



# Westport Historic District Commission

Town Hall

Westport, Conn. 06880

## WESTPORT HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION January 9, 2018 APPROVED ACTION MINUTES (Digital Recording of Meeting is Available)

**Members Present:** Chair Randy Henkels, Vice Chair Ed Gerber, Clerk Grayson Braun, Member Bob Weingarten, Alternates Cheryl Bliss, Marilyn Harding, and Judi Freedman

The Westport Historic District Commission held a public hearing at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 9, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. in Town Hall, Room 309/307 for the following purposes:

1. To hear the Chair's report and update on current HDC activities.

**Chair Henkels reported that the recommended edits made by the State Historic Preservation Review Board were incorporated by the project consultants into a revised Bridge Street National Register Nomination Study. The final report will be forwarded to the National Park Service for final review and listing.**

2. To approve the minutes of the December 12, 2017 meeting. **The draft action minutes were APPROVED as submitted.**
3. To elect a slate of officers for 2018. **The following slate of officers were unanimously elected to serve in 2018:  
Chair Randy Henkels, Vice Chair Ed Gerber, and Clerk, Grayson Braun.**
4. To review and comment on proposed renovation at **2 Riverside Avenue (a.k.a. 25 Post Road West), the Daniel Platt, Lorenzo Tuttle House, c. 1843/1870) in the National Hall National Register Historic District. (Chair Henkels recused for this item.)**

**Paul Harris of Cole Harris Associates requested a letter of comment from the HDC for proposed modifications at 2 Riverside Avenue which is located in the National Hall National Register District. He represented the current owner, Ciara Webster. Their goal is to preserve the original structure and undertake a major renovation by embellishing it and showcasing the display of modern antique furniture. He presented plans for a second-floor addition, the relocation of the Post Road entry, the enhancement of the front facade with shop windows, the installation of a glass curtain wall on east and south elevations, a public space, expanded parking, extensive landscaping and a roof garden. Acting chair Ed Gerber questioned the extent of the proposed demolition. Mr. Harris replied it was under 35%, as discussed with zoning staff. Ed Gerber and Grayson Braun stated strong objections to the use of new materials including the glass curtain wall on the east elevation and the use of corten steel on the roof and walls of an addition. Ms. Braun also stated that the proposed project is "a massive departure, not appropriate...the original structure was dwarfed by new elements on a small site." The project was endorsed by local architect and abutting neighbor Peter Cadoux, who made a recommendation to repeat the lead coated copper finishes, instead of the proposed corten steel, on the addition. The members supported his recommendation.**

5. To take such action as the meeting may determine to recommend to the Building Official that the balance of the delay period for a demolition permit at **241 Bayberry Lane** be waived. **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**
6. To take such action as the meeting may determine to recommend to the Building Official that the balance of the delay period for a demolition permit at **9 Wakenor Road** be waived. **APPROVED 3 (yes) Henkels, Gerber, Braun and 2 (no) Weingarten and Harding**
7. To take such action as the meeting may determine to recommend to the Building Official that the balance of the delay period for a demolition permit at **6 Ivanhoe Lane** be waived. **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**
- ~~8. To take such action as the meeting may determine to recommend to the Building Official that the balance of the delay period for a demolition permit at **20 Rices Lane** be waived. **Waiver was previously recommended by the HDC.**~~
9. **(The following application is continued from December 12, 2017. Testimony was taken.)** To approve a *Certificate of Appropriateness Application* dated November 28, 2017 for the proposed new construction, driveway, fencing and lighting fixtures at **20 Morningside Drive South located in the 20 and 26 Morningside Drive South Local Historic District.**

Architect for the project, Joe Cugno, presented an Italianate style new construction with a garage in the foreground. He emphasized its reduction in size and height compared to the previously presented alternative designs. In his opinion, Mr. Cugno stated the proposed style was appropriate because it mimicked the original Italianate house. There was discussion about the importance of the studio to the district and its role as an accessory building to the main house, which was intentionally located in a meadow some distance from the house. Chair Henkels emphasized the nature of the historic district as a rural environment, unified by its structures and spaces. Although he acknowledged the care that went into preparing the new design, he commented there was too much replication and it was too large in scale, thereby, overwhelming the studio. He corrected the applicant by saying that the Secretary of the Interior Standards very clearly state that the proposed new construction should be subordinate to the main structure, which in this case, is the studio. He added, by reconfiguring the lot lines, the applicant has made it difficult not to obscure the studio. This might be achieved by building a small house, which the applicant stated was not their intent. Chair Henkels commented that the HDC was trying to give the applicant an opportunity to build a new construction without obstructing an important component of the district. In summation, the proposed design was too large for the district. Several neighbors spoke in strong opposition.

Chair Henkels suggested a motion, which was made by the Clerk and unanimously approved by the members, to close the hearing in order for him to carefully draft a resolution based on comments made by the members and input from the public. This resolution will be voted on in a special meeting in the next couple of weeks.

10. To consider the thematic nomination of nine early 20<sup>th</sup> century stone bridges (Kings Highway, Main Street, Myrtle Avenue, Evergreen Avenue, Jesup Road, Long Lots Road, Cross Highway, Greens Farms Road, Saugatuck Avenue) under Criteria A (broad patterns of history) and C (distinctive type, period or method of construction) to the National Register of Historic Places.

Morley Boyd requested the HDC support the National Register Nomination of 9 local stone bridges. He referred to the POCD and the HDC Handbook which cite the importance of these structures to the character of the town. Upon motion by Grayson Braun and seconded by Bob

**Weingarten and approved unanimously, the members supported seeking grant funding for a thematic study of nine local stone bridges. Staff will inquire of SHPO if an eligibility study would be required prior to the preparation of a National Register nomination study and what would the form be for the eligibility study. Procedurally, the support of the First Selectman/Board of Selectman and the Board of Finance would be next steps.**

**The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.**