

NEW HAVEN HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Wednesday, September 13, 2023, Regular Meeting, 7:00 PM

Location: Web-based meeting via Zoom

Chair Trina Learned calls to order the public hearing at 7:03 pm.

In attendance: Fatima Cecunjanin (Staff to the Historic District Commission, Planner II), John Ward (Special Counsel to Economic Development), Trina Learned (Commissioner and Chair), Susan Godshall (Commissioner), Karen Jenkins (Commissioner), Richard Munday (Commissioner), Dylan Christopher (Commissioner), David Valentino (Commissioner), John Herzan (New Haven Preservation Trust)

1. Roll Call

Chair Learned reviews New Haven's Zoom meeting HDC policies and procedures and the point of New Haven's Local Historic Districts and the Historic District Commission (HDC).

2. Public Hearing

2.1 23-07-CA 98 South Water Street (MBLU: 232 0002 02000) City Point Local Historic District. Owner: Pequonnock Yacht Club. Applicant: Lawrence Wang. Seeking approval to replace vinyl siding.

Lawrence Wang, 100 Parrott Drive, Shelton

Mr. Wang explains that for the last year they have tried to find the appropriate siding because half of the existing is aluminum and half is vinyl. They think the best way forward is to take off the siding and repair the novelty wood siding and some framing underneath and re-side it to protect the building. Chair Learned clarifies that they don't need a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to repair the siding but since they can't match the siding they submitted an application. Mr. Wang confirms. Chair Learned asks why when the wood siding is repaired do they need to put siding over it. Mr. Wang explains that wood siding is rotted, in some places with large holes. Chair Learned opens it up to Commissioner questions.

Commissioner Godshall asks about a site plan and which building is being discussed. Mr. Wang explains it is the small restaurant on the property. Commissioner Godshall asks what he means by novelty siding (Chair Learned explains it's called Dutch lap siding) and if there are photos of it. Chair Learned says all the photos of the current siding show it. Commissioner Valentino asks what the replacement siding will be. Mr. Wang replies that in the original COA it allows for vinyl siding so that is their plan. Commissioner Christopher asks if the building is designated aside from being in the district. Mr. Wang says it is not. Commissioner Munday asks to see the application on the screen for reviewing together. The existing siding and novelty siding underneath are visible in the photos. Commissioner Godshall clarifies that the original COA says to repair the siding and now the ask is to replace the siding. Chair Learned says that the vinyl siding that Mr. Wang held up as an example of the new siding does not match what is currently there and asks if the profile matches the yacht club's siding. Commissioner Christopher asks if the restaurant is currently open because it appears there is a major interior renovation as well. Mr. Wang confirms that they are doing structural repairs, electrical, and floors inside. Commissioner Christopher asks about the timeline. Mr. Wang replies that he hopes to be finished in a month or two. Commissioner Christopher asks what percentage of building has been worked on. Mr. Wang replies that it has been most of it. Commissioner Godshall confirms that the yacht club siding is Dutch lap (shown by Google Maps) which does not match the vinyl sample. Mr. Wang adds that the siding on the yacht club varies. Chair Learned opens up the public hearing.

John Herzan, 35 Flying Point Road, Branford (New Haven Preservation Trust consultant)

Mr. Herzan clarifies that this building is a contributing resource to the Oyster Point National Register District and the local historic district because it is attached to a contributing building. He adds that there is a variety of different siding on the buildings, including shingles on the yacht club on the interior parking lot side. He also adds that preserving the wood siding was discussed with Mr. Wang but the amount of the deterioration made his contractor feel that trying to replace the wood would jeopardize the structural integrity. By opening up the interior, they could also see the clapboard underneath of the yacht club. He

feels that the replacement with vinyl siding is appropriate for this building to preserve its utility and reuse.

Chair Learned closes the public hearing. Commissioner Christopher asks for clarification about the style and profile of the replacement siding. Chair Learned does not feel certain they have that information in the application. Commissioner Godshall says that it is Dutch lap on two sides of the yacht club but it is unclear the size based on the street view. The siding does align with both buildings where they meet. Mr. Wang explains that the siding to be used is the proposed siding approved by the COA last year (4' Dutch lap siding, wood grain).

Commissioner Valentino moves to approve the application with the new vinyl to match the existing as much as possible.

Commissioner Godshall amends the motion to approve the application as submitted with two stipulations; (1) that the replacement siding be 4" Dutch lap as shown on the cut sheet subject to administrative approval (if it is up to 4.5") and (2) it matches in profile as closely as possible to the siding on the Pequonnock Yacht Club.

Commissioner Munday seconds.

Chair Learned will not vote so only five commissioners will vote.

All in favor at 7:53.

Motion passes.

3. Discussion Items

3.1 Demolition Delay

Ms. Cecunjanin reviews several recent demolition delays from the past few months.

- **98 Hazel Street**
 - The residential bungalow was built c. 1920 and is located in the Winchester Repeating Arms National Register District. The delay ends on October 15, 2023.
- **15 Hillhouse Avenue – Rear addition to be demolished**
 - This building is owned by Yale and is an educational facility built c. 1894 and the addition was built in 1940/50. It is in the city's Historic Resource Inventory.

- **349-351 McKinley Avenue – Portion of roof to be demolished**
 - This is a convent owned by St. Aidan’s Church, built in 1956 and located in the Suburban Westville State Register District. A portion of the roof is being demolished for conversion to apartments. The delay ends on October 22, 2023.
- **788 Elm Street – Rear garage to be demolished**
 - This garage is associated with an Edgewood Park National Register Historic District residence, built c.1910. The delay ends on November 12, 2023.
- **479 Norton Parkway – Rear garage to be demolished**
 - This garage is associated with a residence in the Beaver Hills National Register Historic District, built in 1920. The delay ends on November 23, 2023.

Chair Learned would like to take the five items as a consent agenda and asks the Commission if they have a question about a specific property. Commissioner Godshall explains that Sarah Tisdale of the New Haven Preservation Trust (NHPT) worked with Ms. Cecunjanin on four of these items so they have been reviewed by NHPT. Chair Learned explains the Commission’s role to comment with objections if they need to. Commissioner Godshall explains that for 349-351 McKinley Avenue the owner is working with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) staff for tax credits. The shown plan may not be final design. There is some concern about the integrity of the building and whether it can contribute to the district with the proposed changes. Commissioner Munday comments that the proposed changes are a common form of adaptation of an existing building with considerable lengths being taken to retain the building’s character. He doesn’t consider it to be demolition. Commissioner Godshall explains that the demolition ordinance applies to a building or any part thereof which is why this case is considered a demolition. Ms. Cencujanin reminds the commission that representatives for some of the properties are present to answer questions.

Chair Learned asks about the plans for 98 Hazel Street and if the new construction is for a substantial multi-unit housing project. Commissioner Godshall raises that it was purchased to be demolished which is a concern. Chair Learned explains that as a Certified Local Government, the Commission is the designated group who, if there

were a substantial objection to a demolition, would have a voice in expressing that opinion. The Commission does not have a voice in design considerations going forward, or any other use of the property. Commissioner Munday expresses he does not object to this structure due to the well-intended purpose for the land.

Jim Paley, 333 Sherman Avenue, Neighborhood Housing Services of New Haven

Mr. Paley wants to clarify that the Hazel Street property was not purchased for demolition, but the intention was to rehab it. However, Todd Levine and Marena from the State Historic Preservation Office determined it was not structurally sound. Neighborhood Housing Services modified the original plan to reuse the house with one that would demolish instead.

No motions made by the Commission. Chair Learned thanks the representatives from the properties for taking the time to attend.

3.2 79 Lawrence Street

The Commission had concerns about the plans for this demolition as the renovation went differently than what was proposed. Ms. Cecunjanin shows photos of the work being done on this building from June which only show that maybe the foundation remains. Staff have been trying to figure out with the building department what is an appropriate form of enforcement. Commissioner Godshall adds that there was confusion on the building permit, but it said the work was removing from the roof line and above so what has happened disregards both permits. Her understanding is that the city fined the owners \$100 but she thinks they should incur some stronger enforcement than that amount. Ms. Cecunjanin thinks language should be added to the demolition delay ordinance about changes to the work and notification to the appropriate parties. Commissioner Godshall states that the pictures shown are hers from before the June meeting and now it looks done. Between those times there was no work stop order given. Ms. Cecunjanin thinks there was early on, but the building official may have allowed them to just secure the structure. Mr. Ward agrees that there needs to be a way to deal with this kind of behavior and he will be looking into

it. Chair Learned asks for an update at the next meeting. Mr. Ward confirms he will give one.

3.3 Potential upcoming applications

Ms. Cecunjanin explains that she added some items to clarify if they need a COA from the Commission.

- **627 Quinnipiac Avenue – Solar panels**
 - An applicant wants to put solar panels on the house at the corner of Welcome Street and Quinnipiac Avenue (QRHD), which are only visible a little bit on Welcome Street. Chair Learned explains that the statutes have been amended to accept alternative energy installations. Traditionally the Commission reviews how they are affixed, their profile, etc. Once those questions are addressed, it is seen as a temporary change which would make them permissible. Several applications of solar have been approved. She also recommends that the applicant come before the Commission and not the company installing them.
- **116 Greenwich Avenue – Roofing**
 - Ms. Cecunjanin explains that a narrative has been submitted to remove architectural shingles that were installed improperly. They are installing the same shingles. Chair Learned replies that repairing like for like may only require administrative approval.
- **37 Exchange Street – Roofing**
 - Ms. Cecunjanin explains a similar situation at Riverplace Condos which is to re-roof one of the buildings.

4. Minutes

4.1 Approval of April 20, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Valentino makes a motion to approve minutes.

Commissioner Godshall seconds.

All in favor at 8:36.

Motion passes.

4.2 Approval of June 14, 2023 Meeting Minutes.

Commissioner Godshall makes a motion to approve minutes.

Commissioner Learned seconds.

Three edits were made by Commissioner Godshall which have been corrected.

Commissioners Learned, Godshall, Christopher, Valentino and Jenkins in favor;

Commissioner Munday abstains at 8:43.

Motion passes.

5. New Business

Commissioner Valentino makes a motion to adjourn.

Commissioner Munday seconds.

All in favor at 8:43.

Motion Passes.

Respectfully submitted by Jordan Sorensen, recorder.