

Town of Suffield Historic District Commission
Minutes of Meeting – August 3, 2015 – 7:30 P.M.
Suffield Town Hall – Downstairs Meeting Room

Present: Doug Mayne Chairperson, John Schwemmer, Scott MacClintic, Margery Warren, Brendan Begley

No public comments

Approval of the Minutes of the July 6, 2015 Meeting:

Meeting minutes from July 6, 2015 were handed out to the members for their review. Members agreed to review them and moved this item until after the applicants were heard.

Applications for a Certificate of Appropriateness:

98 South Main Street. “Dismantle existing garage” Roz and Frank Luongo, owners

Owners Roz and Frank Luongo of 98 South Main Street returned after having attended the June and July HDC meetings in regards to their garage project. Both Luongo’s wished to express their concerns with the HDC. Frank Luongo spoke first. Frank explained that this process began with a May 18th application for the Luongo’s and now they were in their third meeting nearing three months later. Frank expressed concerns that the HDC kept “changing the bar” on what the HDC required from their project. Frank referenced the Town’s Historical District handbook which states “to offer a reasonable approach to property improvement”. Mr. Luongo stated as

residents of town for nearly twenty the Luongo have done everything the HDC has askedthey have provided detailed drawings, modified their plans on several times and redrawn their prints several times, followed the suggestions of the HDC all along the way; they are working with a qualified contractor who has years of experience working with HDC; and yet after all that the Luongo's are now concerned that the HDC has again asked the Luongo's to change the pitch of the roof dramatically changing their drawings and changing the dimensions of the garage and greatly changing the practicality of the garage space. Mr. Luongo continued to address his concerns which are listed in the Mr. Luongo's notes attached. (as Secretary I was unable to take all notes necessary to list out all of Mr. Luongo's concerns and suggestions)

After a brief discussion regarding Mr. Luongo's statements, Ruz Luongo's spoke regarding her concerns. Ruz stated that the Luongo's have adjusted their timeline on this project and the Luongo's have made every effort to meet the modifications and suggestions made by the HDC. Ruz pointed out that it appears to her that the board is acting in an "arbitrary and capricious manner" which not the board duty per the HDC handbook. Ruz pointed out that the Board had not followed its own HDC guidelines by the fact that the board did not provide her with written notice of their decision after each meeting; additionally that the board did not vote on the Luongo's application at the June meeting, that the board did not publish minutes of its June and July meetings in a timely manner (seven days as required by the HDC guidelines), that the HDC did not post public notice of it's meeting held July 23rd to vote on the changes made by the Luongo's to their drawings; that the HDC acted improperly by voting by email and not at a meeting and more importantly that the results of that vote have not been noted in the public record. The HDC explained that an email had been sent to each

member on July 23th and each member had been “polled” as to their thoughts on the changes and that a “vote” had not been taken. The HDC apologized for the use of the word “vote” in an email sent to the Luongo’s explaining that the members were just being asked for their thoughts. The HDC indicated that this was done in an attempted to move the Luongo’s application along. Ruz explained that to her the HDC kept changing the “goalposts” after each review; leading more modifications; more costly redrawings and leaving the applicant very disappointed and frustrated at the process. Ruz listed several other concerns and made suggestions for the commission so that future applicants might not be treated in similar manner. Mrs. Luongo’s notes attached. (As Secretary I was unable to take all notes necessary to list out all of Ruz. Luongo’s concerns and suggestions.

Discussion followed on Luongo’s proposed garage relating to the dimensions and the pitch of the roof.

The presented detail drawings of a proposed replica garage structure were reviewed. The presented drawings were detailed drawings prepared by the Luongo’s Builder, Keith D’Angelo of Canton Connecticut.

The Chairman and commission thank the applicant for the quality and detail of the drawings. After review of the drawing and discussion Chairman Mayne again expressed concerns over the “roof pitch” and the pitches difference from the existing structure. The Chairman expressed concerns that the increased width of the proposed replica garage dramatically changed the architectural features of the existing garage.

After much discussion is motion was made.

Commissioner Schwemmer made a motion that the applicant's application be approved as presented. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Warren.

Motion passes. Four in favor of the application and one commissioner against the motion.

289 South Main Street. "Proposed roof mounted solar panels on south side of Barn" Tom Johnson Owner

Mike Feinberg representing C-TEC Solar of Bloomfield, CT explained that the Johnson's wish to add solar panels to be mounted on a barn located in the rear of their property. Mr. Feinberg explained and the Chairman confirmed that only a few feet of the barn is located within the HDC district.

After discussion regarding the location of the barn, and with most of the structure outside the HDC district as well as the fact that the panels would themselves be outside the HDC district a motion was made to approve the application of solar roof mounted panels on a barn located mainly outside of the HDC district Motion moved by Begley and seconded by Warren.

Motion passed without objection.

451 South Main Street. "Demo and replacement of existing garage" Michele and Larry Brickner owners

The Brickner's explained that they meet with several contractors and have determined (last meeting HDC asked them to verify with contractors to determine if the barn could be saved) that the barn could not be saved and should be

demolished. Brickner's presented drawings (see attached pdf.) by Lee H. Levey, A.L.A., LLC Norwalk, CT. The barn shall be sided with wood vertical siding and wood trimmed windows. All windows that can be seen from Main Street will be wood, vinyl windows maybe used in the rear (west elevation), however the applicant indicated they would use all wood. All windows will have wooden mutton and three over three wooden dividers as shown on the drawings. The new barn's roof material will be metal roofing material, a metal roof is typical of many local barns. Garage doors of the barn would be barn style doors made of wood however the doors will function as modern garage overhead doors that can be operated electronically.

The attached breeze way from the existing house will be all wood siding featuring wooden doors, wooden screen doors and wood windows.

Additionally, the applicants provide several old photographs, undated however estimated to be over one hundred years old of the barn. The applicant's stated these photos were used to assist in the barns elevations. After much discussion a motion was made to approve the application by MacClintic and seconded by Schwemmer. Motion approved with out objection.

523 North Main Street. "New porch on the Northside of the Home" Peter Hill owner

The Applicant Peter Hill presented drawings of a proposed new porch on the north elevation of his home. The plans show for a new enclosed porch structure to be attached to the north side of the home set back from the front of the home. Front elevation of the home faces east.

HDC recommended that wooden lattice be used to cover this new foundation of the porch, softening the appearance to the street. The porch constructed of wood siding to match the general details of the existing porch located on the south side of the home. Roofing material on the new porch would be asphalt shingles matching the south porch. The applicator suggested that they might use metal roofing material which the HDC agreed that metal roof would be ok. The Commission discussed many details of the project before a motion was made by Begley to approve the application seconded by MacClintic.

Motion passed with three in favor Warren, MacClintic and Begley; and against Schwemmer and Mayne.

185 North Main Street Suffield Academy Patrick Booth
“Replacing garage at Headmaster’s house with new barn”.

Suffield Academy Financial Director Patrick Booth came before the commission in order to determine if the HDC would be in favor of demolition of the existing garage and replacement with a more “barn like” structure. Mr. Booth explained that the present garage was built in the nineteen seventies and that the garage doors were very low. So low that a car with a carrier on top could not drive into the current garage without the removal of the carrier. Much discussion followed. Mr. Booth indicated that he would be back at the next meeting with a plan that would include the suggestions of the HDC. As no application was presented no vote was required nor taken.

Approval of the Minutes of the July 6, 2015 Meeting

Commission approved the minutes of the July 6, 2015 meeting.
Adjourn 10:20 pm.