



TOWN OF FAIRFIELD
Town Hall — Fairfield, Conn.
FAIRFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Fairfield Historic District Commission
APPROVED Minutes of Special Meeting
January 20, 2011

The Fairfield Historic District Commission (HDC) met on Thursday, January 20, 2011 at 4:30 p.m. in the second floor Conference Room, Old Town Hall, Fairfield, CT 06824.

Legal notice of the Public Hearing was published in *The Fairfield Citizen* on January 12, 2011.

ATTENDANCE AND DESIGNATION OF VOTING ALTERNATES

Present: Ellen Gould, Timothy Smith, Margaret Browning, Commissioners, and Thomas Dailey, Alternate

Absent: Henry Backe, Peter Petron, Commissioners, and Adam Klyver, Alternate

CALL TO ORDER

Ellen Gould, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 4:35p.m.

PUBLIC SHOW CAUSE HEARING

Arthur Gravanis, 2829 Bronson Road, Fairfield, CT 06824

- a) alleged violation: installation of parking pullout without HDC approval. Violation letter issued on August 13, 2010. **Hearing originally scheduled for December 9, 2010 and continued to January 20, 2011.**

The show cause hearing concerns a parking pull-out installed and edged in metal at least in part on town right-of-way at the corner of Bronson Road and Verna Hill Road, without the Town's permission or permission from the HDC.

Arthur Gravanis, the homeowner, made the presentation including a poster with different views of the front of the house, where he has lived since 2005. He stated that the mailbox was in its current location when he bought the house. Mail trucks had made a "turn in" to the mailbox and Mr. Gravanis filled in the area with gravel and inserted metal edging in summer, 2010. (The HDC issued a violation on August 13, 2010.)

Mr. Gravanis stated that he filed an application for a certificate of appropriateness on September 10, 2010 and that he received a letter on September 21, 2010 stating that his application was incomplete and that he was in violation as the pull-out is on town property and that he needed a permit from the Engineering Department in order to do what had been done. He stated that HDC

had no binding authority to tell him that he must get a permit from the Engineering Department nor was there a regulation in the HDC guidelines requiring same.

William Hurley, Town Engineering Manager, stated that the town has a policy of discouraging aprons or pull-offs on town roads, especially in historic districts and that postal regulations state that mailboxes ought to be placed 12 inches from the road. Any work or improvements on a town right-of-way must be approved by the Director of Public Works and have a permit from Engineering. If approved, a pull-out must be paved or have a hard surface with crushed stone imbedded.

Mr. Gravanis stated twice that he did not understand why he was being cited when there was no binding authority from the town or the HDC.

Mrs. Gould said that the HDC was the last stop in the process, that other approvals must be granted before HDC could schedule a hearing.

Richard Saxl, Town Attorney stated that public works, engineering, conservation and zoning approval precede HDC.

Mr. Gravanis disputed the Town Attorney's statement.

Mr. Dailey commented that HDC has been placed in the role of referee.

Mr. Smith asked where town property ended and Mr. Gravanis's property began.

Mr. Hurley stated that according to the A2 survey, Bronson Road is an historic right-of-way consisting of 50 feet in width plus 40 feet on either side.

Mr. Gravanis said the procedural process was vague.

Mr. Smith suggested that the mailbox be moved to the entrance of the Gravanis driveway on Verna Hill and that Mr. Gravanis could still keep his Bronson Road address. Mr. Hurley said he also made that suggestion to Mr. Gravanis

After lengthy discussion, Mr. Saxl asked for a five minute recess to speak to Mr. Gravanis and Mr. Hurley.

Following this discussion, Mr. Saxl recommended that the hearing be continued for 90 days.

Motion: Mr. Smith moved to have the hearing continued for 90 days, seconded by Mr. Dailey. Voting in favor of the motion: Mr. Smith, Mr. Dailey, Ms. Browning and Mrs. Gould. Motion carried unanimously.

End of Public Hearing

Motion: Mr. Dailey moved to go into executive session, seconded by Mr. Smith. Voting in favor of the motion: Mr. Smith, Mr. Dailey, Ms. Browning and Mrs. Gould. Motion carried unanimously. Madeleine Mackenzie, Acting Secretary, was excused from the meeting at 5:35 p.m.

Executive Session

Meeting resumed at 6:20 p.m.

Motion: Mr. Dailey moved that the HDC endorse the recommendation of the Town Attorney, Richard Saxl, to the Board of Selectman, with respect to the HDC fine being considered later in January by the Board of Selectman. Motion seconded by Mrs. Gould. Voting in favor of the motion: Mr. Smith, Mr. Dailey, Ms. Browning and Mrs. Gould. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion: Mrs. Gould moved to continue discussion of the HDC Handbook at a later date due to time constraints, seconded by Mr. Dailey. Voting in favor of the motion: Mr. Smith, Mr. Dailey, Ms. Browning and Mrs. Gould. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion: Mr. Dailey moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Smith. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

**Madeleine Mackenzie, Acting Secretary
For the Commission**