

NEW HAVEN HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Wednesday, May 13, 2020, Regular Meeting, 7:00 PM Location: Web-based meeting via Zoom

Commissioner George Knight calls to order the public hearing at 7:01 PM.

In attendance: Aicha Wood (City Plan), Maya Vardi (City Plan), Jenna Montesano (City Plan), Trina Learned (Commissioner and Chair), Tom Kimberly (Commissioner and Clerk), Susan Godshall (Commissioner), Doug Royalty (Commissioner), George Knight (Commissioner), Karen Jenkins (Commissioner)

New Public Hearing

1. 20-06-CA Owner: Lance Lichtor. Seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for Windows Replacement at 576 Chapel Street, Wooster Square Local Historic District.

Lance Lichtor, 576 Chapel St, Unit 8, New Haven

Mr. Lichtor says he is applying for the installation of four new cottage style windows on the first floor of the building because the current windows leak and therefore need to be replaced. He provides information on the proposed windows (pine, double-hung, primed white, insulated with Argon gas).

Commissioner Godshall notes the application is not notarized and Ms. Vardi says the necessity to notarize was waived due to the Covid-19 situation.

Commissioner Royalty says the application mentions the new windows being both double-hung and single-hung and receives clarification that the windows will be double-hung. Commissioner Royalty also inquires about changes in the window jamb and muntins and Mr. Lichtor says they should be very close to the original, but is unable to provide the exact details.

Commissioner Godshall says it is important for the muntins on the first floor to match those on the second floor (consistency).

Commissioner Kimberly asks if the applicant has considered restoring the existing windows rather than replacing and the applicant says he was told restoration wouldn't fix the problem.

Commissioner Knight asks if the applicant knows the date of the windows, but the applicant does not.

Commissioner Knight says he is not convinced that the windows are leaking, rather he thinks there is a condensation issue relating to lack of insulation. He says he thinks the windows actually look in rather good shape and he is not seeing degradation and therefore is not convinced the windows need to be replaced. Commissioner Knight says the Commission wants

to see carefully drafted drawings showing the precise existing condition and the condition once the windows would be replaced, including details on muntin profile, jambs, etc.

Commissioner Royalty says he agrees with Commissioner Knight's opinion and thinks these windows are restorable. He says these windows are an important, distinctive feature of Wooster Square and should be retained, if possible, and if they can't be retained, replaced in-kind.

Mr. Lichtor asks who can restore windows and Commissioner Royalty suggests he contact New Haven Preservation Trust and/or Preservation Connecticut for resources. He also says the applicant can look into interior storm windows for insulation.

Commissioner Godshall suggests Mr. Lichtor speak to Elizabeth Holt of New Haven Preservation Trust.

Ms. Holt says she spoke to Mr. Lichtor via Zoom and will be happy to speak to him again and direct him to other contractors.

Commissioner Jenkins questions the other Commissioner's advice of restoration.

Commissioner Knight says it is the Commission's responsibility to protect the original fabric of the district and the windows are an important part of an important building in Wooster Square.

Commissioner Royalty agrees with Commissioner Knight and says that the condo association should look into State Historic Preservation Office tax credit program for homeowners to help alleviate Mr. Lichtor's concerns about pricing.

Mr. Lichtor withdraws his application, 7:47pm.

Continued Public Hearing

2. 20-07-CA Owner: Anna Mariotti. Seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for Gutters and Roof Line Trim Replacement, at 75 Sea Street, City Point Local Historic District.

Anna Mariotti, 75 Sea Street, New Haven

Aaron Kotowski, 75 Sea Street, New Haven

Ms. Mariotti reviews the conditions of 75 Sea Street including rotting gutters and rotting wood behind gutters. She says multiple contractors say the existing Yankee gutters are not repairable. She says she intends to remove the existing metal gutters and replace them with historically appropriate white aluminum half-round gutters. She explains how the gutters will be attached to the roof and the gutters' dimensions. Ms. Mariotti says she intends to remove the aluminum trim and siding and restore wood roofline trim and decorative wood elements (brackets and rafter tails). She provides detailed before and after drawings.

The Commissioners indicate they are happy with the updated presentation of the applicant.

Commissioner Knight says the rediscovery and re-expression of the rafter tails will make a great impact on the house. He confirms the applicant won't be using AZAC or PVC as a wood replacement.

Commissioner Royalty says he thinks half-round gutters are a good choice because they're historically appropriate.

Commissioner Knight opens the meeting for public comment.

Elizabeth Holt, NHPT, 922 State Street, New Haven says she thinks this is a wonderful application and recommends its approval.

Commissioner Godshall says the New Haven Preservation Trust is an important element in this sort of project due to the level of support Ms. Holt provided Ms. Mariotti.

Commissioner Royalty suggests the idea of reinforcing materials for gutters because the house is located in a flood zone.

Commissioner Kimberly moves to approve the application with the amended information.

Commissioner Godshall seconds.

All in favor 8:16pm.

Discussion

3. 90-day delay
 - 783 Orchard St.- Original expiration date: September 1, 2020

Ms. Wood says SHPO identified adverse finding in two regards for this development project: demolition of 783 Orchard St and concerns about the massing of the project. The scale of this project can't be reduced to receive CHFA funding. SHPO is unsure of conditions inside house.

Commissioner Godshall says she drove by the house and does not think this building is worth the Commission taking a stand on.

Commissioners Knight and Royalty agree, but Commissioner Royalty notes the Commission does need to think about the fact that SHPO deemed an adverse effect and this is the demolition of a historic resource.

Commissioner Godshall suggests the Commission could propose mitigation ideas.

Ms. Wood says in other New Haven demolition cases mitigation has included HABS documentation, nomination for the Armory, and interpretive signage along Farmington Canal Trail. She says the developers for this project have done renovations in the area and then offered as affordable housing.

Commissioner Godshall suggests that as a mitigation option the developer could donate labor to the Dixwell United Church of Christ's fund for essential façade and roof repairs.

Commissioner Learned recommends that if the Commission chooses to advocate for compensation their language should include that the Commission understands that 783 Orchard St has been demolished through neglect for years and, now that we've acknowledge Dixwell United Church of Christ, we'd like to demonstrate community support so it doesn't fall on hard times and maintains its status of a historic resource.

4. Pinto House Relocation- request that the Pinto House maintain its National Register status

Ms. Wood says there was testimony for this building to retain its National Register of Historic Places listing and that SHPO is in the process of preparing a recommendation that the NR council has the building maintain its listing. She says the Commission can write a letter to SHPO endorsing maintaining listing. There is concern that the Pinto House may not retain its listing and that it may not be qualified for relisting once relocated.

Commissioner Learned recalls the Commission speaking about this previously and supporting the Pinto House keeping its listing and agrees a letter should be drafted.

Commissioner Godshall says she will write a letter of support.

5. 915 Winchester Avenue- Proposed Wireless Communication Facility Modification

Ms. Wood says this is a dorm building at Albertus Magnus College and it is part of a roof installation.

New Business

6. Approval of Draft Meeting Minutes- 04/20/2020

The Commissioners provide their edits to the minutes.

Commissioner Learned moves to accept the minutes as amended.

Commissioner Kimberly seconds.

All in favor 8:50pm

Commissioner Learned moves to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner Godshall seconds.

All in favor 8:50pm

Respectfully submitted by Kristen Hopewood, recorder.