

NEW HAVEN HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
Thursday, April 20, 2023, Regular Meeting, 7:00 PM
Location: Web-Based Meeting via Zoom

Chair Trina Learned calls to order the public hearing at 7:04pm.

In Attendance: Fatima Cecunjanin (Staff to the Historic District Commission, Planner II), John Ward (Special Counsel to Economic Development), Trina Learned (Commissioner and Chair), Karen Jenkins (Commissioner), Susan Godshall (Commissioner), Richard Munday (Commissioner), David Valentino (Commissioner), Cordalie Benoit (Commissioner), Sarah Tisdale (New Haven Preservation Trust)

1. Roll Call

Chair Learned reviews New Haven's Zoom meeting HDC policies and procedures and the point of New Haven's Local Historic Districts and the Historic District Commission (HDC).

2. Public Hearing

2.1 23-04-CA 92 East Pearl Street (MBLU: 163/ 0734/ 00200) Quinnipiac River Local Historic District. Owner/Applicant: Eric D'Aquila. Seeking approval for modifications to East Pearl Street building entrance and Pierpont Street building entrance, including front bay window, entry stoops, entry doors, and railing systems.

Eric D'Aquila, 92 East Pearl Street, New Haven

Mr. D'Aquila introduced 92 East Pearl Street as a Greek Revival style home, built in the 1830s. He states that there was an addition to the building in the 1890s, in which the project was to take out the original entrance and stoop of the building. Mr. D'Aquila wants to rebuild the original entrance and stoop on Pierpont Street, along with modifying the entrance to the East Pearl Street side of the building. The new stoops on each side of the building will match the building materials of the specific façade of the building, with wrought iron handrails. The Pierpont Street façade included a door historically where the one of the windows is located in the present, and Mr. D'Aquila states that he has found extra bricks in the basement that match the exterior exactly, to use on this façade of the building. The landing and treads will be constructed of brownstone, which he will get

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from a stone fabricator. The railings on this side of the building will have panels consistent with other New Haven Greek Revivals. The applicant restates that on this wing of the building, he wants to replace the existing window that was added in the 1890s, with a new stoop and door to match the original layout of the home. On East Pearl Street, Mr. D'Aquila wants to create a "sunken building" entrance by replacing the current window opening with a door and the bay window with a new entrance. He would use the existing window opening in order to put a door in. There would be a stoop going up to the first-floor entrance and a stoop going down to the basement entrance, like an urban townhouse. There will be railings on both sides, which gives it the feel of a sunken garden. On the Pierpont Street façade, the existing bay window is sagging quite a bit. The window is wood framed, with stucco below it. Mr. D'Aquila is proposing to continue this stucco downwards to the foundation for more support, due to the warping of the floor that could be problematic in the future. For the Pierpont Street entrance, the applicant states that he would use an existing window opening to create the space for the new doors. He would not change the height of the opening but would remove the window and put a flat paneled wood transom to match the door, which would be a salvaged, four-panel door from that time period. Mr. D'Aquila states that he has already purchased doors from an architectural salvage that fit the measurements and time period and has included them with his application. On the East Pearl Street entrance, he will install double doors, which must have been what was there originally, due to the size of the bay window. Each door would consist of a two-slab exterior door, with a two-panel transom on top. Four panels total or two per slab. For the door at the sunken basement level, Mr. D'Aquila would reuse the existing window opening and lower it about eighty-one inches, in order to fit a door in it. The applicant states that he has worked with the New Haven Preservation Trust, who suggested that he use Doric style columns for the stoop.

Chair Learned states that the commission appreciates Mr. D'Aquila's thoughtfulness in returning the dignity to this building and neighborhood. She states that the details in the drawings are a little hard to understand and she just wanted to double check that what the commission approves is what actually will occur if a third-party checks the plans in the

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future. Chair Learned notes that there are two things that Mr. D'Aquila mentioned that are not in his application, which include the footing under the bay window on the Pierpont Street wing and the detailing on the cornice on the side of the building. Mr. D'Aquila states that he is not planning to do any work to the porch, and that the drawings have some inconsistencies with what is existing presently. He additionally states that he is willing to hold off on the footing of the bay window or revise his application in the future to include this.

Chair Learned asks if the commissioners have any questions. Commissioner Godshall asks the applicant to explain more about the footing on Pierpont Street, as she did not understand why it was needed. Mr. D'Aquila states that on the drawing, the window is sagging to the horizontal line below. He indicates that the floors are sagging and wants to solve this problem. The window is cement-based stucco and the applicant states that he would probably extend the brick on the rest of this building to cover this area as well. Commissioner Godshall states that this would probably require an amendment to Mr. D'Aquila's application and additional engineering before addressing the problem. Mr. D'Aquila agrees with Commissioner Godshall and states that he would excavate before, and that the foundation will have to be excavated before the stoops are put in.

Commissioner Munday adds that the addition of the original style of doors will add to the architectural spiritedness of the building and support the character of the building. He states that the drawings do not provide enough information about how the work will actually be conducted and that he is interested in seeing the stone choices and what they will look like. Mr. D'Aquila states that the existing building has a brownstone foundation and over the years there has been a cement-based plaster put on top of it. He would like to chip out the cement in the future and wants the stoops to match the original foundation and to look like an extension of the house. Commissioner Munday asks what is consistent with Greek Revival language. Mr. D'Aquila states that the existing foundation is random rectangular brownstone. Commissioner Munday points out that that is not what is on the drawing, as there are free stones in the drawing. Mr. D'Aquila says that his intent is to extend the original materials in the foundation and that the drawing needs to be adjusted

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to replicate this. Commissioner Godshall states that the choice of materials depends on what he does with the rest of the building, and they would have to choose at that point. Commissioner Valentino mentions that 14 Clark Street is similar to the applicant's house, and he should look at that for reference. He urges Mr. D'Aquila to choose something that best aligns with what is currently there and he should see what is there first and then decide.

Chair Learned urges the commissioners to stick to discussion about what the applicant is actually proposing. Chair Learned questions the choice of iron railing and mentions that it is very ornate, almost Charlestonian. She states that the Secretary of the Interior's standards guard against creating a false history. The commission wants to be careful that what is being added would have been there rather than a recreation of a historical element that may have never been present. Chair Learned asks if the arch above the window that is in the drawing is actually on the building presently. Mr. D'Aquila responds that it is a brick arch that is there now, built into the building and that there will be no changes to that. Chair Learned states that there may not be sufficient details in the drawings, as they are more schematic than construction level, where there is room for opportunity to interpret the details differently. Commissioner Godshall states that she seconds the thought about the railings and that they look a little over the top, and that Charlestonian was a good description. Commissioner Godshall mentions that she thinks Mr. D'Aquila should think about putting the same railing on the East Pearl side as is on the Pierpont side. Mr. D'Aquila says that the panels on the stairs are similar, but the ones on the sidewalk do not fit on the treads on the East Pearl side, so he needed a different size. Commissioner Godshall states that she is not arguing about that, but that she suggests a simpler railing on the stairs without extra ornamentation may be more appropriate. Mr. D'Aquila said that the New Haven Preservation Trust thought that these would work and that he thought they were in line with the Greek Revival style. Chair Learned starts that it would be helpful if he had examples of other buildings in New Haven, preferably in the Quinnipiac River District, that showed more ornate ironwork.

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Chair Learned opens the floor for public comment. Chair Learned opens the floor for commissioner discussion. Commissioner Godshall states that she believes that she is now understanding the drawings better and that she thinks the commission is referring to them as schematic, since parts of the building that are not being worked on are included in the drawings. Chair Learned agrees and states that it would be helpful where no work is being proposed either had no detail or had a more faithful representation of what the building actually looks like. For instance, the railings in the photos do not look like the railings in the drawing. Chair Learned asks if anything on the side porch is part of this project. Mr. D'Aquila states that there is not. Chair Learned states that it is just the two porches, as well as the entry to the garden level. Chair Learned asks to know what is underneath the stairs, in the "Enlarged Stair Section" of the drawing, as there are just a series of circles. She asks if that trap rock is what is internal, behind the brownstone. Mr. D'Aquila responds that that area is basically fill, where the concrete will go on top of and under where the treads are, the fill will be surrounded with concrete and a field stone will be applied. Chair Learned asks if there is a detail in the drawings of the new posts. Mr. D'Aquila responds that there should be dimensions in the drawings somewhere, and that they will be custom forged with iron, and wants it to be appropriate for the style. This particular post is something that he went back and forth with the New Haven Preservation Trust about, and they suggested to use 540 Chapel Street as an example for some design criteria. Mr. D'Aquila states that he is working with a forge for another project on 112 Wooster Street. Chair Learned states that she finds it unfortunate that they do not have sufficient detail to understand what is going on and that this looks a little schematic, as they only see height dimensions, but not other dimensions. Mr. D'Aquila asks if there is something that he can help Chair Learned understand. Chair Learned responds, stating that it would help if they knew what the cap looks like, or even something as simple as the arch detail on the side if that is indented or embossed, as they cannot tell from the drawing. The other thing is that given its elegance and simplicity, which she loves, it is completely out of touch with the railing, in her opinion. Mr. D'Aquila restates that he worked with the New Haven Preservation Trust, using 540 Chapel Street as a model.

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Commissioner Godshall mentions that the commission dealt with this property recently for a driveway request.

Chair Learned asks if there are any other thoughts from the commissioners in the discussion. Commissioner Munday says that the point Chair Learned made about not creating a false history or an inconsistent story is important, and that the language of the railings adds something unnecessary. It raises a lot of questions, and he would like to see it dialed back. Adding the new doors is a good move. The design creates area ways on East Pearl that will expose existing wall below grade currently and paving will change the view of the building from the street, so the commission does not really know what they will actually see when it is finished and if there will be more concrete.

Commissioner Munday mentions that for example, in this section of the stairs, they do not know whether they will be made of exposed concrete or if it will be faced with stone, as it is not showing in the drawing. Mr. D'Aquila states that there will be no exposed concrete, and that the note indicates that it will be wrapped in brownstone with migrant edges. Commissioner Munday states that he believes the detail Mr. D'Aquila is describing is consistent with newer buildings and not so much with fabric of the character of the existing building. An approach that comes from the building now may be sounder and more historically sympathetic, and the thin stone may not be like what is in the original building. Mr. D'Aquila states that he is not following what Commissioner Munday is saying and that they would not see the thickness of the stone, as you would be unable to tell from the outside. Commissioner Munday states that he thinks the problem that he is having is that there is not enough information here. He states that he does not want to discourage what the applicant is attempting to accomplish and thinks that what he has so far is great. Mr. D'Aquila states that he is getting the sense that this application is not going to be approved, so he does not know if it would be smart to invest in a more thorough drawing. Commissioner Godshall says that she thinks the applicant has heard some positive comments and it does not have to be an either/or situation, as they can table it and have him come back, particularly to remove things that are not going to happen and more information on the items that they have dwelled on for an hour. She

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states that the applicant noted that there were other railings nearby that supported his choice and that she thinks that an appropriate thing to do, if they table this until next month, would be to bring back some photos that convince the commission that this railing is appropriate.

Commissioner Jenkins says that she sees the New Haven Preservation Trust is on the line and that they have heard Mr. D'Aquila state several times that he has worked consulted with them. It is her sense from the conversation that they are giving him mixed signals about the drawings, so she is wondering if someone from the New Haven Preservation Trust, who he has worked with, can speak up on behalf of the work that was done to get to this point. Chair Learned states that the way that these proceedings go, is that the applicant gives their information, and the commissioners ask questions. They ask for public comment, which is where the New Haven Preservation Trust makes public comment. The New Haven Preservation Trust made no public comment. Then, as a commission they are to have discussion within themselves. They have not been adhering to this procedure. Chair Learned states that if it feels appropriate to go back and start again they can do that, but they should be mindful that they still have another applicant waiting. As Chair, she would like to offer that she believes that they have insufficient information to understand what the applicant is doing. They do not have enough information about materials or details, and it is hard to understand what is or is not in this application. They do need clarification, because at the end of the day at whatever point that they approve this application, they need documentation that has field verification, which is standard operating procedure for the Historic District Commission.

Commissioner Jenkins questions how the applicant got to this point then, with consultation from the New Haven Preservation Trust, who cannot speak since they have moved past that point. Chair Jenkins states that sometimes what happens with other applications, is that they come for a discussion, rather than an approval, but this application is not fully complete, so they are spending time trying to clarify details that are just numerous enough that it is hard in this discussion to clarify.

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Commissioner Godshall moves to table this application until the May meeting in order to clarify what is and is not in the application, the intent of the materials at the base of the East Pearl stairs and its consistency with the existing foundation (including the excavation for the garden level and detail for the foundation, excavation, and paving for that area), details about the railing and post, and if the applicant chooses to bring details about the proposed footing on the bay window.

Commissioner Munday seconds.

Commissioner Jenkins states that she would still like to hear from the New Haven Preservation Trust, as Mr. D'Aquila has been working on this application for three years and consulted with them. On a procedural issue, they are cutting the New Haven Preservation Trust off, and the applicant is presumably silenced until the next meeting. Chair Learned states that she will make an exception to the procedures and asks if the New Haven Preservation Trust would like to make public comment.

Sarah Tisdale, 922 State Street, New Haven

Ms. Tisdale states that herself and the applicant have had multiple conversations and that he originally had an even more ornate fence and column capital and they really worked to dial down some of the ornate details and get it to the Doric columns, picking up a lot of details from throughout the neighborhood. Ms. Tisdale states that she has mentioned to the applicant that there are a lot of Greek Revivals that do not have iron fence work and stair balustrades, as a lot are more simplistic. She mentions that they did find some more ornate examples on Chapel Street, which was a more expensive area, so it might not have been necessarily at this building, but they did pull up some very similar ideas, which is what Mr. D'Aquila picked up for his application. Ms. Tisdale states that the New Haven Preservation Trust could work with Mr. D'Aquila to simplify the design.

Chair Learned withdraws her voting status to achieve a five only vote.

2-3 opposed at 8:27pm.

Motion fails.

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Commissioner Valentino states that he wanted to get some more clarification before he made another vote. Commissioner Valentino asks if they are just voting on the door frames today. Chair Learned states that the application is to remove the existing front bay window, rebuild the original front entry stoop and double door entry for East Pearl Street building, add townhouse style steps down to the garden level entry door, entry door to be an existing brick window opening, build new railing system for entry stairs on Pierpont building, build new entry stoop. Commissioner Valentino states that what he meant by that, was that they are not doing anything with the foundation, what they were talking about is strictly what was just mentioned in the application. Mr. D'Aquila states that it is everything related to the three new entrances.

Commissioner Godshall moves to table this application until the May meeting in order to clarify what is and is not in the application, the intent of the materials at the base of the East Pearl stairs and its consistency with the existing foundation (including the excavation for the garden level and detail for the foundation, excavation, and paving for that area), details about the railing and post, and if the applicant chooses to bring details about the proposed footing on the bay window. Commissioner Munday seconds.

Commissioner Munday states that the reason why he seconded the motion was because the scope of the work that they are voting on is more than what is on the application. He believes that there is more design work involved and there is extensive material and details involved that are not resolved yet. The application is not ready for an up or down vote, and that is why he voted for tabling. Chair Learned states that she agrees with Commissioner Munday and is very happy with the direction that this application is going, but that it is insufficient for the commission to approve and clarify that the intent of the applicant matches the approval of the commission, but it is also not field verifiable, and that has been a long-standing criterion. Commissioner Jenkins states that she still does not understand how the applicant got to this point, while he had consulted with the New Haven Preservation Trust, on an application that never should have been here. Commissioner Jenkins asks where the applicant is in terms of help and guidance so that when he comes before the commission he understands what they are asking for. Chair

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Learned says that she will read for the record exactly what their application says, and it has existed for twenty-five years. The application says “materials to be filed with the application: location map, photographs of the building from all sides, photograph or sketch of the portion of the building affected, drawing of work to be done with listing of materials to be used, and site plans showing existing and proposed construction, parking areas, and fences, and that is just the bare minimum for the application. She states that what they are asking for is a complete application for next month, so that they can come to a determination. Commissioner Godshall says that as the New Haven Preservation Trust’s designee on the commission, she would like to state that working with the Trust involves a back-and-forth. The Trust staff makes suggestions and brings forward best practices but does not dictate the design. The Preservation Trust is not directing how Mr. D’Aquila presents or what he chooses.

Chair Learned withdraws her voting status to achieve a five only vote.

4-1 in favor at 8:38pm.

Motion passes.

2.2 23-05-CA 67 Howard Avenue (MBLU: 233/ 0003/01600). City Point Local Historic District. Owner/Applicant: Tony Salerno. Seeking approval to repair existing front porch.

Tony Salerno, 20 Saugatuck Avenue, Westport

Mr. Salerno introduces 67 Howard Avenue, which he acquired last fall. It was a home being used as an illegal boarding house. They saw that it would be viable to because it still has a lot of its beautiful charm and original architecture on the interior. Over the years the exterior has had upgrades such as vinyl siding, replacement windows, vinyl replacement windows, and so on. It was initially approved as a two-family home in the 1920s. Their plan was to preserve as much as they can and to do some very cosmetic repairs on the interior. Mr. Salerno states that they have already done some repair work to the front porch on the home. The porch did have some of its original look and they had spindles and balusters replicated to match, for them to be able to put it back together. Mr. Salerno says that they have been working with the City of New Haven Building

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Department, who has issued a verbal stop work order. As it turns out, they are under a lot of scrutiny by neighbors. They understand that they care about their neighborhood, and they do not want anyone to do something that is outside of the historic mandate. Mr. Salerno says that as soon as they took over and came in, they did some landscaping and ripped out old shrubs. He states that there is some dental molding that was installed about twenty years ago, which they are not planning on touching. Whatever has been done to the upper section of the porch, they are not touching. Their intent is to make the porch safe and attractive enough, with what material was remaining there. On the left side of the drawing, the balusters and rails were original, but on the opposite side someone had done some repairs at some point, as well as the stair rail and steps. They did a faux brick panel under the porch, like a plastic brick. Mr. Salerno states that they found some lattice material under the porch from the time period that they would like to replace or reface with some natural material. It would be an eight-inch trim board and cedar lattice material. The painted material is trim, and they were thinking of leaving the cedar lattice stained, and then in the front doing a panel effect, which he thinks goes with the time period of the home, so that would be mimicked on each side of the porch. Mr. Salerno replaced part of the broken pine material on the left side of the porch with poplar replication to match it beautifully. They also replaced the pine tongue-and-groove floorboards with cedar, because the new material is not as viable. The posts are original to the home and are weathered, but in good shape. They have taken some of the bottom trim pieces off and replaced those with paint grade material to match, because people were going in and out of the house. With the permission of the Building Department, they repaired the floor, which is already one hundred percent better than what was there. The new built piece and the original built piece are perfectly matched. The plywood under the porch was what was under the faux brick and some of it will come off and they will put the trim and lattice where it should be. Mr. Salerno states that his style choice was to do the panel effect in the front, but they can also do the more traditional lattice effect in the front too. Anything rotting they have removed. The new lattice piece that they have made is made out of cedar material. Mr. Salerno states that he hopes this was straightforward for the commission and that it would be consistent with the house and the area.

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Chair Learned thanks Mr. Salerno and asks if the porch railing on the right side has already been replaced. Mr. Salerno states that is correct and they will take it down if the commission would like, but they put it up because they have people walking in and out of there and did not want a missing rail. Chair Learned states that she applauds Mr. Salerno's sensitivity and observation at not only in the proportion of the balustrades, but in the spacing in between them, which indicates a house from this era. Mr. Salerno states that the new code is four inches, so it really goes to the workmanship of the home. Commissioner Benoit asks if Mr. Salerno plans on doing anything that is not replicating exactly what is there, but with more durable materials. Mr. Salerno states that that is correct and the only area that there was a little work on is at the post at the bottom of the stairs, but they tried to keep a consistent fluted material to what was already there. They created a fluted post with a hip style or four-sided square cap. Commissioner Godshall states that she agrees with Chair Learned about the balustrades and that the photos beautifully illustrate that. She states that there is something above the porch that looks puzzling. Mr. Salerno states that there is a rubber style roof on the upper porch, and it is out of their budget to replace, but it has been inspected. Commissioner Godshall asks why it is a different color. Mr. Salerno says that the difference in color is due to the shadow of the white aluminum material. He believes that the original gutter system may have been built into the roof, so it is possibly covered with the roofing. Commissioner Godshall states that she realizes that the railings on the stairs are not on the application, but they look like they need work. Mr. Salerno says that to make building code, they have to make the railings to a certain height and are replicated match the original pieces with the original gap down to a square newel post. It allows for safety and because it is more than five steps it acts as a handrail. Commissioner Godshall clarifies that she was asking what was going to be put at the bottom of the stairs. Mr. Salerno says that it will be similar to the posts on the porch. Chair Jenkins asked if the applicant had already replaced some of this. Mr. Salerno states that they have for safety reasons because the right side was falling off and they re-secured what was original. He states that they have temporarily rebuilt the stairs but have not done the finishing work on it. Commissioner

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Godshall asks if he has more information about the stair rail. Mr. Salerno states that he does not have a drawing, but it will be the same profile, same gapping, same baluster look with the same bottom. Commissioner Godshall states that she believes Mr. Salerno is doing a great job of explaining it but is not sure that a building inspector could take this drawing and compare it to the new baluster and railing and match it. Mr. Salerno responds that they have been working with the Building Department. Commissioner Godshall states that she is not worried about them doing their job, she is just worried about the commission doing their job, that they do not have information about the rebuilt stair post, railings, and balusters. Chair Learned mentions that she believes that they have more recent pictures than are in the application. Mr. Salerno states that he believes that he sent a picture of the new post to Ms. Cecunjanin. Commissioner Godshall states that they have a situation where it is already built, but not in the application. Chair Learned states that they have a narrative that says to rebuild the stairs and rail to match the original material, but they do not have a drawing or a photograph. Chair Learned said that what is somewhat confusing, is the fact that the Building Department has let work continue and the application was still pending. Commissioner Godshall asks about the condition of the railing. Chair Learned states that they are seeing the railing now completed. Mr. Salerno states that the railing had fallen down, so they put it back up because they have people coming in and out of the house. He states that the original piece is intact and has not been touched, they just need to finish the trim, which will be crown material to go around the post, as it was originally. Commissioner Godshall states that it is hard to distinguish between what has already happened versus what is going to happen. Chair Learned states that there is a complication with the fact that work has been ongoing, so they are looking at an application that was submitted a couple weeks ago and the stairs have neared completion in that time. Normally they look at drawings that would then compare to construction work. Now they are looking at construction work that has already been done to see if it would have complied with what they would have expected in the application. Mr. Salerno states that the parts of it that have not been done are the corner post, the trim material, all of the finished trim material, the lattice material, and the trim on the bottom

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section of the porch. They carried it only to the point where someone could hold onto the rail and not fall off the porch. Chair Learned opens the floor to public comments.

Sarah Tisdale, 922 State Street, New Haven

Ms. Tisdale states that she reviewed an earlier form of this application and still has some questions that have not been answered. She would like to see more details about the new posts. The comment on the drawing mentions historic referencing original specs, which the applicant has clarified is picking details up from the columns. There is no historic photograph or document that shows that those are the original posts. She states that their historic photo shows no posts. She would also like to see more information on the railings, the details, and the dimensions of the stairs. Chair Learned asks Ms. Tisdale to clarify about the photo she has. Ms. Tisdale states that the photo they have shows no newel posts and no handrails from the HRI. Commissioner Godshall states that it is in the HRI part of the application. Mr. Salerno states that he is unsure if that would be defying the building code at that point.

Chair Learned asks for commissioner discussion. Commissioner Valentino states that he lives in this district and a lot of people have contacted him and told him that they are worried about the owners of this house cutting corners and that they are watching the house to make sure that nothing is done that they do not agree with. He states that he is glad to see Mr. Salerno here and that everyone is glad to see that the faux brick has been taken off. Commissioner Valentino states that everything that they have seen here seems to be up to the historic timeframe of the building and the integrity of the neighborhood. Chair Learned states that they have seen this vigilance and interest in the two other districts from time to time and that as property owners who have been held to the standards of the local Historic District Commission, they want to see their neighbors held accordingly. Commissioner Godshall states that on the original lattice piece that was found under the porch, she noticed that there was a very nice molding on the inside edge of the trim piece and the drawing was not detailed enough to know whether that was their intent or not. Mr. Salerno states that they are going to mimic that with the quarter round

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nosing. Commissioner Godshall says that the sketch does not represent the intent of the applicant. Chair Learned states that simply putting a notation on the sketch saying that it will be framed with quarter round molding would suffice. Mr. Salerno says that he would totally add that and make that part of the application. Commissioner Munday says that it might be a question for counsel, but that it seems like much of what they have been looking at has been repair or restoration, so he is wondering if this needs a Certificate of Appropriateness or if it is the case that it is not required. Chair Learned states that that is not a question for counsel, it is a question for the chair. Commissioner Munday also mentions that the lattice that was found under the porch has a much higher ratio of solid to void than the one in the drawing. Mr. Salerno states that the new lattice he found at a lumber yard and knows that the older one has about thirty coats of paint on it, which decrease the size of the opening. He states that if the commission would like it to be similar spacing, he could have lattice made to mimic the old one. Chair Learned states that they have accepted applications with hand drawings in the past and certainly ones that replicate in a way that is interpretable. She states that they have just seen an historic photograph that shows no railing and having not quite much detail on the stairs, so she would require a Certificate of Appropriateness because they do not have a stark fabric there and do not know what they are repairing or replicating rather than repairing. Chair Learned states that she agrees that most of the porch is a repair, but because some of it is brand new fabric and the material has been changed, it is worth a conversation. She states that with the vigilance and the care and integrity that is being protected by the neighbors in this district, they need to hold everyone to the same standard. Commissioner Godshall states that they have heard two different things about the return, which would be more visible because it is frontal. One option was to continue the lattice around and one option was to block it out and either have a raised or depressed panel, which she is not sure that they have enough information about, even in the two drawings. Chair Learned states that the drawing that was submitted with the application is of an inset panel with quarter round inset molding seems to be quite clear. Commissioner Godshall states that the dimensions are sharply different. Chair Learned states that the frontal sketch appears to be scaled and the dimensions are slightly different. Commissioner Godshall mentions that

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there is a rectangle at the top that says eight inches and asks what that is. Chair Learned says that it appears that the eight inches refers to the framing. Mr. Salerno says that it is the trim board that would frame the lattice work and is about an inch above the ground and will be symmetrical on both sides as a mirror image. Chair Learned says that a notation on the drawing would be helpful. Commissioner Godshall asks about the eight-inch trim board and the differences in the drawings. Chair Learned states that she understood the eight-inch marking to be the framing and that on one side it frames the inset panel and on the other side it frames the lattice. Commissioner Godshall asks what the space between the panel and the trim board is. Mr. Salerno states that that is the quarter round molding. Commissioner Godshall states that the frontal view looks different. Mr. Salerno states that the outside line that he believes Commissioner Godshall is looking at is a measurement line that he did not utilize. Chair Learned states that there is a little bit of clarity that would have been helpful, such as getting rid of those lines.

Commissioner Valentino makes a motion to approve this application for the modification, repairs, and restoration of the railing, porch deck, stairs, and stair railing inset panels on the front and inset lattice on the sides of the porch.

Commissioner Benoit seconds.

Commissioner Godshall withdraws her voting status to achieve a five-only vote.

All in favor at 9:39pm.

Motion passes.

3. Minutes

3.1 Approval of February 8, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Chair Learned notes corrections to the minutes, including replacing “asp” with “hasp” on page two, clearing up the confusion in the last sentence on page two, creating a break in the paragraph when Chair Learned opens the floor for commissioner discussion on page five, and taking “uncompensated” out on page five. Commissioner Munday notes adding “shield” following “ice and water” on page five and making “property value” plural on page seven.

Commissioner Godshall makes a motion to approve the minutes as amended.

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Commissioner Munday seconds.

All in favor at 9:50pm.

Motion passes.

4. New Business

Commissioner Jenkins states that there is a new commissioner, and it would have been nice to know beforehand so they could have welcomed her. Commissioner Benoit says that it is too bad that the commission did not get the letter saying that she was appointed. Commissioner Jenkins says that it would have been great to be notified and given a paragraph about the new commissioner and she would like to do a better job at welcoming new commissioners. Commissioner Valentino says that he is excited to have Commissioner Benoit join them. Commissioner Benoit introduces herself and says that she moved to New Haven in 2001 after having gone to the Yale School of Forestry and lives at 19 Court Street and was president of the Historic Wooster Square Association up until this past year.

Commissioner Munday states that he would like to bring up submission adequacy and feels like there should be a level of completeness uniform for all applications. The commission should be presenting straightforward plans with clarity. Commissioner Godshall says that she seconds that and is troubled that they spent an hour and forty minutes on an application with a full architectural drawing and did not approve that, and then they looked at one with the barest sketch that was approved in twenty-five minutes and there is no consistency. Commissioner Godshall says that if others compared the two projects that they reviewed tonight, they would have a hard time saying what it was that the commission wanted to see. Commissioner Benoit asks if they have the staff review the applications to tell them what is missing. Chair Learned responds that City Hall does not have a dedicated preservation specialist and Ms. Cecunjanin has this commission and many other jobs to do. As applications come in, both Ms. Cecunjanin and Ms. Brown make phone calls to the applicants, but ninety-nine out of one hundred times, the applicants do not listen to the advice and takes their chances. The New Haven

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Preservation Trust also does some sort of review. Chair Learned believes that they continue to deal with property owners in the historic districts that do not truly understand the Historic District Commission. She states that they have gone back and forth for years about what the right amount of information is and that is one of the reasons why the New Haven Preservation Trust is now under contract with the city, so that there is someone with a great deal of knowledge base. The criteria for a complete application, which is right on the application, is almost never followed. Commissioner Benoit states that the commission should not take incomplete applications, as Chair Learned stated the Preservation Trust is under contract. Chair Learned states that there are public relation issues that urge the commission to take the best application that is available at the time of the deadline before the meeting. Commissioner Munday states that he appreciates the circumstances, but he believes that there somehow has to be a rationale. Chair Learned says that in the second application tonight, it was already ninety percent built, so there is less worry about the building inspector agreeing and the second thing is that it is primarily repair. She states that always requiring full architectural drawings is discriminatory in terms of people's means. Commissioner Benoit states that if something like the second drawing is good enough for the Building Department, then she does not think they should demand anything else. Chair Learned states that the Historic District Commission has been served with several lawsuits, where the issue becomes whether the building inspector has the ability to take the documentation issued by the Historic District Commission and match it to what was built.

Commissioner Godshall states that she is not familiar with when administrative approvals can be given versus requiring the applicant to come to the commission, and she would like to discuss it in the future. Chair Learned states that they can definitely add that as an item for next month and Laura Brown and Attorney Ward should be involved in that discussion.

Commissioner Valentino makes a motion to adjourn.

Commissioner Benoit seconds.

All in favor at 10:08pm.

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Motion passes.

Respectfully submitted by Amelia Mower, recorder.