

**RIDGEFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
**Lower Level Small Conference Room**  
**Town Hall, 400 Main Street**  
**Ridgefield, CT 06877**  
**April 19, 2018**

**APPROVED MINUTES**

A regular meeting of the Ridgefield Historic District Commission (“HDC”) was held in the lower level small conference room of the Town Hall, 400 Main Street, Ridgefield, CT 06877, on Thursday, April 19, 2018, and beginning at 7:30 p.m.

The following members were present:

Dan O’Brien, Chair  
Briggs Tobin, Vice Chair  
Joseph Gasperino  
Rhys Moore  
Sean O’Kane  
Harriet Hanlon (Alternate)  
Kam Daughters (Alternate)

**AGENDA**

- 1) 10 Governor Street – Ridgefield Youth Barn – Installation of a mural and information plaque
- 2) 236 Main Street – Hawley House – Window replacement and siding repairs
- 3) 63 High Ridge Avenue – Driveway asphalt paving and expansion of a parking area

**MEETING**

**The Meeting was called to order by Mr. O’Brien at 7:30 p.m.**

- 1) 10 Governor Street – Ridgefield Youth Barn – Installation of a mural and information plaque

Denise Qualey, with the Ridgefield Youth Commission, was present.

D. Qualey said the Ridgefield Youth Commission worked on a project to create a mural intending to spread kindness in the Ridgefield community. Funds of approximately \$10K were raised and D. Qualey showed the HDC a rendition of the mural. She stated the project was covered in the Ridgefield Press as well as the Newstimes in February 2018. When completed, the mural would be six panels, approximately 90 sq. feet. When placed outside of the Teen Barn Center, it would be visible from Governor Street and there will be no lighting added at that time. They would see how it looked for now. D. O’Brien reminded her to come back to the Commission if lighting is to be added at a later date.

D. Qualey said they were interested in erecting an information plaque. They spoke with Kay Ables, town historian, but unfortunately it was not possible to do a museum spot type of plaque. However, they believed they would be able to copy the form with some other type of plaque. The plaque would go on

the grass at the bottom of the barn so it wouldn't block the mural. The Garden Club would landscape and plant bulbs annually.

A dedication is scheduled for June 10<sup>th</sup> at 1pm at which they were hoping the Clementi Foundation would be able to attend to speak.

J. Gasperino asked if Wells Fargo owned the property, which D. Qualey confirmed. J. Gasperino also asked if the driveway was asphalt. D. Qualey said she thought it was, but perhaps it was old. J. Gasperino asked if perhaps Wells Fargo could be approached to pave the driveway. Especially since the nearby property had sold and there was a dumpster available. J. Gasperino suggested D. Qualey speak with the manager of Wells Fargo and D. Qualey agreed.

**B. Tobin moved and J. Gasperino seconded a motion to approve the application for the installation of a mural (six panels approximately 90 sq. feet) and information plaque, similar to the Ridgefield Historical Society's plaques, outside of the Teen Barn Center facing Governor Street without any lighting. Motion passed 5-0.**

2) 1 Parley Lane – Window replacement of the short square windows with tall, narrow, rectangular windows

At the invitation of D. O'Brien, the owner Charles Gay appeared before the HDC with a minor change to their previously approved December 14, 2017 application.

C. Gay said most of the home's windows are tall, narrow and rectangular. There were two short square windows at the top that he would like to replace with the same type of tall, narrow, rectangular windows appearing on the rest of the house. These rectangular windows were not part of the original house, and he was hoping to change them in keeping with the rest of the house. S. O'Kane asked if these were the windows by the hallway. D. Gay confirmed they were, and that this hallway connected to the bonus room above their garage. B. Tobin looked at a rendering C. Gay had distributed and asked about the overhang. S. O'Kane said the window replacement would be a big improvement, look much more elegant and bring more light into the upstairs hallway.

**J. Gasperino moved and S. O'Kane seconded a motion to approve a modification to a previously approved application allowing for the replacement of the short square windows in the second-floor hallway connecting to the bonus room, with tall, narrow, rectangular windows, matching the other windows on the house. Motion passed 5-0.**

3) 236 Main Street – Hawley House – Window replacement and siding repairs

D. O'Brien advised that Don Ciota, the owner of the house, would not be appearing at the meeting. D. Ciota was still waiting for quotes to come in from window preservation-type contractors.

D. O'Brien said for the next HDC meeting on May 17<sup>th</sup>, this application would go over the 65-day statutory limit for applications to be considered. Therefore, he recommended the HDC vote without prejudice to give the applicant time in receiving the additional quotes they required so the applicant may refile an application.

**T. Briggs moved and S. O’Kane seconded a motion to deny the application without prejudice in view of the expiring time required to hear applications. Applicant is expected to soon refile this application. Motion passed 5-0.**

S. O’Kane spoke about his visit to the Hawley House last month. He said this was a great house, circa 1713, one of the most historic houses in town, and predated the Keeler Tavern by six years. On the visit, Gregory Farmer of CT Trust attended. G. Farmer said no new modern window would come close to the current windows. These windows were circa 18-19<sup>th</sup> century, ¾” thick and hand planed. G. Farmer said if these windows were restored, stripped, repainted, reglazed and taken care of, they would last another 100 years. In the front, lower, right hand sash, the wood could be fixed if rotting out. G. Farmer also said he was in favor of putting storm windows. In S. O’Kane’s view, D. Ciota appeared enthusiastic on restoration.

J. Gasperino said D. Ciota’s concerns had been the safety egress and heating loss because of the windows. G. Farmer said none of the glass was likely original to the house. The oldest was found downstairs, circa around 1780. Others were circa around 1880 to early 1900’s. S. O’Kane said G. Farmer was not suggesting reglazing with modern glass, rather taking out what was there, saving the glass, reglazing and putting them back in. J. Gasperino agreed the original glass was gone, but what was there was very good glass and they should be saved. S. O’Kane said there were three companies G. Farmer recommended to put in wood storms with removable sash. S. O’Kane said this was a considerable task, but doing a room at a time is what G. Farmer highly recommended and advocated for in restoration. S. O’Kane said new modern windows last twenty years, and if the current windows were restored as suggested, they would last 100 years.

In J. Gasperino’s view, D. Ciota appeared to embrace the historic sense. S. O’Kane said if people purchase a home in the Historic District, they become responsible for keeping the historical perspective. J. Gasperino said he believed it was clear, the historical value of the windows. J. Gasperino said G. Farmer dated the current wood shutters to circa 1850 and said they should be saved and repaired.

D. O’Brien asked about the siding wood rot. S. O’Kane said G. Farmer was not insistent that all sides be the same. D. O’Brien said then replacing with like materials would make sense. J. Gasperino said there was a lot of paint. S. O’Kane said the door in the back would probably be changed. This was on the east side and the only egress on that side. He does not see this as a major stumbling block.

D. O’Brien advised that at the May 17<sup>th</sup> HDC meeting, B. Tobin would be running the meeting. D. O’Brien and S. O’Kane would be absent.

D. O’Brien said for the next month’s meeting, 63 High Ridge (a Queen Anne home), might be submitting an application. H. Hanlon asked if this was the old McNamara’s house and this was confirmed. It appears they will be looking for the driveway to be replaced with asphalt. Currently the driveway has loose, stone gravel. They want to create parallel parking spots which cannot be seen from the street. D. O’Brien suggested the HDC members drive by 63 High Ridge to view the current driveway conditions. To date, no application has been filed. D. O’Brien indicated that many of the houses in the historic district have asphalt driveways. J. Gasperino asked what about oil and stone. S. O’Kane said he would suggest that option. S. O’Kane said he believed the owners may be amenable to that suggestion.

D. O’Brien said he got a call regarding 155 Main Street. There might be an application to put in a flagpole where a tree had stood. J. Gasperino asked where on the property. D. O’Brien was not sure.

D. O'Brien said Keeler Tavern might come back regarding the signage out front. He thinks an application may be submitted for the May 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. S. O'Kane said he would recuse himself on that matter due to his client relationship.

D. O'Brien said he heard from John Doyle who advised good progress had been made on the Church lighting issues. Dimmers were put on three of the bollards. J. Doyle said someone was coming on Monday to put a film on the post lights so the HDC could see the results. This would be underneath the light to diffuse, which would change the light. This film, was horizontal underneath the light. T. Briggs said this might do the trick. S. O'Kane asked what would this look like from a distance. D. O'Brien said only one light would be done. T. Briggs said it might be difficult to see the bulb from the naked eye. D. O'Brien asked about everyone's schedule to see the progress next week by a site visit. The date was agreed for next Tuesday April 24<sup>th</sup> at 8pm, and failing that, on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup>.

D. O'Brien said he would be reaching out to Mark Blandford for the HDC alternate position which was met with general agreement.

D. O'Brien said he got an email from J. Gasperino advising of possible work being done at the Keeler Tavern. D. O'Brien and S. O'Kane visited, and found that they were not replacing the windows, but were taking the windows down and restoring. They were doing ongoing maintenance.

J. Gasperino said that the dog receptacles looked to be working out. The receptacles were being emptied out every week. However, it appeared that they were also being used for coffee cup trash. J. Gasperino said these receptacles have made a big difference. H. Hanlon said this was a good call. J. Gasperino said on the rail trail, there were tall poles with signage being used. T. Briggs said that he would guess that it was 90% effective on Main Street and about 50% effective on the Rail Trail. D. O'Brien said it may make sense to wait a while before having more receptacles installed in the Historic District area

4) Approval of the HDC Meeting Minutes – March 15, 2018

The HDC members took a moment to review the March 15, 2018 HDC meeting minutes.

**B. Tobin moved and S. O'Kane seconded a motion to approve the February 15, 2018 HDC meeting minutes. Motion passed 5-0.**

**S. O'Kane moved and R. Moore seconded a motion to adjourn the Historic District Commission Meeting at 8:35 p.m. Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L. Fields