

MINUTES  
Regular Meeting  
Historic District Commission of the Town of Greenwich  
Wednesday, February 7, 2018, 7:00pm  
Gisborne Room, Town Hall

**ATTENDEES PRESENT**

COMMISSIONERS: STEPHEN BISHOP – CHAIRMAN, KATHRIN BROWN, ARIS CRIST,  
DARIUS TORABY

ALTERNATES: MARTIN KAGAN, ANNIE MCGINNIS, SERENA BECHTEL, CYNTHIA  
SMITH

ABSENT: FI FI SHERIDAN, MARIE WILLIAMS

Mr. Bishop called meeting to order at 7:05pm:

1. CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

47 Strickland Road, Cos Cob, CT 06807 (contributing property to Strickland road  
Local Historic District)

Owner: Greenwich Historical Society

Represented by: Debra Mecky, Executive Director, Greenwich Historical Society

Designer: Whirlwind Creative

Review plans for installation of new sign at entrance to the main parking lot at 47  
Strickland Road

Ms. Mecky began her presentation by introducing David Lackey and Terren Baker of  
Whirlwind Design who have been hired to work on interpretive signage as well as  
exhibits for the Greenwich Historical Society campus.

Mr. Lackey began by speaking of the new identity his firm is creating for Greenwich  
Historical Society. The signage that his firm has developed for the site is minimal in  
theme (Whirlwind has been working closely with the site's architect David Scott  
Parker). The primary sign that is being presented tonight is the entrance sign.

The proposal involves a double-sided sign that is to be integrated into the landscape  
of the site. The parapet wall and walking platform were identified where the sign  
would be placed. Further, the sign will be perpendicular to Strickland road not  
parallel. The sign will be at a visible scale and will be 52 inches wide and 72 inches  
tall. The sign is a monumental sign but not a post. There will be smaller directional  
signs and a restricted access sign.

Mr. Lackey then asked for questions.

Mr. Crist asked if the brought sample is quarter scale.

Mr. Lackey confirmed and identified where the soil line would be.

Mr. Lackey further stated that the actual sign's finish is a powder-coated finish and the name will be in relief (Greenwich Historical Society).

Ms. Smith asked, in regards to the coating, would it rust? Mr. Lackey replied no – it is a tiger drylac coating (used by other National Park Service sites).

Mr. Toraby asked about the mock up. Mr. Lackey said that the site is still under considerable construction and a mock-up was tested for visibility.

Mr. Toraby commented that it is very hard to imagine the actual scale of the sign with what is around it. Mr. Lackey understood the comment.

Mr. Bishop stated that that he feels the sign is attractive. He additionally offered that it is more of a contemporary type of look rather than a reference to either historical signs or the use of historic fonts and wondered if that was the direction the Historical Society was heading.

Mr. Toraby agreed, as the current style of the sign is completely contradictory to the Historical Society's use.

Ms. Baker responded that Whirlwind is trying to change a bit of the tenor of the Historical Society – moving away from stodgy and more towards contemporary and interesting but still deals with history.

Mr. Lackey interjected that they have been working closely with the site's architect and heavily contemplated the design of a sign from the significant era of the site but the architect preferred a sign to retain the austerity of the establishment.

Mr. Bishop then asked if the sign's were near or on any of the buildings.

Mr. Lackey stated that signs would not be attached to any historical buildings.

Ms. Baker said that it is an institutional sign and the site is a comprehensive gathering of a variety of buildings.

Mr. Lackey said that having worked in the past with the Park Service selection has been for light lettering and dark background as it offers better visibility.

Mr. Toraby said the design itself is very attractive and well proportioned. But the main sign is a bit too high especially for people who are driving and walking by – it should be at eye level. Is there any material in the complex that you are trying to relate the background of the sign to?

Mr. Lackey said no, not on the exterior but more so in the interiors of the various buildings.

Mr. Toraby stated that then it is quite foreign to the complex.

Ms. Smith asked if the type setting is above the stonewall?

Ms. Mecky said correct. The reason that the stonewall is so high has to do with the railing of the handicapped ramp. That was approved in the site plan.

Mr. Kagan stated he is getting the sense that the purpose is changing the focus from the Bush-Holley House to the Historical Society. Because the HS has no gravitas – it doesn't say it's a museum or anything but other than an organization. The property is known as the Bush-Holley House.

Ms. Mecky explained that that has been a problem for the Historical Society as its mission is broader than being the caretaker for the Bush-Holley House. Being the keeper of the Town's history, the Historical Society is trying to continue to build up its identity.

Mr. Kagan says that you are missing something by not having the signs in front of the buildings.

Ms. Mecky explained that you could only have a certain amount of signs allowed. Therefore the Historical Society is including interpretive signs for assisting visitors in identifying the various places on the campus.

Mr. Toraby said that the Bush-Holley House is a national destination not the Historical Society.

Mr. Kagan said the proposed design and lack of identification for the Bush-Holley House is missing what the site is known for.

Ms. Smith inquired how big would the lower letters be? Ms. Back responded that they would be 2.5 inches high (with the "G" being 14 inches).

Mr. Bishop said that he feels that this is the right scale.

Mr. Toraby asked graphically, why is the G the prominent letter of the sign? Mr. Lackey responded that that is the new identity/logo.

Mr. Toraby said originally there was a green background sign. Why was the green abandoned? Ms. Mecky said the proposed color ties in with the treatment of various elements of the site. Mr. Lackey further said that the color green upstages quite a bit. He further added that the proposed sign creates a presence but does not upstage the

feel of the district. Ms. Mecky offered that people have had difficulty seeing the green sign in the past. Mr. Lackey stated that green is a highway color and that brown is a historic/institutional color.

Mr. Kagan said that you are missing the mark by not calling it the Bush-Holley House and Museum, Operated by the Greenwich Historical Society.

Mr. Bishop asked for a motion and announced that Ms. Bechtel would fill in for Ms. Sheridan who is absent.

Motion to approve the installation of a new sign at the entrance to the main parking lot at 47 Strickland road and voted to approve the plan that was submitted for said meeting.

Moved by Kathryn Brown  
Seconded by Stephen Bishop

Voting in favor: Mr. Bishop, Ms. Bechtel, Ms. Brown, Mr. Crist  
Abstaining: Mr. Toraby

2. CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS  
140 Greenwich Avenue, Greenwich, CT 06830 (Greenwich Historic District -NRHP)  
Owner: Willgreen Holdings LLC  
Represented by: Jim Sackett, VP, CPG Architects

Review proposal to change window material from steel to aluminum on previously approved application

Postponed

3. Other Business

Informational presentation by Joe Tranfo regarding zoning proposal for downtown Greenwich

MINUTES

Motion to approve January 9, 2018 minutes

Moved by Kathrin Brown  
Seconded by Stephen Bishop

Unanimous vote

Voting in favor: Mr. Bishop, Mr. Toraby, Ms. Brown, Mr. Crist, Ms. Smith, Ms. Bechtel, Mr. Kagan, Ms. McGinnis

Motion to end meeting  
Moved by Annie McGinnis

Seconded by Martin Kagan

Meeting adjourned at 8:44pm