



Town of North Kingstown, Rhode Island

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NORTH KINGSTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

August 6, 2018

The North Kingstown Historic District Commission convened in the Municipal Offices Court Room, 100 Fairway Dr., North Kingstown, RI

The following members were present:

Wayne Trissler
Gail Hallock Cyr
James Shriner
Sarah Goldberger
Stacy Elliott

Andrew Correia was excused.

Shaun Lacey, AICP, Principal Planner, was present as staff liaison.

Commission Chair Jim Shriner called the meeting to order and explained the proceeding as follows:

- The applicant or their representative would be asked to come forward, be sworn in and give a brief explanation of their application.
- The board would review their requests, ask questions of the applicant, and take comments from the public.
- Decisions may be rendered the same evening, or the matter may be continued until a later time.
- The minutes of the meeting's session will not be approved until the next regularly scheduled meeting.
- If the application is approved, you will receive a Certificate of Appropriateness next month. There is a 20-day appeal period before you may apply for a building permit. If you wish to appeal a decision by the Historic District Commission, you may apply to the Zoning Board of Review during that 20-day timeframe.

Minutes and a decision are recorded in the Town Clerk's office.

Certificates of Appropriateness

Certificate of Appropriateness: Alterations/Minor Modifications request for a fence removal and replacement of windows, siding, pergola lattice and driveway materials on a single-family residential property located at 59 Washington Street, AP 117 Lot 239, zoned Village Residential Historic (VRH)

Certificate of Appropriateness: Site Improvements request for a proposed deck in the rear yard of a single-family residential property located at 109 Main Street, AP 117 Lot 241, zoned Village Residential Historic (VRH)

Certificate of Appropriateness: Alterations/Minor modifications request to amend a May 7, 2018 approval for a new driveway on a single-family residential property located at 25 Pleasant Street, AP 117 Lot 132, zoned Village Residential Historic (VRH)

Mr. Shriner said the first agenda item is a review and signing of last month's Certificates of Appropriateness. With no question or comment from the Commission, Mr. Shriner signed the certificates (Ms. Cyr acting as Vice-Chair signed Mr. Shriner's certificates).

Site Improvements: Application of Siobhan E. O'Bara, 11 Fountain Street, North Kingstown, RI 02852 to construct a retaining wall and replace existing steps in the front yard of a single-family residential property located at 11 Fountain Street, AP 117 Lot 238, zoned Village Residential Historic (VRH)

Siobhan Obara came forward and was sworn in.

She told the Commission she owns the property at 11 Fountain St. which sits on the corner of Washington St. She said she would like to construct a new retaining wall and replace the existing steps leading to the entry of the house.

She said there are existing concrete steps leading up to the original granite steps and into the front door. On either side of the steps is a grass area-with a slight incline from the street to the house. She said in the 4 years she has lived in the house, there has been a continued issue with street vehicles running over the steps and the grass. She said in 2017 and 2018 there were extensive structural issues from the snow plowing efforts from the town. The plows ran over the grass, as well as struck and cracked the steps. To mitigate concern, she would like to remove a portion of the lawn and front steps and construct a 12" retaining wall along both street fronts. The proposed wall and steps would be replaced with granite. Gravel or pea stones would be placed between the retaining wall and the street.

Ms. Cyr noted the gate located on Fountain St. She asked if Ms. Obara had plans to add steps there or if it will be solid stone wall.

Ms. Obara said that is a great question. She said her intention is to have a solid stone wall although it does make sense to have some type of an indentation on that part in front of the gate. Perhaps a small incline or step up. She would rather not have a tiered model the entire way but would perhaps

investigate pulling back the wall there, then a flush stone wall, then just that one step up to the gate.

Mr. Shriner said he had taken a walk over and seen that not only are the steps significantly deteriorated from both damage and poor construction, but the transition from the beautiful natural granite to flagstones set in concrete is not the best look. Ripping all of that out and replacing it with natural granite accomplishes two things. It will obviously make it much more attractive entry, making it much more in keeping with the village; the request or desire for natural stone also mitigates the damage issue. He added that he didn't think a single step up to go into the back gate would have any detracting from the appearance of the wall at all. So, I think that is a logical addition to the application.

Mr. Shriner asked Commission members if they had any other comments.

With none, he called for a motion to open the floor to the public.

Ms. Cyr moved. Ms. Elliot seconded.

There was no public comment.

Ms. Cyr moved to close the public meeting. Ms. Elliot seconded. All voted aye.

Mr. Shriner then entertained a motion on the proposal.

Ms. Cyr moved to approve the application as proposed with the addition that a granite single step be installed in front of the gate to the side yard as well.

Mr. Trissler seconded. All voted aye. The motion carried.

Signage: Application of Christine Bourget, The Captain's Table, 31 W Main Street, North Kingstown, RI 02852 to install a new sign on the front of a commercial building located at 31 W Main Street, AP 117 Lot 151, zoned Wickford Village Center (WVC)

Ms. Christine Bourget came forward and was sworn in. She told the Commission that she is opening a retail store at 31 West Main St.; she is calling her business "The Captain's Table". She would like to install a new sign on the front of the building. The proposed sign is 14 sq. ft. in area, one inch thick, and rectangular. The sign material consists of painted carved plastic (PVC). The sign will be affixed above the entry.

Ms. Bourget said she does know the Town prefers wood for signage in Wickford. She said she looked around for wood signs. She really wanted a carved sign, because she thought traditionally, with the anchor and the captain's table it would look great. What she found was that could barely afford to do a wood carved sign. She did find an option that she felt would be something that would last a long time; it wouldn't need maintenance and it does look very much like wood. She understands that the ordinance is different, but she wanted to come and ask the Commission to

consider it. She has brought an example of the sign. She thinks the technology makes a product that looks great. She said the gold carved lettering of the sample is what she would use.

Mr. Shriner asked if the picture Ms. Bourget submitted with her application are an actual depiction of the font, color, shape and lettering.

Ms. Bourget answered yes that's exactly what she wants.

Ms. Cyr asked if the sign the Commission approved at "Sprigs" was similar.

Mr. Lacey answered that was MDO, there was no carving on that graphic.

Ms. Cyr asked Ms. Bourget if a wood sign would be that much more expensive.

Ms. Bourget said it's much more expensive; she wouldn't be able to do a carved wood sign that thick. She said there is also an expense with the maintenance on it because the wood would fade and need painting. The thickness of the wood would require laminate, so it would look fake in terms of how thick it would be. She prefers a carved sign, she really likes the look.

Ms. Elliot asked about the maintenance with a PVC sign.

Ms. Bourget said the sign contractor told her the sign would last a lifetime; she wouldn't have to do anything to it after it is hung. It doesn't warp, it doesn't weather.

Mr. Shriner said he finds that the sign would be more appealing with carved shapes, lettering and fonts He said his opinion is that this looks about as close to wood as you're going to get, and he can empathize with the maintenance of wood signs. He said he doesn't necessarily think that the sign must be made from wood just for the sake of wood.

Ms. Cyr agreed.

Ms. Elliot said that it's almost worse to have complaints about deteriorating signs.

Mr. Shriner then said the Commission appreciates Ms. Bourget going the extra distance, both with the shape that she has selected, along with the font. It's going to be a carved sign, which is hands down a much better look than any painted or laminate sign.

Mr. Trissler said that if this is something the Commission is considering, they should limit this to signs only.

Mr. Shriner responded, "duly noted."

Ms. Cyr said that this sign is one of the higher signs and sort of off from the street.

Ms. Bourget agreed with Ms. Cyr. She said because of the placement of the sign she must compete.

With no further comment from the Commission, Mr. Shriner called for a motion to open to public comment.

Ms. Elliot moved. Ms. Cyr seconded. All ayes.

There was not public comment.

Mr. Shriner asked for a motion close public comment

Ms. Cyr made a motion to close. Ms. Elliot seconded. All ayes.

Mr. Shriner asked if somebody cared to make a motion on this application.

Mr. Trissler moved. He said the Commission believes that this material could be used for signs, but signs only; once carved and painted it does look very similar to wood, particularly wood that is highly finished; and, it is desirable to have a carved sign over a laminate sign.

Ms. Goldberger seconded. All voted aye. The motion carried.

The Commission welcomed Ms. Bourget to the Village.

Alterations/Minor Modifications: Application of Cameron J. Lewis, 121 Main Street, North Kingstown, RI 02852 to replace two windows on the rear of the second and third floor of an existing single-family residential house located at 121 Main Street, AP 117 Lot 244, zoned Village Residential Historic (VRH)

Mr. Cam Lewis came forward and was sworn in. He told the Commission he would like to replace two existing Anderson casement windows (located on the 2nd and 3rd floor). The windows are at the rear of the residence. He is planning to use all-wood JELD_WEN windows/sliders with internal simulated grills. He said the existing windows were installed on or about 1978. Due to the nature of the casement windows and their location, they have been exposed to extreme weather and wind. The windows no longer close properly and are not as efficient as more advanced double paned windows. He said he did investigate side by side double hung windows, but they are expensive; so, they investigated sliders. JELD-WEN is the only company that offers a full wood slider. He added all the windows will be new construction, all wood; the Commission approved a JELD-WEN window for the bathroom addition in 2013. He said as much of the trim will be used again – the rest will be replaced.

Ms. Cyr said it looks to be a replacement in kind.

Mr. Shriner asked what type of grills he was planning to use.

Mr. Trissler asked if the slider offered true divided light.

Mr. Lewis said that the slider will be true divided light with internal grills.

Ms. Cyr asked if they manufacture a slider with external grills. She said Mr. Lewis is planning sliders with the grill between the glass; she is not sure she likes the look of that; she thought perhaps no grill would be more like what's already there.

Mr. Shriner said it would really be much more in keeping if exterior grills were in place.

Mr. Lewis said the existing ones on the second floor are interior grills.

Ms. Cyr found a slider within the brochure Mr. Lewis submitted with external grills; these also say they are true divided light – so perhaps that is what Mr. Lewis is getting.

Mr. Lewis said he did not know.

Mr. Shriner agreed that external grills are more and keeping, if Mr. Lewis could get the slider with external grills, that would work; it would be better to have no grills over the internal grills.

Mr. Lewis pointed out that he is not sure if the external grills on that product will be wood.

Ms. Cyr agreed; it looks like they may not. She asked Mr. Lewis to see if the grills come in wood. If they do not perhaps it may be at Mr. Lewis' discretion to decide on external grills, internal grills or no grills.

Mr. Shriner asked for any further comment from the Commission. With none, he asked for a motion to open the floor to public comment.

Ms. Elliot moved.

Mr. Trissler seconded.

With no public comment, Mr. Shriner entertained a motion to close the meeting to public comment.

Ms. Cyr moved.

Mr. Trissler seconded. All voted aye. The motion carried.

Mr. Shriner moved to accept the application as presented. The owner has agreed to investigate external muntins on the windows to be consistent with the double hung windows on the rest of the house. But as they may not offer a wooden one, nor does the existing windows have one, that's not a requirement of the Commission. The Windows as installed will not have a significant detraction by any nature to the village and is also a well out of sight of virtually anything, therefore, will not have any impact on it.

Ms. Cyr seconded. All voted aye. The motion carried.

Alterations/Minor Modifications: Application of Christophe Massenet, 41 Main Street, North Kingstown, RI 02852 for a new air condensing unit and to replace three windows with new doors on a single-family residential house located at 41 Main Street, AP 117 Lot 224, zoned Village Residential Historic (VRH)

Mr. Christophe Massenet came forward and was sworn in. He said that he is excited about his purchase and is looking forward to making the house livable again. He told the Commission that he would like to install HVAC; the condenser would be on the exterior of the building; however, due to new floodplain regulations the unit will have to be elevated. Mr. Massenet has two options for making the condenser unit less visible: locating the unit externally over the three windows (which are proposed to be replaced with French doors) and shielding the unit with a painted clapboard screen around the perimeter; or, a second option is to potentially to put it in the storage shed, which is a two story structure which would get the unit above the baseline elevation. The second option is the one that the applicant is leaning toward. He said he also wants to replace three windows at the rear of the house; they do not appear to be original to the house and there are three sashes missing on the existing windows which presents problems with trying to rebuild. Mr. Massenet told the Commission that he would like to replace these windows with French doors. The existing rear door is not tall, so this proposed means of egress would be more functional. He said he is not sure the Commission's terms are working with Anderson doors - if that's something that is allowed.

Ms. Cyr had a question on how the condenser will be supported.

Mr. Massenet said there is a quick sketch included with the packet materials, there would be a bracket tree that it would have to come down off the bottom of that to create a pad for the condenser to sit on.

Ms. Cyr said the system and its installation should be engineered.

Mr. Massenet said he would do that.

Ms. Cyr said she would like to see the engineered plans. She also asked about the clapboards, there should be louvers that face backwards so that there's enough air circulation.

Mr. Massenet said that again is the reason why he is thinking this is probably not the best situation. His intention is to get it out view.

Ms. Cyr said if the applicant decides on this external location, she wants to see plans.

Mr. Shriner agrees with Ms. Cyr; he has seen systems have been put on shelves, but are are hidden from view. The visibility of this plan is not within the character of the village. Mr. Massenet has an important house in the village. It is a significant house; it's the only house in the village that is on the National Register of Historic Structures. Minimum impact is ideal, but the Commission understands that modernization is a reality.

Mr. Vespa, the contractor said the alternative plan of having the mechanicals in the second story of the shed (an attached wing of the home) is by far his preference.

Mr. Shriner said the plan using the shed is his preference also.

Mr. Vespia said louvers would have to be planned on the backside for air flow.

Mr. Shriner said it looks like the best thing to with this application is to is to continue it.

Ms. Cyr agreed.

Mr. Massenet asked if there is any way the plans could be approved by staff if the Commission reviewed them electronically. He would like to have it installed before the cold weather hits.

Mr. Lacey said, at the pleasure of the Commission, they could approve the alternative plan with a condition that the applicant can work with staff on the details, Mr. Lacey said he could share the details and consult with a minority of the Commission who could in turn respond with advisory comments.

Commission members agreed, they would go along with Mr. Lacey's suggestion.

The Commission then pointed their attention to the door.

Mr. Shriner asked if the chosen door was clad.

Mr. Massenet answered yes.

Mr. Shriner then said the Commission draws the line on new construction applications that aren't in kind; the Commission insists on new construction windows, new construction doors, with a wood exterior. The reason being that wood acquires a patina and texture.

Mr. Massenet said he would explore other options but was the Commission okay with the door location replacing the existing three windows.

Mr. Shriner said the windows missing sashes is a problem; and he sees the need for better access to the exterior patio.

Ms. Cyr asked how wide the triple set of windows is.

Mr. Vespia answered that they are little bit smaller than the planned door.

Ms. Cyr wondered if it might look a little more in keeping with what's there (three windows) if 2'6" french door panels rather than a wider opening were used.

Ms. Cyr suggested looking into Marvin doors.

Mr. Shriner added Trim-line, they make fine wood products.

Mr. Vespia said yes, they would do that.

Ms. Cyr clarified that meant the frame, the door and true-divided light.

Ms. Elliot added wooden exterior muntins are preferred.

Mr. Shriner said that this is another project that could probably be handled administratively with the submittal of the specifications on the product chosen. With Commission agreement, he then called for a motion to open the floor to public comment.

Ms. Cyr made the motion

Ms. Elliot seconded. All voted aye.

Mr. Shriner asked for a motion to close public comment.

Ms. Cyr moved.

Ms. Elliot seconded. All voted aye.

Mr. Shriner moved that we accept the application subject to a rendering by the applicant of the recommended suggestions strongly encouraged location for the compressor being in the back “elle” of the house. He said he moved we accept the application for the door has presented with the following changes: the door will be narrowed to a five-foot door or three panels of two foot six with a specification sheet to be provided to the staff of the wood door that is going to be installed. The changes are certainly in keeping with the village. It allows the owner to modernize while not impacting the village or the flavor of the neighborhood.

Ms. Cyr seconded. All voted aye. The motion carried.

Informational Items and Announcements

Summary of administrative approvals for the month of July

Mr. Lacey updated the Commission on several applications approved administratively in July.

Adjournment

Mr. Shriner said with no further matters, he motioned to adjourn. Ms. Cyr seconded. All voted aye. The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 PM.

Beth Gagnon-Glasberg

Recording Secretary