

**RIDGEFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
**The Lounsbury House**  
**316 Main Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor**  
**Ridgefield, CT 06877**  
**November 18, 2021**

**APPROVED MINUTES**

A meeting of the Ridgefield Historic District Commission (“HDC”) was held in the Lounsbury house at 316 Main Street, Ridgefield CT, which was open to the public, on Thursday, November 18 2021, and beginning at 7:30 p.m.

The following members were present:

**Dan O’Brien, Chair**  
**Briggs Tobin, Vice Chair**  
**Rhys Moore**  
**Sean O’Kane**  
**Kathleen Daughters (Alternate to Harriet Hanlon)**  
**Mark Blandford (Alternate)**

**AGENDA**

- 1) **29 West Lane – Remove existing roof and install Tesla solar roof**
- 2) **17 Main Street – Addition of new skylight on rear flat roof; replacement of rotting, removable glass enclosure panels at sunroom with operable window units; new stone wall (extension of neighbor’s wall, matching material, detailing and proximity to sidewalk); and new wood picket gate**
- 3) **321 Main Street – Demolishing and rebuilding of barn**
- 4) **90 Poplar Road – Designation as a Local Historic Property**
- 5) **Future Commission meeting schedules**
- 6) **Approval of Minutes**

**MEETING**

The meeting was called to order by Mr. D. O’Brien at 7:31 p.m.

1) **29 West Lane – Remove existing roof and install Tesla solar roof**

Ms. Lindita Donahue, Tesla permit coordinator, was present to represent the Applicant. Portions of the solar panel were displayed to the HDC members.

Mr. O’Brien asked if these panels were presented to other Historic District Commissions. She said yes and mentioned that it had been presented in East Hampton. Mr. O’Brien asked if it was for a newer home, not necessarily a historic home. Ms. Donahue said it had been for a newer home.

Mr. O’Kane asked why the panels couldn’t be simulated to appear as smaller shingles. Ms. Donohue said in the Northeast, because of the colder temperatures, they could not make the panels smaller. Mr. Blandford said he thought it should be scored to appear as several panels, not made smaller sized necessarily. Mr. O’Brien asked if they were overlaid. Ms. Donahue said they were.

Mr. Blandford said the house in question was built in 1996, and is not an historical home. Currently, the home had an asphalt single roof. Ms. Daughters asked how long of a life span of the solar shingles. Ms. Donahue said the life span was approximately 30-35 years. Mr. Blandford asked if the efficiency reduced over time. Ms. Donahue said it had a higher efficiency and didn’t lose much due to the power wall. You are able to monitor the unit on an app. Ms. Daughters asked if they were all the same shiny black color. Ms. Donahue said the color was black. However it was not so shiny. Only when the sun hit it.

Mr. Blandford asked if approval would set a precedent. Mr. O’Brien said each application was different and subject to its own facts and conditions. If this were a historic home, this would be a different discussion.

**Mr. Moore moved and Mr. Tobin seconded a motion to approve the application as submitted to remove the existing roof and install a Tesla solar tile roof. Motion passed 5-0.**

**2) 17 Main Street – Addition of new skylight on rear flat roof; replacement of rotting, removable glass enclosure panels at sunroom with new operable window units; new stone wall (extension of neighbor’s wall with matching material, detailing and proximity to sidewalk); new wood front picket gate; and placement of a shed in the rear of the property**

Mr. Alex Bellina of Doyle Coffin Architecture and Mr. Robert Rae, homeowner were present. Mr. Bellina distributed photos and drawings to HDC members. Mr. Bellina presented as follows:

- a) Addition of Skylight to Rear Flat Roof – The skylight was low visibility from the street. There were no changes since the site visit. The first picture showed the view from Main Street.
- b) Replacement of Sunroom Panels with Window Units – Mr. Bellina said the current panels were going to be replaced, stored and restored. On the porch, they are looking to use wood fold-up & in panels, with a decorative wood railing beneath and wood fixed-in sash windows behind the railing. The fold-up windows pivoted inside when opened. Along the front, there would be fixed wood double hung windows, with wood railing beneath and double hung windows below, along with a wood door to match. Mr. O’Kane asked if there were screens for the panels and windows. Mr. Bellina said yes. The photos showed the panels opened and with screens. The wood panels would use single glaze glass. The porch was a three season room. The glass was not insulated. Mr. O’Kane asked if the porch was used in the winter. Mr. Bellina said no. Mr. O’Kane asked why they were using glazed windows. Mr. Bellina said that’s what was there now. Mr. O’Kane asked if the door would be the same size. Mr. Bellina said yes. Mr. O’Kane asked if they had considered a continuous band of windows at the base. Mr. Bellina said there was a stone wall in front along with stone steps. Mr. Rae said the door was not currently used. Further, it was not expected to be used when replaced. Mr. O’Kane asked if all windows would be wood. Mr. Rae agreed it would be wood on the restored porch. Mr. O’Kane said the main house was prominent.
- c) New Stone Wall with Wood Picket Gate. Wall to match neighboring material, detailing and proximity to sidewalk. – Mr. Bellina said they were extending the stone wall along the front property from the neighbor. The height would be approximately 30 inches. The gate would be a painted wood picket fence with wood posts. There would be recessed lights within the stone wall in the driveway end area, approximately 3 x 5 inches, with low lumen output. Color casing would be black or dark grey.
- d) Patio Extension behind the House – Ms. Daughters mentioned one had to step down to reach the patio. Mr. O’Brien said it would be very unlikely for anyone to see the extension in the back of the house. The

- ground dropped down. Mr. O’Kane said there were existing stone steps. He asked if the equipment would be behind the garage. Mr. Bellina said they would be where the propane tanks were located.
- e) New Shed behind the Property – Mr. Bellina said it would not be visible from the street. This was a modular unit, wood shingled, painted white. Mr. O’Kane said the upper side would face the street. Mr. O’Kane said this was very different from the house. Mr. Blandford asked if it could be seen from the street. Mr. O’Brien said the property dropped down quite a bit. Mr. Tobin said the property went down and then back up. Mr. Bellina said the shed would be put on piers. They still needed to get Wetland approval. Mr. O’Brien said once they passed Wetland approval, to return for HDC approval if there was any change in the shed location.
  - f) Roof replacement – Mr. Bellina said the roof was leaking. They were looking to replace with the same asphalt shingle roof material.

**Mr. Tobin moved and Mr. O’Kane seconded a motion to approve the plans as presented for the addition of a new skylight on the rear flat roof, replacement of removable glass enclosure panels at the sunroom with operable wood window units and new wood door; new stone wall with recessed driveway lights (extension of neighbor’s wall, matching material, detailing and proximity to sidewalk), new wood picket gate, patio extension behind the house, replacement of existing asphalt roof with the same asphalt material, and placement of a shed in the rear of the property. Motion passed 5-0.**

### **3) 321 Main Street – Demolishing and rebuilding of barn**

Ms. Michelle Hogue (General Contractor and Applicant) was present. Ms. Hogue brought large scale detailed plans with elevation detail. She stated the plans were homeowners approved, which was confirmed by them to Mr. O’Brien.

Ms. Hogue said they looked at using barn doors. However the rusting of the hardware was of concern. Instead they created architectural panels that had the same aesthetic appeal, that were non-operative but looked nice.

Marvin wood double hung windows would be used. On the South side, you could see the window over the sink and the one window for the stairs.

The roof line continued over the laundry area, as suggested by the HDC.

They were planning to use as much of the existing original wood beams as possible.

Mr. O’Kane said he liked the in-depth plan details along with the elevation. Mr. Tobin asked about the current use of the structure. Ms. Hogue said it had not been used for a long time, but perhaps lawn equipment before the current owners.

Ms. Daughters asked if they were replacing the east and west sides with French doors. Ms. Hogue said they were, and on the East side, also adding the non-operative barn doors.

**Mr. O’Kane moved and Mr. Moore seconded a motion to approve the revised plans dated October 26, 2021 as presented for the reconstruction of the barn which will have the same dimensions and roof pitch as the existing structure and will also replicate details of the existing structure to the extent possible. Motion passed 5-0.**

**4) 90 Poplar Rd - Designation as a Local Historic Property**

Mr. O'Brien said there were quite a few approvals to go through, to have a property designated as historic. With tonight's approval, the last step would be obtaining the Board of Selectmen's approval scheduled for December 8, 2021.

**Mr. Tobin moved and Mr. O'Kane seconded a motion to recommend that the property at 90 Poplar Road be designated a Local Historic Property subject to the Commission's jurisdiction based upon the study report submitted to the Commission. Motion passed 5-0.**

**5) Future Commission Meeting Schedules**

No objection was made on the schedules distributed to the members.

**6) Approval of the October 7, 2021 HDC Site Visit and Special meeting, October 7, 2021 HDC meeting and November 7, 2021 HDC Site Visit and Special meeting Minutes**

Ms. Daughters moved and Mr. Moore seconded a motion to approve the October 7, 2021 HDC Site Visit and Special meeting minutes, with Commission members who did not attend such meeting abstaining. Motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Tobin moved and Ms. Daughters seconded a motion to approve the October 7, 2021 HDC meeting minutes, with Commission members who did not attend such meeting abstaining. Motion passed 5-0.

Mr. O'Kane moved and Mr. Moore seconded a motion to approve the November 7, 2021 HDC Site Visit and Special meeting minutes, with Commission members who did not attend such meeting abstaining. Motion passed 3-0.

Mr. Blandford left the meeting at 8:26 p.m.

**Mr. Tobin moved and Mr. O'Kane seconded a motion to go to Executive Session to discuss pending items. Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

The Commission members exited Executive Session at 8:41 to the public.

**Mr. Moore moved and Ms. Daughters seconded a motion to adjourn the Historic District Commission meeting at 8:42 p.m. Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L. Fields  
Recording Secretary