

NORWICH HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Minutes of the April 7, 2020 Special Meeting

The special meeting of the Historic District Commission was held Tuesday April 7, 2020 at 4:00PM via teleconference call.

Members Present:

Regan Miner (Acting Chairwoman)

Timothy Dowhan

Nancy O'Neil

Greg Johnson

Richard Guidebeck

Members Absent:

I. Public Meeting

The public meeting was convened at 4:08 pm. The order of COA presentations and discussions are at the discretion of the commission to accommodate all participants.

- COA 409 – 34 East Town Street (United Community & Family Services) *Other, Energy Upgrade*

Pam Kinder of UCFS stated their goal is to keep the integrity of the Samuel Huntington home intact during a three-part energy upgrade process which includes insulation in the attic, installation of storm windows in the transom area, an upgrade to the existing HVAC system and ultimately the replacement of 70 windows. Pam Kinder stated this COA refers to the HVAC portion of the project and currently they utilize window units for cooling during the summer months which is not ideal. Pam Kinder said the project is being funded through a donation from Norwich Public Utilities through the Neighborhood Assistance Act. Timothy Dowhan stated his only concern would be the cement pad needed for the four exterior HVAC condenser units and clarified that it would only be visible from a close proximity to the building. Pam Kinder also clarified that the only exterior work occurring will be the cement pad. Richard Guidebeck asked if

the pad would be sheltered by shrubbery to which Pam Kinder responded that it would over time.

- COA 412 – 170 Broadway (Peter DeCarlo) *Restoration, Electrical Upgrade* and COA 413 – 172 Broadway (Peter DeCarlo) *Restoration, Electrical Upgrade*

Joe Orsini introduced himself as the electrical contractor for the project and stated that their plan is to upgrade the electrical service inside the building from fuses to circuit breakers to increase safety. Joe Orsini stated that per new electrical codes and requirements from Norwich Public Utilities, exterior meters are now required on all buildings. The applicant is looking to install nine exterior meters with a main disconnect at 170 Broadway and five meters at 172 Broadway. Mr. Orsini stated the meters would be located on the right side of the building from the front of the property. Peter DeCarlo, the property owner, stated the reason for the upgrade is due to safety concerns at 172 Broadway where the service has failed because of water leaking into the fuse panel during rain and an electrical trip issue at 170 Broadway where there is a tenant that requires constant air conditioner service due to medical issues. Joe Orsini stated they have attempted to resolve the issues, but they are non-repairable. Mr. DeCarlo wished to note that neighboring properties have existing exterior meters so meters at this property would not be out of the norm for the neighborhood. Discussion ensued on the potential of having interior meters to which Joe Orsini stated he believed per Norwich Public Utilities that the meters must be exterior. Timothy Dowhan asked if the electrical wiring would be replaced from the street to the home as well as inside the home to which Joe Orsini responded the owner is responsible for replacing the wiring from the point of attachment to the home. Further discussion ensued regarding the location of the meters and their visibility from the street. Regan Miner asked if there would be a possibility to utilize shrubbery for shielding the meters from view. Joe Orsini stated due to the three foot minimum working space required by code there cannot be anything permanently obstructing the meters. Nancy O'Neil questioned if there were any possible options for shielding the meters while adhering to code. Peter DeCarlo and Joe Orsini discussed options of constructing swing doors to cover the meters that would match the exterior of the property, as the property driveway prevents a stationary shield. Gregory Johnson asked if the total area of the meters was about 120-inches which Joe Orsini said was correct, but clarified that the nine meter section includes a 23-inch wide main disconnect. Timothy Dowhan asked if the applicant would be flexible on the potential of creating a shield for the nine meter section if required to which Peter DeCarlo answered he was, but his preference would be to build a small enclosure out of similar siding opposed to doors.

II. Regular Meeting

The regular meeting was convened at 4:53 PM.

A. Action on COA's

- COA 409 – 34 East Town Street (United Community & Family Services) *Other, Energy Upgrade*

Richard Guidebeck made a motion to approve the COA as presented. Nancy O Neil seconded. Timothy Dowhan stated he had seen the window AC units in the past and felt the upgrade would be an attractive improvement to the home. Timothy Dowhan stated the issue sounds structural and imminent as well. Nancy O'Neil agreed that the changes are needed and the property would look better afterwards. Richard Guidebeck, Timothy Dowhan, Nancy O'Neil, Regan Miner and Gregory Johnson voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

- COA 412 – 170 Broadway (Peter DeCarlo) *Restoration, Electrical Upgrade*

Gregory Johnson made a motion to approve the COA as presented. Timothy Dowhan seconded. Discussion ensued regarding the positives and negatives involving the installation of an enclosure to cover the proposed meter. Lacking a clear drawing or understanding of what the enclosure would look like, the Commission ultimately decided not to require it. The motion remained unchanged. Gregory Johnson, Timothy Dowhan, Richard Guidebeck, Regan Miner, and Nancy O'Neil voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

- COA 413 – 172 Broadway (Peter DeCarlo) *Restoration, Electrical Upgrade*

Richard Guidebeck made a motion to approve the COA as presented. Timothy Dowhan seconded. Richard Guidebeck, Timothy Dowhan, Regan Miner, Nancy O'Neil and Gregory Johnson voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Minutes of Wednesday February 26, 2020 Special Meeting

- Richard Guidebeck made a motion to accept the February Special Meeting minutes as written with the revision of Nancy O'Neil's absence listed as excused. Gregory Johnson seconded. Richard Guidebeck, Gregory Johnson, Timothy Dowhan and Regan Miner voted in favor. Nancy O'Neil abstained. The motion passed.

C. Chairman Report: None.

D. Old Business: None.

E. New Business: None.

F. Next Meeting Date:

- Scheduled for Wednesday April 15, 2020 at 5:30 PM.

G. Adjournment

- Gregory Johnson made a motion to adjourn the Special Meeting At 5:15 PM. Nancy O'Neil seconded. Gregory Johnson, Nancy O'Neil, Richard Guidebeck, Timothy Dowhan and Regan Miner voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine Rose
Recording Secretary