

**WETHERSFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING
MARCH 14, 2006**

The Wethersfield Historic District Commission held a Public Hearing on March 14, 2006 in the Town Council Conference Room at the Town Hall, 505 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield, Connecticut.

Members Present:

Douglas Ovian, Vice Chairperson
Jennifer Wolf, Clerk
Robert Garrey
Vacek Miglus
Eric Hart, Alternate
Gary McLeod, Alternate

Members Absent:

Susan O'Brien, Chairperson
Bette Botticello, Alternate

Also Present:

Robert Cook, Historic District Coordinator

Vice Chairperson Ovian called the meeting to order at 7:33PM, and read the opening comments. Commissioner Wolf, Clerk, read the Legal Notice as it appeared in the *Hartford Courant* on March 3, 2006.

APPLICATION NO. 3369-06. Gary Vivian seeking to construct a two-story addition with attached 3-car garage and breezeway at 323 Hartford Avenue.

Gary Vivian of Cactus Design, 43 Old Pewter Lane appeared before the commission. Also appearing before the commission was Mark Raymond of 323 Hartford Avenue. Drawings were provided to the commission, and a model was displayed. This project had to be presented before the Zoning Board of Appeal. Therefore, some changes were made to the materials submitted with the application. Revised information was presented to the commission.

Mr. Vivian explained the project, which involves the construction of a two-story addition and a three-car garage. The building's footprint is being increased by 540 square feet. The new garage will replace the old garage in the back of the house to minimize the view from the street. The driveway will be moved to the front of the house.

Materials will not match existing materials on the house. The exposure of the clapboard will match, but cementitious board will be used. An earlier addition has shingles, which will be replaced with clapboard. Roofing materials will match existing shingles. The proposed windows are Anderson wood with vinyl clad on the exterior. The grill patterns on the existing windows vary. The grills on the new windows will match the adjacent windows.

Commissioner Ovian indicated that he was surprised by the fact that there would be no visible door on the street side of the house, especially considering the amount of changes being done to the house. He indicated that it is not uncommon for a house of the period to have more than one visible entryway. In this house the entryway is barely visible. Mr. Vivian stated he considered the issue and struggled with a design because the front of the house does not face the street.

Commissioner Ovian also expressed some concern about the lack of a step back on roof line, and a possible massing issue.

Commissioner Garrey indicated that lack of a door on the street side was not a great concern for him. He also reminded the commission that past concerns about massing issues created at other locations involved properties situated on

smaller parcels of land.

Commissioner Wolf asked whether any thought had been given to placing windows on the back side of the garage. She stated she was not sure how much of that part of the building would be seen from the public way, but noted that it will be seen by neighbors and is adjacent to the backyard. Mr. Vivian stated that several considerations went into the decision not to put windows on the garage, including financial and security.

Commissioner Miglus asked whether any thought had been given to stepping down the addition so that it would not be the same height as the current building. Mr. Vivian indicated that there is a 6" step down. Other variations were designed, but the change in the pitch of the roof was undesirable.

Commissioner Miglus also expressed concerns about the mulled windows on the north side of the house. He indicated that the front of the house is very symmetrical, but the windows on the side of the house do not fall in the center of the gable upsetting the symmetry on that side of the house. He indicated that the window pairing does not match the mid-19th century style of the house. He also expressed concern about the placement of shutters on those windows, which should have no shutters. Mr. Vivian stated that he and homeowner wanted a large expanse of glass in that location, and some internal design issues dictated the placement of the windows.

Commissioner Garrey asked whether the removal of the shutters would address Commissioner Miglus' concerns. He responded that removing the shutters would help. He also indicated that mulled window pairs also work with a level of trim that is significantly higher than the rest of the building.

Commissioner Oviaan asked whether consideration was given to flattening the pitch of the roof on the north elevation, or hipping the gable. Mr. Vivian indicated that the original design of the roof was flatter and did have a hipped gable, but the decision was made to change it to its present design. Commissioner Garrey thought the flattening of the roof was more desirable than adding a hip to the roof.

Commissioner Miglus mentioned that some of the windows on the second floor of the addition seem to have different size panes than the panes on other windows. Mr. Vivian indicated that the size of the panes was reduced when the roof was lowered. He indicated he was hearing from commissioners that the side wall should go up, at the same time reducing the pitch of the roof.

Mr. Vivian confirmed that the foundation will be replicated.

Mr. Vivian stated that there were letters submitted by neighbors on both sides of the property speaking in favor of project. The letters were submitted to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

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

Billye Logan of 318 Hartford Avenue appeared before the commission and spoke in favor of the project. She mentioned that the house has more frontage than any other house on the west side of the street, and that there is no massing issue.

Commissioner Oviaan 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. 3370-06. Town of Wethersfield seeking to install a bench in front of the Masonic Hall on a concrete pad at 245 Main Street.

Robert Cook, HDC Coordinator, represented the Town of Wethersfield and appeared before the commission. He mentioned that this memorial bench is the reemergence of a previous application for installation of a bench in front of The Creamery. That prior application was withdrawn.

The current application is for the installation of a bench in memory of David Longey. The bench was donated by his

mother. She asked that it be installed in front of the Masonic Hall, and that it face Mr. Longey's church located directly across the street.

Commissioner Wolf asked for the exact location of the bench. Mr. Cook stated the location is marked. It will be located in between the sidewalk and the street, and is centered in front of the Masonic Hall directly across from the building's front door. Commissioner Miglus went to see the site and saw no marking. He stated he would like to hear from the town as to exactly what the bench looks like and exactly where it will be placed.

Mr. Cook stated he would return to the site to clearly mark the site, or the commission could stipulate the location.

Commissioner Ovian 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. 3371-06. Bijoux Rose LLC seeking to install a sign mounted on the building at 277 Main Street.

Rose Brodeur and Lynn Decker of 277 Main Street appeared before the commission. They are opening a skin and nail salon and have applied to install a sign for their business. The proposed sign is 1 1/2 " foam board, black, and with cream-colored lettering. There will a 2' x 8' sign facing Main Street, and a 2' x 5' sign facing Hartford Avenue

Mr. Cook mentioned that he was not aware that the application was for two signs. Ms. Brodeur mentioned that they eventually want two signs, and thought they should seek approval of the second sign now. The first sign they would like to install is the one facing Main Street.

Commissioner Ovian asked whether the sign would be lit. Ms. Brodeur mentioned that the sign will be lit. There will be lights above the sign, and will be controlled by a timer. The lights are not currently installed. Mr. Cook mentioned that he was not aware that lights were being installed. The installation of lights was not, therefore, included in the public notice.

Commissioner Ovian 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. 3321-05. Greg & Haddya Nye seeking to amend the approved Certificate of Appropriateness to substitute the type of windows at 7 Summerfield Drive.

Gary Vivian of Cactus Design, 43 Old Pewter Lane appeared before the commission. He reminded the commission that this application was approved for Eagle windows. He later determined that all

the existing windows, except one, are vinyl. The one exception is an Anderson vinyl clad window. He is proposing to change all the windows to Anderson windows.

Commissioners thought the vinyl windows looked better than traditional vinyl windows. Before further deliberating the request for an amendment, they agreed to review the existing windows and the proposed windows.

Commissioner Ovian 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 Garrey, seconded by Commissioner Wolf and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to close the public hearing on applications 3369-06, 3370-06, and 3371-06, and to open the public meeting on those applications.

Aye: Garrey, Hart, McLeod, Miglus, Wolf

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APPLICATION NO. 3369-06. Gary Vivian seeking to construct a two-story addition with attached 3-car garage and breezeway at 323 Hartford Avenue.

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

Discussion

Commissioner Miglus indicated that there were a lot of issues that were raised during the public hearing, and got the impression that the architect was willing to consider the suggestions made by commissioners. He would prefer to have the architect and the homeowner resubmit their own design changes rather than have the commission stipulate changes.

Commissioner Oviaan agreed, but indicated he did not want to inconvenience the homeowner with a delay.

Commissioner Garrey indicated there were a lot of design suggestions made by commissioners. He indicated that some major suggestions, such as changes to the roof line, are merely the commission's opinion which may not be the design the homeowner wants. He did not feel the varying opinions were critical to the decision as to whether the addition is appropriate. He felt the changes everyone agreed upon could be stipulated.

Commissioner Hart agreed with the motion and with having the homeowner return with his own ideas for design changes.

Aye: Hart, McLeod, Miglus, Wolf Nay: Garrey

APPLICATION NO. 3370-06. Town of Wethersfield seeking to install a bench in front of the Masonic Hall on a concrete pad at 245 Main Street.

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

Discussion

Commissioner Garrey made a motion to approve the application as submitted. The fact that a specific location for the bench was not noted was of little concern to him. His feeling was that the proposed bench is 6' and will be located on a rather large expanse. He did not feel massing was an issue.

Commissioner Wolf stated the bench will be fixed so it is important to ensure it is not placed in a location that will detract from the building. Commissioner Miglus agreed that the bench should not be placed in the center of the building. He suggested it would be better to have two benches facing each other at a slight angle and facing the street. Although the application was for only one bench, Mr. Cook suggested that approval could be stipulated for two benches in the suggested design. The next bench approved by the town would be located in the second approved location.

It was noted that the bench was donated by Mr. Longey's mother with the request that it be located directly facing the church across the street. Commissioner Garrey also noted that the commission should not be designing the location of the bench, rather it should be approving or disapproving the location specified in the application.

Commissioner Garrey withdrew his motion. Commissioner Miglus then motioned to table the application in order to give the town the opportunity to provide more information on the exact location of the bench, and to review the suggestions made by the commission. Commissioner Garrey restated his opinion that the decision as to the location of the bench should be left to the donor, and should not be decided by the commission or the town. The HDC's responsibility is to approve the desired location, not to relocate the bench where it feels is appropriate.

Aye: Garrey, Hart, McLeod, Miglus, Wolf

APPLICATION NO. 3371-06. Bijoux Rose LLC seeking to install a sign mounted on the building at 277 Main Street.

Upon motion by Commissioner Wolf, seconded by Commissioner Garrey and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to TABLE the application leaving the public hearing open.

Discussion

Commissioner Wolf stated that the wording on the application is somewhat different from what the applicant described at the public hearing. The requested lights cannot be decided upon without more information on what will be installed.

Aye: Garrey, Hart, McLeod, Miglus, Wolf

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF: [February 14](#) and [February 28, 2006](#)

Upon motion by Commissioner Hart, seconded by Commissioner Miglus and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to APPROVE the minutes of both meetings as presented.

Aye: Garrey, Hart, McLeod, Miglus, Ovian Abst: Wolf

OTHER BUSINESS

Public comments on general matters of the Historic District

None

Report of the Historic District Coordinator

Robert Cook advised that Peter Gillespie has not yet completed the application for submission of the Stillman Building for a preservation award. Commissioners volunteered to call Mr. Gillespie to help with moving the process along.

HGTV has asked whether there are examples of commercial property converted to private use in Wethersfield. The Grange, a property at Main and Garden, and a candy shop on Main Street were mentioned.

Mr. Cook reported that the handbook is available on-line.

Bonnie Therrien and Russ Morin were in Washington DC to receive the \$50,000 Preserve America grant.

Mr. Cook mentioned an article about Code Breakers in Yankee Magazine.

CORRESPONDENCE

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion by Commissioner Wolf seconded by Commissioner Garrey and a poll of the Commission, it was unanimously voted to ADJOURN the meeting at 8:57PM.

Aye: Garrey, Hart, McLeod, Miglus, Wolf

Respectfully Submitted
TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Jennifer Wolf
Clerk