

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES

OCTOBER 2, 2019

8 PM

TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM

PRESENT: Chairman Deysenroth, Vice Chairman Kimberley, Members Langlois, Peiffer, and Poirier  
Alternates: Bleifeld and Grigerick

Chairman Deysenroth called the meeting to order at 8 PM. He appointed member Langlois to serve as clerk pro tem for the meeting.

The minutes of the September 11, 2019 meeting were approved on a motion by Ms. Peiffer seconded by Mr. Poirier and carried unanimously.

Chairman Deysenroth called the Public Hearing on the Application of David and Natalia Bentley to order.

Mr. and Mrs. Bentley were represented by Eric Michaels of Ranney, Michaels LLC. The application is for the addition of a new mud room, kitchen, master suite and laundry. The proposed addition will have a standing seam metal roof while the original portion of the building will retain a wood shingle roof.

Mary Welsch Lehman of River Road spoke of her objection to the expansion of the garage because the garage is nonconforming and has not been granted a variance by the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Mr. Michaels withdrew the proposed garage expansion and swimming pool from the application.

Mr. Deysenroth closed the Public Hearing at 8:25 PM.

Mr. Kimberly moved that a Certificate of Appropriateness be granted, Mr. Poirier seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Mr. Deysenroth asked Town Attorney Bloom for advice about members of the commission commenting on matters before the Commission on social media before the Commission had deliberated on the issue. Atty. Bloom said that members should not be writing in public forums.

Chairman Deysenroth opened the continuance of the September 11, 2019 Public Hearing on the proposed Offutt Center addition to the Weston Public Library.

Architect Hanna Prazada addressed some of the issues that had been raised at the September 11 meeting. She said that the height of the proposed building is 21'6" when viewed from the parking lot. She said that the entry doors would be 3' wide with "hold opens" to insure handicapped accessibility.

Chairman Deysenroth read a letter from Mary Dunne of the State Historic Preservation Office and Stacey Vairo from the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation who said that the proposed addition overpowered the existing building. They also inquired whether there was any federal funding involved, because if there is federal funding, review by the National Trust is required. Alan Swerlowe, 112 Birch Hill Road confirmed this.

Chairman Deysenroth then asked the Commissioners for comment. Four commissioners commented on the proportions, saying that the addition was “disproportionate,” “too big,” the zinc roof “towering over” the existing Library.

The Commissioners all affirmed that they supported the project and that their concerns were related to aspects of the design. The architect was asked if she had considered orienting the addition differently.

Commissioners also asked questions about the application of the stone. The stone will be attached to the building by a stainless steel grid in a patchwork fashion. The steel grid will be in the shadow of the stone components.

Alan Swerdlowe commented that the site plan was inappropriate for the building and that the building’s design should not be driven by the parking. He also gave examples of well known buildings which have had good additions which were separate and different.

Harry Falber of Oak Lane spoke in support of the addition.

Ruth Israely of 11 Nordholm Lane asked about the purview of the HDC.

Ellen Strauss of Ladder Hill North asked about the Facebook posts.

First Selectman Chris Spaulding, Architect Hanna Przada, Town Attorney Ira Bloom and Amy Sanborn left the room to confer. Upon return, Ms. Przada said that the height of the building could be reduced by 3’ 6” and that the proposed sign could be free standing in front of the entrance.

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 and was continued until 8PM on October 16, 2019.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynne M. Langlois

Clerk Pro Tem