

**NEW HAVEN HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

**Monday, April 20th, 2020 Regular Meeting, 7:00 PM Location: Web-based meeting via Zoom**

**Commissioner Trina Learned calls to order the public hearing at 7:10 PM.**

**In attendance:** Aicha Wood (City Plan), Maya Vardi (City Plan), Jenna Montesano (City Plan), Trina Learned (Commissioner and Chair), Tom Kimberly (Commissioner and Clerk), Susan Godshall (Commissioner), Doug Royalty (Commissioner), George Knight (Commissioner), Karen Jenkins (Commissioner)

Review of Executive Orders regarding meeting.

**New Public Hearing**

1. 20-07-CA Owner: Anna Mariotti. Seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for Gutters and Roof Line Trim Replacement, at 75 Sea Street, City Point Local Historic District.

**Anna Mariotti, 75 Sea Street, New Haven**

**Aaron Kotowski, 75 Sea Street, New Haven**

**Jacek Tarlowski, J&A Construction LLC, 1045 Dixwell Avenue, Hamden**

Ms. Mariotti says she needs to replace gutters, wood behind gutters, and roof rake. The gutters are beyond repair and the wood behind them has rotted. Replacement includes damaged fascia and soffit. Ms. Mariotti says she will be replacing the house's current Yankee gutters with new, exposed gutters, and the fascia and soffit will be replaced with PVC.

Commissioner Learned notes the decorative details of the fascia and soffit and the fact that those details would be lost if replaced with PVC. Ms. Mariotti comments it would be too expensive to restore the wood and that the project is already quoted at \$17,000 to \$18,000.

Commissioner Learned says she doesn't have a clear sense of the end product nor the attachment of the gutters, details of the fascia, soffit, etc.

Commissioner Godshall notes that wood has a texture that PVC doesn't.

Commissioner Learned inquires if the aluminum siding was on the house when purchased by the applicants and they say it was. Commissioner Learned says aluminum wouldn't have been approved by the Commission.

Commissioner Learned says the applicants are proposing changing materials, and the Commission looks for adherence to historic character. She says the Commission has not approved PVC in this sort of application and it is concerning if the applicant's intent is to encapsulate everything that was in aluminum in PVC.

Mr. Kotowski suggests adding molding on top of the PVC to replicate crown molding and the look of wood.

Ms. Mariotti asks if there are options other than wood and comments that wood is very expensive. She says that everything on the exterior of the house is covered with aluminum except around the porch.

The Commissioners discuss the proposed half-round vs. the original Yankee gutters.

Commissioner Learned inquires if the applicants spoke to the New Haven Preservation Trust regarding their application and they replied they had.

Commissioner Royalty asks how much is being torn off with the Yankee gutters.

Ms. Mariotti says the wood behind the gutters rotted, so that will be removed.

The Commissioners ask what the house will look like at the end of the project and Ms. Mariotti replies that the grey aluminum around the roof line would be white and the gutters still wouldn't be visible because they would be encapsulated in either PVC or wood, except for one location on the porch.

The Commissioners inquire how these repairs will change the overhang of the roof.

The Commissioners determine they need more details, including scaled drawings, and information on materials. They don't have enough information to understand what the applicant intends to do and then to verify that it keeps with the character of the historic district.

Commissioner Learned opens the discussion to public comment.

Elizabeth Holt, NHPT, 922 State Street, New Haven says she has spoken with Ms. Mariotti extensively, but hasn't had the opportunity to see the house because of social distancing.

Commissioner Godshall asks if there are photos of the house prior to the aluminum encasement. Ms. Holt says she will look and give to applicant.

Commissioner Learned closes public comment.

Commissioner Royalty says Yankee gutters are part of the historic character of the building and he doesn't want to lose them, if possible. He feels that proposed new gutters would not be historically accurate and he feels this project isn't meeting the standards of rehabilitation.

Commissioner Learned says the damage the house experienced is because of the aluminum casing. She says PVC doesn't keep with the historic character and that it warps and deteriorates and won't always look good.

Commissioner Learned says there is a lack of detail on how will resolve the roofline and the fascia and soffit is unclear. There are no cutsheets, no dimensions, it is unknown how the gutters will be attached. Commissioner Learned says the proposed may seem like a cost-effective option, but in actuality, it's spending a lot of money to deteriorate the house.

Commissioner Godshall notes the applicants have done a good job taking care of the porch on the house.

Mr. Kotowski says they can't afford to restore the house the way the Commission suggests, and it may become demolition by neglect.

Commissioner Learned tells the applicants they can repair the gutters and roofline exactly in-kind.

Commissioner Royalty moves to continue the application at the next scheduled HDC meeting.

Commissioner Kimberly seconds.

**All in favor 8:22pm.**

### **Discussion**

2. COVID-19 related changes that affect the HDC work

Commission notes 90-day delay of demo is now 180 days.

3. 414 Chapel St- Wireless communication facility modification

Sec 106

No comments.

4. 90-day delay

783 Orchard St.- Original expiration date: June 3,2020. Extension of additional 90 days: September 1, 2020

City Planning staff explain that this house is part of the Winchester National Historic District and needs to be removed to build a new development that includes affordable housing. The land the house occupies needs to be used for access. The house is deemed inhabitable.

Commissioner Royalty says it doesn't seem like great preservation policy for a preservation minded city to sweep away a historic building for access for new construction. He says there must be other options to consider prior to demolition.

Commissioner Godshall inquires about parking requirements and Ms. Woods says the project already asked for a special exception to reduce parking.

Ms. Montesano says the project requested two applications for zoning relief, one for parking (only half the usual number of required parking), and a density variance (2.175 floor ratio). She says the Board of Zoning Appeals has yet to rule.

Commissioner Learned suggests trying to optimize the footprint and the idea of making the building smaller or the idea of building up.

Ms. Woods says the project has CHFA funding and they already reduced the number of units. She says there's a certain number of units required to get CHFA funding and that 80 percent of the development is affordable housing.

Ms. Montesano says the scale of the surrounding area is the reason to keep the project from building up.

Commissioner Learned raises the question of how inhabitable the building is.

Commissioner Knight says the building's value as a historic structure has been diminished by alternations and, possibly fatally, water damage.

Ms. Woods suggests the Commission could write a letter regarding the project sharing their thoughts.

Commissioner Learned says she wants to know the conditions of the house and doesn't feel the Commission knows enough at this point to write a letter. She says she thinks it's important for the Commission to find ways to support affordable housing in the area.

Ms. Montesano says Jim Turcio inspected the house and she can assist in finding information regarding its condition.

## **New Business**

### 5. Approval of Draft Meeting Minutes- 03/11/2020

Commissioners move to approve the minutes.

Commissioners second.

**All in favor 8:53pm**

Commissioner Godshall notes that 1142 Chapel Street was demolished, despite the Commission hearing extensive public testimony.

Commissioner Godshall suggests clarifying the idea of “like for like” repairs for applicants.

Commissioner Royalty moves to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner Kimberly seconds.

**All in favor 8:57pm**

Respectfully submitted by Kristen Hopewood, recorder.