

RIDGEFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
Lower Level Small Conference Room
Town Hall, 400 Main Street
Ridgefield, CT 06877
July 20, 2017

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, July 20, 2017, and beginning at 7:30 p.m.

The following members were present:

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

Absent: Eric Pashley

AGENDA

- 1) 103 Main Street – First Congregational Church of Ridgefield – Change to the exterior lighting fixtures in the parking lot
- 2) 316 Main Street – The Lounsbury House – Proposed addition of a wrought iron railing
- 3) Main Street Area – Proposed placement of pet litter receptacles

MEETING

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

- 1) 103 Main Street – First Congregational Church of Ridgefield – Change to the exterior lighting fixtures in the parking lot

Krystle Toczyłowski of Doyle Coffin Architecture was present.

K. Toczyłowski distributed an information packet to the HDC members. K. Toczyłowski stated that for cost reasons, a substitution was submitted in February. She also stated the light source is equal to or less than the previous fixture. The drawing indicates it’s a cut off fixture and that the light is projected downward. The last page of the packet shows a comparison of both lights. D. O’Brien said that T. Briggs had asked about the light projecting downward and had also wanted to see an installation. S. O’Kane asked about the height. H. Hanlon questioned if the current light wasn’t the same height. K. Toczyłowski said the heights were the same, and also as previously approved. The proposed pole is ten feet tall. D. O’Brien asked to table the discussion until B. Tobin arrived.

- 2) 316 Main Street – The Lounsbury House – Proposed addition of a wrought iron railing along walkway and proposed replacement of shutters on 310 Main Street located on the Lounsbury property

Alex Bellina and Kerri Glass were present to represent the Lounsbury house.

A. Bellina presented pictures of the wrought iron railing via an iPad to the HDC members. A. Bellina said they planned to install a wrought iron fence with a scroll design to stabilize the railing to the post. The support will be cemented in the ground. A similar profile exists by the house's front steps. Sean O'Kane asked about the railing location relative to the Main Street wrought iron fence. A. Bellina said the path meanders and goes directly to the gazebo on the right side from Main Street.

A. Bellina stated that without the scroll design, there would have been an extra bar added to the railing. A. Bellina said the proposed railing as shown in the sketch would have balusters. Kam Daughters asked how long the railing would span. A. Bellina said it would be approximately 75 feet long. Kerri Glass said the railing does curve a bit.

On a separate matter relative to the shutter replacement on one of the property's rental houses, D. O'Brien asked what type of material would be used for the shutters. A. Bellini said they would be using natural wood.

D. O'Brien asked if the public had any question or comment. There was none.

J. Gasperino moved and S. O'Kane seconded a motion to approve as presented the application for the addition of a proposed wrought iron railing along the walkway on the property running along the south side of the main building. Motion passed 5-0.

- 1) 103 Main Street – First Congregational Church of Ridgefield – Change to the exterior lighting fixtures in the parking lot (Continued)

K. Toczyłowski gave an information packet to T. Briggs. She stated the first page showed that the light was projecting downward. The second page showed that the light was equal to or less than the previous fixture. The third page was shot drawings showing the LED light source and cut off fixture. The fourth page was a photometric illustration. The fifth page was a photo of the housing. The sixth page was a street view in Texas. Installation examples are not physically near Connecticut as the supplier is in Texas. The last page was a comparison between both lights.

S. O'Kane raised a question on the height. K. Toczyłowski said the top pole was eleven feet but could be lowered to ten feet. B. Tobin said that would be similar to the previous light.

B. Tobin was concerned the light would be too bright and was also concerned with the downward projection. B. Tobin asked why a video couldn't be provided. K. Toczyłowski said the manufacturer did not have that information. D. O'Brien suggested they buy a light and install it so the HDC members could determine whether the actual functioning of the fixture was consistent with the representations being made.

S. O'Kane said that if Texas was the only place the light had been installed, to have someone take a video and send them a PDF. His concern was the neighbors across the street. Glare was also a concern.

In looking at the packet, S. O’Kane asked how tall the light was in Texas. K. Toczyloski said it was 14-15’ high. B. Tobin said reality is much different than drawings. K. Toczyloski said she would try to get a video.

D. O’Brien opened the floor to the public. Molly McGeehin asked if anyone had looked at solar lighting. K. Toczyloski said that the 3 year project was almost ready to be installed so it was too late to change. D. O’Brien said that the HDC was responsible for what was appropriate for the area, not what was environmentally feasible. S. O’Kane said that he preferred an LED bulb as a green product.

D. O’Brien said the proposal would be tabled again. D. O’Brien asked K. Toczyloski to get a demo put together, so that he could then set up a special HDC meeting to complete the Commission’s review. D. O’Brien stated the HDC members want to preview the lighting first before putting the proposal to a vote.

3) Main Street – Proposed placement of pet litter receptacles at various Main Street locations

Molly McGeehin and Nicole Connors were present as members of the Dog Waste committee.

M. McGeehin said she was asked to be part of the committee to address the situation. N. Connors said they were looking to have ten strategically placed receptacles staggered on Main Street. She mentioned there are currently four trash cans in the business district which is outside the historic district. When people walk their dogs, there is nowhere for them to throw the dog waste baggies. N. Connors said a lot of parks have these receptacles and that it is not an eyesore. D. O’Brien said height was an issue. N. Connors said the receptacles have to be put in the ground and would be approximately five feet from the ground. N. Connors said the receptacles would be emptied every two weeks, on a trial basis. Maybe more often. J. Gasperino asked who would empty it. N. Connors said her son Ryan volunteered to do this for the two-year period. Dog waste is toxic because the dogs don’t eat natural foods. N. Connors said they also plan to put six receptacles on the rail trail. J. Gasperino asked where these receptacles would be put on Main Street. N. Connors said five would be in the historical district and could be tucked behind a tree, by the church, etc. She said they know they have to ask the property owners. M. McGeehin said the receptacles would also be placed in Ballard Park.

M. McGeehin said this was also an educational message. She said some people think the dog poop is a fertilizer when in fact it is incredibly toxic. D. O’Brien asked how this would be done. M. McGeehin said by articles in the paper. J. Gasperino asked if homeowners would be asked for their input. N. Connors said ‘yes’. And if there was an issue, they would move the receptacle. M. McGeehin said Rudy has already asked some of the people and there has been no push back so far.

N. Connors said they expect expenses to run approximately \$6,700 the first year with maintenance around \$1,900. They will need sponsorship. The receptacles will have tasteful sponsor related decals on the lid, which will be weather resistant. The receptacle colors can be brown, black or green. M. McGeehin said the town is not providing funding. This will be funded solely by private donations. B. Tobin asked what color would be best. N. Connor said she would go with a darker color.

R. Moore said there is currently a \$25 fine. Why was this not enforced? He asked if this would change people’s behavior. N. Connors said this would make a difference. She said if these were available, people may use it. J. Gasperino said some would and some wouldn’t. N. Connors said they would not be able to use biodegradable bags since they deteriorated quickly. S. O’Kane said people have to be responsible. He questioned whether people were being encouraged to use plastic. S. O’Kane said Greenwich had just banned all plastic. He said maybe just the bin and no baggies. N. Connors said not everyone has baggies

with them. M. McGeehin said research has shown that people's excuse for not picking up is because they don't have a baggie. R. Moore said a big part of the issue is enforcement. R. Moore said this is a band-aide and he's not wild about it on Main Street. R. Moore is not at ease with the receptacles in front of historic properties. R. Moore said educating is part of the issue; letting people know it is a violation of the town ordinances.

D. O'Brien said the main issue is littering and dog waste disposal in the historic district on Main Street, a heavily pedestrian travel route. Trash receptacles along Main Street will help. B. Tobin asked if the signs could be changed. N. Connors said 'yes'. D. O'Brien said the height could be reduced. B. Tobin said three feet is a pretty typical height to blend in. The bag dispensers could be attached to a trash can. N. Connors said she would order one to see how it looks on a trash can. S. O'Kane said five locations in the business district seem like an awful large amount. S. O'Kane suggested to take a smaller approach and see how effective or how much the receptacles filled up. N. Connors said she was not stuck with the ten receptacles. She said they could start with two in the historic district. S. O'Kane said people should have their own bags and pick up after their dog poop. This is going above and beyond what they can use. M. McGeehin said in Colorado they have no dog litter in Gardens of the Gods because of the dog stations. S. O'Kane said trash cans every 50' creates a visual onslaught.

R. Moore asked if any other local towns have these receptacles. N. Connors said no one has it. However, they all say they have the same issue. R. Moore said it is great on the rail trail. H. Hanlon said it is a great idea to start with two receptacles. And if the two receptacles don't work out, to remove them. N. Connors said she has no problem with that rolling out. However to get the funding, she has to get a lot of at least ten. S. O'Kane said perhaps she could split the receptacles with the other towns. B. Tobin said perhaps she could return the unused receptacles. S. O'Kane was still concerned with location. He said N. Connors would need approval from not only the HDC commission but also the property owners.

B. Tobin moved and J. Gasperino seconded a motion to approve the placement of two dog litter receptacles off Main Street in the Historic District on the conditions that (1) such receptacle installations be limited to a receptacle with dog waste bag dispenser attached thereto; (2) the physical locations of such receptacles is subject to this Commission's further consent; and (3) installation of such receptacles is limited to a one-year period beginning on the date of such installation, after which its longer term installation is subject to Commission approval at or before such one-year anniversary. Motion passed 5-0.

4) Approval of the HDC Meeting Minutes – June 15, 2017

The HDC members took a moment to review the June 15 2017 HDC meeting minutes.

H. Hanlon moved and R. Moore seconded a motion to approve the June 15, 2017 HDC meeting minutes. Motion passed 3-0.

B. Tobin moved and H. Hanlon seconded a motion to adjourn the Historic District Commission Meeting at 8:52 p.m. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L. Fields