



CITY OF STAMFORD
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
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FINAL Minutes of the Historic Preservation Advisory Commission (HPAC)

Date: Regular Meeting held: September 1, 2015
Location: Stamford City Hall, 888 Washington Blvd. Stamford CT 06901
6th fl., Safety Training Room
Present: Attending: Lynn Drobbin, Anne Goslin, David Woods, Barry Hersh,
Rebecca Shannonhouse. Absent: Lynn Villency Cohen, Elena Kalman
Jill Smyth

REGULAR MEETING

I. Call to order (Meeting called to order 7:09 pm)

The Commission moved to have R. Shannonhouse sit in as a voting member for the meeting, in place of J. Smyth.

(Moved by L. Drobbin and seconded by A. Goslin, and carried unanimously)

II. Approval of August 4 meeting minutes

The Commission voted to approve the minutes of the August 4th meeting. No changes were noted.

(Moved by (A. Goslin) and seconded by (B. Hersh) and carried unanimously)

III. New Business

A. 17 Belltown Road (7.3 Project)

1. J. Kaufman of CTSH attorneys provided a presentation of the project with copies of plans and the zoning application. She introduced the owners, Orchard K&G. The project is located at 17 Belltown Rd. on the east side of the street. There is a zoning application that also includes 21 Belltown Rd. No improvements are planned for 21 Belltown. The plan is to restore the existing two story dwelling at 17 Belltown and add two dwellings at the back. The owners also plan to do a historic preservation of the original house. Photos were provided in the package.

2. The site is an R-7.5 zone. There are shops across the street and multifamily dwellings in an eclectic block. 21 Belltown is used as a commercial building. The 17 Belltown house was built around 1875. The existing is 25 ft high. They want to extend the CN use to allow density for these two properties. The 17 Belltown site can support up to 4 units, but 3 total units will work with setbacks and parking.

3. The project is proposed to receive the historic preservation density bonus 7.3 of the zoning regulations. They are also asking for additional height for the back two units. They will be 2 1/2 stories and 2,400 SF. in each of the two new constructed units. The front renovated unit will be 1,780 SF. The original is about 3,000 sq ft. The proposed units will be three bed rooms each.



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4. R. Kahn presented the historic analysis of the project. The owners want to do a 7.3 bonus project. She supported the owners and said that all of their previous projects have come out well. She intends to be on site when the demolition will take place, and will review any changes to the structure for conformance with the 7.3 renovation guidelines. When the siding comes off she will check to see if there are marks in the framing and on the building that indicate historical materials and window or door openings.

She also noted that builders in those days built from pattern books, and anticipates that the materials were similar to the pattern books. It was Italianate or late Greek revival design. They will add a porch. It does not need a railing. Simple chamfered posts will be used that are based on a pattern book style. Renee says that the design is a “restoration” of the house as it would have looked in the past. They are leaving the details open to interpretation so they can do some analysis during construction. She supports the 7.3 restoration of this project and asks for HPAC approval.

5. D. Woods noted a concern that the building is not being restored to its original condition as it is required in the 7.3 regulations. The presenters have said that the building will be restored, but the drawings and elevations do not match the description. The old historic building will be altered by adding a south side addition and by adding a front porch, and changes to the window openings, trims and eave details. The architect and owners have not provided the original plans and elevations. The changes are not overlaid on the existing conditions, so it is hard to tell what is being deleted and what is being added. It looks like the building will be changed significantly. It looks cute and sort of historical, but it does not look like the original house. Also, the roof line of the addition does not match the original. It looks like a new modern interpretation of historical architecture with some new trim details added.

6. L. Drobbin said that 7.3 regulations allow some additional density if the developer will enhance the appearance of a historic house. While the regs. “encourage” restoration, they also allow for interpretation and changes to the historical architectural elements, if actual evidence is not present. She says it does not need to be a strict restoration.

7. D. Woods noted the language from the regulations say that it needs to be a restoration according to “Department of Interior Standards”. R. Kahn said that they support “interpretive restoration” in order to improve the appearances of properties that have been modified over time. She stated that she would make adjustments, if needed, as the construction progresses, and the owners will support her interpretations. She asks HPAC to rely on her evaluation to get the project completed properly.

8. D. Woods also noted that the addition can be more compatible with the historic building. The window proportions should be in scale with the windows on the original house. The new details should also be similar to the existing historic structure. The owner may want to use shutters at the front façade of the addition, to match the front façade of the original house. The owners did not provide the North elevation or the East elevation. Also, the cupola is not needed on the addition.



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A motion was made for HPAC to provide a recommendation for approval of the project with the following conditions:

1. The owners revisit the historic façade design once the siding and new additions are removed to conduct a restoration of the original house.
2. The addition (two rear units) should be more compatible with the facade of the historic house with the following changes:
 - The size, configuration and proportions of the windows;
 - Matching the gable & eve scale and trim details;
 - Use of the same gable end round top window, as on the original house.
 - Delete the cupola.

It was also noted that the commission have not considered the zoning issues as well as density and parking as a part of this review. The commission will allow the applicant to send the requested changes by email for further review.

(The motion was moved by B. Hersh and seconded by A. Goslin and carried unanimously)

B. Lord & Taylor Addition

1. Mr. Al Cava of Milrose is a consultant to Lord & Taylor for this 6,600 SF. expansion of the original building at High Ridge and Long Ridge Roads. There is no variance request. The work is as of right. The building is historically significant and listed on the State Register. The owners are asking for support of the expansion.

2. Tom Houck of Highland Associates presented as the architect for the project. The building is believed to be designed by Raymond Loewy's firm in New York. There will be two areas of construction at the southeast corner, adding 3,200 SF at the corner, and a 3,000 sq. ft. addition that encloses the original open canopy on the third floor. The SE corner expansion is for back of house space. It will be a stock room on the first floor and the second floor. There are three large openings in the canopy at the third floor. They want to recapture the space and will place glass skylights over the openings and a glass window wall at the exterior. The original balcony "cover will remain. The new enclosed space will be an active sales area. The open deck area at the sides will remain open exterior and will have glass railings. The glass will be transparent.

3. The addition on the Southeast corner will be set back behind the original front concrete panels and the finish will be matched. The applicant proposes to paint all the precast white. The base will be gray. The wood louvers will be repaired and painted a slightly darker gray.

4. There will be some minor modifications to the landscape including new drainage. There will be a new retaining wall at the southeast corner.



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5. L. Drobbin noted that HPAC encourages an existing conditions analysis. D. Woods said it might be better to use a paint that is closer to the original precast concrete color. Or the owner can lightly sandblast the concrete panels to clean it up. The original may have been a more limestone / beige color. L. Drobbin encouraged keeping the original buff colored brick.

6. D. Woods asked that the louvers be a darker gray so the reveal reads as the original design intended. It is understood that the louvers will be replaced, as most have rotted wood. It was also noted that the glass enclosure on the third floor should be as transparent as possible so the "holes" are visible from below.

A motion was made for HPAC to provide an approval of the project. A letter will request that the owners respect the original colors and materials as may be determined by an investigation of original conditions. The letter will be sent to Norman Cole and to Al Cava.

(The motion was moved by B. Hersh and seconded by A Goslin and carried unanimously)

C. ZBA referrals to HPAC

1. A Goslin reported that HPAC received referrals from the ZBA. HPAC can decide to hold comments on the projects since they did not file an application with HPAC. The commission can also comment to the ZBA on the material that is provided. It was generally agreed that HPAC should not comment on the projects at this time. The group also recommended that HPAC have a conversation with the ZBA about future procedures. The planning department staff should screen the projects for review.

2. A. Goslin will draft an email to the ZB stating that HPAC is unable to review these projects as forwarded by the planning department, as there is not adequate information for a complete review.

3. The group did agree to provide preliminary comments for two of the properties/projects as noted below as they have some historical importance.

a. The 1442 Shippan Avenue project requests an addition to the original 1885 house, of a garage with a second story, to be built at the rear corner and visible from Shippan Ave. This was the original Frank Gurley house. It was restored back in the 80's

Comments: HPAC noted that the scale of the garage addition appears to be out of proportion to the main house. It should have a better contextual relationship with the original. HAPC all agreed that these are preliminary comments since the project was not submitted to the commission

b. The 214 Westover Road project requests the construction of a free standing garage near the existing garage of a 1928 Tudor/Cotswold revival house.



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Comments: HPAC noted that the design is simple and compatible with the original house. It was suggested that there should be some added buffer screen planting on the side of the closest property line. HPAC recommends approval of the garage.

All agreed that A. Goslin should draft a letter to the planning department requesting a procedure for review of future ZBA projects. She will send a draft to L. Drobbin for review before sending to Norman Cole, David Killeen, and David Woods.

IV. Old Business

A. Yale & Towne plaques update

L Drobbin noted that the project is being handled by John Freeman of BLT. He forwarded two plaques for review that were similar with only slight changes. He did not provide design for the three different plaques as required. BLT also requested comments before the next meeting. Lynn returned the original HPAC comments to BLT. Lynn also noted that these historic interpretive plaques need to have a standard of quality that others will follow in the future. There was no reply from BLT on Lynn's E-mail.

W. Haynes reported that R. Kahn has located an original bronze plaque of Henry Towne. W. Haynes believes it is from Gorham (casting company) and may have been a gift to Mr. Towne upon his retirement. Renee asked if BLT wants to make a donation to HNP, for the plaque. She will get the plaque appraised. It was recommended that the plaque can be a substitute for one of the three required on the site. More information is needed and no action was taken.

(The item was tabled without further decision. Review of status will be ongoing)

B. Sacred Heart School updates

1. The ad for the sale and relocation of the cottages will be published this month. It has been placed on the CT trust Facebook page.

(The item was tabled without further decision. Review of status will be ongoing)

C. Hoyt Barnum House, relocation update

1. B. Hersh provided an update of the progress. Two architectural firms presented at the selection meetings. Christopher Williams Architects (CWA) made a very good proposal and discussed how the building should be moved. They have good experience with moving big buildings. They moved the school of forestry at Yale. here was a unanimous decision for their selection. The city is negotiating a contract with CWA. This may delay the start of the project for a few weeks.



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2. A Goslin asked if the city plans to follow through with the study of the option for the building to remain on the police station site. W. Haynes noted there was an “oral” commitment by the city, but it did not make it into the MOA. He will make a note of it to the city.

3. W. Haynes reported that the HNP position is that they understand the historical society (SHS), wants the building moved to their facility at High Ridge Road, and that the city and the police do not want it at their site. So, the best solution is to save the building and move it as requested by SHS. SHPO has said that if it is moved in three pieces it has a “good chance” to be relisted. HNP supports this direction.

(The item was tabled without further decision. Review of status will be ongoing)

D. Coastal Survey, update

W. Haynes provided an update. He said there are two potential areas/sites that are currently under consideration for study, as part the state’s historic resource inventory (HRI) . They are the Cove Neighborhood and E. Main Street area. The state may have 5 areas that they can assign, throughout the state. They made a pitch to the state and the neighborhoods have been visited. Jenny Scofield of SHPO said there is a chance that these two Stamford sites will make the final list. The group is waiting for that determination.

(The item was tabled without further decision. Review of status will be ongoing)

E. Atlantic Street PO, update

1. W. Haynes reported that there was a very positive meeting with SHPO on site. The changes that E. Kalman reviewed for the porte-cochere seem to be OK. They were reviewed and supported by the SHPO. The group is also OK with removal of some of the post boxes. There is a center archway on the main floor that will remain.

2. Wes noted that the SHPO has an issue with the grade change on the north side. The developers want to cut the grade down to match the basement level of the original PO. This will allow the basement to be used for retail, with entrances at grade. Wes and HNP support the retail and restaurant uses on the lower level. He stated there is allot of retail space available at the basement level.

3. There are three historic chandeliers in the lobby that will be retained. There are three safes; all the doors have been removed. A search is being conducted to see if these doors can be located.

(The item was tabled without further decision. Review of status will be ongoing)

F. Programming Updates



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No discussion was held at this time.

(The item was tabled without further decision. Review of status will be ongoing)

G. Status of Pending Demolitions

No discussion was held at this time.

(The item was tabled without further decision. Review of status will be ongoing)

H. Grants update

No discussion was held at this time.

(The item was tabled without further decision. Review of status will be ongoing)

V. Adjournment

L. Drobbin adjourned the meeting at 9:40 PM. (There was no further discussion.)

David W. Woods AIA, Secretary
Historic Preservation Advisory Commission.