

NORWICH HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Minutes of the April 17, 2019 Regular Meeting

The regular meeting of the Historic District Commission was held Wednesday April 17, 2019 at 5:30 pm in City Hall Room 319.

Members Present:

Scott Learned (Chairman)
Regan Miner (Vice Chairman)
Timothy Dowhan
Richard Guidebeck
Nancy O'Neil

Members Absent:

Greg Johnson - excused

I. Public Meeting

The public meeting was convened at 5:30 pm. The order of COA presentations and discussions are at the discretion of the commission to accommodate all participants.

- COA 392 – 359 Washington St (*Roof*)
John Dennis (owner) presented his application. The house is circa 1900 (Applicant noted there is some aluminum siding). Applicant would like to replace current flat, 3-tab, asphalt shingle with Ownings Corning *Duration* architectural (dimensional), asphalt shingle. Applicant describes it as a ‘middle-of-the-pack’ product (i.e. not their top of the line, not their low end). Existing shingle is faded black (although it now appears grey) atop a white house. Proposed shingle is predominately grey.

II. Regular Meeting

The regular meeting was convened at 5:35 pm

A. Action on COAs

- COA 392 – Washington St (*Roof*)
Discussions by the commission members were favorable to the replacement of existing shingle with like material and architectural detail. No issues voiced with proposed choice of color. Motion to approve the COA as written (RG; NO second) was **approved** unanimously.

B. Minutes of March 20, 2019 Regular Meeting

- Motion to accept the March Regular Meeting minutes as written (NO; RG second) was approved unanimously. (SL abstain)

C. Chairman Report

- General Comments: Recent COAs have called into question what defines appropriate materials and treatment. In very few applications (usually as a result of an ‘after-the-fact renovation’) has the HDC strayed from an opinion of ‘like for

like' material and restoration treatment. Chairman suggests the HDC's mission and responsibilities be added (in a short section) to the top of the COA application. By bringing this detail to the forefront, this may help the applicant in the planning of their project, provide awareness in the generation of the COA, and in the end alleviate unnecessary tension in communicating and working with the applicant. Recent applicants have voluntarily expressed anticipating ominous and/or 'contentious' expectations in dealings with the COA process and the HDC (which hopefully have been proven to be unwarranted!). Chairman will draft the COA changes for review by the committee at a future meeting. Application will leave the rules & regulations as is in the preliminary section of the full COA package.

- Chairman indicated he received a voice message but no further documentation and/or application pertaining to the proposed replacement of roof shingles at 377 Washington St (Vincent Verdi). Message conveyed a desire to replace current wood shingle with asphalt. Chairman will respond to owner with a letter (with COA package included) of encouragement to read the COA package prior to submission of an application and work performed (cc: JTroeger @ Building Dept). Mr. Verdi address is listed with a NY address. *Have we approved asphalt for wood?* Only when work was performed before asking for permission. In term of house with historic value, the committee's general opinion has been 'like for like' material (i.e. 'wood for wood').

D. Old Business

- RMiner reports the historic list of COAs requested for submission to the state were delivered to the city (AFuller) for State submission. Three remain missing from 2015. Members will continue to review potential sources of the information . Chairman will review for potential electronic copy. Failing that, a request to the applicants directly will be made (DCregeau, JHamblin, LPereira). Missing COAs: COA #333 (23 ETown), #335 (11 Huntington Ln), #365 (193 Broadway). *What is disposition of boxes and content delivered to city?* If city will store the artifacts, there are two more boxes that could be included. HDC would need to have access to the items in storage. Action Item: RMiner to contact city clerk to re-iterate the artifacts retain HDC ownership. RMiner to clarify these are the HDC original and submission to state should be copies of the artifacts only.
- RMiner has not heard a response to our most recent communications on HDC budget. A 3rd letter on budget sent to City Manager, Comptroller, and DRhodes (HDC is City Planner budget item) on April 2nd proposing a budget of \$1788. Original budget request was \$2388 sent October 16th; City response on March 13th was \$1000 (theoretically covers legal notices and IT costs). Our recent proposal would contain enough to support our basic costs and a Recording Secretary and eliminates funding the historic preservation award. Mayor Nystrom and City legal counsel have expressed the opinion that as a regulatory agency, a non-voting recording secretary is a must. Plan is to await response on our latest rebuttal letter. If necessary: Ask MDriscoll for support/legal opinion. In addition: Investigate HDC meeting include audio self-recording.

E. New Business

- As discussed in Chairman comments: Action Item - Chair to write Verdi letter.
- It was noted that work was being performed on roof at 6 Elm Ave. Chair to write letter (per review of property) with COA and reminder. (Seiderwicz, owner)

F. Next Meeting Date

- Scheduled for Wednesday May 22, 2019 at 5:30 pm. (Action Item – TDowhan to initiate rescheduling (Regular Meeting → Special Meeting) with city. Commission to review and entertain future meeting dates to ensure attendance is optimized.

G. Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn (TD; NO second) approved unanimously. The Regular Meeting adjourned at 6:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Learned
Chairperson
SL/td