

MAYOR
Caroline Simmons

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS
Matthew Quiñones

LAND USE BUREAU CHIEF
Ralph Blessing

HPAC CHAIR
David W. Woods, AIA



CITY OF STAMFORD
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
888 WASHINGTON BOULEVARD
STAMFORD, CT 06904 -2152

(DRAFT) Minutes of the Historic Preservation Advisory Commission (HPAC)

Date: Regular meeting held Tuesday, December 12, 2023.

Location: Via Zoom.

Present: David Woods, Chair; Barry Hersh, Elena Kalman and Rebecca Shannonhouse - Commissioners.

I. CALL TO ORDER.

Mr. Woods called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and introduced the first item on the agenda.

II. Approval and/or Corrections to the September 12, 2023 Meeting Minutes and the May 2, 2023 Meeting Minutes (*Tabled from the June 6, 2023 Meeting*).

The Commission considered the minutes of the September 12, 2023 Regular Meeting. There were no comments or modifications recommended.

A motion was made by Mr. Hersh to accept the minutes, seconded by Ms. Kalman and the vote was carried unanimously.

The Commission considered the minutes of the May 2, 2023 Regular Meeting. There were no comments or modifications recommended.

A motion was made by Mr. Hersh to accept the minutes, seconded by Ms. Kalman and the vote was carried unanimously.

III. NEW BUSINESS.

No New Business or as may properly be introduced before the Commission.

IV. OLD BUSINESS.

A. ZB Application #223-39 - KCI Summer, LLC - Text Change.

Location: 1911 Summer Street.

Presenter: Lisa Feinberg, Carmody Torrance Sandak Hennessey, LLP.

Applicant is proposing amendments to Section 7.3 of the Zoning Regulations to facilitate the construction of residential uses located on corner lots and to grant the Zoning Board the authority to reduce setbacks applicable to on-site parking areas.

B. ZB Application #223-40 - KCI Summer, LLC - Site & Architectural Plans and/or Requested Uses, Special Permit and an application for approval for addition to the Stamford Cultural Resources Inventory (CRI).

Location: 1911 Summer Street.

Presenter: Lisa Feinberg, Carmody Torrance Sandak Hennessey, LLP.

Applicant will be preserving the existing historic structure and proposing an addition of four (4) new townhouses attached to the rear along with landscaping and on-site parking.

Ms. Kalman recused herself as she is the architect on this project.

Ms. Feinberg made a presentation providing details on the project and answered questions from the Commission.

Before opening it up to questions and comments from the Commission, Mr. Woods made note that he had a discussion with Ralph Blessing, Land Use Bureau Chief, regarding the historic nature of the existing building that the primary concern is whether or not the restoration will meet HPAC's standards for historic preservation. Mr. Woods also stated that the Text Change and the setback issues are a Zoning Board issue and not under the purview of HPAC for approval but to provide recommendations regarding the relief requests on the historic restoration of the existing structure.

Mr. Woods asked the Commission for their questions and/or comments.

Mr. Woods called for any comments from the public; there was no response.

After considerable discussion, Mr. Woods called for a motion to accept the four (4) items discussed for the Resolution and support for the restoration project and the three (3) items discussed for recommendation to the Zoning Board regarding the Text Change to Section 7.3.

Mr. Hersh made a motion to accept the four (4) items discussed for the Resolution and support for the restoration project and the three (3) items discussed for recommendation to the Zoning Board regarding the Text Change to Section 7.3, seconded by Ms. Shannonhouse and the vote was carried unanimously.

After considerable discussion, the Commission agreed on the following Resolution for the project at 1911 Summer Street:

At HPAC's regular meeting held on Tuesday, December 12, 2023 the Commission was presented with the design concept for renovation/restoration of a residential structure at 1911 Summer Street, along with a new residential addition. The project was submitted for consideration under Section 7.3 of the Zoning Regulations. The Owner indicated that the interior area of 1911 Summer Street will be renovated into a single residential unit and the exterior will be restored. The following is a record of the Commission's discussion and approval of the historic work under consideration.

The Commission would like to commend the Owner for filing a Section 7.3 application to save this important structure. By unanimous vote, the Commission supports the design concept with these important comments to be included in the design:

1. *It is understood the structure is in good shape and the exterior is comprised of shingle siding. The Commission encourages the Owner to restore the shingles. Where patching occurs, the shingles will be matched to the original.*
2. *The Owner has indicated the windows will be replaced. The Commission requires the Owner to match the original shape including the 9 over 0 mullion pattern of the original windows.*
3. *The Commission requests that the new addition construction use similar materials, including the use of similar shingles on special elements of the design and including the large bay window at the center, of the same color.*
4. *A paint color for the shingles of the historic structure was approved in Phillipsburg Blue (Benjamin Moore color). The Owner noted they will use the same color on the central bay window of the addition. The addition is further defined by a darker blue on clapboard siding. The Commission also reviewed and approved the restoration of wood trims and columns on the historic structure and the white paint color. The Commission further encourages using similar details, trims, and colors in the new addition.*

In granting support for the project and restoration of the historic structure, the Commission understands the Owner has submitted the project to the City's Cultural Resources Inventory. That approval is provided under a separate Resolution and will be confirmed at the conclusion of the work.

HPAC understands the Land Use Boards may have other considerations for review that are beyond the scope of HPAC recommendations. Those may include bonuses, setbacks, parking, and landscape improvements that are under the Zoning Regulations. The discussion at the HPAC meeting raised a number of issues with the new construction proposal that will require the Zoning Board's attention.

1. *The setbacks on the side facing the neighbor on Summer Street should be reviewed by the Zoning Board. The Commission expressed concern with the changes requested that will allow two (2) parking spaces along the site lot line. This issue is important as it forces the new structure to be shifted toward Fifth Street and reduces the frontage required in Section 7.3.*
2. *There was concern on the part of the Commission for requests of Text Changes to Section 7.3. The most important item is under setbacks (Section 7.3.C.4 - b). The Owner requests changes for corner lots that "may reduce the setback on one frontage to no less than five (5) feet in a commercial district, or no less than ten (10) feet in a multifamily residential district." The Commission believes that this Text Change will create a bad precedent for future developments on corner lots.*

The design for this project shows a building face that is five (5) feet away from the frontage on Fifth Street. The Commission believes the building is located too close to the street and does not fit the context of other residential structures along the street which all have larger setbacks. It was noted that the commercial structures on the opposite side of the street also have larger setbacks. While there was an opposing view on the Commission, the general consensus is that this residential building of four (4) stories is too close to the street for this neighborhood. It is also in front of the historic structure and diminishes its importance on the site.

Section 7.3 also reads: "Front yard setbacks may be reduced by up to the setback of existing adjacent Historic Buildings." This is an important statement. We urge the Land Use Boards to consider the context and the other residential structures in the neighborhood.

- 3. The Commission encourages the Zoning Board to review the parking for this project and consider alternatives. If some relief for parking can be provided, then it may be possible to shift the new addition structure so that it does not encroach on the frontage along Fifth Street. The Zoning Board should consider the need for two (2) onsite parking spaces including a "visitor" space.*

Mr. Woods then made a motion to support adding the historic structure to the Cultural Resources Inventory once the restoration is complete, seconded by Mr. Hersh and the vote was carried unanimously.

Ms. Kalman returned to the meeting.

Mr. Woods introduced the next item on the agenda.

C. 237-241 Henry Street Associates, LLC (Permit #B-20-2361)

Location: 237 Henry Street

This is a critical reconstruction project which was approved by the Zoning Board and was the first such project. The applicant was required to post a bond to ensure the façade was rebuilt in accordance with the historic precedent and according to the approved plans. The Land Use Bureau is seeking HPAC's approval on the façade before returning the bond.

Mr. Woods explained that the Commission is not providing approval on the Critical Reconstruction but recommending to the Land Use Bureau that HPAC is in agreement with the work being done so the bond can be released.

Ms. Kalman provided an update on the project.

Mr. Woods asked for questions and/or comments from the Commission.

Mr. Woods then asked the public for comments; there was no response.

Mr. Woods called for a motion to recommend to the Land Use Bureau that the Owner has met HPAC's agreement on Critical Reconstruction.

Mr. Hersh made the motion to recommend to the Land Use Bureau that the Owner has met HPAC's agreement on Critical Reconstruction; seconded by Ms. Shannonhouse and the vote was carried unanimously.

Mr. Woods noted to the Owner, Peter Laskowski, that it was a nice job done on the historic structure but for future reference on work done to the back building, HPAC would not have approved the back building with the aluminum windows which do not match the historic building. There were some things done that do not match the historic structure and if there is another project to come before the Commission better attention should be paid to the back building.

C. Update: Historic Brochure Progress.

Presenter: Rebecca Shannonhouse, Commissioner.

Ms. Shannonhouse provided an update stating that the grant has been approved and stated that the grant expires on August 31, 2025.

Ms. Shannonhouse reported that this has passed all the Boards and the letter has been received from Mary Dunn (SHPO) so it is good to move forward.

D. Update: Demolition Permit Applications.

No Demolition Permit Applications or as may properly be introduced before the Commission.

E. Miscellaneous Future Projects of Note.

- 1785 & 1799 Summer Street.

Mr. Woods stated there has been no information received on this project.

- Daughters of the American Revolution 250th Anniversary historic plaque at Fort Stamford Park.

Mr. Woods stated this has been presented to the Parks & Recreation Commission and placement is to be determined.

F. 2024 Meeting Schedule.

Mr. Woods asked if there were any comments; there was no response.

All Commissioners agreed to the 2024 Meeting Schedule as presented.

V. ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. Hersh made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Ms. Shannonhouse and the vote was carried unanimously.

Mr. Woods adjourned the meeting at 8:53 p.m. (There was no further discussion.)

Respectfully submitted.
December 15, 2023

David Woods, Chair
Historic Preservation Advisory Commission

Meetings are normally held on the first Tuesday of the month starting at 7:00 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for January 9, 2024 (Date adjusted due to New Year's Day) via Zoom.