

**WETHERSFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
**PUBLIC HEARING**  
**February 27, 2007**

The Wethersfield Historic District Commission held a Public Hearing on February 27, 2007 in Room F-3 at the Pitkin Community Center, 30 Greenfield Street, Wethersfield, Connecticut.

Members Present:

Susan O'Brien, Chairperson  
Vacek Miglus, Vice Chairperson  
Jennifer Wolf, Clerk  
Robert Garrey  
Gary McLeod  
Eric Hart, Alternate  
John Maycock, Alternate

Members Absent:

Bette Botticello, Alternate

Also Present:

Kristin Stearley, Historic District Coordinator

Commissioner O'Brien, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:30PM, and read the opening comments. Commissioner Wolf, Clerk, read the Legal Notice as it appeared in the *Hartford Courant* on February 16, 2007.

**APPLICATION NO. 3469-07.** Ekret Llukaj seeking to install replacement windows on the 2nd floor and 1st floor porch, new doors for the front and back porches and construct a deck in the rear of 6-8 Middletown Avenue.

The applicant was not present at the hearing.

**APPLICATION NO. 3470-07.** Carol Bruce seeking to build a screened porch on the existing cement slab and to remove the existing shed in the rear yard at 381 Hartford Avenue.

Carol and Arthur Bruce of 381 Hartford Avenue appeared before the commission. They explained that there is an existing cement slab on the west side of the garage. They wish to build a screened porch on the slab that will measure 14' x 16'. There will only be a glancing view of the north side of the porch from the street.

The porch will have 24" of clapboard on the bottom with 5 screens above. There will be an additional section of clapboard above the screen. The clapboard will match the siding on the house and will be painted to match the garage. The roofline will match the roofline on the house and on the garage. The pitch of the roof will also match, but will be a step-down from the garage. There will be a wooden door facing south.

The applicants also wish to remove an existing shed. The shed cannot be seen from the street. Nonetheless the applicants were advised to include the removal of the shed in the application.

Commissioner O'Brien asked whether there was anyone else wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to this application. There being no one, this portion of the hearing was declared closed.

**APPLICATION NO. 3472-07.** David Peters seeking to install an above ground pool in the rear yard at 117 State Street.

David Peters of 117 State Street appeared before the commission. He explained that he wishes to install a 27' above ground pool. It will be 52" in height. A ladder will be installed. Although the exact style of ladder has not been

decided, the ladder will be removable. The height of the ladder is unknown. A picture of the ladder was provided, but no brochure describing the pool was available. However, the applicant provided pictures of a similar pool.

Mr. Peters indicated the pool will not be visible except at the right of the house only because bushes were severely cut back. The pool would be somewhat visible through the bushes. Commissioner O'Brien indicated the commission cannot consider bushes or other plants since they are not permanent fixtures. The question was raised as to whether the pool would be visible from Hartford Avenue. Commissioner Wolf asked the applicant what would be done to hide the pool. He stated he would be willing to install a fence.

Commissioner O'Brien asked whether there was anyone else wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to this application. There being no one, this portion of the hearing was declared closed.

**APPLICATION NO. 3467-07.** Dwight DeBow seeking to install a replacement window at 293 Middletown Avenue (Tabled on 2/13/07 with the Hearing left open - last date to act on is March 27, 2007).

Dwight DeBow seeking to install a replacement window at 293 Middletown Avenue appeared before the commission. He explained that there is a double casement window on the right side of the house. He wishes to replace the window with a double-hung window to match the existing windows in style. Commissioner Miglus asked for the size of the window and expressed some concerns that the new window be proportional to the other windows in the house. The applicant indicated that he had not made a final decision on the size pending approval from the commission of the type of window.

The existing windows are wood true divided light windows. However, Mr. DeBow would like to replace the casement window with a new construction vinyl window. The window will have grids only on the top frame. The applicant indicated the grids could be on the outside or in between the glass, although he would prefer the grids be in between the glass. If that window is approved by the HDC, he would like replace all the windows on the house with the same type of window.

Commissioner Miglus asked whether the applicant would match the trim when the siding is replaced. The applicant stated he would.

Commissioner O'Brien asked whether there was anyone else wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to this application. There being no one, this portion of the hearing was declared closed.

**APPLICATION NO. 3465-07.** Reinaldo Montalvo seeking to demolish the existing garage and replace it with a new garage the same size or larger at 16 Church Street (Tabled with the Hearing left open - last date to act on is March 13, 2007).

The applicant asked that the application be tabled once again since he was unable to attend the hearing. Kristin Stearley advised the applicant that the March 13 meeting is the last meeting the application can be heard, and suggested he attend the hearing.

Commissioner Wolf expressed a concern that the application would be automatically approved if for any reason the commission could not hear the application at the March 13 meeting. Commissioner Miglus indicated that a special meeting could be called if necessary.

**APPLICATION NO. 3471-07.** C-P Investments LLC seeking to renovate the Comstock Ferre building; renovation and adaptive reuse of other building on site and conversion to mixed use retail, office and residential; and Construction of a new 5,400 sf building containing retail, office and residential uses adjacent to Church Street at 249-263 Main Street.

Jack Gilmartin of Hewitt Engineering and Surveying, 470 New Britain Avenue in Kensington, appeared before the commission. Also appearing was the project's architect, Craig Aliberti of 27 Oakledge Drive in Ivoryton, and Attorney Peter Evans.

Mr. Gilmartin presented what the plot plan will look like. He described several changes that have been made since the commission viewed the initial plans. The changes include the removal of a fence in the garden area and the shortening of a stockade fence on Church Street. He indicated that the commission had expressed concern about the amount of pavement proposed. Mr. Gilmartin indicated that, in fact, there is 400 sf less pavement than currently exists. Chip seal will be done, which provides a more gravel look. Samples of the pavement and curbing will be provided.

Landscaping will be done in the parking areas. There will be sixty-five (65) parking spaces. Two dumpsters will be on the property. A stockade fence will screen the dumpsters.

The barn will be 10' narrower than it currently is. The 10' will be removed from the back of the building, where it currently encroaches on the neighbor's property. There will be a walkway at the back of the building to allow for access. The walkways will be 5' wide.

Mr. Aliberti explained that the two buildings along Main Street that currently exist are not being touched, except for repairs and painting. Building 3 is the existing barn and its flanking wings and Building 4 is new construction along Church Street.

Building 3 will have approximately 5400 sf of retail space on the first floor and eight dwelling units on the second floor. Building 4 will have approximately 2300 sf of retail space on the first floor and three dwelling units on the second floor.

Building 3 will be taken down, with the center barn being recreated and the wings being redone in the general shape of what currently exists. The building will be moved 10', which allows for loading in the back of the building and fire exits for the dwellings. A fence to match existing fencing will be installed. Trees, which will be as tall as the second floor windows, will be planted.

The shape of the existing barn is replicated in Building 3. Storefront glass with transom units above and glass doors with half panels below will be used. Dormers are for egress and ventilation for the second floor dwellings. Two of the three cupolas have been removed at the commission's suggestion. Mr. Aliberti indicated he would like to maintain the cupola in the middle of the building in order to give the building a distinctive vertical feature, especially since the building is 145' wide. A fence will be installed on the side of the building. Windows are shown on the gable ends, but can be removed to address privacy concerns expressed by neighbors.

A 22' x 5' sign is proposed. The sign would be wood with carved lettering. The sign would be lit with pan lighting with the light bulbs inside the fixtures.

Fifteen-foot high post lighting is proposed on the property. The lights will be located in areas where neighboring properties are buffered by the building. Four-foot lighting to wash over walkways will be installed where 4' picket fencing is located. The lights will not spill over to any of the surrounding properties.

Mr. Aliberti noted that the commission had commented about the Victorian appearance of Building 4. He presented photos of the neighboring homes on Church Street. Although the homes on the same side of the street as Building 4 are not Victorian, 4 homes across the street are including the home directly across street. Mr. Aliberti stated he tried to bring some unity among Building 4, the back building and other homes in the area by making Building 4 more Victorian.

In response to the commission's comments about the windows in Building 4, the windows have been changed to double-hung. By doing that the building blends in better with the homes on Church Street. Also in response to the commission, a wing has been put on the east side of the building that will be used as retail space on the first floor and residential space above.

All siding and trim will be wood. All windows will be wood with applied interior and exterior grids and bronze in between the glass so that the window reads as a true divided light. Shake shingles will also be used.

Commissioner Miglus expressed some concerns that the gable on the rear wing appears more prominent than the gable

on the front of the house. Mr. Aliberti indicated that the look could be remedied by broadening the main part of the house.

Mr. Aliberti stated he did not provide photos of the property from Hartford Avenue since the property cannot be seen from the street, although it can be seen from the neighbors' property. The plantings in the area are thick. The same type of plantings and trees can be used to block the neighbors' view.

Commissioner Hart asked whether another architectural style had been considered. Mr. Aliberti stated he had originally presented a Colonial style.

Commissioner Wolf thanked the architect for taking into consideration the comments made by the commission during earlier meetings. She also stated that an updated set of plans had been provided. However, any future plans must reflect the changes/concerns raised by the commission during the hearing and meeting. Future plans must also reflect the location of the freestanding lights.

Commissioner O'Brien asked whether there was anyone else wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to this application.

Chester Willard of 54 Center Street appeared before the commission and asked questions about the location of the entrances to the buildings. He was advised that there would be entrances on both Church and Main Streets.

Maureen Hayes of 29 Hartford Avenue appeared before the commission. She expressed concerns about the size of the project. She also expressed concerns about the destruction of the barn, the amount of lighting, and the likely change of the flavor of the residential neighborhood.

Brian Freeman of 59 Church Street appeared before the commission to ask whether the created streetscape photograph presented Building 4 to scale. He also indicated that the roofline of Building 3 appeared very large. He expressed a concern about the amount of lighting and asked whether it was possible to see a nighttime simulation of the property. Mr. Freeman asked the commission for information about the future steps the application takes after the first meeting.

Martha Smart of 62 Church Street appeared before the commission. She also expressed concerns about the amount of lighting proposed, and the addition of commercial property on Church Street. She also asked whether existing hemlocks will be replaced.

Barbara Vicino of 24 Church Street appeared before the commission. She stated she is totally against the proposed 4' picket fence with lighting and a sidewalk on the other side that will be installed by her property line. She feels that she and her neighbors will lose the privacy they currently enjoy on their property. When asked if she preferred something else, she indicated she preferred that a 10' stockade be installed.

Dana Spicer of 31 Church Street appeared before the commission. She also expressed concerns about the commercialization of Church Street.

Shirley Alderman of 267 Main Street appeared before the commission. Her property abuts the Comstock property. She has concerns about the installation and location of a fence that will enclose her property, which is only 41' wide in that area. She also expressed concerns about the lights that she fears will light up her property.

Terrance Brown of 38 Church Street appeared before the commission. He asked how written comments could be submitted. He was advised to submit any comments to Kristin Stearley. He is concerned about the scope of the project, the impact on his lifestyle, and the effect on his future ability to sell his property.

Rosalyn Hayes of 29 Church Street appeared before the commission. She suggested the roofline be lowered. She noted that there is a proposed fan in one of the buildings, and expressed concerns about the possible smell. She asked whether the buildings had basements since she had concerns about water displacement.

Barbara Dupruis of 23 Hartford Avenue appeared before the commission and expressed concerns about traffic and lack

of privacy.

Jim Vicino of 24 Church Street appeared before the commission and also expressed concerns about the commercialization of Church Street and the increase in traffic.

Ann Kuckro of 471 Main Street appeared before the commission. She expressed concerns about the size of the buildings and suggested some ways to make the building smaller. She is on the tourism commission and expressed concerns about losing the current look of Comstock. The property is used as a focal point for tourism and is concerned about the addition of parking spaces in the front of the property.

Kathy Ahern Williams of 15 Hartford Avenue appeared before the commission. She expressed concerns about the proposed development in the current residential neighborhood.

Billye Logan of 318 Hartford Avenue appeared before the commission. She urged the commission to table the application and to work with the developer to create a project that everyone can be satisfied with.

Claire Mead of 373 Main Street appeared before the commission. She also asked the commission to consider carefully the proposal.

Mary Lynch of 53 Ridge Road appeared before the commission. She has worked in the area for many years and noted that the project will have a major effect on the neighborhood. She asked that the commission consider the effect on the neighbors.

Paul Langdon of 37 Church Street appeared before the commission to express concerns about the extent of the project.

Kristin Stearley indicated that she received a letter from Melba Osgood of 45 Church Street. She expressed a concern that there is no space on the property for 65 cars.

A number of residents expressed concerns about the lack of notification to neighbors who do not abut the property.

Peter Evans, attorney for the developer, explained that the developer was approached about development of the property which has been for sale for some time. The developer has an option on the condition that Comstock Ferre remain as a tenant on the property. As a condition of purchase, the present owner of Comstock Ferre must sign a 15-year lease. If the present owner chooses not to continue to run the business, the developer has a right to first refusal so they can purchase the property and continue to run the business.

Mr. Aliberti addressed the questions raised by the public. He advised attendees that the original plan was to repair existing buildings. However, the barn is in serious disrepair and is a major fire hazard. Therefore, it was decided to replicate the building.

Upon motion by Commissioner Garrey, and seconded by Commissioner Wolf and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to close the public hearing on all the discussed applications, except application 3465-07, 3469-07, 3471-07, and to open the public meeting on those applications.

Aye: Garrey, McLeod, Miglus, O'Brien, Wolf

**WETHERSFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION  
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**APPLICATION NO. 3469-07.** Ekret Llukaj seeking to install replacement windows on the 2nd floor and 1st floor porch, new doors for the front and back porches and construct a deck in the rear of 6-8 Middletown Avenue.

Upon motion by Commissioner Wolf, seconded by Commissioner Garrey and a poll of the Commission, it was voted

to TABLE the application.

### **Discussion**

Aye: Garrey, McLeod, Miglus, O'Brien, Wolf

**APPLICATION NO. 3470-07.** Carol Bruce seeking to build a screened porch on the existing cement slab and to remove the existing shed in the rear yard at 381 Hartford Avenue.

Upon motion by Commissioner Garrey, seconded by Commissioner Wolf and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to APPROVE the application as submitted.

### **Discussion**

Aye: Garrey, McLeod, Miglus, O'Brien, Wolf

**APPLICATION NO. 3472-07.** David Peters seeking to install an above ground pool in the rear yard at 117 State Street.

Upon motion by Commissioner Miglus, seconded by Commissioner Garrey and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to APPROVE the application with the following stipulation:

- The existing hedges must be maintained to block the view of the pool. If not completely blocked from view, an appropriate wooden fence to achieve that purpose shall be required.

### **Discussion**

Commissioner Wolf expressed her concerns that the stipulation will be unenforceable and restated that a fence is necessary. Commissioner Garrey stated that the existing hedges, if maintained, will sufficiently shield the pool.

Aye: Garrey, McLeod, Miglus, O'Brien Nay: Wolf

**APPLICATION NO. 3467-07.** Dwight DeBow seeking to install a replacement window at 293 Middletown Avenue (Tabled on 2/13/07 with the Hearing left open - last date to act on is March 27, 2007).

Upon motion by Commissioner Miglus, seconded by Commissioner Wolf and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to APPROVE the application with the following stipulations:

- The casement window shall be replaced with a double-hung 6/1 window to match the existing in size and type.
- Window must also match muntin style and material.

### **Discussion**

Aye: Garrey, McLeod, Miglus, O'Brien, Wolf

**APPLICATION NO. 3471-07.** C-P Investments LLC seeking to renovate the Comstock Ferre building; renovation and adaptive reuse of other building on site and conversion to mixed use retail, office and residential; and Construction of a new 5,400 sf building containing retail, office and residential uses adjacent to Church Street at 249-263 Main Street.

Upon motion by Commissioner Miglus, seconded by Commissioner Wolf and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to TABLE the application.

## **Discussion**

Commissioner Wolf thanked the public for attending the meeting and for providing the commission with feedback about the project. She indicated the commission takes the public's comments very seriously, and encouraged the public to attend future meetings.

The commissioners expressed concerns about the amount of pavement that is planned. They also listed the items they asked be provided to the commission. Those items included:

- Cutsheets for all windows, lights and doors.
- Sample of walkway paving.
- Detail of the walkways.
- Landscaping type and location.
- To-scale drawings of streetscape.
- Sample of roofing material
- Type and placement of lighting.
- Detail of cupola.

Aye: Garrey, McLeod, Miglus, O'Brien, Wolf

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF:** February 13, 2007

Upon motion by Commissioner Miglus [the minutes of the February 13, 2007 meeting](#) were approved without objection.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Public comments on general matters of the Historic District**

None.

### **Report of the Historic District Coordinator**

None.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Upon motion by Commissioner Wolf and seconded by Commissioner Garrey and a poll of the Commission, it was unanimously voted to ADJOURN the meeting at 10:26PM.

Aye: Garrey, McLeod, Miglus, O'Brien, Wolf

Respectfully Submitted  
TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD  
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Jennifer Wolf  
Clerk

