

**RIDGEFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
**Lower Level Small Conference Room**  
**Town Hall, 400 Main Street**  
**Ridgefield, CT 06877**  
**May 17, 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, May 17, 2018, and beginning at 7:30 p.m.

The following members were present:

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

**AGENDA**

- 1) 236 Main Street – Hawley House – Window replacement and/or restoration and siding repairs
- 2) 155 Main Street – Installation of flagpole
- 3) 21 West Lane – Window replacement
- 4) 63 High Ridge Avenue – Driveway asphalt paving and expansion of a parking area
- 5) 152 Main Street – Keeler Tavern – Street signage
- 6) 103 Main Street – First Congregational Church – Parking lot lighting fixtures.

**MEETING**

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

- 1) 216 Main Street – Hawley House – Window replacement and/or restoration and siding repairs

Don Ciota, the owner of the house, was present.

D. Ciota said he did his due diligence, had field visits by Greg Farmer of CT Trust, and read extensively regarding restoration of the windows. At this point, he was in the process of triaging his windows, taking into account the historic value. The window restoration quotes he received were dear. He’s read John Leeke’s “Save America’s Windows”, seen numerous Youtube videos, spoken with G. Farmer and understands this kind of restoration to be quite a labor intensive process. Therefore, the way he was looking into accomplishing the restoration was via a ‘triage’ approach, because not all the windows were in the same condition. There were three sashes that needed complete restoration and others needed less attention. And still other windows needed middle to moderate restoration. After Greg Farmer’s visit, it was apparent that the windows were well made examples of craftsmanship. So D. Ciota started working on the windows that were the least conspicuous. He cleaned the rails, once the molding was taken off, and found the job more complicated. The windows themselves were loose. He examined the sashes and the

exterior paint had to be removed as well as the glass, because he didn't want to break the glass. He was then able to paint and remove the original putty. Don then cleaned and primed the window. The outside of the window, exposed to the elements was more work. Each pane of glass was labeled, although they seemed to be the same size. He intends to have a glazier put the window panes back. Once reinstalled, he will paint the windows and glaze. D. Ciota believed the window he's worked on has never been repainted. He used a brass bristle brush and underneath, there was white primer. On the interior, nothing (bottom sash). There was little water absorption over the years. He believed oil based paint was used on the inside. Outside, acrylic paint, no later than the 1950's. Different materials have different rates of expansion and the window facing the sun bubbled and blistered. He still has to work on the molding. He will be taking the sashes to be repaired, and the bottom rails may be replaced exactly. However, many windows won't have to be fixed to these levels. The storm windows he will repair and preserve so they are operative. He is looking to replace the upper storm windows. The lower storm windows he doesn't intend to open. Once he has ventilation with the upper windows, he doesn't need to open the lower storm windows. Reading the G. Farmer literature, Harvey True Value exterior storm windows were recommended.

As D. Ciota gets closer, he will be amending the application to say "Windows to be preserved (to last another 100 years), protected and repaired when necessary". Also wanted to amend the application, to include replacing the south side with shingles and reserve the possibility of replacing the shingles on the other three sides. Doesn't know why it was clapboard. J. Gasperino said he didn't have an answer either. D. Ciota said he felt clapboard was the original, but wanted to mention that on the North side, there is a hole you can't see. On the other three sides with clapboard, the paint isn't adhering to the surfaces. D. Ciota also is looking to replace the rear door of the house, to resemble the front door of the house, with a non-descript 20<sup>th</sup> century door. J. Gasperino said if on the west side, the window casing is rotted, then it should be replaced. As the shutters date to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, J. Gasperino felt the shutters should be preserved. D. Ciotta said if the siding was replaced, rotted window casing materials would also be replaced. He would also have the builder redo the shutters if possible. J. Gasperino said they should be saved. D. Ciotta said maybe the slats could be replaced although he doesn't intend to replace them. J. Gasperino said they were part of the character of the house.

J. Gasperino asked the HDC members if the triage approach was acceptable to the Commission. Clearly, D. Ciota was a careful and responsible owner. However, could an owner take on something like this? He brought this up for discussion – an issue or not? M. Blandford said due to the incredible amount of detail, he felt comfortable on having D. Ciota make the decisions. J. Gasperino agreed, but thought that perhaps G. Farmer could visit and take a look. D. Ciotta was amenable.

D. Ciotta brought a window, as an example, to show the Commission members. He said he wanted to show the work he did. D. Ciota's said his work background was in the semi-conductor industry, state of the art, dealing with extremely small components in hermetically sealed environments. As such, he wouldn't do anything he was not comfortable in handling. For example, he would not do any type of carpentry. Prices to do this type of window restoration work were pretty dear. The objective being to touch the least. He was trying to ensure the windows would be preserved. He found these windows were made of strong old yellow pine. Once the windows were restored, he had special paraffin wax, created for semi-conductor components that would work just as well for the windows. Linseed oil would also be used.

B. Tobin said D. Ciota owned an important piece of history. He appreciated what D. Ciota was doing. He looked forward to the revised application. D. Ciotta said he would aim for submitting the revised application in June. D. Ciota believed this was feasible and had lined up professionals who could take over what he couldn't do. He said he had a significant investment in the house.

J. Gasperino asked if there were any hardware on the windows. D. Ciota said none. J. Gasperino asked if any on the second floor. D. Ciota said some.

D. Ciota said the existing storm windows were to be used as a resource, meaning the glass would be used as replacement. J. Gasperino said that G. Farmer said there was nothing special about the storm glass.

2) 155 Main Street – Installation of flagpole

Property owner has not submitted an application as of this date. Possible future filing.

3) 21 West Lane – Window replacement

The applicant requested an appearance deferral until June.

As per the site visit notes of May 10, 2018, the Commission is awaiting further information regarding the application.

4) 63 High Ridge Avenue – Driveway asphalt paving and expansion of a parking area.

Property owner has not submitted an application as of this date. Possible future filing.

5) 152 Main Street – Keeler Tavern – Street signage

Hildegard Grob, Executive Director of Keeler Tavern and Joel Third, Past President of Keeler Tavern were present on behalf of the Keeler Tavern. B. Tobin distributed renderings of the proposed signage.

H. Grob said since they acquired the brick building, they needed a new sign, designed to be simple and effective, to guide visitors. Currently the Keeler Tavern is a regional history center with 2000 children visitors from Kindergarten thru 12<sup>th</sup> grade. This sign is tasteful, discreet, and needs to draw attraction. It has standard up-lighting, not glaring. M. Blandford asked about the ‘dangler’ sign, stating the original application doesn’t mention it. J. Gasperino asked about the current actual sign. There were two vinyl signs as a mockup. B. Tobin said he had no issue with the design, but that it seemed big for a Main Street sign. H. Grob said it was less than 20 feet per side, and per guidelines. She said the rendering was photo shopped, so perhaps the proportions were off. However, from a practical point, it should be big so people could see it. K. Daughters wondered about the placement. She thought that of instead at the curb, perhaps it would be better situated at the front of the building. H. Grob said typically, signs were perpendicular. But, they moved the sign around quite a bit and decided on that placement to optimize the perspective.

J. Gasperino said they had just resolved a lighting issue. The Aldrich light was now appropriate. J. Gasperino said lighting specifications needed to be more specific than ‘standard’. H. Grob asked what light specifications the Aldrich used. J. Gasperino said D. O’Brien had the information that was submitted.

K. Daughters asked about the materials. H. Grob said the sign was double sided, heavy duty aluminum post, powder white painted with acrylic polyurethane paint.

B. Tobin said he was troubled with the size as it seemed to be as high as a person. B. Tobin suggested an onsite meeting as a group. J. Gasperino agreed, and to view the lighting specifications too. R. Moore said he wanted to see the scale. B. Tobin said they would leave the site date open, with the goal to meet before the next HDC meeting in June. H. Grob would check with the Aldrich and would also reach out to D. O'Brien regarding the light specifications. Maybe those lights would show up differently on this sign.

K. Daughters said it was a beautiful contemporary sign. H. Grob said the old Keeler Tavern sign on Main Street would come down once this one was established as it would no longer be needed.

6) Approval of the HDC Special Meeting Minutes – May 10, 2018 (103 Main Street)

The HDC members took a moment to review the May 10, 2018 HDC Special meeting minutes.

**M. Blandford moved and J. Gasperino seconded a motion to approve the May 10, 2018 HDC Special meeting minutes. Motion passed 5-0.**

7) Approval of the HDC Meeting Minutes – April 19, 2018

The HDC members took a moment to review the April 19, 2018 HDC meeting minutes.

**J. Gasperino moved and R. Moore seconded a motion to approve the April 19, 2018 HDC meeting minutes, with Commission member who did not attend such meeting abstaining. Motion passed 4-0.**

**J. Gasperino moved and K. Daughters seconded a motion to adjourn the Historic District Commission Meeting at 8:50 p.m. Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L. Fields