



NEW HAVEN HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION AGENDA
Wednesday, April 14, 2021, Regular Meeting, 7:00 PM
Location: Web-based meeting via Zoom

Commissioner Trina Learned calls to order the public hearing at 7:02 PM.

In attendance: Michael Piscitelli (Economic Development), Maya Vardi (City Plan), Trina Learned (Commissioner and Chair), Tom Kimberly (Commissioner and Clerk), Susan Godshall (Commissioner), Doug Royalty (Commissioner).

Commissioner 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.

Continued Public Hearing

1. 20-13-CA 20 Grand Avenue LLC, Karin Patriquin.
Seeking approval for a modification of Certificate of Appropriateness #20-13-CA issued on December 11, 2020, for removal of existing chimney and construction of a new brick masonry chimney to match in dimensions and materials at 14 Grand Ave., Quinnipiac River Local Historic District.

Karin Patriquin, 14 (20 Grand Ave., New Haven

Ms. Patriquin reviews the application that was approved in December 2020, and that she now asks to amend.

Ms. Patriquin says that in removing some of the interior finishes to re-insulate the buildings, they discovered that one of the chimneys is leaning toward the street and is separating from the interior wall. Working with a structural engineer, they concluded if the wall on the third floor was thicker, the chimney could have been reattached, but the current conditions do not allow for stabilizing the chimney.

Ms. Patriquin proposes to remove the chimney from the bottom of the third floor upward and recreate a veneer brick chimney.

Ms. Patriquin elaborates on the reason for choosing a veneer brick, says the dimensions of the proposed brick are the same as the existing ones, and explains that the new chimney would be secured to the existing rafters and beams on the ceiling of the third floor, under the roof.

Ms. Patriquin says that the new chimney will have the exact dimensions, height, depth as the existing chimney.

Commissioner Learned thanks the applicant for a thorough presentation and asks about the functionality of the chimney. Ms. Patriquin confirms that the chimney is not functioning.

Commissioner Godshall asks about the condition of the second chimney. Ms. Patriquin says that they have already stabilized that chimney.

Commissioner Royalty asks if the applicant considered reuse of the existing brick. Ms. Patriquin says that they eliminated this option due to the integrity of the existing brick that is compromised and the bricks' weight.

Commissioner Royalty asks if the applicant is planning to remove the entire chimney. Ms. Patriquin says it will be only partially removed. For instance, the part in the basement is stable and will not be removed.

Commissioner Learned asks the applicant how they will handle the depth and profile of the mortar joints in thinner veneer brick. Ms. Patriquin replies that they look to replicate the existing appearance. When the roofer and mason will remove the existing chimney, they will measure everything and replicate the mortar to achieve the same appearance.

Commissioner Learned opens the discussion to public comment.

Elizabeth Holt, New Haven Preservation Trust, 922 State Street

Ms. Holt offers her support for this project and says it is necessary work that has to be done. Ms. Holt says she trust that Ms. Patrick is committed to the building and has confidence that this project will be carefully executed.

Commissioner Learned closes public comment.

Commissioner Royalty notes that under other circumstances, he would find real brick more appropriate than veneer brick as but finds the justification for the veneer acceptable.

Commissioner Royalty moves to approve the application as submitted.

Commissioner Kimberly seconds.

All in favor 7:20 PM.

New Public Hearing

21-01-CA Owner: Caroline Lombardo, Agent: Crystal Langer.

Seeking approval for removal of two gates and fencing and installation of new gates and fencing, construction of new steps and replacement of concrete walkways with new bluestone walkways at 44 Howard Ave., City Point Local Historic District.

Crystal Langer, 261 Pokorny Rd, Higganum, CT

Ms. Langer says that her application is focused on landscape improvements for aesthetic reasons, mainly to match the theme of the rest of the neighborhood. Ms. Langer reviews the existing conditions viewable from Howard avenue, chain link fence, and gates with concrete walkway and lack of cohesive plantings.

Ms. Langer notes that great is steep, about a 24-inch interchange between the porch stoop and the sidewalk.

Ms. Langer says that they are looking to correct the grade, remove the chain-link fence and gate and construct raised stone retaining walls in front of the house, with a cedar fence on top, typical to the neighborhood. Ms. Langar is also proposing walkway improvements bluestone walkway with brick banding on the outside, a design pulled from that city point historic district.

Ms. Langar notes that the retaining wall will be 18-inch-high, and where there is currently a chain-link gate she proposes three rock face Granite steps reminiscent of properties on Water Street. The height of the fence and the wall combined will be 48 inches.

Ms. Langer elaborates on the choice of the combination of fence and wall, saying that 44 Howard Ave. is one of the steeper lots in the neighborhood and I think it would be a nice improvement to the front yard, instead of a steep grade.

Ms. Langer says that she is proposing natural cleft bluestone with polymeric sanded joints and a vintage brick soldier course. The retaining walls are New England Blend Thinstone veneer, bluestone cap with a split face, Granite steps. The three steps will be rock face Granite, 48" wide, 6" rise.

For the fence and the gate Ms. Langer proposes a Classic Victorian picket, uniform straight top, 2" x2" pickets, 1" x4" top and bottom kick plate, 30 foot high, to sit on top of a 18-inch retaining

wall. The gate leading to the walkway will be a 4' high by 4' wide gate constructed from the Victorian picket with cross support. The driveway gate will be the same but double, totaling an 8' length with 2 48" gates combined at a 4' height to match the height of the wall and fence combined.

Ms. Langer reviews historical references from the neighborhood, to put her proposal in context.

Commissioner Learned says she appreciates the examples from the neighborhood and notes that some examples are not from the City Point local historic district.

Commissioner Royalty asks if the applicant has a drawing that shows the retaining wall with the proposed fence in relation to the building. Ms. Langer says she doesn't have a but demonstrates the height of the fence using a marked-up picture.

Commissioner Learned asks how the picket fencing will be attached to the bluestone cap. Ms. Langer replies that it will be anchored from underneath with black hardware, they will drill through the bluestone and then up into the fence.

Commissioner Kimberly asks about the massing and notes that the fencing would be visible.

Ms. Langer says that she is proposing a see-through fence that will not block the view of the front porch from the street, just partially the lawn space.

Commissioner Kimberly asks if the fence will be right against the sidewalk or set back. Ms. Langer replies that it would be set back about four inches.

Commissioner Learned asks the applicant how she derived the proportions of the wall and the fence.

Ms. Langer replies that she based it on the existing grade, and she surveyed the neighborhood to ensure her design is customary. For the height, Ms. Langer says that 48 inches will not block any of the house and keep the porch open. Moreover, the family has young children, thus they are looking for a little more enclosure for the front yard while also keeping true with the neighborhood.

Commissioner Kimberly asks about the option of bringing the retaining wall back and put plantings in front of it. Ms. Langer says this will require at least a two-foot bed to get enough root space.

Commissioner Godshall notes that a two-foot gap back from the sidewalk with plantings requires maintenance and that she thinks the four-inch setback will allow for more space for the kids to play on. Commissioner Godshall also says that a wall that is parallel to the sidewalk will be a better fit in terms of street rhythm.

Commissioner Learned opens the discussion to public comment, there are no comments, and Commissioner Learned closes public comment.

Commissioner Godshall moves to approve the application as submitted.

Commissioner Kimberly seconds.

All in favor 7:48 PM.

Discussion

3. Wooster Square Public Art Project - Wooster Square Monument Committee

Bill Iovanne, 11 Wooster Place, New Haven

Laura Florio Luzzi, 1233 Dunbar Hill Rd, Hamden

Reverend Harland Dalton, 329 Greene Street, New Haven

Mr. Iovanne presents the public art project that will replace the Columbus statue taken down by the City in June of 2020. Mr. Iovanne says that the mayor appointed the Wooster Square Monument Committee in July and that they began meeting in August.

First, they wrote a mission statement, guiding principles and structured a process to follow to replace the Statute removed. In September, they asked for the public's input on a proper and appropriate replacement. Mr. Iovanne says that the Committee received well over 100 responses. Next, their Subcommittee categorized responses. They have eliminated individual monuments of any one singular person and decided to combine some ideas. Finally, the Subcommittee put forward an idea to tell the story of Italian immigration to New Haven and the contributions of the Italian American Community to the City of New Haven. Recently the Committee put out a call to artists to help develop the idea which was formulated within the Committee.

Mr. Iovanne says that the Committee will be seeking permission to remove the existing wrought iron fence around the foundation of the former Columbus statue and approval for the materials that are going to be used in the public art project. Also. They might be asking for approval to modify the height of the foundation. If permitted, the stone that would be removed from the foundation would be incorporated into the project's landscape design.

Mr. Iovanne says that the Committee envisions four storyboards using both sides with a verbal a written narrative along with photographs.

Mr. Iovanne says that their goal is to present this idea to the Commissioners, seek advice and counsel and answer any questions.

Commissioner Learned thanks Mr. Iovanne and notes that Wooster Square is a vital part of the local historic district and the City. Commissioner Learned says she is happy to start a dialogue and to have the opportunity to weigh in on this project.

Commissioner Royalty asks about the Committee's process and how the project has expanded from a statue replacement to include a garden space and several interpretive panels. Mr. Iovanne notes that every one of the committee meetings has been open to the public and publicized.

Mr. Dalton confirms that while the initial conception was to replace the statue, the Committee decided that a public art project that is not monumental but rather eye-level and interactive is a better fit.

Commissioner Godshall inquiries about the maintenance plan. Mr. Iovanne says that the Committee has a contingency plan for maintenance.

Commissioner Royalty asks about the project budget analysis. Mr. Iovanne says that they compared this project to other recent similar projects and that he is confident that the budget established is sufficient.

Commissioner Royalty suggests having preservation professionals join the Committee.

Commission Royalty says that the Historic District Commission's role is to protect and maintain the historic resources, that the park is a primary historic resource in Wooster Square, and has

national significance. Thus, the Historic District Commission's mission is to determine whether additions and new construction are compatible within the historic district.

Commissioner Royalty notes that the Historic District Commission will consider any proposal according to the Secretary of The Interior Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties and The National Park Service for landscapes.

Mr. Dalton says that there is no preservation professional on the Committee and that they should invite a preservation professional into the ongoing conversation.

Commissioner Learned opens the discussion to public comment.

Rosa Ferraro-Santana, Alder of Ward 13, 39 Clifton Street, New Haven,

Alder Ferraro-Santana notes that she is part of the Committee and was appointed by the mayor to assist as an aldermanic representative to the Committee. Alder Ferraro-Santana says that the Committee sought to present the project to the Historic District Commission to ensure that HDC apprised the project and got feedback.

Anstress Farwell, 129 Church Street, New Haven.

Ms. Farwell asks about the funding of the project. Mr. Iovanne replies that the project is privately funded.

Ms. Farwell says that she had worked on the project for the sculpture of the Amistad located in front of City Hall and that her working group went through a similar process. They avoided pre-determining the elements of that project to allow artists to suggest new ideas.

Ms. Farwell expresses concerns about the public outreach and notes that the RFP was published before it was discussed at the Community Management Team. Ms. Farwell highlights the importance of the park and the replacement of the monument, especially when a new concept is proposed as an addition to a historic park.

Ms. Farwell reviews the history of the park briefly, saying it was private people that donated the land and set up the park to increase land values around it. The Columbus statue was the neighborhood-level expression of the City Beautiful movement. Ms. Farwell notes that

celebrating Columbus nationwide was very much a focus of the City Beautiful movement. The movement was looking to bring high-quality art to public spaces and public buildings.

Ms. Farwell notes that there were competing ideas about the statue replacement. She encourages the Committee to come back and share in advance any idea or progress with HDC and the Management Team, so they could distribute it over their email list to neighbors.

4. HDC Enforcement follow-up

- **250 Greene Street**

Michael Massimino, 15 Hosley Avenue, Branford, CT 06405

Mr. Massimino reports back to the Commission on temporary windows installed instead of the windows approved by the Commission. Mr. Massimino says that they have experienced delays with the window orders but that they finally got delivered, and they have started installing them already. Mr. Massimino estimates that all the windows will be replaced within the next two to three weeks.

- **28 and 36 East Grand Ave.**

Patricia Kane, 731 Quinnipiac Avenue, New Haven.

Ms. Kane says she would like to inform the Commission of two different properties in the historic district : 28 E. Grand Ave., and Ziggy's Pizza at 36 E Grand Ave. Ms. Kane shows pictures of several signs on both properties that the Commission did not approve.

Commissioner Godshall notes that the zoning enforcement officer should follow up with the owners when the Commission sends out enforcement letters.

Ms. Vardi says she thinks it is important to send out enforcement letters, even if the recent letters did not yield any results yet, it is on the record, which makes it easier to pursue further.

Commissioner Godshall notes that the owner of 28 East Grand was nonresponsive before when the Commission sent out a letter about an unapproved sign at 489 Quinnipiac Ave.

Commissioner Learned says she thinks the Commission needs to take that first step and put on record their concerns about non-compliance.

Mr. Piscitelli asks staff to compile a list of unapproved signs.

Commissioner Kimberly mentions that the same owner that installed the signs without approval also rebuilt the front stairs without approval at 22-24 Hallock Ave.

5. 90 Day demolition delay

- **313 Humphrey Street**

Ms. Vardi reviews the details of the application and notes that the City Plan Commission approved the project in March.

Commissioners discuss the plan to build a three-unit building behind the historic building at 313 Humphrey, its massing and design, the appropriateness of that plan, and how it affects the neighborhood fabric.

Commissioner Godshall says that the demolition should have been identified before the plan moved on to Site Plan Review. Also, there might be a need to require demolition delay applicants for a fuller explanation for the proposed demolition or to include a plan or drawings as part of the noticing requirements.

- **256 Shelton Avenue.**

Ms. Vardi says that no application was submitted yet, but the applicants reached out with questions on applying.

Commissioner Royalty inquires if the preservation trust could research under-documented properties where unknown African American history and associations with important people may be found.

Commissioner Godshall notes that some of the details about cultural history and ownership history are found in the Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) but points out that the HRI is not available to the public.

Commissioner Royalty notes that over 30-40 years since the HRI was completed, many changes accrued, and there might be more properties, like the two properties on Howe Street, that were nearly lost because their importance in African American history was unknown. African American history is often not well documented, might require more investigation, or maybe not at the forefront of the documentation effort in 1983.

Commissioner Learned opens the discussion to public comment.

Ms. Farwell says that the City should reconsider its application process across the different Land Use Boards and Commissions, and recommends that an application for a site plan review or other city approvals will not be filed until the demolition delay has been settled. Otherwise, the opportunity to discuss the resource is lost.

6. Section 106- 150 Yale Ave.

Ms. Vardi reviews the location of the facility and the scope of modification proposed for the existing telecommunication facility.

Commissioner Royalty notes that the site is a National Historic Landmark.

Commissioners discuss the importance of the site, the appearance existing communication facility, when and how it was initially approved, the effect of the proposed modification on the overall appearance, and their role as a commission within the Section 106 review process.

Commissioner Learned asks the Commissioners if they wish to voice an opinion on the proposal.

Commissioner Royalty says that the scope of work being proposed will not alter the existing facility significantly.

Commissioner Godshall asks if the new equipment will be taller.

Ms. Vardi says that usually when there is a change in the overall height, it is mentioned in the cover letter or email. In this case, they did not mention any change to the height.

Commissioner Godshall says that she thinks that the Commission should comment if the proposed equipment were taller or more massive but that these details are missing.

Ms. Farwell notes that similarly to solar panels, the communication facilities can be viewed as temporary attachments to the historic resource and that it is important to know what the lifespan of these facilities is.

Commissioner Learned agrees and says that the Commission distinguishes proposals that are reversible, such as storm windows; even though they have a significant impact on the exterior view of a building, they are not irreparably harming the historic fabric of the building. Moreover, the continued viability and usefulness of the structure is also something that the looks at, electronic communication apparatus is very much part of the viability of how the buildings are used. Yet, this should be done as appropriately and unobtrusively as possible.

Commissioners discuss the dimensions of the equipment and lack of important details.

7. February Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Kimberly makes a motion to approve the meeting minutes as submitted.
Commissioner Royalty seconds.

All in favor 9:21 PM.

Commissioner Kimberly moves to adjourn the meeting.
Commissioner Godshall seconds.

All in favor 9:23 PM

Respectfully submitted by Maya Vardi, Staff.