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WETHERSFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING
MAY 25, 2004

The Wethersfield Historic District Commission held a public meeting on May 25, 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 Ovia, Vice Chairperson
Jennifer Wolf, Clerk
Vacek Miglus
Robert A. Garrey
Eric Hart
John Toomey

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 May 14, 2004.

APPLICATION NO. 3200-04. Robert Worthington seeking to install siding and windows at 39 Kenwood Road.

Mr. Robert Worthington 39 Kenwood Road appeared before the Commission with contractor Mr. Herbert Symmes requesting permission to reside his cedar shingle sided home with an imitation-cedar product made from vinyl because he wanted a more up to date product. The windows would be replaced with insulated double hung windows.

Mr. Symmes described the windows as wooden vinyl clad Harvey Majesty 1/1 double hung windows.

Commissioner Miglus asked if they had a manufacture cut sheet to supply for the window selection. He was specifically interested in the profile of the window, and wondered if the glass would be set back from the outside edge of the sashes. Mr. Symmes said that it would be recessed a bit. He had wanted to bring in a sample window but had not had time to grab a sample to bring in.

Commissioner Miglus asked if all of the windows would be replaced. Mr. Worthington explained that the house was in 2 parts. There was the main part, which was the original house and then there was a family room and garage that had been added on. He proposed replacing only the original windows.

Commissioner Ovia asked if the fixed pane picture window was still there and would it be replaced. Mr. Worthington said that it was there and it would be replaced. Mr. Symmes said the replacement would be custom made to fit.

Commissioner Ovia asked what color the trim would be and was told that it would be white.

Commissioner Logan asked for information about the siding. Mr. Symmes said that it would be a vinyl product made to replicate the look of cedar shakes and would be Heritage Cream in color.

Mr. Cook wanted to make note that the original application had been for vinyl clapboard, the applicant had now advanced to this product.

Commissioner Ovian asked if there was anything wrong with the current siding besides the paint failure. Mr. Worthington explained that they had tried to paint the house themselves once and there were a few areas where the shakes were damaged with indentations from trying to scrape the paint off of them. There were also cracks in some places. They had last painted about 10 years ago and it was chipping off.

Mr. Symmes said that one of the reasons for the residing was to eliminate having to paint it again. Commissioner Ovian thought that the siding would be quite a bit more expensive than painting.

Mr. Symmes pointed out that the siding would cover more than a single paint job. Commissioner Ovian agreed but thought it would be wise to compare how many painting jobs would equal the cost of the vinyl, to decide if it would be worth it.

Commissioner Logan asked how they would treat the overhang. Mr. Symmes said that they would use ventilated soffits with holes in it.

Commissioner Hart asked how the vinyl would be joined at the corners. Mr. Symmes explained that there were special inside and outside corner pieces that interlocked, so no corner boards were necessary. The vinyl would have the same 7" exposure and match almost exactly what was currently on the house now.

Commissioner Garrey asked what about the window and door trim. Mr. Symmes said that all the trim would be wrapped with metal with the J-channel built into that, so that none would be exposed.

Commissioner Miglus pointed out that the home currently had brick mold trim around the windows and wanted to know if they would be putting square trim there to bending to approximate the brick mold. Mr. Symmes said that they would probably be bending to try to square it off, because the brick mold would be tough to do. The trim around the windows would be 2 1/2" with the J-channel behind it 3/4". They would boxing in the sills as well with metal. Mr. Symmes said that another option would be PVC coated metal, to avoid the chalky look that the metal can get.

Commissioner Miglus suggested that the aluminum could also be painted.

Commissioner Ovian asked if there were shutters on the house right now. Mr. Symmes said that there were two wooden shutters currently on the house and they could be reset.

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. 3201-04. Scott Guay seeking to install a shed in the rear yard at 25 Wilcox Street.

Mr. Scott Guay 25 Wilcox Street appeared before the Commission and submitted a picture of the wooden 8' X 12" shed he proposed to build and install in the rear corner behind his home. His wood sided shed would have no window, and would be painted gray to match the house color, with trim and roofing also to match. The door would have cross pieces painted in blue and would face his home.

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. 3202-04. Chris Lyons seeking to move existing fence and install a gate across driveway at 21 Woodland Street.

Mr. Chris Lyons 21 Woodland Street appeared before the Commission explaining that his fence had been approved in July 2001, and then amended in August 2001. He proposed to take the existing fence of approximately 24' and move it 10' over, and add 2 5' sections for a service gate across the driveway. This alteration would add approximately 240 sq. ft. of useable space for him. He submitted the Walpole Woodworking catalogue to show the type of picket fence he had and the type of gate he was proposing. He also submitted a plan which showed the original fence plans, and the different materials for it that had been proposed at one time. The wooden fence and gate they had settled on would be

left natural and they would install plantings along the exterior portions.

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. 3203-04. Jill & Donald Swoverland seeking to construct an addition and deck and install an above ground pool at 29 Belmont Street.

Mr. Donald Swoverland and wife Jill of 29 Belmont Street appeared before the Commission and submitted a photograph of the neighbor's pool, indicating that the pool they were seeking approval to install would be nearly identical. They were also proposing to build an addition and a deck out to the pool.

Commissioner Logan asked if their yard was fenced. Mr. Swoverland said that there was a 4' picket fence around the perimeter which they had received approval for 3 years ago but they would change it to stockade if necessary for the pool.

Commissioner Miglus asked what the height of the pool would be. Mr. Swoverland said that they would be evening out the grade and the pool would be 52' from the grade. The addition would match the house in siding with exposed rafter ends like the house. The deck would be at two levels. The first level would come off the back of the addition at 38" off grade, with a gate to lock before the second level which would raise about 2 steps to come to the height of the pool at 52".

Commissioner Hart asked what the deck railings would look like. Mr. Swoverland said that he had not thought about that yet but he was open to suggestions.

Commissioner Garrey asked if the addition was inset from the west side of the house. Mr. Swoverland said that it would not be the full width of the house in order to accommodate the 12' X 16' deck. The upper roof would also be set in 2' to keep it symmetrical.

Commissioner Logan asked if there was a stepped in back porch on the house now and if so would he be following that line. Mr. Swoverland said that there was and he would take it down to build the addition.

Commissioner Ovian asked if the addition came out father than the side of the house, and he was told that he did not.

Commissioner Ovian said that it appeared that the addition shared the same side wall with the house from the drawings. Mr. Swoverland said he had drawn it flush but he could be build it with a bump out. There was an overhang that came out 2' past the sidewall.

Commissioner Miglus suggested that a cleaner way of constructing the addition might be to inset the entire addition, by the width of the entire overhang and run the shed roof into the edge of the house. That would solve several problems. There wouldn't be an awkward lump of overhang, the wall wouldn't have to be woven in, and it would give a solid place to attach the roof. He asked if the addition would be built on piers and if so how the open area underneath would be finished.

Mr. Swoverland said that the siding starts on the house 38" up because of the grade. He thought it would be easier to follow the foundation line and then cover the space with lattice like one would do with a deck.

Commissioner Miglus pointed out that the addition would look like a permanent and solid part of the house, while the lattice would make it look like it was hanging off of the house.

Mr. Swoverland suggested that he could false frame it and side it down. Commissioner Miglus added that it could also be stuccoed to match the foundation.

Commissioner Miglus asked what sort of deck railings would be used and also whether or not he would use a toe kick. Mr. Swoverland said that he thought the typical 1 1/2" square beveled top and bottom, and had not planned to use a toe

kick.

Commissioner Miglus said that the toe kick served two purposes. It gave the deck a more traditional look and also made clean up a lot easier. It kept the broom or shovel from getting hung up on all those balustrades. He pointed out that when one is standing at the railing there was a place for your toes to go right under the railing which enabled one to belly right up to it.

Commissioner Miglus mentioned that the windows that had been put in needed an additional application. Mr. Swoverland hadn't realized that he needed Commissioner approval for a replacement.

Commissioner Miglus said that if they weren't like for like they needed Commission approval.

The Commissioners discussed that there was a stockade fence with lattice top on part of the property but the 48" high open picket fence on the sides would not do an effective job of screening the 52" high pool.

APPLICATION NO. 3204-04. Kathleen Landers seeking to install an air conditioner unit on the side of the house at 58 Main Street.

Ms. Kathleen Landers and husband Paul Landers 58 Main Street appeared before the Commission requesting permission to install an air conditioning unit on the side of their home. The unit would be 25" high and 24 1/4" X 24 1/4" wide and that it would be placed on a fiberglass pad. Photographs of the side of the house showing where they intended to put it were shown to the Commissioners. Ornamental grass which grew to a height of 6' would surround it. The applicants noted that although the grass was seasonal it was still there in the winter only brown.

Commissioner Miglus asked if there was any chance of putting the unit in back. Then it couldn't be seen from the street and the neighbors on the side wouldn't have to hear it as much. Ms. Landers said that she was worried that by putting it in the back yard her dogs would urinate on it. She would prefer not to put it in the back.

Commissioner Ovia said that some units are quieter than others. He added that for units placed on the side in closely spaced neighborhoods, when they were quieter they were easier to approve. He also mentioned that his neighbor had a unit on the side that faced their house and it was very quiet. It was also surrounded by ornamental grasses and it worked for screening but in the dead of winter the grasses do fall over. He said that it was a choice of either having a permanent super structure around it in a tight little area, or screening it by something that comes and goes.

Mr. Landers said that it was right outside their bedroom window so it had better be quiet.

Commissioner Logan said that if their contractor knows it is going outside their bedroom then it probably is a quieter unit, or they will be replacing it right away.

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. 3205-04. Andrew Bykowski seeking to remove a shed/porch structure at 16 Fernwood Street.

Mr. Andrew Bykowski 16 Fernwood Street appeared before the Commission and explained that there was a front porch structure on the front of his house that was not part of the original house. The original front door was behind the structure which butted up to the two front windows. He proposed to take down the structure, and submitted a sketch showing the new front wall which would then have two double hung windows with shutters on them. The house is sided in aluminum; he hoped to be able to match it.

Mr. Cook said that this project would be completed in two phases. Tonight's application concerned the first phase, the demolition of the front structure.

Commissioner Ovia asked if the windows were the original windows. Mr. Bykowski answered that they seemed to be.

Commissioner Garrey asked if he was proposing to replace all the windows. Mr. Bykowski answered that he would only be changing the two front windows, as the other windows on the house seemed to have been done already.

Commissioner Ovian asked if the applicant intended to replace all the windows at some point because if he was thinking of replacing them then he might want to think of working toward a consistent division pattern on the lights when he chose the new front windows.

Mr. Cook pointed out that phase one was just to remove the structure.

Commissioner Miglus agreed however he thought it was important for the Commission to know what the house would look like when the project was done. By simply removing the structure it would reveal two windows and a door.

Mr. Cook was concerned about what siding would be available to cover the wall once it was opened up. Commissioner Miglus said that aluminum was still available, and if the old siding was faded it could all be painted or the new siding painted to match the old.

It was noted that the application was just to remove the structure, and a new application would have to be filed before any other change could be made to the house, because public notice had not been served.

Clerk Wolf read three separate letters from neighbors Sebastian Bazzano 11 Fernwood Street, Richard & Betty Violette 14 Fernwood Street, and John & Marybeth Pascone 13 Fernwood Street in support 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. 3198-04. John C. Peleponuk seeking to construct an addition, repair front porch and stairs, and install a fence in the rear at 30 Center Street.

Mr. John Peleponuk and wife Jennifer 30 Center Street appeared before the Commission and submitted revised drawings for their house addition, which they had just received that afternoon from their designer. They confessed that they did not care for the new plans. However they also submitted a rendering which showed essentially the same plan that was submitted at the previous meeting with the addition of an eyebrow window/dormer in the front roof to break up the "ski slope" appearance of the large roof section. They preferred this option to the new plans.

Commissioner Ovian showed an older side picture of the home in which the rear yard could clearly be seen through the side porch. The addition would then block that view.

Ms. Peleponuk pointed out that there are hemlocks that tower over the house that now block the view without the addition.

There was also a general concern for where storm water would go with the new design.

Commissioner Wolf asked if the applicant would like to continue to play with the plans and let them Table the application for now.

Ms. Peleponuk said that in order to save the interior elements they had not been able to come up with any other design for the addition. They did like the eyebrow in the front but to do a true dormer, it would have to be raised above the existing elevation of the house.

Commissioner Ovian asked if they had considered moving the ridgeline of the house over. There was a general discussion on how it might work but Ms. Peleponuk said that although it seemed to make sense, there was a reason that they had not been able to do it although she couldn't remember right now what it was.

Mr. Cook suggested that it might be useful if he sat down with the applicant and their designer so that everyone's concerns could be addressed.

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. 3199-04. Luis Ocasio seeking to construct a single family house at 226 Broad Street.

Mr. Louis Ocasio 36 Somerset Street and architect Dante Boffi appeared before the Commission. Mr. Ocasio said that they had looked at the site plan and the footprint and the side yard had grown. They realized that they had not flagged the site properly when the Commissioners had made their site visit, when corrected the side yard grew from 12' to 20'.

Mr. Boffi said that there had been several pertinent issues that had come up at the previous meeting, he had discussed them with the applicant and they had tried to address all of those issues. The Commissioners had thought the front windows were too horizontal, and so they had elongated them. They decreased the 3 dormers over the garage to 2 and centered them over the garage doors. They would be leaving as many trees as possible on the site so that between the bend in the street along the Green, the trees and the way the carriage house style garage was angled it would not be the prominent feature of the house.

Mr. Cook asked how many square feet the house was. Mr. Boffi said that it was approximately 3000 square feet of total living space including the area between the garage and the house. The garage footprint was 782 square feet.

Commissioner Ovian asked where the access to Broad Street and if it was before or after the stop sign. He was told that it would be on the main part of Broad Street and not the side part.

Mr. Dante said another major concern to the Commission had been the vinyl siding that had been proposed. They had discussed this concern and their main concern with using cedar had been with the maintenance and the quality control of the siding. He proposed using a cementitious clapboard product that would take paint very well and hold it twice as long as wood. He said that there had also been concern about the windows. The windows they had proposed were a solid wood window with simulated divided light, with muntins applied permanently to the exterior and interior.

Commissioner Logan asked to digress a bit and wanted to know the dimensions of the lot. Mr. Ocasio showed the lot on the plot plan and traced the dimensions. The longest side was approximately 1000 feet while the forward sections of the odd shaped lot were considerably shorter.

Commissioner Logan noted that there was considerable room on the lot but that the cramped location they had selected for the home was the only buildable section due to the wetlands and the 30 year floodplain line.

Commissioner Ovian wondered if the area above his lot and the north of the Lombruni residence was buildable. Mr. Ocasio said that he didn't know if any of the land beyond it was buildable as only the front had been topographically surveyed because of the wetlands beyond. He thought because of the wetlands it was really a mute point.

Commissioner Ovian said that it had been a mute point until they realized that a building had been approved right next door to the north. He thought it raised the possibility that Mr. Ocasio's lot was buildable to a point, unbuildable for a point then buildable again.

Mr. Boffi said that the front door would be a six panel wood door. The roofing would be an architectural asphalt shingle in the weathered wood color although they were open to suggestions for color. It was noted that it was a pre-approved color. For the garage door they submitted several suggestions. The drawings showed an arch topped door and it was explained that the manufacture would custom make any style. Mr. Ocasio preferred it in a wood shade to match the front door.

Mr. Boffi said that at the previous meeting there had been some suggestion as to how they could hide the gutters with the use of molding. They proposed to join fascia dental molding under k-series gutters to create a continuous seamless profile around the building and 6" down spouts which would be hidden behind the corner boards. The simple gable roof allowed for a clean look. There would be exterior copper fixture lantern style lights flanking the side entry, the garage doors and on either side of the front door.

Commissioner Miglus asked how important the cupola was to the design. Mr. Boffi said that the garage is a modern necessity, and the cupola stands to accentuate that necessity. He thought that it also tended to break up the roofline.

Mr. Ocasio said that he had always liked the look of the cupola, and he preferred it for personal reasons.

Commissioner Miglus said that they were building a home with rather traditional features but without a pair of side chimneys and only a side chimney. The cupola on the garage gives prominence to the garage instead of the main house.

Mr. Boffi said that historically a carriage house would have a cupola for ventilation. In this situation with the tree coverage, you won't really see the garage but when you turn the corner of the driveway the carriage house will meet you on the approach. He said that as far as the chimney went, there was no where else a chimney would work because of the interior elements of the house.

Commissioner Ovian said that he didn't have a problem with the copula but he did have a problem with the closeness of the garage to the red house. He thought that because of the way the lots had been divided that it did not leave any kind of a back yard for the red house and thought that if one were to imagine a squared off area as the area for the back yard of the red house that it would take up almost entirely the area taken up by the carriage house of the house that will now be known for generations as the Ocasio House. If the garage were in the back of the house then at least it would leave the feeling of a back yard for the red house.

Mr. Dante said that they had spent a lot of time trying to figure out the best place to put the garage, and because of the restrictions for this irregular yard and trying to meet all the proper setbacks on the lot, this was the best location for it. Otherwise it would have to be set at a very unsightly angle towards the Green and the view would be of the side corner of a house, although it would create more room for the red house.

Commissioner Wolf said that the red house would no longer be looking at a back yard they would be looking at a huge loop of blacktop in their backyard.

Commissioner Ovian suggested that they turn toward the Green another 10' -15'.

Mr. Ocasio said that they were maxed out and too close to the building line to move the garage.

Commissioner Ovian suggested that they could get a variance from the ZBA. Mr. Ocasio said that with all the opposition they had thus far faced, that was the last place he thought he would be going.

Commissioner Ovian said that they are constantly being told that it was impossible to put the garage in the back, yet they had not been shown any drawings showing how it is an impossibility. He had nothing to say to others when they asked why the garage wasn't in the back.

Mr. Cook asked why the garage couldn't go in back of the house. Mr. Ocasio said that it would start to encroach upon the wetlands.

Mr. Cook pointed out that the Building Department said that wetland didn't start for 100' beyond the house.

Commissioner Ovian thought that it could be tacked onto the back of the house as it is designed. Mr. Ocasio wanted to know where the door to enter it would be located if the garage was behind the house.

Mr. Boffi pointed out that the back of the house would no longer face an open field it would now face a garage. Commissioner Ovian commented that that was not unusual for houses in Glastonbury and he gave examples.

Mr. Boffi said that rear garage locations are usually site driven and thought this lot was narrow it had width enough for the garage on the side.

Commissioner Logan asked if there was a purpose for the windows over the front door. Mr. Boffi said that they had

briefly discussed this at the previous meeting. He said that if it were up to him the windows would be the same size as the windows on either side but because of code requirements which required the front porch roof to be a certain pitch he could not lower the roof in order to make the windows larger.

Commissioner Logan said that if there were no porch a single window over the door it would look better. Mr. Ocasio said that the porch served a definite purpose of protecting one from the elements and serves a practical need. Mr. Boffi said that he thought the porch as a practical element outweighed the problems with the windows which he agreed were squat.

There was a general discussion on house the porch might be altered to allow larger windows. In the end there was no agreement as to how it might be done and still meet code requirements for pitch.

Commissioner Miglus asked for details about the windows. Mr. Boffi said that they would be solid wood vinyl clad windows with simulated divided light.

Commissioner Miglus asked what color the windows and trim would be. Mr. Boffi said they would be white.

Commissioner Miglus thought that because so many of the manufactured products were white, the eye tended to read a house trimmed in white as new. He said that when other colors were used, the eye went right past them.

Mr. Boffi said that the material also came in a creamy white color and if blended properly with the siding it might achieve the look that was being described.

Commissioner Wolf wanted to point out that the color was the preference of the applicant not the Commission's. She also wanted to express her appreciation to the applicant for bringing in each and every detail they had asked for.

Mr. Frank Falvo 121 Broad Street stepped forward and said that he thought the house would be a good addition to the neighborhood and that it was a nice looking house.

Mr. John Carbone stepped forward and said that it was evident that the applicant and the architect had done a very thorough job and had touched on all the concerns the Commission based upon the previous meeting. He felt it would be strongly recommended that the Commission approve the application. He wanted to ask what the function or the role of the Commission was.

Commissioner Logan explained that they lived in a designated Historic District, an evolving riverfront community and the role of the Commission was charged with the preservation of all structures located within that area. Whatever the era of the structure built, they were charged with its preservation. Their Historic District was the largest of its kind in the country.

Mr. Carbone said he had been listening to the meeting and that there were six items that were concerns of the Commission and he felt the applicant had done an excellent job of addressing them. But then he heard the Commissioners modifying the design of the home, which had not been part of the previous meeting.

Commissioner Logan said that they had discussed moving the garage at the previous meeting and they had done a site visit and had discussed it then. The windows were still not the way she would like them.

Mr. Carbone thought that it was still a matter of opinion.

Commissioner Logan said that that might be in some respects but that they had books that they looked through read and followed. She said that the house in front of the proposed house is a very very important house in Wethersfield and that Broad Street is the most important street in the town. It's a very beautiful street and they have to be responsible.

Mr. Carbone said that he thought that everyone appreciates the commitment that the Commission made but he still thought that there was a lot that was the matter of opinion. He thought that the architect should be commended.

Commissioner Logan agreed that there needed to be flexibility on both parts but that there were certain things they had to stand on.

Commissioner Oviañ wanted to point out that the Silas Robbins house was so far gone at one point that some thought it should be taken down. However it had been recently been restored and had become the greatest financial investment ever put into a building on the Green. He thought that the Ezekiel Williams house even in its current state had to be looked at in the context of where it would be landed.

Ms. Anne Kuckro 471 Main Street stepped forward to give a brief history of the Ezekiel Williams house, the red house at 226 Broad Street. She said that prior to 1759 both sides of Broad Street extended to Marsh Street. Sheriff Ezekiel Williams purchased the land from the town in 1759 and built a gambrel roof house facing the west side of Broad Street. During the revolutionary war Sheriff Ezekiel served as the Commissar for all of Connecticut and his job was to feed and house all of the British Prisoners of War. In 1781 tax records indicate that he had enlarged his house with a second faÁade facing south of the Green. This house remained the pride and focal point of the Broad Street Green until the Depression in the early 20th century when the owners turned it into apartments and eliminating the south entrance and obscuring the western facade with a double decker porch. During the late 19th century the owners started the process of restoration. They moved the porches to the rear and restored the small pane windows on the west facade, but did not restore the south faÁade at all or remove the shed dormers. There is some question as to whether the south side can still be considered frontage when there is no longer a doorway on that side. If Town officials decide that the south boundary constitutes frontage, then she felt that the Commission should require the property owner of the Ezekiel Williams house to restore the south facade particularly the front doorway, so that it actually has a front and a front door.

She also thought that the front wall of the new house should have the same setback as the red house and said that traditionally this was the case with homes next to each other on Main Street and Broad Street. She said that when you build a new house you had to consider the neighbors, in this case the only neighbor is the Ezekiel Williams house. She said that the massing of the red house was essentially square while the new house was horizontal. It should have a gambrel roof and not a gable, and she didn't think the garage should be attached and on the side. There was an existing driveway easement for the owner of the property to reach his fields through the wetlands; this driveway could still be used to get to a driveway in the back. She pointed out that this house was a very important part of the Green and until this time the Ezekiel Williams house had stood alone, and she thought the new house should be a substantial square and side by side almost like a twin. She thought that they should Table the application until some of these considerations had been addressed.

Mr. Malcolm Macmillan 242 Broad Street stepped forward and said that he objected to anything being built on the site. He thought that anything being built there would affect him from a water perspective. Over the years his property had become wetter and wetter and he had to put in 3 drainage ditches and because his property was at the lowest point, he got all the displaced water in the area. He said that through much of the winter they were dealing with standing water. It was his feeling that this application should be standing before the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission and that the Historic District Commission should table it until they do.

Commissioner Logan said that this Commission was concerned only with the aesthetic perspectives of applications and did not preclude any need for other permits or approvals.

Mr. Edward Chesky 234 Broad Street stepped forward and said that he owned the property adjacent to 226 Broad Street that he objected to the placement of the garage. He thought that the side placement would be an anomaly on the Green.

Commissioner Logan pointed out that there were actually a whole block of them.

Mr. Chesky thought that the side placement gave the house a more modern look.

Ms. Elaine Walsh 238-240 Broad Street said that she wanted to echo the statements about the severe water problem. She said that there was approximately 12' of her property she could not stand on or put a fence on because of the water.

With new construction there would be digging and drainage and she wanted to know where all that water would go.

Commissioner Logan said again that they really could not listen to discussion about water problems.

Ms. Walsh said that she was also concerned about the placement of the garage.

Ms. Janet Lombruni 200 Broad Street stepped forward and said that she was concerned about the driveway crossing the Green and that a construction loading pad might be put out by the sycamore trees.

Commissioner Ovian said that they did not regulate driveways in residential areas.

Ms. Lombruni said that she wanted to echo the statements that Ms. Kuckro had made. She agreed about the garage and additionally thought that they needed to be up front with people that although it may be a lovely house it may not be the right house for that spot. She also thought that it should face the Green in the same direction as the red house and that it had to fit in with the neighborhood.

Commissioner Wolf said that they cannot force people to make changes.

Mr. Luis Ocasio said that as the owner of the Ezekiel Williams house he had a stake in how it was maintained and very interested in its historical significance and its value to the community. He also paid a handsome price for it and so he absolutely wants to have a say in how it is kept up. He said that as far as the wetlands went, they had a ruling from the Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission and has a declaratory ruling that was issued to him. He said that as far as the frontage the regulations encourage you to follow the street line, and because of the way Broad Street curves at that point it led us to put the house at the angle we did. He didn't know what bearing the fact that the Ezekiel Williams house once faced another direction should have on today's ruling. They had placed the driveway on the advice of the Town Engineer and the Chief Building Official. He would appreciate any questions or concerns the Commission had being directed toward him.

Commissioner Ovian asked Mr. Ocasio as the custodian of the Ezekiel Williams house and the person who has the power to control both parcels if he had considered the disadvantage he might place on the Ezekiel Williams house by placing the new carriage house garage so close to what looks like the back yard of the other house. He thought that even if the house remained a five family home with apartment usage that doesn't see much lawn usage, it still seemed to him like it was naturally part of that buildings landscape. Although he agreed that this was not the only instance of buildings being close to each other, but that was usually as a result of necessity. In this situation he had the power to decide exactly where the new building would be located and how it would affect the pre-existing building.

Mr. Ocasio said that although he appreciated what was being said, he was still driven by zoning regulations.

Commissioner Ovian said that it could also be considered for economic reasons, since he felt that the value of the Ezekiel Williams house would fall as a result of the lack of space between the buildings. They would want to have at least a little back yard.

Mr. Ocasio said that he wished the appraiser had felt the same way when he purchased it. He also wanted to add that the 4 acres beyond the new house would be left as open space.

Mr. Cook wanted to say in support of the applicant that he had witnessed Mr. Ocasio working to find solutions to every question or concern that had been raised by the Town Staff upstairs and by the Commissioners.

Although there were many opinions here he felt that the applicant would do what's right with these two vital properties but that he could not be everything to everybody. He strongly felt that the project would not be a mess, and thought that what was being presented was a good proposal.

Mr. Ocasio said that he appreciated the support. He also wanted to say that he and his wife's desire from the start had not been to have a shiny new house that would stand apart but that would fit right in on the Green.

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

**WETHERSFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
PUBLIC MEETING
MAY 25, 2004**

APPLICATION NO. 3200-04. Robert Worthington seeking to install siding and windows at 39 Kenwood Road.

Upon motion by Commissioner Miglus, seconded by Wolf and a poll of the Commission it was voted to TABLE the subject application and allow the applicant to submit detail information on the proposed windows.

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

APPLICATION NO. 3201-04. Scott Guay seeking to install a shed in the rear yard at 25 Wilcox Street.

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

Commissioner Miglus thought that the applicant had made an effort to make the shed match the house and located in such a way as to be unobtrusive to the property and overall he thought it would be a gain to the neighborhood.

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

APPLICATION NO. 3202-04. Chris Lyons seeking to move existing fence and install a gate across driveway at 21 Woodland Street.

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

The gate shall be a capped wood picket gate across the driveway

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

APPLICATION NO. 3203-04. Jill & Donald Swoverland seeking to construct an addition and deck and install an above ground pool at 29 Belmont Street.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION

The Commissioners discussed the fact that the fence would need to be higher than 48" to screen the view of the pool. Mr. Cook wondered if they could stipulate a change in the fence without public notice being served. Commissioner Logan pointed out that a fence was already there. It was generally agreed that more information would be needed about the fence before they could approve the application.

Commissioner Miglus also wanted to see the addition stepped in the width of the overhang.

The Commissioners all agreed that an application would need to be filed for the windows that had been replaced.

Upon motion by Commissioner Miglus, seconded by Ovian and a poll of the Commission it was voted to TABLE the subject application for further clarification of the fence.

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

APPLICATION NO. 3204-04. Kathleen Landers seeking to install an air conditioner unit on the side of the house at 58 Main Street.

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

1. The landscaping to hide the unit must be maintained.

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

APPLICATION NO. 3205-04. Andrew Bykowski seeking to remove a shed/porch structure at 16 Fernwood Street.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION

The Commissioners discussed how the applicant might be able to reapply without having to file a new application but ultimately it was decided that the applicant should see how the house looked after removing the structure before making any other decisions. Commissioner Wolf thought it was important for the Commissioners to have some idea of what the house would look like before allowing anything else to be done.

Commissioner Miglus agreed to meet with the applicant to discuss various options available with him.

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

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

APPLICATION NO. 3198-04. John C. Peleponuk seeking to construct an addition, repair front porch and stairs, and install a fence in the rear at 30 Center Street.

Upon motion by Commissioner Garrey, seconded by Ovian and a poll of the Commission it was voted to TABLE the subject application to allow the applicant the opportunity to meet with their designer and Mr. Cook.

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

APPLICATION NO. 3199-04. Luis Ocasio seeking to construct a single family house at 226 Broad Street.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION

Commissioner Miglus said that there were a number of points brought up by Ms. Kuckro that could not be considered, one being that they could not force a restoration of 226 Broad Street. He thought that there was confusion as to what windows were being proposed. He said that the windows were presented as being vinyl clad, while the windows that they pointed out in the book were wood on the inside and extruded on the outside. He wanted two more weeks to mull over the massing. He thought that the garage and the front entrance weighed heavily on all of them. This was a situation where a wide building was being forced in between two relatively square buildings.

Commissioner Wolf asked if he would be more comfortable if the building proposed were the same width but square. Commissioner Miglus said that it wasn't just that, but it was about the vertical massing. He would feel more comfortable if the garage were placed in back. He restated that he would like the opportunity to sit on it for a couple of weeks.

There was a general outburst from members of the public at this point concerning what they felt to be unreasonable suggestions by Commissioners to consider changing the design of the proposed house and discussions they felt were the concerns of other Commissions besides the Historic District. Chairperson Logan insisted that order be established.

Commissioner Garrey pointed out that the houses on Main Street were more similar in style setback and design but that Broad Street was full of stylistic variations in its houses, and he didn't see any twin houses on the street. The familiar center hall yet contemporary design of the proposed house was reasonable. He saw no reason to deny the application. He agreed that it was a unique lot, but he had no problem envisioning a house there.

Commissioner Ovian felt backed into approving the application. He felt that this lot had frontage only because it had purchased the Ezekiel Williams house and denied it a back yard. He thought that just because they couldn't force the applicant to restore the house didn't mean they could prevent them from causing further harm to the important house. He thought it appropriate to consider the Ezekiel Williams grounds in considering this application, and they needed to make a statement while they still had the chance. He was in favor of Tabling the application.

Commissioner Wolf felt that the house should face the street line and since it was on a curve, it did. She wasn't sure where the problem lay with the windows, but she felt that the applicant had addressed all of their voiced their concerns.

The vote tonight concerned whether this house was appropriate for this lot.

Commissioner Logan said that she was till concerned about the garage but at least the garage looked like house and not a garage. If there was any other way to get the garage out of there and give the other house more space she would be happier, but realizing the site limitations she knew it wasn't feasible. She also still had a problem with the three small windows over the front door but other than that she had no other problems.

Commissioner Hart said that he essentially agreed with Commissioner Garrey, and added that their Historic District was an evolving riverfront community and 100 years from now this house will be looked upon as the style home of 2004.

Commissioner Toomey said that bearing in mind that this is an evolving riverfront community. He said that looking at this as a Native American it must be noted that since the beginning of habitation here no one would have built a home on this lot seeing as this in a floodplain. He said that the applicant just better hope the Earth Mother didn't decide this was the 99th year in the 100 year flood plan. He shared some of the concerns of the other Commissioners; he thought that the design was fine for a contemporary home, and the garage was too close to other house but he thought that this was grand house and should have a grand double front door with at least side lights. It was pointed out that side lights were proposed but a double door would be preferred by him.

Mr. Cook said that we had the opportunity to ask more questions about the windows during the public hearing. To Table the application would be a discredit to their good name and relationship to the community because he felt it showed they were doing something wrong here. He wanted to remind the Commission that the Green was not a museum, but as had already been pointed out this is an evolving riverfront community and they should welcome the works of different architects. They should welcome it, embrace it and let the applicant do as they put forth.

The Commissioners then discussed whether or not to stipulate the windows because of the discrepancy between what was presented and what had been discussed. Some Commissioners felt that wooden windows were required while others felt that since the applicant had already changed the siding to cementitious board that clad windows were an acceptable option.

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 stipulation:

1. The windows shall be aluminum clad simulated divided light wood windows.

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

APPROVAL OF [MINUTES OF: May 11, 2004](#)

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

1. On page #5, 6th paragraph, the last word should read, addition, not house.

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

PUBLIC MATTERS

Ms. Janet Lombruni expressed her disappointment over the outcome of the last application. She also wanted to know if the Commission was allowed to vote on applications that may have pending applications before other Commissions. She was told that it was permitted and it happened all the time.

Mr. Luis Ocasio said that the Town Attorney had rendered a decision and decided to back his building lot.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Cook said that he had not written a letter to the homeowner on Kenwood Street about the fence yet. But he added that if the fence on Marsh Street was a new vinyl fence he would order them to take it down immediately, no application had been filed for any fence there.

On the subject of Air conditioning units he thought that he had seen enough of them come before the Commission to know how to handle them. He wondered if he could just use his judgment in letting homeowners know where it could be placed and how to screen them. Commissioner Logan stated that there would be no record of the placement if no hearing was held.

Mr. Cook said that there would be record because of the permit he would have to issue.

Ms. Paula Larsen and her contractor appeared informally before the Commission to discuss the placement of a handicapped ramp for the ice creamery she had been approved for. There were suggestions as to where it might be placed in order to cause the least disruption to the site and to the neighbors. Mr. Cook suggested that Ms. Larsen discuss it with the Building Department and have them sign off on it before coming back to the Commission for an approval.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 11:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

**TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

Jennifer Wolf
Clerk