HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MEETING
MAZZA ROOM
GREENWICH, CT
DECEMBER 7, 2016

MINUTES

ATTENDEES PRESENT
COMMISSIONERS: STEPHEN BISHOP – CHAIRMAN, FI FI SHERIDAN, KATHRIN BROWN, DARIUS TORABY, ARIS CRIST

ALTERNATES: MARIE WILLIAMS

Mr. Bishop called meeting to order at 7:08pm.

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1. 50 RIVER ROAD
   COS COB, CT

REPRESENTED BY: DOYLE HERMN DESIGN ASSOCIATES
OWNER: CRK, LLC
PRESENTED: CHRISTOPHER D. BRISTOL, ESQ., GILBRIDE, TUSA, LAST & SPELLANE LLC

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
[CONTINUATION FROM NOVEMBER 9, 2016 HDC MEETING]
[NOTE: 50 River Road is a contributing structure to the Mead Avenue District of National Register of Historic Places]

Review plans dated 11/29/16 for proposal (revised from previously approved proposal) to construct an addition to the building and convert the building’s use to employee housing and squash courts for use in connection with the Greenwich Water Club located at 49 River Road.

Mr. Kral began his presentation by announcing that since last month, he has retained a landscape architect for the project. Mr. Kral gave a further update that he did reduce the overall footprint of the building which was included for the presentation tonight. The design still meets all the zoning requirements.
Mr. Alex Esposito produced a design that showed the building addition lowered. He further indicated that what he felt the past application lacked was the plantings in the front that are now addressed. The proposed building now disappears due to the surrounded ‘green wall’ which now appears to be a privet hedge.

Mr. Bishop mentioned that there had been discussion about putting in windows. Mr. Kral felt that the addition of windows pulls away (detracts) from the main house and that the goal was to keep the upper part simple. Landscaping could be added to the rear to help soften the look. Additionally, the exclusion of windows does help with the design of the interior.

Mr. Kral then produced a design that offered plantings (not a green wall) for HDC review that applied to the streetscape.

Ms. Williams inquired whether the existing house had a basement? Mr. Kral responded that does and it was about a story deep. She then asked about soil testing. Mr. Kral responded that yes all soil testing had been performed. Ms. Williams then asked about flooding and was told that the structure was not in the flood zone. She then asked if the proposed structure could be dropped further (another eight feet for a total of 16 feet). Her reasoning being that since this is a massive addition a design of the roof surface would act as an outdoor garden with a flavor that would blend into the house and thus lower the profile of the structure and allow for the facility you want.

Mr. Kral said that he had not researched going down two floors but stated that the cost of doing so rises exponentially (heating, ventilation, etc) and would put the project out of reach. Additionally, the sinking of the foundation into the ground does affect FAR which is another consideration.

Mr. Toraby asked to see the site plan. He felt that it basically tells the main story although the HDC’s point of interest is to preserve this most attractive existing structure. However, mass wise, it is being overpowerd by the size of the new development. Mr. Toraby went on to state he is willing to forgive that as preservation of the main structure is the most important portion of the proposal. Mr. Toraby then said that the new design is creating an appearance that is more subdued and not fighting with the main structure and somewhat complimenting it. Mr. Toraby would rather see more of the fenestration on the other elevations. He also suggested that if the applicant could create an offset on the other elevation by recessing the walk so that you would not have one long massive wall facing the neighbors. The wall could have an indentation to it.

Mr. Esposito said that they are changing all the materials, natural siding and restored windows of the current structure. Mr. Kral stated that he had agreed to HDC’s recommendations towards the preservation and offered restoration ideas regarding restoring the main structure to but he is now concerned about blending the proposed addition to the main structure.
Mr. Toraby said that was what was driving his point. He described that the top wall is quite visible. So Mr. Toraby suggested having one of the courts bumped out in order to create a shadow line. Mr. Kral replied that he could certainly look at implementing that suggestion. Mr. Bishop agreed that the division would break up the mass.

Mr. Bishop stated that he wanted consensus of the commission regarding clusters versus green wall.

Ms. Brown felt that adding density plantings and having plants larger in scale would help to diminish the massiveness of the proposed structure.

Ms. Sheridan felt if the birch were centered it would cut the building in half and should be placed closer to the western side of the building. Both Mr. Toraby and Ms. Brown stated that they did not mind where the birch was currently being placed.

Mr. Bishop said that ARC would probably comment on the landscaping but that the applicant heard HDC’s comments about placing plantings in front of the proposed structure so as to break up its mass.

Mr. Kral volunteered to come back from ARC after they rendered their opinion.

Mr. Bishop stated that he wanted to see the rear of the proposed structure.

Mr. Esposito said the entry doors are recessed 2 feet with a common overhang.

Mr. Toraby stated he wants the emphasis of the indentation carried over through in order to have a break up of the mass.

Ms. Brown asked is the squash area going to be AZEK? The siding will be cedar and should mimic the siding of the house (which is wood clapboard). Mr. Esposito confirmed the house is clapboard (under the vinyl siding).

Mr. Bishop felt that the restoration actions will be notable. And that he hoped when the applicant returns there will be more specific discussions regarding material and window selections and that they will be of high quality.

Mr. Esposito did comment that they are now removing quite a number of additions in the rear that aren’t compatible with the house, like the fire escape.

Mr. Bishop then stated that he wanted the applicant to return to HDC after their meeting with ARC.
Motion to preliminary endorse Design Study #3 with further improvements that will include an indentation/projection that breaks up the mass on the southwest wall and the northwest wall (rear entrance side). The applicant is to return to HDC following their meeting with the Architectural Review Commission to further discuss restoration details of 50 River Road.

Moved by Ms. Sheridan
Seconded by Ms. Brown
Unanimous vote

Voting in favor: Mr. Bishop, Ms. Sheridan, Mr. Crist, Ms. Brown, Mr. Toraby, Ms. Williams

2. 50 EAST PUTNAM AVENUE
GREENWICH, CT 06830

OWNER: Y.M.C.A.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
[NOTE: 50 East Putnam Avenue has Historic Overlay as well as placement on the National Register of Historic Places]

Applicant seeks approval of window infill

Mr. Toraby expressed concern that a vapor barrier was missing and that the chlorine and water is affecting all the steel members and mortar joints. On Putnam Avenue scape, white streaks can be seen ‘dripping’ down the wall.

Ms. Sheridan asked if a discussion with the new director of the Y.M.C.A. should be had about the structural difficulties regarding the corrosion.

Mr. Bishop agreed.

Motion to approve infill of the three windows [using the same pre-approved material].

Moved by Mr. Toraby
Seconded by Mr. Crist
Unanimous vote

Voting in favor: Mr. Bishop, Ms. Sheridan, Mr. Crist, Ms. Brown, Mr. Toraby, Ms. Williams
Mr. Bishop will write a letter with assistance from Mr. Toraby regarding the chlorine and expressing concern over the present and possible future damage and offer solutions for consideration.

MINUTES
Motion to approve minutes from November 9, 2016 meeting

Moved by Ms. Brown
Seconded by Ms. Sheridan
Unanimous vote

Voting in favor: Mr. Bishop, Ms. Sheridan, Mr. Crist, Ms. Brown, Mr. Toraby, Ms. Williams

DEMOLITIONS
21 Sinawoy Road
Cos Cob, CT

[note: any Greenwich resident may place a stay on a noticed demolition]. Otherwise, no action was taken.

UPDATE
Mr. Bishop discussed with HDC membership his meeting with Planning & Zoning Director Katie DeLuca whereby there are to be changes to the preservation incentives letter (that included a proposed amendment addition to Planning & Zoning regulation and was approved by HDC membership at September 14, 2016 meeting) that will now reflect an increased bonus for preserving historic structures. Mr. Bishop asked for approval from HDC membership to revise the letter and amendment to reflect bonus expansion and to re-submit to Planning & Zoning.

Motion to approve Mr. Bishop's edits from September 14, 2016 meeting and resubmit to Planning & Zoning

Moved By Ms. Sheridan
Seconded by Mr. Toraby
Unanimous vote

Voting in favor: Mr. Bishop, Ms. Sheridan, Mr. Crist, Ms. Brown, Mr. Toraby, Ms. Williams

Mr. Toraby announced that he will be pursuing drafting of a resolution regarding pavement within all local historic districts and present to HDC at its next meeting.

RTM votes on 117 Dingletown Rd on Monday, December 12, 2016 for the property to receive Local Historic Property designation.
Motion to end the meeting
Moved by Mr. Crist
Seconded by Mr. Toraby

Mr. Bishop closed the meeting at 8:30 pm