

NEW CASTLE HDC MEETING
JANUARY 7, 2016

Present: Rodney Rowland, Chair, Lorn Buxton, Kate Murray, Jeff Hughes, Elaine Nollet, and Peter Reed.
Absent: Irene Bush

Meeting called to order by the Chair at 7 PM

Rowland advised the public to please sign in if you wish to speak. Address all questions to the commission; no dialogue to public.

1st item: Public hearing for Jay & Mary Pat Gibson, 91 Cranfield Street, Map 17, Lot 14.

Petitioners received previous approval for this project but now have some changes so are coming before the commission to address those. Lorn Buxton recused himself.

Mary Pat Gibson – we were here last February and received approval for renovations to the house and to build a 2 car garage. At the time of our application, we had proposed garage doors which were flat faced doors. In the process, we realized we could improve and enhance the character of the house if we put on garage doors with a single row of single pane lights that mirrored the windows on the new sitting room. Below the single row of lights are vertical panels that match the door on the front of the house. These doors enhance the overall look of the work that has been done. There is a drawing of new doors in the package submitted and we also have a copy of specifications on the doors for the board. The doors which are now in the new garage are temporary, they are not what we are requesting. The doors will be painted the same dark green as other exterior doors.

Another matter we wish to discuss is the new chimney on the front of the house. When we came before the board in February, the application included work to have all 3 chimneys repointed. Two have been successfully repointed, but when the mason started on the front chimney, he found that the brick had deteriorated from inside the chimney out and it could not be repointed as planned. We felt fortunate to have hired a mason with extensive historic restoration experience. Along with his help, we chose new bricks that are the same color and size as the bricks on the chimney that had to be pulled down. The chimney was rebuilt in the exact same footprint as the old chimney, and the same dimensions. We eliminated the cement collar that had been added to the original chimney and also eliminated the stainless steel screen on top. In essence, the chimney was duplicated without those two features which we feel improved the historical characteristic of the home. The only deviation from the original chimney were 3 rows of stepped out brick at the top and another 2 rows of stepped out brick separated by a row of half brick on an angle. We did this to improve the historical look of the house and the architectural design. We saw this chimney on a historic building in Exeter. The architectural roof which was approved by you was being installed one week after the chimney work was scheduled. We sincerely felt if we rebuilt the chimney within the same footprint and with the same brick, that it would be OK with the HDC. It was never our intent to bypass the HDC. If we had known the chimney could not be repointed, it would have been included in our application.

Rowland questioned the design of the new chimney, specifically the half brick at an angle, then asked if there were questions for the applicant on the garage or chimney? Craig Strehl asked “what is the recourse of the HDC – I’m not opposing what these people have done – but if people step out of bounds?” Rowland answered that the building inspector would be asked to issue a cease and desist on

1 the work. Rowland stated that is why people are advised to be aware if their house is in the historic
2 district as to what that means for zoning code.

3
4 Lorn Buxton was asked “what does the select board do if people step out of bounds?” Buxton
5 responded that if notified that the project has not been approved, he asks for a response and asks the
6 building inspector for a cease & desist. Beyond that, the select board has the authority to fine if the
7 work continues after a cease & desist. If a project has been completed, they can be ordered to remove
8 and replace to its original form. However, sometimes with historic buildings, that can be impossible. If
9 it is trees or shrubbery, they may be asked to replace it. For example, if somebody cut down a bunch of
10 trees 40-50 years old, they may be asked to replace w 10 year old trees.

11
12 Strehl stated that there should be some teeth to the enforcement of code. Some people seem to think
13 it is better to ask for forgiveness than permission.

14
15 Buxton stated that the town has addressed this by adding a second building inspector so they are more
16 aware of these things and catch them before it’s too late. The inspectors have been equipped with an
17 iPad so they have the conditions imposed by the board and information accessible at all times.

18
19 Jay Gibson stated that “in response, I would like to say for the record, it was not our intent to seek
20 forgiveness rather than permission”.

21
22 Rowland stated that he agrees there needs to be some teeth to the code and it’s something we need to
23 work on. I don’t believe there was any mal-intent but I think the chimney is a little more fancy than
24 would have been approved, particularly the one course of brick on an angle.

25
26 The public hearing closed and Rowland asked for questions or comments from the commission.

27
28 Elaine Nollet agreed that applicants have to cross the T’s & dot their I’s but we also have to look at
29 someone’s intent and clearly they did not intend to violate the code. I don’t think the chimney is that
30 intrusive that it detracts from the architecture of the house and I think they have done a beautiful job of
31 restoring the house.

32
33 Kate Murray said she is fine with the chimney but finds the garage doors elaborate. The proposed doors
34 puts the garage in the forefront rather than the rest of house being the focus.

35
36 Rowland agreed stating that garages are not historic but we tolerate them because everyone has cars.
37 The original doors were simplistic and the new ones bring attention to the garage and would rather have
38 it on the original structure.

39
40 Nollet stated that when you look at the drawing, it always seems to jump out so much more at you and
41 we, the commission, need to remember this.

42
43 Murray stated that the original drawing seems to recede more than the new doors.

44
45 Peter Reed thought the top portion is fine; the glass panels would allow some light in but wonder
46 whether the presentation of the lower panels is how the doors will really look.

47

1 Jay Gibson stated that the vertical lines in the panels are more accentuated in the picture. The front
2 door of our house is a door built with V grooves. The doors will be dark green. I think it will be very
3 subtle in reality, more so than the black and white drawing.
4

5 Jeff Hughes asked if the original proposal was to reuse the original doors? Jay Gibson stated that the
6 original doors were too small. The original request was to have doors of the same nature but we
7 couldn't actually reuse the old doors. Hughes stated that the original approval then was for a flat door
8 and added that he doesn't have an issue with the garage doors but that the glass does not go with the
9 historical style. His preference would have been to replace the chimney in kind, but it's done.

10
11 Rowland stated that he will not be voting for the garage. He believes simple is better but we have to
12 take a vote.
13

14 Reed voted to approve the new proposal as presented. Hughes seconded with discussion.
15 Nollet approved. Murray & Rowland denied. Rowland advised the Gibsons that they had their approval.
16

17 Next item on the agenda is a work session for Doug Palardy of 33 Walbach St, Map 18, Lot 72.
18

19 Rowland advised that the board would not be voting but finding out information and asking questions.
20

21 Sarah Hourihane from DeStefano Architects presented. Palardy recently purchased 33 Walbach Street
22 and wants to meet with you to get your input on approvals. The first page is an aerial view of the
23 property, the 2nd page is of the existing house, 3rd page is suggested changes but we are no longer
24 requesting stairs and deck be removed. We have also taken off the application to relocate the side
25 entry.
26

27 The west elevation has an existing side deck which we would like to remove and there is an existing
28 bump out window. We will continue the clapboards down and apply lattice below. We are working
29 with Ambit Engineering for water runoff and will have a gutter to a rain garden.
30

31 Murray asked given the incline, where does the water go?
32

33 The slopes will be graded toward the ocean and plantings will help filter the water. Another change we
34 have is that we would like to put in a wood stove and the plans show a side vent which is what we
35 initially were going to install but now propose a brick chimney mass and would like to know the board's
36 feelings. Rowland asked if the chimney would be down to grade and would it be brick? Yes it would.
37 The lattice below would be in front of the chimney but you would see the brick behind it. The gutter
38 would be sandwiched between the chimney & the lattice. The foundation will be concrete and stone.
39 Rowland stated that he likes the chimney. Hourihane asked if the board was fine with removal of the
40 chimney on the other side which was built in the 70's. Yes, the commission is OK with that.
41

42 Hourihane moved on to the north elevation stating the proposal is to remove the side deck, add a back
43 deck, and replace the picture window with sliders. Rowland asked if the north elevation is visible from a
44 public way? No don't believe so.
45

46 Hourihane stated that the final component is the garage but before that, wanted to know if the
47 commission had any comments on the main house? Peter Reed asked if the chimney being removed is
48 currently in use? No, it was used for a wood stove which is no longer in use. The chimney being

1 removed is on the east side and the new one is on the west side. Pallardy stated that for reference, the
2 chimney being removed is actually a square sheet metal box painted to look like bricks.

3
4 Rowland asked about the front door – it looks like it is 4 panel w/2 lights? Hourihane replied yes it is.
5 Rowland asked if they have a thought for the side door? Hourihane stated they are looking for the
6 commission’s input and suggestion. Rowland reiterated that he liked the front door but not sure it’s
7 worth repeating and doesn’t feel strongly one way or another.

8
9 Pallardy pointed out that on page 2 there is a railing pictured; the deed refers to maintaining a fence
10 which is gone. He proposes putting a 3-4’ fence there for safety.

11
12 It was asked how tall the new chimney would be? Hourihane stated that there is a bedroom window
13 there so will have to analyze that once we get into it. Rowland stated that the chimney will have to be
14 a distance from the window or door, according to code.

15
16 Murray stated that she was so anxious about this property coming up but so far it looks good to which
17 Nollet concurred.

18
19 Hourihane moved on to the garage. The top are existing drawings, the middle are option no. 1, and the
20 bottom is option no. 2. Pallardy is a designer and artist and would like to utilize the space above the
21 garage for a studio. The front elevation will remain the same; we are proposing to dormer the back side
22 for additional head height. On the west elevation, we propose a spiral staircase to get up to the 2nd
23 floor. The staircase would be light and airy and stuck behind a tree, it would be the least obtrusive and
24 the least in lot coverage especially since they are going for shoreland approvals.

25
26 Option 1 has a gable off the back side the entire width.

27 Option 2 has a smaller gable dormer that would step in with a small balcony.

28
29 The commission asked for pictures of the current garage which were passed around.

30
31 Rowland stated that he wasn’t sure changes to the water side bothered him too much given the limited
32 visibility of it. “I always go with simple. The spiral staircase I would never approve in a historic district.
33 There is no precedence for it and it is very visible.”

34
35 Buxton stated that it could be quite dangerous as ice could easily develop on it.

36
37 Hourihane stated that the owner is aware of that but the staircase is so he has use of his studio which
38 would be used mostly in summer. Our hope is that because we are in a sensitive location, the spiral
39 staircase provides the smallest footprint. Rowland stated that it flies in the face of the guidelines we
40 have. New construction is to be keeping in line with historic and this is not. Hughes agreed. Petitioner
41 was asked if there is currently a 2nd floor on the garage. Yes there is with a pull down staircase. Nollet
42 stated “I’m very progressive and I couldn’t approve it.” Reed asked if there was room in the garage to
43 put a staircase. Hourihane stated that the interior is 20’ x 20’, the spiral staircase would have to be in
44 the center and may have to be enclosed by code which would take up more space. Someone from the
45 public asked if they had the ability to take one side of the garage for an outside stairway? Hourihane
46 stated that another option would be to add a shed dormer to add head height to the garage to give
47 more room. Rowland stated he would have to see the plan.

48

1 Hourihane indicated that they have a sketch of that option and stated it's really just the back side that
2 you're seeing and it's a very rough drawing, but they would be able to gain a little head height. Hughes
3 asked when the garage was added? In the early 60's. It was originally a cape but in the early 70's
4 changed to gambrel. Hughes stated that this is one of the oldest houses in town and in a prominent
5 location and that the first thing you will see is the shed dormer. Rowland agreed that the garage is
6 difficult to alter. Murray stated that she likes the smaller dormer. Hourihane stated that the smaller
7 dormer gives a smaller footprint on the interior so there is less room for interior stairs. Rowland stated
8 that the commission prefers an interior staircase, but not sure how you get there.

9
10 Hourihane asked if the commission was good with the changes on the main house? Yes the commission
11 is fine with those changes and discussions on the garage can continue. Rowland advised Hourihane and
12 Pallardy to let Pam know what they would like to do next month.

13
14 Next item on the agenda is a work session for Charles McIntyre, 119 Main Street, Map 17, Lot 1.

15
16 Brendan McNamara, the Residential Designer for the project, stated that the general intent is to change
17 the rear and add on a screened porch. Go to page 2, the south elevation – the existing shed roof and
18 entry deck would be demolished and removed. They will put the shed roof back, extending it out. The
19 house was built in 1776 and obviously didn't look like this. The chimney you see in the original house
20 dates to 60's or 70's ; our intention is to remove that chimney. The larger chimney is being demolished
21 to just below roof level and they will restore the chimney that was removed. We will put shingles on the
22 rear as opposed to clapboard and a metal roof on the secondary structure to differentiate from the
23 primary structure. The brackets on the main house are true brackets. On the addition, the brackets
24 would be much simpler. The shingles would be natural looking and the trim would remain a light tone.
25 We are trying to break up the feel of the siding. Screen doors are retrofitted, and there is screen
26 between the columns.

27
28 Murray stated that the tops of the columns are different from the columns on the house. McNamara
29 stated they are mimicking but not copying the columns. Rowland stated that there is a lot of copper
30 roof. Would you consider something more traditional?

31
32 McNamara stated the roof pitch is less than 4 and the next material would be shingle. Both Hughes and
33 Murray stated that from the road you would see very little of the roof and the copper darkens.
34 McNamara agreed stating that it doesn't turn green, it will turn brown.

35
36 Rowland asked if there were other questions? Murray asked if the skylight is staying? Yes. Rowland
37 asked if there was anyone of the public to speak? No one spoke.

38
39 McNamara stated that they have white shingles and intend to do Azek trim but we do intend to paint it.
40 Will also have Marvin aluminum clad windows. They were asked to bring a sample to the hearing.
41 Rowland asked if the door surround was accurately depicted? Yes.

42
43 Next item on agenda is McCormack, 41 Piscataqua Street, Map 18, Lot 44.

44
45 McCormack – we've got an existing building which is covered in asbestos shingles. There are wooden
46 shingles underneath which I would like to expose. We would like to change the front porch with a
47 couple of new windows and a small landing. They are true divided light windows, 6 over 1, which

1 mimics what is there now. I have pulled a couple of doors out but am not married to them and looking
2 for suggestions from the commission.
3

4 Murray asked what the shingles are like underneath? McCormack said they are in pretty good condition
5 but I haven't seen a lot of them.
6

7 Rowland asked "you have a 1 x 5 window and shutters on some?" McCormack answered Yes, the
8 windows on the upstairs are existing and don't have shutters on them. They will be replaced with a little
9 narrower of a window and shutters.
10

11 Rowland asked are these large trim boards? Yes I used 1 x 6 but I can do smaller.
12

13 Hughes asked if he was moving the entrance of the house from one side to the other? Yes, we just
14 received approval to move the driveway from one side to the other side of the house so it makes sense
15 to move the entry.
16

17 Rowland asked about the windows again – they are predominately 6 over 1 and then there are paired 9
18 lights on the second floor in the front. He also asked about the window on the side by the new entrance
19 and stated he'd be interested in a window keeping with the design of the others. McCormack stated
20 that he could put a couple of double casement windows like those in the front of the house.
21

22 Rowland asked if the doors were panel doors. McCormack advised that the side door has 2 vertical
23 raised panels and I believe the front door actually shows 3 vertical raised panels.
24

25 Murray stated that she likes it, it looks good, but would want to see more details on the doors. It is
26 definitely an improvement from what's there.
27

28 Rowland advised McCormack to provide details for the doors at the hearing. Also to have details for
29 the windows and to provide cut sheets for the doors. Rowland stated it looks like he is depicting granite
30 steps for the front and asked what he planned for the side stairs? McCormack plans wood for the side
31 stairs. Rowland advised to provide details for the stairs and the rails. He also asked about the exterior
32 shutters – are you thinking of panel shutters? Yes, McCormack thinks they would be easier and was
33 advised to also provide details of the shutters at hearing.
34

35 McCormack was asked what his plans were if the shingles under the asbestos shingles are not good and
36 replied that he will replace them with cedar shingles.
37

38 Rowland asked if there is any exposed foundation? Yes, there is exposed foundation behind the porch.
39 The porch doesn't have a foundation, it is on pilings. McCormack plans an apron to block the view.
40 Right now there is lattice and he is not sure if he will put veneer with stone. Rowland advised to please
41 show what he proposes to use on the plans because the commission will advise the building inspector.
42

43 Reed asked McCormack if he found a number of shakes unusable if he had replacement shakes that
44 would match? McCormack advised it wouldn't be difficult to replace the shakes and match them. I
45 usually use cedar shakes because they last longer than pine shingle. The idea would be to make them all
46 natural.
47

1 Rowland advised that was the last work session for this evening. We have minutes to approve from
2 December 3rd. Minutes were reviewed and edited.

3

4 M/S/P to approve the minutes of December 3, 2015 as amended.

5

6 Rowland asked if there was any new business. Kate Murray introduced Judy Groppa who just moved
7 into the neighborhood and has a background in historic architecture. She was Executive Director of the
8 Historic Society in Darien, CT. and was on the architecture review board in the Town of Darien for 15
9 years. She also initiated that if someone wanted to demolish a house more than 50 years old in the
10 town, they had to go before a commission which tried to persuade them not to tear it down. Judy
11 presently works at Warner House with Sandra Rux. Ms. Groppa's name will be brought to the select
12 board as an alternate.

13

14 M/S/P to adjourn at 8:30 pm.

15

16 Respectfully submitted,

17 Diane L. Cooley