 8' deep covered porch behind the existing sunroom at 14 Avalon Place.

Upon motion by Commissioner Miglus, seconded by Commissioner O'Brien and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to APPROVE the application with the following stipulations:

- All windows shall be simulated divided light.
- On the east elevation the new window may be a casement window but size must remain as existing.

**Discussion**

Aye: Maycock, Miglus, O'Brien, Wolf  
Nay: Garrey

**APPLICATION NO. 3486-07.** Edward A. Chesky Jr. seeking to replace the existing garage doors at 234 & 236 Broad Street.

Upon motion by Commissioner Garrey, seconded by Commissioner O'Brien and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to APPROVE the application as submitted.

**Discussion**

Commissioner Miglus asked whether the proposed windows would appear like plastic appliques and whether it would be more appropriate that the door have flat panels without a window. Commissioner Garrey indicated that the door has too small an impact on the district to be concerned about the whether the lights would be appropriate.

Aye: Garrey, Maycock, Miglus, O'Brien  
Nay: Wolf

**APPLICATION NO. 3487-07.** Curt Ebner seeking to install fencing and a gate at 18 Kenwood Road.

Upon motion by Commissioner Miglus, seconded by Commissioner Garrey and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to APPROVE the application as submitted.

**Discussion**

Commissioner Miglus indicated that the fence is appropriate for the house and neighborhood.

Aye: Garrey, Maycock, Miglus, O'Brien, Wolf

**APPLICATION NO. 3484-07.** Michelle Ahern seeking to install replacement windows at 2 Wilcox Street (Tabled from the May 8, 2007 meeting the hearing left open - last date to act on is June 26, 2007).

Upon motion by Commissioner Miglus, seconded by Commissioner O'Brien and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to DENY WITHOUT PREJUDICE.

**Discussion**

Commissioner Miglus stated the vinyl windows are not appropriate and could clash with the aluminum clad windows

in the front. He stated the applicant needs to explore other options, and suggested that Kristin Stearley discuss some of those options with the applicant.

Aye: Garrey, Maycock, Miglus, O'Brien, Wolf

**APPLICATION NO. 3476-07.** Old Town Café seeking to construct an outdoor patio and storage shed in back of the building and change lighting and signage in front of building at 181-189 Main Street. (Tabled from the April 10, 2007 & April 24, 2007 meetings with the Hearing left open - last date to act on is May 22, 2007).

Upon motion by Commissioner Miglus, seconded by Commissioner Wolf and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to DENY the application.

### **Discussion**

Commissioner Miglus stated the applicant has not appeared before the commission to explain his application. Therefore, there is no option but to deny the application.

Aye: Garrey, Maycock, Miglus, O'Brien, Wolf

**APPLICATION NO. 3481-07.** C-P Equity Holdings LLC seeking to 1) renovate the Comstock Ferre Building, 2) construct two new buildings on site and 3) convert to a mixed use retail, office and residential complex at 249-263 Main Street (Tabled from the May 8, 2007 meeting with the Hearing left open - last date to act on is May 22, 2007).

Upon motion by Commissioner Miglus, seconded by Commissioner Wolf and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to TABLE the application.

### **Discussion**

The commissioners agreed that there were lots of public documents to consider and that more time was needed to review all the information submitted.

Aye: Garrey, Maycock, Miglus, O'Brien, Wolf

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF: May 8, 2007**

Upon motion by Commissioner O'Brien [the minutes of the May 8, 2007 meeting](#) were approved without objection.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **Public comments on general matters of the Historic District**

None.

#### **Report of the Historic District Coordinator**

None.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

Correspondence received pertained to the Comstock project and had already been read in to the record.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Upon motion by Commissioner Wolf, seconded by Commissioner O'Brien and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to go into Executive Session at 11:10PM to discuss legal issues.

Aye: Garrey, Maycock, Miglus, O'Brien, Wolf

Upon motion by Commissioner O'Brien, seconded by Commissioner Garrey and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to leave Executive Session at 11:15PM.

Aye: Garrey, Maycock, Miglus, O'Brien, Wolf

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Upon motion by Commissioner O'Brien and seconded by Commissioner Wolf and a poll of the Commission, it was unanimously voted to ADJOURN the meeting at 11:15PM.

Aye: Garrey, McLeod, Miglus, O'Brien, Wolf

Respectfully Submitted

TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Jennifer Wolf

Clerk