

The Wethersfield Historic District Commission held a Public Hearing on December 11, 2007 in room F3 at the Pitkin Community Center, 30 Greenfield Street, Wethersfield, Connecticut.

Members Present: Robert Garrey, Chairperson  
Eric Hart, Vice Chairperson (arrived 7:04PM)  
John Maycock  
Gary McLeod  
Susan O'Brien  
Bette Botticello, Alternate  
Mark Raymond, Alternate

Members Absent: Paul Camarco, Alternate

Also Present: Kristin Stearley, Historic District Coordinator

Commissioner Garrey, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7PM, and read the opening comments. Commissioner Maycock, Clerk, read the Legal Notice as it appeared in the *Hartford Courant* on November 30, 2007.

**APPLICATION NO. 3550-07.** Frank Pretter seeking to remove the existing rear porch and construct an 11' x 12' single story addition in its place at 51 Harmund Place.

Frank Pretter of 51 Harmund Place appeared before the commission. He explained that he wishes to remove the porch at the rear of the house and to replace it with an 11' x 12' extension to the back of the house. Elevations were provided. Pictures of neighbors' homes were provided to show the type of picture window and railing that would be used.

The addition will be built on a full foundation. The addition will have a shed roof. Vinyl siding, trim, roof, shingles, and windows will match existing. There will be a picture window on the back facing the railroad tracks, and a slider and steps on the side facing the driveway. The windows will be a different brand than currently exist on the house, but they will match in style. The picture window will have no muntins and will have two side crank-out windows.

Commissioner McLeod asked whether there was a setback. The applicant confirmed that the addition will be built on the same plane as the house.

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

**APPLICATION NO. 3551-07.** Pierre Bennerup seeking to remove the hoop house on the Church Street side of the property at 249-263 Main Street.

Susan Riess of 263 Main Street appeared before the commission on behalf of the applicant. Ms. Riess is Comstock's General Manager.

The proposal is to remove a hoop frame structure from the Church Street side of the property. There is no foundation. Ms. Riess explained that the plastic part of the structure fell off during the summer, and the applicant would like to move the rest of the structure to another location. The structure is anchored by metal rods. Nothing is planned to replace the structure.

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

**APPLICATION NO. 3552-07.** Rider and Jill Foley seeking to install replacement windows at 14 Warner Place.

Rider and Jill Foley of 14 Warner Place appeared before the commission. Mr. Rider stated that the proposal is to replace all the windows on the house except the window over the front door. That is the only original window on the house. The other windows were replaced in the 1940's and 1950's.

The current windows are 12/12 except the windows on the ends of the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. Those windows are 6/6. The replacement windows will match the existing light patterns.

The proposed windows are wood on the exterior and interior, and simulated divided light with double panes. The windows are full replacement windows. The size of the windows will match existing.

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

**APPLICATION NO. 3553-07.** Mark Toce seeking to replace the metal roof on the front porch with shingles to match the main roof at 37 Hartford Avenue.

Mark Toce of 37 Hartford Avenue appeared before the commission. He explained that he wishes to remove the existing metal roof on the front porch and to replace it with shingles to match the existing roof. He displayed pictures of the existing roof and the shingles that will be used. No change is planned for the dimensions of the roof.

Mr. Toce stated he is planning on using a Yankee gutter that can be installed over the shingles. He would then cover it in copper to match the existing roof. If he does not use the Yankee gutter, he will install a half-round. His preference is the Yankee gutter. He was advised that his preference will be included on the application. If he decides on another type of gutter, he should contact Kristin Stearley.

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

**APPLICATION NO. 3554-07.** Shireen and John Aforismo seeking to install a freestanding sign and outdoor lighting at 185 Broad Street.

Shireen and John Aforismo of 185 Broad Street appeared before the commission. Ms. Aforismo displayed a drawing of the proposed sign. The sign is wood with carved lettering. It will measure 28" x 27". Under the sign will be a smaller "No Vacancy" sign. A small piece of wood will cover the "No" when necessary. The sign will be on a cast iron pole that will be approximately 8' high.

The sign will be lighted by either well lights or by small spot lights. Twelve low-voltage landscape lights are also proposed. They will be located along the front and side of the brownstone wall.

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

Janet Leombruni of 200 Broad Street appeared before the commission. She read a letter from Tom and Holly Landers of 205 Broad Street dated December 10, 2007. The letter expressed concern about the extent of the proposed lighting and the size of the sign. The writers indicated that they fear the impact the lighting and signage will have on the residential nature of the neighborhood. Any sign and lighting should be in keeping with the historic nature of the neighborhood.

Ms. Leombruni also read a letter from Lorin Hardy and Mark Bryant of 55 Robbinswood Drive expressing similar concerns.

Ms. Leombruni asked the commission to review the photographs she had provided when considering the proposal for lighting.

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

**APPLICATION NO. 3555-07.** Debra Hammer seeking to install a sign and post at 130 Main Street.

Phil Lohman of 434 Main Street appeared before the commission on behalf of the applicant who is president of the Temple Beth Torah. Mr. Lohman presented a drawing of the proposed sign. He stated that they wish to have a sign at a right angle to the building so it will be more visible.

The sign will be wood and painted white with gold. The lettering will be hand-painted in black. The sign will be 2' x 3' and will hang from an 8' high wood post. The post will be square with a ball finial. No illumination is planned.

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

**APPLICATION NO. 3535-07.** 245 Main, LLC seeking to install a garage with door, paved parking, stairs with railings, exterior lighting and replace windows and doors at 245 Main Street (Tabled from the November 13, 2007 meeting. Last date to act on – January 8, 2008).

Attorney Michael Barry, 1177 Silas Deane Highway appeared before the commission representing the applicant. Also appearing was the builder, Michael Carducci, 85 Gilbert Avenue in Rocky Hill. Elevations were provided.

At the last hearing, the commissioners expressed a number of concerns about the proposal, which were addressed by the applicant. The first of the concerns involved the handicap ramp. A question was raised whether the ramp could be done with two turns rather than three. Mr. Barry stated that the ramp would extend past a window if done with two turns. The applicant felt that the ramp looked too much like a hospital ramp if done with only two turns.

The railings on the ramp will be black matte tubular metal since ADA may require a radius corner. If ADA does not require radius corners, Mr. Carducci stated he could install a wrought iron railing with square and twisted balusters. The preference on the application will be listed as the tubular railing.

The front doors will be rebuilt.

The garage doors will be constructed out of a composite material, which addresses the concern about the originally proposed doors being too shiny. The doors will be painted white, 16-panel with no windows. Two lights will be on the garage on both sides of the middle door. Gutters on the garage will be copper.

Gutters on the building will be replaced in-kind.

The proposed windows are Andersen wood windows with a permashield coating. The muntins are on the exterior and interior. The light patterns will match the existing, which currently consists of 6/1 and 9/1. The windows on the third floor are being lowered, which Commissioner O'Brien stated was in keeping with the building's architectural period.

Commissioner O'Brien asked for the dimension of the garage and was told it is 42' x 22' and is located 1.63' from the property line. The garage is approximately 20' high. She expressed concerns about the mass of the garage, especially in the back which has no windows. She asked whether the garage could be built to look more like a garage, such as not being built of brick. Mr. Carducci stated the garage could be sided with another material, but did not feel the garage would look as nice and would not match the building as well. He suggested a gable roof be added to reduce the amount of brick that is visible.

Commissioner Garrey suggested windows be added to the back of garage. Mr. Carducci indicated that he did not feel windows would impact the massing issue as well as lowering the roof. Commissioner O'Brien suggested the garage be reduced to 2-bay. Mr. Carducci indicated that the original plan was for a 4-bay garage, which the town did not approve. The building will have four condominium units and parking is limited. Therefore, he does not want to make the garage any smaller.

Mr. Carducci agreed to install a gable roof and to install two windows on the back. The windows will match the same model and make as the windows on the building and will be 6/1.

The doors on the side of the building will be an Andersen Frenchwood hinged patio doors.

Commissioner O'Brien expressed concern about the massing of the handicap ramp and the use of brick. The ramp is required and the size is required because the door is approximately 5' from the ground. Mr. Carducci stated the plan is to cover the ramp with landscaping.

A color drawing of the finished building was displayed. Commissioner Hart indicated the drawing is a good rendition of the landscaping and of the gable roof. He suggested the drawing be made a part of the application. A copy of the drawing will be provided.

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

Janet Leombruni of 200 Broad Street appeared before the commission. She expressed concerns about the size of the garage and about its proximity to the neighboring property. She stated she recalls someone representing the Comstock property expressing concern about the size of the building blocking light. She also expressed concern about parking stating that the issue of parking in front of the building should be revisited. She also stated that town officials/employees have allowed a number of buildings to be converted to condominiums without allowing for public comment.

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

**APPLICATION NO. 3537-07.** Elyse Rybczynski seeking to install replacement windows at Apt. 2N, 226 Broad Street (Tabled from the November 13, 2007 meeting. Last date to act on – January 8, 2008).

Glenn Damboise of 44 Jennifer Lynn Drive, Milldale appeared before the commission on the applicant's behalf. He stated that the applicant had tried to persuade other owners of units in the building to purchase the same new windows, but only 3 of 5 owners agreed.

Commissioners visited the site individually since the application was presented.

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

Upon motion by Commissioner Hart, and seconded by Commissioner Maycock and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to close the public hearing on the discussed applications.

Aye: Garrey, Hart, Maycock, McLeod, O'Brien

Upon motion by Commissioner Hart, and seconded by Commissioner O'Brien and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to open the public meeting on the discussed applications.

Aye: Garrey, Hart, Maycock, McLeod, O'Brien

**APPLICATION NO. 3550-07.** Frank Pretter seeking to remove the existing rear porch and construct an 11' x 12' single story addition in its place at 51 Harmund Place.

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

**Discussion**

Commissioner Hart stated the proposed design is well grounded. The proposed windows and siding will make for a seamless continuation of the house. Commissioner O'Brien concurred saying that the design is in keeping with the neighborhood.

Aye: Garrey, Hart, Maycock, McLeod, O'Brien

**APPLICATION NO. 3551-07.** Pierre Bennerup seeking to remove the hoop house on the Church Street side of the property at 249-263 Main Street.

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

**Discussion**

Commissioner O'Brien stated that the removal of the structure will make the neighborhood look cleaner and neater.

Aye: Garrey, Hart, Maycock, McLeod, O'Brien

**APPLICATION NO. 3552-07.** Rider and Jill Foley seeking to install replacement windows at 14 Warner Place.

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 Garrey stated that the proposed windows were a very nice product and is appropriate for the house.

Aye: Garrey, Hart, Maycock, McLeod, O'Brien

**APPLICATION NO. 3553-07.** Mark Toce seeking to replace the metal roof on the front porch with shingles to match the main roof at 37 Hartford Avenue.

Upon motion by Commissioner Hart, seconded by Commissioner Maycock and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to APPROVE the application with the following stipulation:

- The applicant shall retain or replicate the Yankee gutter on the porch roof.

**Discussion**

Commissioner O'Brien stated that the removal of the roof will improve the look of the house.

Aye: Garrey, Hart, Maycock, McLeod, O'Brien

**APPLICATION NO. 3554-07.** Shireen and John Aforismo seeking to install a freestanding sign and outdoor lighting at 185 Broad Street.

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

- Two well lights will be used to illuminate the sign.

**Discussion**

Commissioner O'Brien noted that the sign is an appropriate size for the neighborhood. Although the commission noted the concerns expressed by the neighbors, Commissioner O'Brien stated the proposed lighting is low-voltage.

Commissioner Garrey stated he did not feel the proposed sign was too large considering the size of the property. Commissioner Maycock agreed stating it is important to consider the size of the property when considering the appropriate size for a sign.

Aye: Garrey, Hart, Maycock, McLeod, O'Brien

**APPLICATION NO. 3555-07.** Debra Hammer seeking to install a sign and post at 130 Main Street.

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

**Discussion**

Commissioner Garrey stated the proposed sign was nicely designed. Commissioner Hart stated the material, design and size are appropriate for the district.

Aye: Garrey, Hart, Maycock, McLeod, O'Brien

**APPLICATION NO. 3535-07.** 245 Main, LLC seeking to install a garage with door, paved parking, stairs with railings, exterior lighting and replace windows and doors at 245 Main Street (Tabled from the November 13, 2007 meeting. Last date to act on – January 8, 2008).

Upon motion by Commissioner Hart, seconded by Commissioner Maycock and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to APPROVE the application with the following stipulations:

- Ramp railing shall be tubular metal painted matte black.
- The garage roof shall have a gable roof with a 5/12 pitch with three windows on the north side having a 6/1 light pattern.

- The garage door shall be a composite 16-panel door with no lights.
- There shall be two lamps that will flank the center door.
- Gutters to the garage and side entry shall be copper half-rounds.
- All windows shall be of wood material with exterior muntins. All light patterns will match existing.
- Second floor windows shall match the first floor light pattern.
- Windows on garage shall also match model and make of windows on building and 6/1.
- The fill material over windows shall be stucco.
- Doors affixed to Church Street entry shall be Andersen Frenchwood in-swing doors all of wood.
- Doors facing Main Street shall be 8-light.
- Sidewalks and pads on Main Street side of property shall be cement.
- Condensers on north side of property shall be shielded by evergreen plantings.

### **Discussion**

Commissioner Hart stated that overall the proposal is appropriate for the district. Commissioner Garrey stated he had the same concerns about massing, but feels the change in the roof pitch will help alleviate the massing issue. He agrees that parking is an important concern for the residential property.

Commissioner O'Brien suggested a rendition be obtained to see whether the changes adequately address the massing issue before the commission takes a final vote on the application. She stated the project is important and will be the commission's legacy. Commissioner Raymond agreed saying that he would like to see what the project will look like with the changes before voting.

Commissioner Maycock stated he felt the proposed changes adequately addressed the concerns expressed by the commission. Commissioner O'Brien stated she felt it was a mistake not to further contemplate the application before taking a final vote.

Commissioner Hart addressed the issue of parking in the front of the building by saying that the commission should use its influence to bring the issue to the forefront.

Aye: Garrey, Hart, Maycock

Nay: McLeod, Raymond

**APPLICATION NO. 3537-07.** Elyse Rybczynski seeking to install replacement windows at Apt. 2N, 226 Broad Street (Tabled from the November 13, 2007 meeting. Last date to act on – January 8, 2008).

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

### **Discussion**

Commissioner Hart stated he felt any application to change the windows on the building should be brought by the association so that all the windows could be changed at the same time.

Commissioner Garrey stated that even if the association applied to change the windows, he would not approve of the proposed windows. He stated the windows are inappropriate for the building and for the district. He stated the building is in a prominent location and the windows should not be changed.

Commissioner Raymond agreed saying that it is important that all the residents in the building use the same windows.

Aye: Garrey, Hart, Maycock, McLeod, Raymond

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF: November 27, 2007**

Upon motion by Commissioner Hart seconded by Commissioner McLeod and a poll of the Commission, the minutes of the November 27, 2007 meeting were approved without objection.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

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

Janet Leombruni of 200 Broad Street appeared before the commission. She expressed concerns about the continued use of the green as a park area for events such as the Cornfest. She also stated its continued use as a parking area will destroy trees on the green. She again expressed concerns about the changing nature of the neighborhood.

Some commissioners stated that although the green is located in the historic district, the commission does not govern or have input into its use. Commissioner Hart disagreed saying the commission should weigh-in on issues affecting such a major part of the historic district.

**Report of the Historic District Coordinator**

None.

**Change of Meeting Time**

Upon motion by Commissioner Hart, seconded by Commissioner McLeod and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to change the time meetings start to 7:30PM beginning with the first meeting in January 2008.

Aye: Garrey, Hart, Maycock, McLeod, O'Brien

**CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Upon a motion by Commissioner McLeod seconded by Commissioner Hart and a poll of the Commission, it was unanimously voted to go into Executive Session at 8:54PM.

Aye: Garrey, Hart, Maycock, McLeod, O'Brien

Upon a motion by Commissioner O'Brien seconded by Commissioner Maycock and a poll of the Commission, it was unanimously voted to leave Executive Session at 8:58PM.

Aye: Garrey, Hart, Maycock, McLeod, O'Brien

**ADJOURNMENT**

Upon motion by Commissioner Hart and seconded by Commissioner Maycock and a poll of the Commission, it was unanimously voted to ADJOURN the meeting at 8:58PM.

Aye: Garrey, Hart, Maycock, McLeod, O'Brien

Respectfully Submitted  
TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD  
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

John Maycock  
Clerk