

Town of Suffield Historic District Commission

Minutes of Meeting - March 3, 2014
Second Floor Conference Room - Suffield Town Hall
7:30 PM

Present: Doug Mayne (Chairperson), David Bahlman, Skip Edmonds,
John Schwemmer
Absent: Brendan Begley, Scott MacClintic, Margery Warren

Doug Mayne called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM

John Schwemmer briefly discussed the need for the Commission to review the Town of Suffield's Plan of Conservation and Development in order to implement some of the preservation action items included in the Plan. It was agreed that next month's meeting should start 30 minutes earlier in order to address these issues.

Agenda Items to consider applications for a Certificate of Appropriateness:

435 North Main Street, Proposed Reconstruction of Two Chimneys & Replacement of Roofing Shingles

Present to speak in behalf of the project were Corey Brinson, attorney; Tim Daley, attorney; the contractor for the project.

A drawing of the proposed chimney replacement was presented by the contractor. Although the Commission was in favor of the chimney heights (one at 2 feet, the other at 6 feet in order to have matching chimney heights on the two pitched roofs of different heights), the chimney cap detail in the drawing was not clear enough to determine actual design. John Schwemmer presented a photo of various chimneys on Greek Revival structures in Suffield, particularly at 241 Main Street, when the top of the chimney consisted of a 2 brick course corbel capped with a two brick finish course set on the same plane as the chimney below the corbel (photo attached). The representatives for the project agreed that this design detail could easily be

done and agreed to do so. Samples of two proposed brick styles were presented to the Commission and all members felt that the KF Brick in Heritage Red was the closest to the brick style, color and texture of other Greek Revival structures in the historic district. A sample of the shingles proposed for use in spot replacement on both sides of both pitched roofs of the structure was presented for approval. The Commission approved Owens Corning Supreme Shingles in Onyx Black for spot replacement, as they are close in design and color to the existing shingles.

Commissioner John Schwemmer made a motion to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the reconstruction of the chimneys according to the design of the one at 241 N. Main (KF Brick in Heritage Red), with spot replacement of roof shingles (Owens Corning Supreme Shingles, Onyx Black), seconded by Skip Edmonds, and unanimously passed.

278 Thompsonville Road, Proposed Replacement of Wooden Clapboard Siding with Timberlake Vinyl Siding

James Lombella, owner of 278 Thompsonville Road, explained his desire to replace all the wood siding on his house with vinyl siding. Mr. Lombella stated that he purchased the house two years ago. The house was originally an old post and beam barn structure that had been converted to a residence in 1986. Mr. Lombella's opinion was that the wooden siding placed over the barn structure in 1986 had not been properly maintained over the years, and that his desire was to install vinyl siding to eliminate necessary repairs to the existing siding and re-painting. Members of the Commission discussed at length the structure's relationship to the historic district, and particularly the property immediately to the west. In order to maintain compatibility with the prevailing materials and texture in the historic district, members of the Commission expressed their strong preference for repair or replacement of the siding in kind, and that the introduction of vinyl siding would be detrimental to the integrity of the historic district.

Commissioner John Schwemmer made a motion to deny the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace the existing wooden siding with vinyl siding. Commissions Schwemmer, Bahlman and Mayne voted for the motion. Commissioner Edmonds voted against. Motion passed.

Kent Memorial Library, Proposed Window and Door Replacement, and Relocation of Transformer

Present to explain the project plan for the replacement of doors and windows developed by Silver Petrocelli Architects were Patrick McMahon and John Cloonan of the Town of Suffield, and Marco Tommasini of Tecton Architects. As for the replacement glass, Commission Bahlman reviewed the Commission's investigation of the proposed double pane, triple film glass, and reported that it was his and Commissioner Mayne's opinion, after mocking up the glass samples in the library, that it performed very well in terms of exhibiting minor coloration and minor impact on the passage of light, with optimum energy efficiency. Compared to other options, it was clearly the most preferable. Mr. Tommasini detailed the proposed plan and options for window and door replacement, particularly the issue of framed and unframed doors. In an earlier meeting of the Commission, the frame profile of the windows and the minor change from the existing frames was discussed, with the Commission supported the changes necessary to the framing system. Similarly in an earlier meeting, the relocation of the transformer to a specific site near the lot line between the library and the Webster Bank was also discussed and supported by the Commission, as was the preference to not replicate the round metal medallions currently in place and necessary in the existing windows, but not necessary in the replacement windows.

Discussion followed about the possibility of the addition of power assist units on replacement doors, and the sense of the Commission was not to use them in order to preserve the design integrity of the original doors.

Commissioner Mayne made a motion to approve the proposed plan for window and door replacement with the stipulation that they be replaced "in kind"; that original doors with frames would be replaced with framed doors, and doors without frames (doors to the courtyard) would be replaced with frameless doors, and that no original doors would be fitted with power assist units in order to preserve the historic profile of the original doors. The motion also included approval of the relocation of the transformer. The motion was seconded by John Schwemmer. Motion passed unanimously.

187 North Main Street (Brewster Hall), Suffield Academy; Proposed Replacement of all Windows in the Original Structure

Patrick Booth of the Suffield Academy and Marco Tommasini of Tecton Architects presented a proposal to replace all of the windows in the original portion of Brewster Hall with Marvin Ultimate aluminum-clad double hung sash windows. After lengthy discussion, the members of the Commission indicated that as only four of seven members are present, they were not comfortable taking action on this important issue without a complete discussion with the entire Commission and a detailed examination of the existing windows and replacement samples. Mr. Booth agreed to return for the April meeting for consideration of the application.

222 North Main Street, Gay Mansion, Suffield Academy; Proposed Addition of a New Fence

Patrick Booth of the Suffield Academy explained the Academy's desire to erect a wooden fence in front of the Gay Mansion. The fence would run along the east side of the sidewalk for the entire width of the property, with piers and opening at the access point for the front door and at the driveway. No gates are proposed. Samples of the posts with rails and a sample of the piers were examined by the Commission. It was agreed amongst members of the Commission that the style of the Walpole "Chestnut Hill" fence was entirely appropriate for a Federal structure, and consistent with other period fences on Main Street in Suffield. Footing details for the fence have not been determined as yet.

Commissioner Bahlman made the motion to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed fence with the stipulation that the fence would be a Walpole "Chestnut Hill" fence, fabricated according to the manufacturer's requirements and constructed as mocked up in the samples, that the fence would be painted, and that a detailed plan for the fence footings would be reviewed by the Commission before construction. Seconded by Commissioner Mayne. Motion passed unanimously.

