

Draft Minutes

TOWN OF GUILFORD Historic District Commission Minutes – 18th September, 2019

A public hearing and regular meeting of the Historic District Commission was held on Wednesday 18th September, 2019 at 7:00p.m. in the Guilford Community Center with Chairman Randall McCartney presiding.

Present: Teresa Buchanan, John Cunningham, Randall McCartney, Reno Migani, Ann Street and Alternates Michael Mancini and Michael Sulzbach.

PUBLIC HEARING

The meeting was called to order at 7:05p.m. Clerk Teresa Buchanan read the legal call of the meeting. Alternates Mancini and Sulzbach were appointed to act.

#823 - Mainsail Capital Management, to install outdoor advertising signs on property located at 63 Whitfield Street. Assessor's Map 39, Lot 94: Rance Hillier stated that there had been two existing signs and his new signs would be installed in the same location using the same brackets. There will be no change in sign size and they will meet the signage regulations. One sign will be at the front of the building and one in the alleyway by the back door. Mr. Hillier noted that his office was on the second floor. Mr. McCartney queried the height given as 92". Mr. Hillier replied that this was from grade to the bottom of the sign. Mr. Cunningham asked about material. Mr. Hillier replied that a composite material would be used. Mr. Cunningham asked about lighting. Mr. Hillier replied that there was existing lighting on the building and he was not requesting any additional lighting. Mr. Cunningham asked if the Zoning Enforcement Officer had reviewed the signs and Mr. Hillier replied yes. No-one spoke for or against the application.

The public hearing was closed at 7:11p.m. and was followed immediately by the regular meeting.

REGULAR MEETING

DELIBERATION OF PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

#823 - Mainsail Capital Management, to install outdoor advertising signs on property located at 63 Whitfield Street. Assessor's Map 39, Lot 94: Mr. Cunningham said he thought the signs looked fine. He then made a motion, seconded by Ms. Buchanan, to approve the application as submitted. Subcommittee appointed is Ann Street. The motion to approve was carried unanimously with Buchanan, Cunningham, Migani, Street, Mancini and Sulzbach voting in favor.

Approval of Minutes: Ms. Street felt the minutes should reflect that the meeting scheduled for 21st August was cancelled due to lack of a quorum and replaced by a special meeting held on 26th August, 2019. Ms. Street then made a motion to accept the Minutes of 26th August, 2019, as amended. Ms. Buchanan seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

Public Forum: There were no members of the public present.

Chairman’s Report: **1) 186 River Street:** Mr. McCartney reported that an after the fact Certificate of Appropriateness application was received for repairs carried out after this house was damaged by a motor vehicle. Several windows and some siding had to be replaced. Mr. McCartney said he had spoken to the homeowner and made a site visit today and felt this work had been a replacement-in-kind. After brief discussion the Commission agreed that a Certificate of Appropriateness was not required for this repair work. **2) 296 Old Whitfield Street:** Mr. McCartney said he had received an email from Mr. Migani regarding a possible demolition on this property. The Town’s building official Kimberly Norman-Rosedam would not issue a building permit so Mr. McCartney and Ms. Street met with her. Mr. McCartney said he showed the HDC minutes to the building official and explained that because the demolition was fairly minimal compared to the overall project and not very visible the Commission approved the project without requiring a demolition permit. Mr. McCartney mentioned that since the Town had hired several new building officials he felt a “lunch and learn” should be held to educate them about the Historic District Commission. **3) Meeting with First Selectman:** Mr. McCartney said he had been invited to meet with First Selectman Matt Hoey and Town Engineer Janice Plaziak to discuss the property at 52 Church Street. Mr. McCartney said he had reviewed the Rules of Procedure with regard to demolitions and how the Town would have to provide a very convincing argument and comprehensive documentation if it wished to demolish the building. Mr. McCartney said the Town seemed unsure what it wished to do with the property and may keep it for cold storage or perhaps retain the façade and demolish the rear. Mr. McCartney said he had explained that the Historic District Commission would want to see plantings along the front of the property to soften and help conceal the parking. Ms. Street felt the façade was worth saving but removing the several additions on the rear might be acceptable.

Annual Report 2018 – 2019: Ms. Buchanan made a motion to approve the Annual Report as drafted. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

Correspondence: CT Trust for Historic Preservation, notice of name change of organization; letter from First Selectman Hoey (8/22/19) reappointing Teresa Buchanan as a regular member; copy of letter from First Selectman Hoey (8/5/19) to Susanna Smith thanking her for her service to the Town.

Public Relations: No report

Discussions: **1) Criteria for Legal Notices:** Mr. McCartney circulated information on legal notice requirements for municipalities from the Office of Legislative Research and from the Rules of Procedure. He said that a legal notice was just for noticing a meeting and if people wished to have

more detailed information they could view applications in the town hall or attend the public hearing. Any information not included in an application by an applicant could not be ruled on by the commission. Mr. Sulzbach noted that if an application was simple it could all be listed in the legal notice but if it was more complicated then just the notice of intent to hold the public hearing could be done without all the detail from the application. Ms. Street mentioned a recent application where some signs were being redone and new signage was being added. She had been concerned because the legal notice did not make clear that there was new signage and she felt it should have listed both refurbishing the signs and adding new signs. Mr. Mancini was concerned that the wording in a legal notice might lead a resident to think the project was minor so the resident would not attend the public hearing when in fact the opposite was true and the resident should have attended the hearing. Mr. McCartney said the legal notice was just a notice of intent and was not intended to convey the scope of a project. Copies of legal notices from the Planning & Zoning Commission and the Zoning Board of Appeals were circulated. None of these legal notices contained details of the projects listed. Ms. Buchanan recommended making the legal notices as generic as possible. **2) Commission Membership:** Mr. McCartney circulated a listing of the commission members and their terms of office. The Rules of Procedure require that 3 regular members and 2 alternates live within the historic district. Mr. McCartney said Ms. Buchanan had been approached by a teacher from Guilford High School who taught architectural history and was interested in serving on the commission. He was unsure if this person lived within the district. Mr. McCartney pointed out that the commission had a hard time filling vacancies with in-district residents. He felt the current vacancy might remain open unless the residency requirement was changed, although one would want to keep the majority of the membership within the district. Mr. Sulzbach recommended seeing what the commission could change at the local level. Mr. McCartney and Ms. Street agreed to research this issue.

Approval of Bills: Mr. Cunningham made a motion to approve the following bills: Shore Publishing, legal notice (8/26/19), \$29; Katharine Stewart, secretarial services. Mr. Sulzbach seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

Unfinished Certificates of Appropriateness: It was agreed the following projects had been completed:-

- #686 Willa Williams, 94 State, expires 6/17/17 – roof (RWM)
- #803 Whitfield Street, LLC, 51 Whitfield, expires 9/18/19 – rear deck/stairs (JC/MM).
- #804 Rolf Langeland, 45 Church, expires 10/16/19 – fence (TB)
- #809 Guilford Savings Bank, 1 Park/44 Boston, expires 4/15/20 – fence/front porch (JC)
- #812 Michael Shea, 11 Fair, expires 5/20/20 – windows (JC)

Mr. Cunningham made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:05p.m. Ms. Buchanan seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

The next meeting of the Historic District Commission will be held on Wednesday 16th October, 2019 at 7:00p.m. in the Guilford Community Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Katharine Stewart
Recording Secretary