WETHERSFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING
MARCH 23, 2004

The Wethersfield Historic District Commission held a public meeting on March 23, 2003 at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Conference Room of the Town Hall, 505 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield, Connecticut.

Members present:
Douglas Ovian, Vice Chairperson
Jennifer Wolf, Clerk
Vacek Miglus
Robert A. Garrey
Eric Hart
Paul Courchaine

Members absent:
Billye Logan, Chairperson
John Toomey

Also Present:
Robert Cook, Wethersfield Historic District Coordinator

Vice Chairperson Ovian called the hearing to order at 7:30 pm and Clerk Wolf, read the Legal Notice as it appeared in the Hartford Courant on March 12, 2004.

APPLICATION NO. 3175-04. Chi & Todd Murphy seeking to construct a second floor addition over existing 1st floor in the rear at 41 Woodland Street.

Mr. Gary Vivian architect and the applicant Todd Murphy appeared before the Commission and passed out bound packets containing renderings, elevations and specifications. Mr. Vivian explained that there was currently a 12' X 16' single story addition with clapboard siding on the rear of the stucco house. They proposed to add a second story without increasing the footprint on the existing structure at all. He explained that because of the rear setback it would otherwise not be seen from the east side but the corner of the addition could be seen from the west elevation, and because of a town driveway at the rear of the property the northern elevation could potentially be seen.

Commissioner Miglus pointed out the Community Gardens which were not private, were back there.

He further explained that the 1st floor of the addition had 1/1 windows that did not match the 6/1 style of the house and they proposed to replace them with the same type of windows which would be used on the new second floor part of the addition and be close in style to windows on the rest of the house. They would be wood clad windows with simulated divided light and be placed at the same height as the other second floor windows. There was currently no trim around the 1/1 windows and they proposed to trim the new ones out to match the windows of the house using Azek composite board. The roofline trim would also match the existing trim.

Commissioner Garrey arrived at this time.

Commissioner Miglus asked if there were any floor plan drawings and was told by Mr. Vivian that he had not sketched any.

Commissioner Miglus asked if there was any setback from the wall of the house and was told that there was not. But Mr. Vivian explained that by carrying the roofline down, and bringing in the dormer it would create a heavy shadow line to read as a roof versus just trim on a facade and added that it would be shingled about a foot up like a Tudor.

Commissioner Miglus asked if they had considered any other ways to tone down the difference between the stucco and the clapboard. Mr. Vivian said that other than changing the finish on the rest of the house and adding stucco to the back addition he saw no other way. But by leaving it the same material as the first floor it would still read as an addition.

Commissioner Miglus suggested that perhaps a different type of wood, like shingles might work as well as allow the graceful introduction of another color.

Commissioner Ovian suggested dropping the dormer wall and stepping the side wall in. Mr. Vivian explained that to do that they would have to change the existing foundation and footprint of the house and they had not wanted to do that.

Commissioner Ovian asked if there was a vertical board at the intersection of the two sidings. Mr. Vivian said that there was not and although he had considered it there would still be the same dissimilar materials coming together and he didn't think a vertical or horizontal board would help it any.

There being no one else who wished to speak in favor or against this application, this portion of the hearing was declared closed.

APPLICATION NO. 3176-04. Lawrence & Sara Gluckman seeking to construct a two-story addition in the rear at 62 Center Street.

Clerk Wolf read a letter from the applicant requesting that the application be Tabled until the next meeting.

Mr. Cook explained that she had a lot of questions about windows and doors and asked to be Tabled in order to have the opportunity to gather information.

There being no one else who wished to speak in favor or against this application, this portion of the hearing was declared closed.

APPLICATION NO. 3177-04. Debra & Joseph Hammer seeking to replace the slate roof, gutters and storm/screen windows at 65 Broad Street.

Ms. Debra Hammer 65 Broad Street appeared before the Commission.

Commissioner Ovian reminded the other Commissioners that the applicants had already been granted approval for an addition to the rear of their home and that Ms. Hammer was here to request changes to the existing building.

Ms. Hammer explained that an architectural shingled asphalt roof had been approved for the addition, and they did their best to match the color. However when they looked at the new asphalt against the old slate roof, they didn't feel it looked right. She added that they had an expert in slate roofing who had been making yearly visits to repair and maintain the slate. They had already experienced some leakage problems and tiles coming down during heavy winds. He told the Hammer's that the 100 year old roof was at the end of its effective lifetime. So they decided that since they were already doing major work on the house and the yard was torn up this would be a good time to replace the rest of the roof and not wait any longer since it might only be another year or perhaps two. Ms. Hammer added that she wasn't sure if the Commission regulated gutters or storms but she went ahead and added it to the application so that they could get approval for them too.

Commissioner Ovian replied that they do regulate gutters, but ordinarily storms and screens are considered outside their regulation however if she wanted to indicate what she was proposing they would certainly listen, but it would not be part of their deliberations.

Commissioner Miglus asked if there were gutters currently on the home.

Mr. Al Poshody contractor stepped forward and answered that they wanted to replace the round downspouts with

rectangular white aluminum downspouts and the 1/2 round gutters with a rectangular seamless style. They had not given it a lot of consideration but they chose this style for pricing and the availability.

Commissioner Miglus explained that at the time this home was built it would either have had no gutters at all or 1/2 round gutters. The K-style being proposed roughly imitates a wooden gutter and would not fit the style of this home. Mr. Poshody commented that he didn't think that the 1/2 round style would still be available.

Commissioner Miglus replied that were available locally and he had installed them on his house last year. They could be painted any color or custom colored for additional money.

Ms. Hammer continued and explained that once the decision had been made to replace the slate her builder came in and got a verbal okay from the building department. The following Monday she was speaking to Mr. Cook about another matter and mentioned the work being done to the roof. He was surprised to hear of it and ordered us to stop work and then Chairperson Logan paid a visit and told us that this was a significant change to the property and should not have been acted upon without Commission approval and a public hearing required.

Commissioner Wolf asked which portion had been removed already. Ms. Hammer said that the northern side had been removed including the dormer. The tiles were so brittle they shattered and are destroyed.

Mr. Poshody said that the contract had not included the roof and the Hammers had not intended to replace it. But after conversations with Mr. Hammer it was decided to make it part of the project. He explained that he called his roofing guys on a Thursday and they happened to be between jobs and could start that Saturday. He would need to get a dumpster and the shingles in a hurry but he was willing to go ahead with it. He called the building department about a permit and spoke to Brian O'Connor and explained that he wanted to tear off the roof and could have a crew start on Saturday. Mr. O'Connor told him to go ahead and then come in on Monday for the permit. The contractor explained that the fact of the house being located in a historic district was secondary to him; his main concern was with making the house look like the blueprint. He could not remember if he mentioned the fact that he would be replacing slate with asphalt but felt that Mr. O'Connor was so swamped with work that if he had mentioned it, it was possible that it just hadn't registered with him. He decided to ask the roofers to come on Monday morning instead, which they did. Early Monday morning they arrived and started stripping the roof. He went off to get the permit when he arrived about 10:30, and Chairperson Logan had contacted the building department. By the time he returned to the house they had already removed 3/4 of the roof.

Commissioner Ovian said that he appreciated the explanations of the chronology and that the Commission would use the information in their deliberations.

Commissioner Wolf noted that the slate that had been removed was gone, but asked if they had looked into whether or not it was available for replacement. Ms. Hammer answered that she had not. Mr. Poshody admitted that he had no experience with slate roofing. Mr. Cook said that he had checked at two sources and found it to be available.

There being no one else who wished to speak in favor or against this application, this portion of the hearing was declared closed.

APPLICATION NO. 3178-04. John Scheerer seeking to replace the windows, gutters, garage doors and trim on house at 16 Meggat Park.

Mr. Cook said that this project was on the Patricia Rust property and had come before the Commission last summer as part of the Small Cities Grant program, but had been withdrawn.

Mr. John Scheerer contractor appeared before the Commission and explained that he was a contractor working with the program. He had also been the same contractor on the previous application for this property. He said that the company that coordinates the projects puts together a spec sheet then puts it out to bid, and he priced the project accordingly.

Commissioner Ovian asked what the home was currently sided in. He was told that it was sided in aluminum.

Mr. Cook said that this project was basically a 100% repair except there are wood windows they want to replace with aluminum clad. The front door was going to be refurbished and the garage door replaced.

Commissioner Ovian asked to go through the replacements one by one, starting with the windows. Mr. Scheerer said that windows were the same ones that had been approved for the next door neighbor Carol Szymanski who had also gone though the program. These windows are aluminum clad wooden replacement windows with simulated divided light and would match the existing 2/2.

Commissioner Ovian asked what percentage of glass would be reduced. Mr. Scheerer looked at the specifications and answered that it would be about 1/4". The front bow window would be reproduced in an aluminum clad window.

Commissioner Ovian asked about the muntin width, being concerned that if they were wider it would not look good. Mr. Scheerer said that they currently went from about 2" on the inside to about 1 3/4" on the outside and the reproduction would be very similar.

Commissioner Miglus said that the dimensions on the spec sheet said 1".

Mr. Cook noted that they intended to refurbish the front door and asked if there were any way to refurbish the front bay. Mr. Scheerer said that it was too far gone. He also said that it had taken him five months to find a manufacturer who would faithfully reproduce the window in aluminum clad.

Commissioner Ovian asked if the current bay windows opened and if so wanted to know if the new one would too. Mr. Scheerer said that they do open and the new ones would also.

Commissioner Miglus asked where the stop on the window would land against. Mr. Scheerer said that it would land against the exterior stop.

Commissioner Miglus said that it looked like a good part of the sash and the screen would protrude past the exterior of the house and asked if it would be accurate to say that about 2 + " would be protruding from the opening. Mr. Scheerer said that he believed that the entire window depth was no more than 3 1/4 "and it would probably not protrude any more than the storm windows.

Commissioner Miglus said that he would hate to see a replacement window looking like a storm window, and that it should fall into the same plane as the existing double hung windows, however if that was an issue they could simply pull the window in farther.

Commissioner Ovian said that in the past the Commission had looked favorably upon sash replacement kits and had requested them in buildings that had larger expanses of glass than this one. He wondered if there was a reason that they had not been considered in this situation. Mr. Scheerer answered that he was familiar with them and he would have considered it on his own. He had found them to be less expensive and had used them on homes in the historic district in Branford. In this case the program is based upon low maintenance for people with low or limited income to enable them to be able to maintain their homes.

Mr. Cook said that the program boiler plate spells out the type of windows to be used.

Commissioner Ovian asked him if sash kits were to be stipulated would it then force him to walk away from the job noting that he was familiar with them and had worked with them. Mr. Scheerer was forced to admit that he would not ordinarily walk away from it but he had already paid for and ordered these windows twice and had about $14,000 invested and would lose at least $7,000 on the windows. He felt that there should have been more planning and research done for the boiler plate before the job was put out to bid.

Commissioner Ovian said that there were intermediaries involved that caused the project to be more complex and the Commission's sympathies were definitely with him and they would address all these issues in the public meeting.

It was noted that the gutters would be a like for like replacement.

Mr. Scheerer said that the current garage doors were old wooden/pressed board doors. They had been spec-ed out for an aluminum door. He proposed a 16 panel 4 light unit but he did not have a picture. He said that he did not care too much about the door and he would go with whatever the Commission requested.

Commissioner Ovian asked what was wrong with the current doors. He was told that much of the pressed wood portions were swollen and falling off of the tracks, and were not repairable.

Commissioner Ovian asked how the currently exposed wooden window trim would be treated. Mr. Scheerer replied that the specs called for all the wood trim to be wrapped in aluminum.

Mr. Cook noted that he had not found there to be any problem with the trim other than it needed painting.

Mr. Scheerer said that program was concerned with the liability of any lead surfaces and that's why they spec the wrapping.

Commissioner Ovian thanked Mr. Scheerer for his patience and his efforts in Wethersfield.

There being no one else who wished to speak in favor or against this application, this portion of the hearing was declared closed.

APPLICATION NO. 3179-04. James & Ann Marie Ritter seeking to install a fence at 17 Willard Street.

Mr. James Ritter the new homeowner of 17 Willard appeared before the Commission and requested approval to erect a 4' fence across around the perimeter of his yard from the back corners forward. He explained that they wanted to minimize access to the front portions of the yard for their 18 month old twins.

He said that they haven't yet decided how much farther they wanted to go but for now they would like a gate at the driveway, and another to limit the visibility from the street. They prefer a vinyl picket fence in a scalloped style and their contractor said that he had done a lot of work in Old Wethersfield including a vinyl fence at the Green.

Commissioner Ovian asked if the same style was available in wood. Mr. Ritter commented that it was available in a similar style.

Commissioner Ovian said that if there was any difference in the style they decided upon then he could always come back and make a change. Mr. Ritter asked how much of a difference would need approval. The Commissioners explained that any discernable difference such as material or cap or post style.

Commissioner Ovian said that the change might not need another application but that Mr. Cook could provide guidance on that question.

Mr. Ritter said that it was his understanding that fences were required to be see-through. Commissioner Miglus said that it was required to supply a 50% view for some distances from the street, but this fence probably doesn't fall into that category. However he added that fences that can be seen through are more neighbor friendly.

Mr. Ritter asked where he could get a copy of the 1976 picture of his home the Commissioners were looking at. He also wondered where he could get any additional information about it. He was told that copies of any of the survey pictures taken by the Town were available from the Town Planning department and any additional information might be gotten from the Old Academy library of the Wethersfield Historical Society.

Mr. Charles Lynn 19 Willard Street said that he had no problem with the fence and he had come in to see what the process was all about since he has a 6 month old and 1 year old child and they would be coming in with their own request. He was in favor of the application.

There being no one else who wished to speak in favor or against this application, this portion of the hearing was declared closed.

APPLICATION NO. 3180-04. LaDolce Bakery LLC seeking to install a sign and outdoor seating at 227 Main Street.

Mr. Rosario Lobella manager of the LaDolce Bakery appeared before the Commission to seek approval for a sign which would be lettered onto the front window of the bakery and the number over the door. He said that he liked the style and font of the travel agency sign and wanted to stay with that look. The gold lettering would be centered and would start about 1 1/2' from the sides of the large plate glass window.

Commissioner Wolf asked as an aside if they would be doing any cooking on-site. Mr. Lobella said that they would not but would be bringing in pastries and baked goods from various sources to create a one stop bakery.

It was determined that the Commission did not regulate any outdoor seating.

There being no one else who wished to speak in favor or against this application, this portion of the hearing was declared closed.

APPLICATION NO. 3181-04. Bobi Molchan & Wayne Holcombe seeking to construct a retaining wall in the front yard at 164 Hartford Avenue.

Clerk Wolf read a letter from the applicant saying that they were attaching this recap to the Certificate of Appropriateness for additional information because it had been brought to their attention that a Commissioner had asked to see the Certificate of Appropriateness for the retaining wall installed in their front yard. It should be noted that they had asked the building department about the retaining wall and were told that anything under 4' did not need to be approved. They had assumed that because it was landscaping the Commission did not need to be involved. Ms. Molchan wrote that the use of the wall was two-fold. They wanted to be able to landscape that part of the lawn but due to the slope it was impossible, now the area created by the wall makes it possible. In addition but most importantly they had been afraid that they would lose the tree in the front yard due to erosion that has increased over the years. An arborist came out to check the tree. They wanted to make sure they would not kill the tree by adding soil but also wanted to stop the erosion of the yard and reduce the chances of the tree falling across Hartford Avenue. They would also be replacing the steps and the front apron with the same stone which was chosen for its closeness to the brick color which enhances the foundation on the home. They are also considering continuing the stone up the north side of the driveway to keep the dirt in place. They have not decided on the driveway yet but are considering outlining the driveway with the stone and filling in the middle with pea stone. They would have considered pavers but due to the high costs of other improvements to the property the cost would be prohibitive. She pointed out that since the Commission could see what the wall looked like it was possible to get an idea of what the rest of the landscaping would look like which the applicants felt were a drastic improvement to what the existing front lawn looks like.

There being no one else who wished to speak in favor or against this application, this portion of the hearing was declared closed.

APPLICATION NO. 3168-04. Krzysztof Jankowski seeking to install a shed in the rear at 191 Middletown Avenue.

Mr. Cook said that the weather had finally cooperated so that Mr. Jankowski could stake out the area where he wanted to locate his shed, and it turned out to be virtually invisible from the public view.

The Commissioners decided that they did not need to concern themselves with it since it could not be seen.

APPLICATION NO. 3173-04. Julie Sapia seeking to install replacement windows at 136 Main Street.

Mr. Gary Vivian architect reappeared with Julie Sapia 136 Main Street before the Commission.

Mr. Cook wanted to mention that sash kits had been discussed with the applicant and they had looked into them.

Mr. Vivian said that they were looking to replace the windows on the clapboard area of the building. The aluminum siding would be cut away to put these windows in. The unsided area left would be covered by flat stock Azek trim on 3 sides and finished with a sill. The proposed windows would be 1/1 new construction aluminum clad wooden windows.

There would be no reduction of glazing which had been a concern with the replacement windows previously proposed.

Commissioner Miglus noted that the Azek trim would create the possibility of removing the J-channel by rabbiting the trim for the siding. Mr. Vivian agreed and said that in the future they hoped to remove the aluminum siding, and then it would all be removed along with the trim, but for now they would be able to get rid of the J-channel at the windows.

Commissioner Miglus pointed out that some of the photographs appeared to have divided lights on the windows and they were actually masking tape applied to create the look.

Ms. Sapia said that after she had looked at pictures of the original state of the building and decided that she wanted to recreate the look and go with the 1/1.

Mr. Vivian showed the Commissioners a sample of the window.

Commissioner Miglus asked if the proposed windows would have the brick mold shown on the sample. Mr. Vivian answered that they would not.

There being no one else who wished to speak in favor or against this application, this portion of the hearing was declared closed.

APPLICATION NO. 3170-04. Paula Larsen seeking to construct an addition to the front of the house at 271 Main Street.

Mr. Cook wanted to mention that Ms. Larsen had been very diligent in trying to understand and meet the needs of the Commission, the neighbors, and the community.

Ms. Paula Larsen 271 Main Street appeared before the Commission and said that she understood the Commissions needs to keep the integrity of the Historic District. She submitted photographs showing stakes where she now proposed moving the front of the building, which would be 1' shorter than the 30' she had previously proposed and would be in the same plane as the buildings to either side of her property. She then went on to explain the current plan. There would be a single front door with a long bench attached to the side of the addition and two bistro tables on the 9' paved front patio that would continue out to the sidewalk.

Commissioner Ovian asked her why she changed the plan to a center single door. She answered that someone on the Commission had suggested it at the last meeting.

Commissioner Ovian said that he had made the suggestion but it had been made with an eye to Commissioner Miglus' suggestion of a smaller building with a front porch. He went on to ask the applicant why she had not addressed the massing issues that had been the primary concern at the previous meeting. Removing only 1' off of the front of the building was not much of a compromise to him.

Ms. Larsen said that moving it back now aligned it with the other buildings and seemed to make more sense to her.

It was noted that there would need to be more than one door for meeting the code. Ms. Larsen produced two more drawings with different double door configurations. She thought that her neighbor would prefer not to have a side door so there would be no exiting aside her property.

Ms. Anne Kuckro said that this particular property, the Osmund Harrison house, was rather interesting and prepared a slide demonstration to illustrate the historical context concerning it. In August 1831 across the street from the house there was a disastrous fire at Mr. Williams barn next to First Church on the east side of Main Street "which was not subdued until 5 dwelling houses and several barns connected with them were entirely destroyed. The ruins extending for some distance in this delightful village present the most melancholy appearance." she quoted from the Connecticut Currant. In August of 1834 there was another disastrous fire which began in a building at the rear of James Belden's property on the west side of Main Street. "consumed all of Mr. Belden's barns and seed houses, 7 or 8 in number also the houses and barns of Roswell Klett, Dr. Cook, Levy Goodrich and the shoe shop of Osmund Harrison".

She said that fortunately the house that James Belden's father built in 1767 was saved. Mr. Belden was determined to rebuild his seed business and according to local tradition he moved and reused the old Robertson store which is the wooden section behind the brick front of Comstock Ferry. She said that if one looks at the south side of the Harrison house the window pattern of an 18th century house; a pair of windows on either side of the side porch entrance and a center chimney. She thinks that Mr. Harrison salvaged the chimney and frame from one of the burned houses and turned it 90' and rebuilt the facade with three windows on each floor and a decorative rectangular window on the gable end. He retained the colonial interior layout with the main door in the center along the side of the house even though he turned it around. Normally a house of this period has a door off center with a pair of windows on either side because from the federal period on the gable end house had a side hall with a front door and two windows in the front living room. This is unusual for a federal to have three windows across the front and then a door. While this house was held up as a model of Yankee resourcefulness in the face of adversity, she noted that it also served as a model for the reconstruction of the Stephen Willard house after it had burned in 1837. In the photograph of the home the same three window pattern and a side door is clearly seen. There were other examples including William Hamler house built in1842, 89 Garden Street, and 323 Hartford Avenue. She found it interesting that the Harrison house created a sort of Wethersfield prototype. She pointed out that the brick portion of the Comstock Ferry building was built with the window pattern of the older wood frame portion it eclipsed reproduced in the brick. She also gave her personal suggestion that a way to preserve the historical fabric of the Harrison house might be an enclosed glass porch under an extension of the 1880's porch roof would preserve the facade and maintain the residential scale of the building. She thought that the most successful improvements to the streetscape over the years have been those that have acknowledged and incorporated aspects of the existing building so as to have evolved naturally from the earlier building.

Commissioner Wolf asked Ms. Kuckro if she had any thoughts on the size of the building. Ms. Kuckro thought that aligning it with the other buildings made some sense since they were close in their set backs. In other situations where there was more of a drastic difference they had split the difference so it was staggered. She pointed out that before the fire there were five houses located there and in colonial times houses were built very closely.

Commissioner Ovian said that there were some that believe that additions should be built so that they could be torn off at some later date. Some times that might be the preferable thing to other things that could happen. However Ms. Larsen created in her application the attempt at a step down addition with the three window pattern across the front and the original roof window.

Ms. Kuckro said that the problem with a single story is that the roof blocks the 2nd floor windows. She said that she was almost inclined to do what Comstock Ferry did and move the entire building forward. She didn't think it preferable to design something with the intent that it could be removed; it should be designed to last and architecturally attractive enough to stay.

Commissioner Courchaine said that they needed to stop trying to impose 21st century ideas of space and site lines onto this and remember that before the fire there were once five other buildings.

There being no other business to come before the Commission, the public hearing was declared closed.

WETHERSFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
PUBLIC MEETING
MARCH 23, 2004

APPLICATION NO. 3175-04. Chi & Todd Murphy seeking to construct a second floor addition over existing 1st floor in the rear at 41 Woodland Street.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION

Commissioner Miglus commented that overall the massing worked reasonably well. Commissioner Wolf said that it was already an awkward wall and this addition wouldn't change it. Commissioner Ovian had been intrigued by

Commissioner Miglus' suggestion to tone down the change of sidings with the use of shakes, but would prefer not to add an additional siding to the mix.

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

1. The windows shall be simulated divided light to match the existing house.
2. There shall be two (2) windows installed on the rear of the dormer.

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

APPLICATION NO. 3177-04. Debra & Joseph Hammer seeking to replace the slate roof, gutters and storm/screen windows at 65 Broad Street.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION

There was considerable discussion about the precedent being set by allowing a slate roof to be removed and replaced by asphalt. Commissioner Ovian said that he had been one of the strongest backers for saving old roofs since he came onto the Commission but over the years he had been evolving to the point where he was willing to accept asphalt in areas where he might not have before. In part because they had not been requiring people to replace wood roofs with wood roofs. But he said that what influenced him most in this particular case was that there had been no discussion of ever replacing the roof with a slate look-alike product on the addition or anywhere else. He felt that by not suggesting it the Commission made the decision to not assert that kind of requirement and opened the door to the applicant to coming back to ask them.

Mr. Cook disagreed and said that it was only a few years ago that the Commission voted that any addition to this particular home with a slate roof should have a slate roof.

Commissioner Wolf also disagreed with Commissioner Ovian and said that using a different material on an addition had been accepted because it's an addition, but she said that they should not let the tail wag the dog. Just because the addition has it is in no way a reason to allow the main part of the house to have it.

Commissioner Ovian said that if we are going to assert that people need to replace slate for slate then they needed to be consistent.

Mr. Cook read in the "Property Owners Guide to the HDC" regarding roofing, that a Certificate of Appropriateness is not required if installation is made to a structure that was built after 1840 of wood, black or gray asphalt"

Commissioner Wolf asked Mr. Cook what his opinion of the condition of the roof was.

Mr. Cook said that in his opinion the roof could be repaired. He added that it may not be possible to just remove it and replace with asphalt because there may be no breathability or ridge vents or any other method in place to keep the asphalt from possibly baking.

Commissioner Miglus said that the house was designed to have slate roof and it has lasted approximately 100 years. The houses that we live in, all things being good will outlast us and outlast our children and our children's children. The present owners of 65 Broad Street had the privilege to move into a house whose roof lasted 100 years but the bad luck of buying it at the possible end of that roofs life. When we take on the responsibility of owning a house and maintaining a house, we shouldn't go with the cheapest possible outcome we should think of the future. This family is putting on a substantial addition to make life more comfortable for them but also for future generations and they should consider that with this decision.

Commissioner Ovian asked if any other Commissioners felt as he did that there is aesthetical dissatisfaction that the roof at the back doesn't match the roof in the front.

Commissioner Garrey agreed and said that the two materials bothered him; he would like to see it unified. He would lean toward the asphalt at this point in order to have it be one roofing material especially since the different materials reflect light so differently.

Commissioner Courchaine said that if they allowed this change to go forward it opens up other applications for owners of an older home with a wooden or slate roof to come forward for replacement.

Commissioner Hart said that when he bought his home built in 1920 he bought it because it was an older house and it was located in the older section of town. He researched it to find out about what was distinct about it and common to it. When he needs to update things he doesn't need to keep everything as it was in 1920 but neither is he going to make changes to it that are drastically different than how it was built. In this case he would opt for the same roof the house was designed for, for the same reason.

Commissioner Ovian said that now that about 60% of the roof has the asphalt shingles on it, if the Commissioners go through with what they are suggesting they would be requiring a tear down. He thought that they should research how many tear downs they had required and see whether they had been this egregious or not.

Commissioner Wolf totally disagreed and said it was not relevant .The fact that the applicant had started the work could not dictate what the Commission's decision would be or it would give people the incentive to start the work because it ties our hands.

Commissioner Courchaine pointed out that this applicant and the contractor has been involved with the project for some time and should have known to come to the Commission before making this decision. He agreed with Commissioner Wolf additionally he said that there was a difference between someone who starts a job and doesn't know they need to get approval and someone who has already gone through a list of jobs.

Mr. Cook said that while they circle around whether they should or shouldn't require a tear down he would read from the Historic District Handbook where it said that they encourage the preservation of existing slate roofs and only under unusual practical difficulty will their replacement with other materials be permitted.

Commissioner Ovian said that they also have a policy of allowing replications to the eye of the existing and that is another option for the homeowner, meaning imitation slate.

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

1. The gutters shall be 1/2 round with round downspouts to replicate the existing.
2. The slate roofing where removed shall be replaced.

Aye: Miglus, Wolf, Courchaine Nay: Ovian, Garrey Abst: Hart

APPLICATION NO. 3178-04. John Scheerer seeking to replace the windows, gutters, garage doors and trim on house at 16 Meggat Park.

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

1. The windows shall be wood aluminum clad simulated divided light with 2/2 horizontal divisions.
2. The bow window shall be replicated in aluminum clad wood.
3. No part of the window shall protrude past the trim including the screen channel.
4. The garage doors shall be 2 light 8 panel doors regardless of material.
5. The trim shall not be wrapped.

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

APPLICATION NO. 3179-04. James & Ann Marie Ritter seeking to install a fence at 17 Willard Street.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION

Commissioner Miglus felt the same way about allowing a vinyl fence in this situation as he had in the previous; when a plastic product comes in for approval that faithfully replicates the look of wood he would consider it. Commissioner Courchaine wanted to say that he had no objection to the fence in vinyl as he also felt the same way he had previously; with a location this far back from the street it would have minimal impact.

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

1. The fence shall be no higher than 4' at any point.
2. The fence shall be made of wood.
3. The fence shall be a scalloped picket.

Aye: Miglus, Garrey, Wolf, Ovian Nay: Courchaine Abst: Hart

APPLICATION NO. 3180-04. LaDolce Bakery LLC seeking to install a sign and outdoor seating at 227 Main Street.

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

Commissioner Miglus thought that the sign was very appropriate for the business and the building and will make a positive contribution to the District on the whole.

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

APPLICATION NO. 3181-04. Bobi Molchan & Wayne Holcombe seeking to construct a retaining wall in the front yard at 164 Hartford Avenue.

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

1. The wall shall be continued along the driveway and the steps in the front be made of the same material.

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

APPLICATION NO. 3170-04. Paula Larsen seeking to construct an addition to the front of the house at 271 Main Street.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION

The Commissioners discussed where the windows should be placed on the very visible northern elevation. It was decided that they would be placed in a configuration on either end which will mimic the placement on the house.

Commissioner Ovian still felt that the addition could be a third smaller and more staggered and that there was no hurry to act he wouldn't mind if allowed to sleep on it. He thought that this was too close to what they voted on at the last meeting. This prompted clarification regarding the design from the applicant.

The Public Meeting was closed at this point and the Public Hearing reopened to allow the following information to be presented:

Ms. Larsen revised the drawings. Mr. Cook thought that finalized drawings should be presented to him for review by the building department. Commissioner Miglus said that once it was reviewed by the building department there may be significant changes requested.

Commissioner Courchaine said that he was in favor of the proposition and as he stated at the previous meeting colonial buildings were built without any consideration or thought to site lines.

Ms. Bobi Molchan 164 Hartford Avenue stepped forward to say that she thought the applicant was bending over backwards to try to bring business into Old Wethersfield. She thought that if anyone wanted to preserve the building then they should have bought it and created a museum out of it. The applicant personally has every right to add an addition to her property and make a business in an area zoned for business.

The Public Hearing was closed and the Public Meeting reopened at this point.

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

1. The addition shall extend no farther than the Alderman property next door.
2. The windows from the existing facade will be reused on the addition.
3. The sign on the front of the building will be of carved of wood.
4. The existing front facade will be documented with photographs and drawings to allow a reconstruction in the future.
5. Two (2) of the existing windows shall be used on the north elevation.
6. The side doors shall be nine (9) light two (2) panel doors.

Aye: Garrey, Miglus, Courchaine Nay : Wolf, Ovian Abst : Hart

APPLICATION NO. 3173-04. Julie Sapia seeking to install replacement windows at 136 Main Street.

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

1. The windows shall be the new construction type.
2. The existing glass are shall be replicated.
3. Composite trim boards shall be used to replicate the existing trim.

Commissioner Miglus said that the windows proposed replicate what is there now quite reasonably and the impact on the District will be minimal. The trim will be a definite improvement to the District.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF: March 9, 2004

Upon Motion by Commissioner Garrey, seconded by Commissioner Wolf, and a poll of the Commission, it was unanimously voted that the above minutes BE APPROVED with the following change:

1. On page 1, Application No. 3173-04, 4th line, the word "shingled" should be changed to "clapboard" and in the 5th line, the word "clapboard" should be changed to "shingled".

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Anne Kuckro passed out detailed notes on the data survey and asked the Commissioners to please read it and then set a date when they could review it and comment on it.

Mr. Cook mentioned that there was a problem at 223 Broad Street. What was approved and what they are doing there are two separate things. He then described the stop work order issued on the project.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 11:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Jennifer Wolf
Clerk