



Town of Fairfield
FAIRFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MINUTES
November 14, 2019

Hearings were held in the Second Floor Conference Room, Old Town Hall beginning at 4:15 p.m.
Notice of this Hearing was published in the Friday, November 1, 2019 edition of the *Fairfield Citizen*

Attendance and Designation of Voting Alternates: James Bohan, George Clark

Commissioners Present: James Bohan, George Clark, Arthur Gravanis, Adam Klyver, Rosina Negron, Christopher Shea

Commissioners Absent: Margaret Kufferman

Call to Order: Chairman Klyver called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m.

Public Hearings:

1. Drew Coyne & Matt O'Connell, 175 Old Post Road, Fairfield, CT. For property located at 175 Old Post Road, Fairfield, CT 06824

Matt O'Connell said they wanted to install central air with two condensers located on the east side of the home which is circa 1837. Mr. O'Connell displayed photos of the property, street views, condenser and the potential location behind shrubs. He said it will be an upgrade to the home and preserve it from humidity.

Mr. Shea asked for the description of line sets which the applicant described including location and material.

Mr. Klyver suggested burying the lines to hide them instead of having on the exterior of house. Mr. O'Connell said contractor recommended the location to connect air handlers in attic to condensers outside and would cause the least damage to the home. They haven't explored underground lines as an option because of cost. Mr. Klyver said it doesn't affect the inside of the home and explained method. Mr. O'Connell said they received six quotes and none gave that option. Mr. Klyver believed running lines on the outside of the home is very unattractive and not appropriate. Mr. O'Connell will discuss with contractor.

Public comment – none.

The hearing closed at 4:24 p.m.

2. David J & Elisabeth M Ives, 411 Harbor Road, Southport, CT For property located at 411 Harbor Road, Southport, CT 06890

Jack Franzen presented representing the Ives. Mr. Franzen noted the home's location on the east side of Harbor Road at its crest. He said it is an accessory pavilion built in the 1980s by the previous owner and has been used as a garden shed. There is no roof but lattice creates partial shade. The patio may have been pre-existing. They propose a cedar roof to make more of a shelter, use the existing lattice and match shingles that are on the house. They would enclose the structure with screening. There is an existing door stop so at one time there was a door. It will be a removable screen sash.

Access is by means of a steep stone serpentine staircase serpentine and they propose installing a railing on one side of the staircase. They will match the railing design on other steps which is a Julius plumb railing. It will be placed on the side up against the hill so it will be less visible. Renderings and elevations were examined. Mr.

Franzen proposed fiberglass black mesh screening and wrought iron railing as materials. The railing will be epoxied into existing masonry treads and there will be no lighting.

Public comment – none.

The hearing closed at 4:30 p.m.

3. Harbor House, Inc., 252 Main Street, Southport, CT. For property located at 252 Main Street, Southport, CT 06890

John Fallon said there is no reason for Mr. Gravanis to recuse himself. Mr. Fallon explained that there was a 2016 Certificate of Appropriateness issued for balconies and the primary reason was to address code and fire safety issues. Subsequently an injunction was brought by Mr. Green citing a 2001 easement agreement violation. The agreement and court judgement stated remedial work had to be performed in eight years or six months after the Klebans ceased to live there. In 2017 and 2018 extensions were granted. They concurred to keep agreement and court judgment viable and come back with a new certification application. They are the same plans that commission approved twice before. Mr. Franzen refreshed the Commission noting the problem on the upper level of balcony, they moved the railing and flower boxes back.

Public comment – Joel Green, Esq. of Green & Gross spoke on behalf of Anthony Gravanis. Mr. Green said Attorney Fallon recited the facts accurately, they had cordial litigation then negotiated a settlement. He respectfully requests the Commission finds it appropriate.

The hearing closed at 4:40 p.m.

4. Cynthia Baldwin French, 115 Main Street, Southport, CT. For property located at 115 Main Street, Southport, CT 06890

Mr. Franzen noted the property location is the corner of Church and Main Streets. He said the formal entry is on the side of house and the family uses the garage entrance to the kitchen. The fence that is alongside of property is a deteriorated stockade fence. They have spoken to neighbors and the French's can move the fence because it's on their property. The proposal is to replace the fence and relocate it on the boundary. It will be a wood cedar picket fence stained in neutral color, the good side will face the neighbor and be an improvement over the stockade that is currently there. The intent is to use a different type fence so as not to overpower. The fences along the side yards are more informal. Photos and renderings were viewed.

Public comment – none.

The hearing closed at 4:47 p.m.

5. Henderson, Peter T. & Amie Redgate, 62 Center Street, Southport CT. For property located at 62 Center Street, Southport, CT 06890

Mr. Franzen stated the purpose of the application is to make adjustments to a previously approved pool enclosure.

Public comment – none.

The hearing closed at 4:51 p.m.

6. 1100 Harbor Road LLC, 1100 Harbor Road, Southport CT. For property located at 1100 Harbor Road, Southport, CT 06890

Mr. Fallon took applications for Items 6 and 7 together. He explained in detail the fence relocation, wall, riprap and easement. He said people didn't use the easement and trespassed over Mr. McMahon's property to access

beach. The owners had difficulty getting homeowners insurance because of this. He said Mr. McMahon didn't want to restrict access but because of the liability he donated a substantial portion of waterfront property that would provide safe public access. In exchange for the conveyance the Town agreed to release the previous 8' easement. Mr. Fallon said project greatly improves public access to shorefront, lower wharf park and addresses safety issues. He noted the waterfront property that has been retained by McMahaons isn't accessible and is only used for visual enjoyment. He stressed that they will build the project in accordance with plans as approved unanimously by Town Boards, construction will be supervised by the Town and they will submit a survey to show it was built in accordance.

Mr. Fallon referred to petition that he said is based on disingenuous information and distributed two letters from the Sasquanaug Association to the Board of Selectmen. He said the second letter is fake and noted differences.

Mr. Franzen described the scope of work for the water lot and the house lot. He explained in detail the existing property and proposed work. He said there would be more legally accessible land and there is no less beach than there is now.

Mr. Fallon said it has been reviewed, carefully examined by town bodies and approved by all other Town Boards and no one has appealed or spoken up through the process until now.

Visibility and change in appearance was discussed at length.

Chris Eggers of Race Coastal Engineering explained the sloping and said application improves access to the beach significantly.

7. 1100 Harbor Road LLC, 1100 Harbor Road, Southport CT. For property located at 1101 Harbor Road, Southport, CT 06890

Public comment in favor – none.

Public comment against - Ms. Stowe asked how many accidents there have been on the property because she walks it daily and has never had an accident or witnessed one.

Dale McIver of Westway Road in Southport discussed in detail his motivation and history of the area. He wants the wall moved under existing ground. The wall at the terrace edge would be a big improvement and with that put back the rocks in a gentle slope. He feels the historical look won't be the same.

Jack Ijams is concerned about erosion. He said when there is a gentle slopping there is protection as it deflects energy. He said it will change the look and feel. He doesn't want the terrace moved out because it will create a steep wall.

Jeremy Frost of 1000 Harbor Road and Southport Conservancy reinforced the Lee's intent to preserve the property. He read the deed restrictions transferred from the Lees to the McMahon.

Mary Lou McGuire of 208 Willow Street and landscape designer sails in and out of Southport Harbor and sailors are guided by this landmark and the lower wharf. Ms. McGuire said boulders are an important part of the character and historic landscape and must be preserved. She asked the Commission to deny the application.

Jay a former RTM member said it will be a change if all the area is filled with grass.

Pamela of Willow Street said the intent has shifted and it isn't a positive for the community.

Mike Drew said despite the application having gone through different commissions, commissions can make mistakes and noted Equinox.

Molly Stokes considered plantings. She said vegetation can block out views.

Mr. Fallon summarized and rebutted remarks in the Sasquanaugh letter.

Mr. Franzen said his understanding of proposal is it will look very similar and the same stones will be put back. He has a hard time believing it's all the same rock from the 1934 aerial photograph. He has looked at 1970s and 1986 photos and they are all different. It looks like stone was added as there are two different colors of stone. The jetties were refreshed by the Town in the 1970s and 1980s. He doesn't see anything inappropriate by riprap or 8' more of grass.

The hearing closed at 6:41 p.m.

Consideration of Public Hearing Items 1-7:

- 1. Drew Coyne & Matt O'Connell, 175 Old Post Road, Fairfield, CT. For property located at 175 Old Post Road, Fairfield, CT 06824**

Commissioner Gravanis motioned to approve as presented. Commissioner Clark seconded the motion.

Commissioner Shea motioned to amended and approve the application with the stipulation that the line sets be concealed from view of the public way. Commissioner Negron seconded the motion which carried unanimously, 5-0. (Clark, Gravanis, Klyver, Negron and Shea in favor)

- 2. David J & Elisabeth M Ives, 411 Harbor Road, Southport, CT For property located at 411 Harbor Road, Southport, CT 06890**

Commissioner Gravanis motioned to approved as presented. Commissioner Bohan seconded the motion which carried, 4-0-1. (Bohan, Gravanis, Klyver, Negron in favor and Shea abstained).

- 3. Harbor House, Inc., 252 Main Street, Southport, CT. For property located at 252 Main Street, Southport, CT 06890**

Commissioner Clark motioned to accept the application as proposed. Commissioner Gravanis seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, 5-0. (Clark, Gravanis, Klyver, Negron and Shea in favor).

- 4. Cynthia Baldwin French, 115 Main Street, Southport, CT. For property located at 115 Main Street, Southport, CT 06890**

Commissioner Bohan motioned to approve as presented. Commissioner Gravanis seconded the motion which carried unanimously, 5-0. (Bohan, Gravanis, Klyver, Negron and Shea in favor).

- 5. Henderson, Peter T. & Amie Redgate, 62 Center Street, Southport CT. For property located at 62 Center Street, Southport, CT 06890**

Commissioner Gravanis motioned to approve as presented. Commissioner Clark seconded the motion which carried, 4-1. (Clark, Gravanis, Klyver, Negron in favor and Shea opposed).

- 6. 1100 Harbor Road LLC, 1100 Harbor Road, Southport CT. For property located at 1100 Harbor Road, Southport, CT 06890**

Commissioner Gravanis motioned to approve as presented. Commissioner Bohan seconded the motion which carried unanimously, 5-0. (Bohan, Gravanis, Klyver, Negron and Shea in favor).

7. 1100 Harbor Road LLC, 1100 Harbor Road, Southport CT. For property located at 1101 Harbor Road, Southport, CT 06890

Commissioner Gravanis motioned to approve as presented. Commissioner Negron seconded the motion. The motion failed, 1-4. (Gravanis in favor and Clark, Klyver, Negron, Shea opposed).

Commissioner Shea motioned to deny the application as presented without prejudice. Commissioner Negron seconded the motion which carried, 3-2. (Gravanis, Negron, Shea in favor and Clark, Klyver opposed).

Approve Minutes from 10-10-19 meeting (Klyver, Gravanis, Bohan, Kufferman)

Commissioner Gravanis motioned to approve the minutes. Commissioner Bohan seconded the motion which carried unanimously, 3-0. (Bohan, Gravanis, Klyver in favor).

Chairman's Report

Repairs:

1. 860 Pequot Ave- Replace rotted, deteriorated porch moldings, railing components, treads and decking as required with like material(all wood).
2. 135 Old Post Road-Replace roof of house and garage with asphalt shingles to match existing.
3. 824 Harbor Road-Replace windows on south side with new windows, same look
4. 494 Harbor Road- Replace rotten trim boards, casing, column and railings where necessary.
5. 1088 Harbor Road- Repair flat roof, replace decking above.
6. 187 Harbor Road- Replace existing stockade fence on property line with identical stockade fence.

Violations: None

Old Business:

1. 554 Tunxis Hill Road- Update on RTM ordinance status

Ms. Negron said the ordinance passed at the September meeting and read Section 26. The handbook needs to be updated to incorporate revisions.

New Business:

1. Podium discussion – DPW placed a new podium and an American flag in the conference room.

Mr. Shea discussed the painting of the unpainted brick home at 35 Rose Hill Road. He read the Handbook and his statement noting his position on the issue. Mr. Negron said since we are revising handbook we should revise that section to add more strict language and clarify for future properties. Mr. Shea said he is still willing to do and welcomed anyone to form a sub-committee, Ms. Negron volunteered. There may be discrepancies in other areas. They will work on a draft for the Commission to review.

Mr. Bohan discussed underground cables lines. Mr. Clark said they are very expensive, \$100k a pole.

Adjourn

Commissioner Gravanis motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:17 p.m. Commissioner Negron seconded the motion which carried unanimously, 5-0. (Bohan, Gravanis, Klyver, Negron and Shea in favor).

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila Tesei
Recording Secretary