WETHERSFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING
APRIL 27, 2004

The Wethersfield Historic District Commission held a public meeting on April 27, 2003 at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Conference Room of the Town Hall, 505 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield, Connecticut.

Members present:
Billye Logan, Chairperson
Douglas Ovian, Vice Chairperson
Jennifer Wolf, Clerk
Vacek Miglus
Robert A. Garrey
John Toomey
Eric Hart

Members absent:
Paul Courchaine

Also Present:
Robert Cook, Wethersfield Historic District Coordinator

Chairperson Logan called the hearing to order at 7:30 pm and Clerk Wolf, read the Legal Notice as it appeared in the Hartford Courant on April 16, 2004.

APPLICATION NO. 3188-04. Seth Paine seeking to modify the existing approved plan for the garage at 223 Broad Street.

Mr. Seth Paine 223 Broad Street and contractor David Paine appeared before the Commission explaining that they had previously received Commission approval and started building. Then they got a call from the Building Department informing them that the height exceeded the maximum allowed. They went to ZBA and got the variance for the height and made modifications to the plan. The misunderstanding occurred because, they said, they were not told to check with Mr. Cook first before the building department gave them the permit.

Mr. Cook explained that it was important to realize that the Commission did not issue the permits or grant variances necessary for work but only approval for appearance. If any changes were made to their approved plan then it was necessary to return to the Commission before any work began. Mr. Paine apologized for any misunderstanding but thought that since the Building Inspector had okayed it, he was good to go.

Commissioner Ovian said that they had approved a plan that was 2 feet higher; Mr. Paine confirmed this and added that it was also 2 feet higher than zoning permitted.

Mr. Paine said that he was seeking either approval for the modified saltbox with a maximum height of 19' 6" or the new plan of a 17' 6" height gable roofed building. The footprint and everything else is the same as the previous plan except for the roofline, height, and the side window and door. He explained that there was a ribbon line around the building which everyone had thought that was the height of the door, but it is not.

Commissioner Miglus asked what the pitch of the roof as it is built right now. Mr. Paine answered that it was about 5 3/4 and the house is about 7/12.

Commissioner Logan mentioned that the Building Department had told her that the applicant had not yet signed off on the papers for the house and they needed to before they could start anything. Mr. Paine said that the Building Department needed a plot plan and he was aware of that and had not started anything.

Clerk Wolf read a letter from neighbor Tom Landers 205 Broad Street which said that although he felt that the proposed garage was a bit large for the neighborhood, he believed that the long term plans for the property would improve the look of the neighborhood. He believed there were 2 options for the garage; either a 20' high saltbox style that would need a variance for the height, or a modified design of the current partially built garage with an 18' peak and box-design which is within zoning guidelines. He would prefer that it be built within Town guidelines however with a variance for a 20' height. He suggested that the Commission should approve a design most appropriate to the neighborhood and least intrusive to the skyline like the original saltbox design.

Mr. John Jezowski 15 Robbinswood a neighbor due west of the property stepped forward to speak and said that his big concern was over the way the process had been disrupted. He said that he had not been informed of the application prior to being notified about the ZBA hearing, nor had any of the neighbors and wanted to know why they hadn't.

Commissioner Wolf pointed out that Mr. Jezowski's property as well as the neighbor on the other side was on the list of abutters to be notified and yet had not been.

Mr. Cook explained that the letters had been sent out, and when it had been brought to his attention that there were neighbors who had not received notice he had looked into it. It was unclear why the letters had not been received.

Mr. Jezowski suggested that perhaps in addition to letters a phone call could be made to at least one neighbor on the list as a follow-up. Mr. Cook said that could be taken under consideration.

Mr. Jezowski wanted to say that he applauded the applicants efforts to upgrade the property, but wished there was more coordination between the different Town committees and commissions in order to inform the public.

Chairperson Logan explained that this type of confusion was the reason they announced before every public hearing that Commission approval did not preclude any need for building permits or zoning approvals. The Building Department needed to approve and evaluate a design before any work could begin. If that process had been followed then this particular problem would have been avoided.

Mr. Jezowski said that the applicant was granted a variance and that was fine with him, his only preference would be that they follow code and the spirit of Old Wethersfield.

Commissioner Ovian said that the lack of notice had been a concern to the Commission, and they had immediately informed Mr. Cook because it was especially suspicious that no one had received their notice. He added that this had never happened in the 4-5 years he had been on the Commission.

Mr. Cook added that because of the magnitude of the project they had gone beyond the usual notification of abutters within 60' and increased it to 240', a factor of 4X. In addition there is the public notice listed in the newspaper, and then of course neighbor to neighbor word of mouth. There was no secrecy involved here, just that for whatever reason, the letters had not been received and it would be investigated further.

Commissioner Ovian asked if Mr. Jezowski shared Mr. Lander's preference for a saltbox design. Mr. Jezowski said that he preferred to stick to the spirit of the neighborhood and would purposely make no comment on his preference.

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. 3189-04. Judith Ann Keane seeking to construct two additions, window changes and partial porch enclosure at 126 Broad Street.

Ms. Judith Keane 126 Broad Street and her designer Mr. Brian Roberts appeared before the Commission. They submitted a plot plan showing where the proposed additions would be located as well as photographs of the home as it exists. One addition would be located on the south side of the house but be even with the porch, the second addition would go on the south east corner behind the first addition. The roof of the addition would be visible behind the porch roof. All trim, siding, overhangs, roofing, metal gutters and window configuration of 6/6 or 6/9 would match the

existing. The windows would be true divided light.

Commissioner Ovian noted that the sightline was pretty narrow but the house to the south was close.

Commissioner Miglus asked what the existing roofing material was, and whether it was metal underneath. Ms. Keane said that it was tar and she thought it was metal underneath.

Commissioner Miglus asked if the double hung windows would be in a well behind the sink. He was told by the applicant that there are double hung windows there now and the new ones would be too. She hoped the newer windows would be easier to open than her existing windows.

Ms. Keane said that the because of their location all the way to the floor and the inconvenience of operation the new windows on the second floor would have to be awning style. The new ones would be much easier to operate. She hoped to capture as much solar heat with the new window configurations as possible.

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. 3190-04. Michael T. Beaulieu seeking to install fences at the rear and side of the property at 396 Main Street.

Ms. Eileen Beaulieu 396 Main Street appeared before the Commission and told them that she had received approval for a fence a couple of years ago, but the approval had expired and she was now seeking to reactivate it. She explained that they wished to install a wooden 6' high fence with lattice top on the north side of the property starting at the rear corner, and a 4' high fence on the east and south side to the driveway.

Ms. Eileen Lasky 7 Howard Avenue stepped forward to see the fence and the location since she lived next door. She was concerned that she might not be able to see up the street when backing out of her driveway and said that the hedge on her property had been cut lower for that reason. Commissioner Logan pointed out that the 6' fence would be only in the rear on the property, while the 4' fence would run along Howard Avenue and her driveway.

Ms. Lasky asked if it would be inset 10'. No one was sure of the Town regulations regarding the placement.

Ms. Beaulieu said that although they were not sure how far out the picket fence would come they were aware of the visibility problem and would be sensitive to that in the placement of the fence.

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. 3191-04. Bob & Nora Uricchio seeking to construct a two-story addition at 81 Spring Street.

Ms. Nora Uricchio 81 Spring Street appeared before the Commission with her contractor Tim Gothers to explain that they wished to build an addition. A previous addition had added front dormers to the cape style home, this addition would square out the front of the house to make 2 complete stories from the existing 1 1/2. The rear part of the addition would add a second level to the existing single story. In front of the house there would be a porch entrance running along 1/2 the front of the house, supported by 3-4 columns and stairs off to the side and privacy lattice underneath. The trim and siding would match the existing house and the decking for the porch/deck would be composite material. The front door would be wooden with a storm door. The existing first floor windows are wood with 8/1 and 6/6 true divided lights while the upstairs windows are simulated divided light with muntins applied to the inside. They did not want to introduce a third type of window so for the new construction they hoped to match all of the upstairs windows with 8/1 simulated divided light.

Ms. Uricchio said that she thought that the new style seemed to match the style of the house better.

Mr. Gothers showed the Commissioners a photograph he had taken showing a sample corner of the window type he

proposed with muntins sandwiched between the glass, next to the upstairs windows which have the muntins applied to the interior. He indicated that there was no visible difference from the outside view of these windows.

Commissioner Ovian commented that if they were not interested in introducing a third type of window they could certainly choose to use the snap-in style for the new windows. The homeowner preferred to get away from that style for ease of maintenance.

Commissioner Miglus asked how far back the addition would be from the original porch and was told it would go back 4'. He thought that from an architectural point of view the overhang was relatively large without a lot of mass behind it. Mr. Gothers realized that the drawings were missing some elements and added a roof over the decking area and a column for support.

There was a general discussion and suggestions about what might work more practically and aesthetically for the design including a roof with a porch deck to break up the long front facade and a more symmetrical look. Chairperson Logan reminded the applicant that any changes should be discussed with Mr. Cook first.

Commissioner Miglus pointed out that there were 7 wooden windows with true divided light visible from the public way on the first floor but only 4 windows on the second floor with the snap-in grills yet they were suggesting that the new windows should take precedence over the 7.

Commissioner Logan asked if the applicant had looked into wooden simulated divided light windows when they had built the dormers or for the addition. She was told that they had not; the dormers windows were clad with snap-in interior muntins.

Commissioner Miglus suggested a full glass storm door to show off the nice front door.

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. 3192-04. Neill Walsh seeking to install iron railings on front steps at 49 Woodland Street.

Mr. Neill Walsh 49 Woodland Street appeared before the Commission and showed them samples of the square 1 1/2" iron vertical pieces he proposed for the 2 free standing railings on his front steps. Instead of the traditional ornamental swirls on the railings he was proposing a cast metal collar element to break up the vertical railings. He showed 2 styles of caps one a colonial looking ball cap which his wife preferred and another of a more flat but peaked style which he preferred.

Commissioner Miglus asked if the applicant had considered a more craftsman-style fence to match the style of his home more. The applicant had 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. 3193-04. Vincent Carbone seeking to install a fence at 25 Garden Street.

Mr. Cook said that the applicant could not attend the meeting tonight but since the information was all here had chosen to go ahead with the hearing tonight.

Clerk Wolf read a letter from the applicant apologizing for being unable to attend tonight's meeting and since they had not hired a contractor yet there was no one else who could attend on their behalf. He explained that there was an existing stockade fence around their pool area and they wished to replace it in kind and push it deeper into the lot behind the pool area. Their neighbor Philip Pasternak 28 Chesterfield Road had been consulted and had no objections.

Mr. Cook said that he had received a call from the neighbor on the other side who had concerns about the front fence because it was apparently on his property, but that it didn't apply to this application.

Commissioner Ovian asked if this property was adjacent to the property whose fence he had been concerned about. Mr. Cook said it was and that that fence was just a replacement for one that had been torn down during construction.

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.

Lawrence and Sara Gluckman 62 Center Street appeared before the Commission.

Clerk Wolf read a letter (on file - dated April 24, 2004) from the applicants which stated that they wished to use Weathershield windows on the planned addition. They would be filing another application for replacement windows for the rest of the house at another date. The double hung windows would all be 6/1 low-e argon gas with aluminum exterior. The casement windows would be of like material and have appropriate sized mullions. The kitchen window over the sink would have 1 clear fixed Paine in the center with 2 operating sides and side mullions. The back opening would be double opening French doors of same material and sized mullions.

Commissioner Ovian asked if the low-e argon gas created a tint to the windows, he thought that the windows in front appeared to be tinted. The applicants said that it did not and the front windows were not tinted either.

Commissioner Miglus said that when the grillwork was on the inside of the windows a tint would be noticeable if present because it appeared as a different color than the sash, but in this case since the grillwork was on the outside a tint wouldn't be noticed even if there was one.

Commissioner Logan said that she had been under the impression that there would be a sample of the window presented tonight.

Ms. Gluckman said that she had not been aware that it would be necessary.

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. 3183-04. Catherine A. Lyons seeking to replace the garage door and install central air conditioning at 52 Garden Street.

Commissioner Miglus said that the application had been Tabled because he wanted to produce a photograph showing what the door would actually look like on the garage. He showed the Commissioners a photograph of the garage with the proposed door style he had prepared on his laptop.

Mr. Cook was unconvinced that the weight of the door could be supported without some sort of center support in the garage. The Commissioners agreed that that was a matter for the Building Department.

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

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

WETHERSFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
PUBLIC MEETING
APRIL 27, 2004

APPLICATION NO. 3188-04. Seth Paine seeking to modify the existing approved plan for the garage at 223 Broad Street.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION

Commissioner Ovian was concerned about the massing comments that had been made in Mr. Landers letter. He thought that the concerns about massing might overweigh other concerns. But he also thought that the pitch of the existing structure was relatively the same as the house and that it would not be especially jarring to the neighborhood as another roofline would be. He did not think that he would have approved this application initially if he had realized that it would be taller than the existing house, and they had in fact approved a structure 3' taller than the one proposed tonight. Perhaps if a model had been supplied it might have been clearer.

Commissioner Miglus pointed out that what effected massing was the ultimate size of the building but also how the finished project was perceived. He said that the side view of the barn with the 5 3/4 roof pitch would expose more wall area than the side view of the saltbox.

Commissioner Garrey felt that the massing concern was more for the rear of the building because of the density of buildings, and that most of the view of the building would be from the side. He felt that a saltbox design was favorable because of the lower roof in the rear area.

Mr. Cook said that he had heard comments from the public and the Commission on the fact that public hadn't received notice and if the Commission chose to Table this application then he would personally make sure that everyone who should receive notice was informed. Chairperson Logan thought that the neighbors wanted the issue settled and construction completed at this point.

Commissioner Miglus was concerned that with the shallow pitch design it would appear like an oversized utility building and not a substantial barn.

Chairperson Logan had gotten the original drawing from the Building Department because she felt it important to compare it to the proposed modifications since she had not realized the Commission had approved something that required a variance. But the Commissioners pointed out that the need for a variance was not something the Commission was concerned with.

Commissioner Ovian said that since a partial tear down would probably be necessary he wondered why they couldn't just approve a saltbox that was 18' high. Commissioner Miglus pointed out that an 18' high salt box would require a smaller footprint and would lower the rear height so as to be barely usable.

Commissioner Ovian thought that although the Afforismo barn was a full 2 story building the fact that the roof pitch was similar to the main house illustrated how this barn might work as long as the pitch was similar to the house.

Commissioner Garrey felt it was not comparable because the other barn was on an open corner lot and not surrounded by other buildings, so it did not present the massing issues this proposed structure did.

Commissioner Miglus said that the pitch that was approved was a relatively steep one, and he felt that pitch had a huge impact as to whether the building would be read as an important building or a not important building. He said that a shallow pitched roof as a rule tended to read as a more modern look. He thought it important to remember that the Commission approved what was originally proposed.

Commissioner Logan said that she had a problem with the size of the building and all of the feedback she had heard was negative concerning the largeness of it. She would not feel comfortable approving what was there now.

Commissioner Hart said that the Commission had previously come up with and approved a Certificate of Appropriateness and he thought that they should go along with what had been approved and agree to the minor change of the window.

The Commissioners wondered if the proposed cupola was included in the maximum height allowed.

Upon motion by Commissioner Ovian, seconded by Commissioner Garrey and a poll of the Commission it was

motioned to APPROVE the structure as built with an additional window. The motion failed to be carry.

Upon motion by Commissioner Miglus, seconded by Commissioner Garrey and a poll of the Commission it was voted to APPROVE the roofline as originally submitted with a 12/12 front pitch and 9/12 rear pitch with the addition of window and double door on the south side as drawn.

Aye: Miglus, Garrey, Ovian, Logan, Wolf Abst: Hart, Toomey

APPLICATION NO. 3189-04. Judith Ann Keane seeking to construct two additions, window changes and partial porch enclosure at 126 Broad Street.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION

Commissioner Miglus wanted to note that the south elevation of the roof was not shown on the drawings and they had been told that it would not be the same pitch as the porch roof. He wanted the Commission to be aware that a piece of the addition roof would show behind the porch.

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

Aye: Garrey, Wolf, Logan, Miglus, Ovian Abst: Hart, Toomey

APPLICATION NO. 3190-04. Michael T. Beaulieu seeking to install fences at the rear and side of the property at 396 Main Street.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION

The Commissioners discussed the need for the applicant to communicate with the Building Department about the placement of the front fence in order to avoid interference with the site lines along Howard Avenue. Commissioner Toomey read the minutes from the original hearing on the fence which proposed that a 6' picket fence would go along the perimeter of the property and then transition to 4' at the forward section. The stipulations going along with the approval concerned other aspects of the application but not the fence.

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

1. A 6' high lattice top wooden fence shall start at the rear of the house and continue to the rear property line.
2. A 4' high wooden fence shall be located on the east side and continue along the south side of the property.
3. The applicant must obtain Building Department approval for the placement of the fence along the neighbor's driveway.
4. The fence shall return from Howard Avenue to the garage.

Aye: Miglus, Garrey, Wolf, Ovian, Logan Abst: Hart, Toomey

APPLICATION NO. 3191-04. Bob & Nora Uricchio seeking to construct a two-story addition at 81 Spring Street.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION

The Commissioners were concerned that by approving the windows that had been proposed they would be allowing the windows of the addition to set the precedent for the house.

Commissioner Ovian said that he had a hard time approving the current design without some sort of symmetry. Commissioner Garrey thought that the addition itself made it asymmetrical.

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

1. The windows shall be wood clad simulated divided light windows with divisions as shown.

Aye: Miglus, Garrey, Logan, Wolf, Ovian Abst: Toomey, Hart

APPLICATION NO. 3192-04. Neill Walsh seeking to install iron railings on front steps at 49 Woodland Street.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION

Commissioner Miglus felt that if the railing was reflecting the style of the house then the selection of the cap style would be more important. But since it was not, he felt that the decision should be left up to the homeowner.

Commissioner Logan stated her preference for the ball cap style.

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

Aye: Miglus, Wolf, Garrey, Toomey, Hart Abst: Logan, Ovian

APPLICATION NO. 3193-04. Vincent Carbone seeking to install a fence at 25 Garden Street.

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

Aye: Wolf, Garrey, Miglus, Logan, Ovian Abst: Toomey, Hart

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

INFORMAL DISCUSSION

Commissioner Ovian said that he would vote for the application because it was a nice addition and the simulated divided light windows wouldn't harm the integrity of the Hubbard house because of their location being largely not visible from Center Street.

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

1. The applicant's letter dated 4/26/04 shall be incorporated.
2. If lattice shall be used to enclose bottom of deck it shall be boxed and wooden.
3. here shall be no railing on the deck.

Aye: Miglus, Wolf, Ovian, Garrey, Logan Abst: Hart, Toomey

APPLICATION NO. 3183-04. Catherine A. Lyons seeking to replace the garage door and install central air conditioning at 52 Garden Street.

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

Commissioner Ovian agreed that the door proposed was a worthwhile compromise to preserve the look of carriage doors on the property.

Aye: Miglus, Wolf, Ovian, Garrey, Logan Abst: Hart, Toomey

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF: April 13, 2004

Upon Motion by Commissioner Ovian, seconded by Commissioner Hart, and a poll of the Commission, it was voted that the above minutes BE APPROVED as submitted.

OTHER BUSINESS

Chairperson Logan said that she had met with Dan Denolo, representing Northeast Utilities, and found out that meter boxes are very involved because there are new state requirements and all the boxes are read by a drive by meter reader. She said that they can usually be put on the side although sometimes they can't. Fred Valente the electrical inspector for the Town is willing to go out and tell the electrician where to put the box, because the inspection is usually done after the installation and it would be too late then. She said that she took Mr. Denolo out to see some examples of the worst installations and he was appalled.

There was a discussion about moving the boxes and it was agreed that every foot farther is more expensive and the homeowners don't want to have to move gas lines and all sorts of other problems.

Chairperson Logan said that the boxes can be painted and there can be a cover over it as long as the meter can still be read.

Commissioner Ovian felt that if they could regulate a cupola on a building then they should be able to regulate an electrical box. Commissioner Logan pointed out that the cupola was an optional object while the electrical box was not.

Commissioner Miglus told the Commission that he had met with the Hammers and in the course of a lengthy conversation had shared the information he had gathered concerning alternative roofing materials for their slate roof. He had found that the artificial slate product cost $280 per square of product, and that real slate would cost between the $270 and $1400 per square. He had spoken with a representative at the Restoration Convention who told him that run of the mill slate would cost between $1200 and $1500 installed per square. By comparison architectural shingles would cost about $50 per square, or $250 installed. It was his opinion that Ms. Hammer wanted architectural shingles and did not care for any of the other options. In short he found that there was no product out there that would adequately replicate their roof in the same cost manner as the architectural asphalt shingles they had proposed. He told the Hammers that he would share the information with the Commissioners and report back to them if there was any consensus as to which way the Commissioners were leaning.

The Commissioners discussed the information and the fact the Hammers were planning to file an appeal to the denial.

Mr. Cook said that the Garden Street fence that Commissioner Ovian had been concerned about was a pre-existing fence.

Commissioner Ovian said that there were multiple sections of fence between the properties but that there was one section which was facing the wrong side out and that his concern was in people driving by seeing that section of fence which was facing sunny-side in and thinking that it was okay to do that to their fences since it was allowed there.

Mr. Cook said that he would check into the ownership of the fence.

Mr. Cook mentioned that there was a vinyl fence at 46 Kenwood Street without an application for a fence at all. Commissioner Logan said that there was also a split rail fence on Kenwood Street. Mr. Cook agreed to write a letter to the homeowner asking them to file an application.

Mr. Cook told the Commission that 30 Center Street wanted to build a 900 sq. ft. addition.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 11:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Jennifer Wolf
Clerk