

Milford Historic District No. 2 – South of the Green
Minutes of Regular Meeting and Public Hearing - Conference Room A, Parsons Government
Center (unapproved)
June 9, 2010

Chair Smith called the public hearing of the Milford Historic District No. 2, South of the Green to order at 6:33 p.m.

Members Present

G. Becker
Timothy J. Casey
M. Jones
Carol Molloy Smith
Walter Ortoleva
Arthur Paulson
Arthur Stowe

Also Present

R. Platt, City Historian

Application for COA

Mr. Doolittle presented his proposal for a new garage and shared photos of the existing garage. He explained the new structure will be 1 ½ car wide, will have a “barn door” style entrance and the roof shingles and sides will match his house. He added they will be repainting the house. Further, the garage will be connected to the house and will have interior stairs to a 2nd floor. The exterior size is 22' x 36'.

Mr. Ortoleva asked why the plan is to attach the garage to the house and it was explained by attaching it to the house, the garage can be taller. He also assured the members that the garage will not be an obstruction to any neighbors.

Mr. Doolittle submitted copies of appropriate notices of mailing and public hearing notice

There being no questions or comments, Mr. Paulson and Mrs. Jones made and seconded a motion to close the public hearing at 6:42 p.m.

Chair Smith called the regular meeting of the Milford Historic District No. 2, South of the Green to order at 6:42 p.m. She explained she would be asking for a motion to reorder the agenda in order to allow Mr. Platt, City Historian to direct comments to a matter she would be bringing up under her report.

Mr. Paulson and Mr. Casey made and seconded a motion to reorder the agenda as recommended by the Chair. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Paulson and Mr. Becker made and seconded a motion to approve the COA application for Mr. John Doolittle, 31 Pond Street, for proposed garage.

Mr. Casey noted in terms of bulk and size, this is one of the bigger projects to be considered in a while. Regarding the construction itself, he stated it blends in with the house and the neighborhood.

Chair Smith agreed and stated she felt it is a good addition to the neighborhood.

Mr. Ortoleva stated it looks very nice but looking at the proposal for the garage, it looks to be as big as the house.

Mr. Paulson agreed but felt the placement of the structure will not radically change the look and the multiple function of the structure is also an advantage. He stated he is comfortable with the proposal.

Motion carried with Mr. Ortoleva abstaining.

Chair Smith recognized Mr. Platt adding she had invited him to the meeting to address the demolition of structure on 25 Prospect Street, as requested by John & Janet Barney.

Mr. Platt provided some background information explaining this request goes back 5-6 years with a plan of conservation and development in the area and hearings that were held at that time. He explained originally there was a plan to construct apartments on this parcel, the zoning board approved the plan and following that decision it was appealed. Further, just recently the State Supreme Court declined to hear this matter and now there is a request to demolish the home on 25 Prospect Street. He added the property is part of the River Park National Historic District. Mr. Platt explained that 4 years ago the CT State Historical District was alerted of the plan for this property and a strongly worded letter was sent to the Barneys. He was hopeful that the Historic District would be consider bringing in the Attorney General which would bring about a 90-day delay followed by the Attorney General's decision to not demolish

Further, Mr. Platt referred to the Delay of Demolition Ordinance which states any structure that is 75 years of age cannot be demolished unless the City Historian or other organizations with historic purpose have given consideration.

Chair Smith stated she would like to pursue the 90-day delay as explained by Mr. Platt.

Mr. Platt interjected the house has sat vacant for sometime and has been subject to some neglect; also, he could not see why the Cemetery Association has not voiced an opinion on this matter yet.

Chair Smith explained the letter she received from the Barneys was dated May 26, 2010 and Mr. Platt stated he would have sufficient time to submit a letter initiating the 90-day delay. He added he would be attending a meeting following this meeting to address this matter.

Mr. Paulson asked if 25 Prospect and surrounding neighborhood was considered part of Milford's Historic District and he was told it was not.

Mr. Becker asked if the 90-day waiting period would begin once a letter was submitted and was concerned with just who would be able to make such a request.

Mr. Platt assured the members that either he or other organizations with a historic purpose can submit the letter and he felt certain that a letter from him would delay the process. With regard to that letter, Mr. Platt explained the letter must state a reason for the delay and he would simply explain that this property is part of the National Historic District. He added once the 90 days expire, the Building Inspector would have to issue a permit and at that time, it would be necessary to request an injunction to further delay.

Mr. Paulson suggested that Mr. Platt compose such a letter and be so kind as to electronically share that letter with this body and invite Mr. Platt to the July meeting and finalize such letter.

Mr. Ortoleva asked if we had real legal means to stop this demolition.

Mr. Platt stated explained the demolition could be stopped at 25 Prospect but he did not feel that further construction of an apartment complex behind this structure can be stopped. He suggested pursuing a plan to work cooperative with the developer in the plans for the apartment complex.

Mr. Becker and Mr. Ortoleva made and seconded a motion to recess the regular meeting and reconvene the public hearing at 7:16 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

At this time Mr. Paulson recused himself from actions regarding the Application for COA.

Application for COA

Mr. Paulson presented his proposal for a replacement fence which will be a 4 ft vinyl, see through picket style erected from the north side of his property into the back yard. He added the prior fence was taller than the proposed fence.

There being no questions or comments, Mr. Casey and Mr. Ortoleva made and seconded a motion to close the public hearing and reconvene the regular meeting at 7:25 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Casey and Mr. Ortoleva made and seconded a motion to approve the COA application for Arthur Paulson and Carolyn Greer, 10 Pond Street for a proposed fence. Motion carried unanimously.

[Note: Mr. Paulson resumed his role as a voting member at this time]

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Paulson and Mr. Becker made and seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the April 14, 2010 meeting as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Chair's Report (including correspondence)

Chair Smith stated Mr. Platt's earlier presentation and the request for intent to demolish 25 Prospect Street as previously discussed was part of her report.

She also received a communication from the City Attorney's office inviting interested parties to a Freedom of Information Commission workshop on 6/29/10 at City Hall. She noted if any members planned on attending they were to contact Toni in the City Attorney's office.

Mr. Casey stated he had attended a similar workshop in the past and felt the information he received would be sufficient.

Clerk/Treasurer's Report

Mr. Ortoleva reported the balance as of this date was \$504.

He added he had received notification from the city that the Commission had been approved for \$650 budget for the next fiscal year.

Mr. Paulson expressed his concern regarding the funds remaining and would they be allowed to be carried over into the next year.

Mr. Ortoleva was certain they are to remain since this Commission is funded by a grant and that money stays in the account.

Unfinished Business

A. Tree Commission Report – Mrs. Jones reported that the walk-through with the Tree Commission was beneficial and she added the Tree Commission is enthusiastic with plans for tree planting. Mrs. Jones stated they plan on planting in the fall and will be communicating that shortly to the residents in the area. She also stated the Tree Commission plans to have the neighbors help with the planting but she will continue to follow up with them regarding the matter.

B. Notifications – Mrs. Jones stated she had been able to identify five new homeowners in the district since 2009 and she provided those new residents with the Commission's rules as an informational matter. She stated she would continue to access the website providing information on new residents.

New Business

Chair Smith asked if the changes approved at the previous meeting had been updated on the city website and Mr. Casey stated he had checked and they were.

Mr. Casey informed the members that the Ct State General Assembly had closed this year's session but prior to that they had acted on Public Act 10-188, An Act Concerning Various Changes to Title 12, House Amendment A. He reported this bill adds provisions for tax credits for certified historic structures in a state registered historic district, not only residential but commercial as well. He shared details of this bill with the members noting it would have implications for businesses within the district.

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn at 7:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Candido
Recording Secretary