

RIDGEFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
Lower Level Small Conference Room
Town Hall, 400 Main Street
Ridgefield, CT 06877
April 3, 2022

Policy: Historic District Commission meetings will be conducted under Roberts Rules of Order and all participants are expected to conduct themselves with dignity and treat all those present with respect, empathy and civility.

APPROVED SITE VISIT AND SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

A site visit and special meeting of the Ridgefield Historic District Commission (“HDC”) was held at 152 Main Street on Sunday, April 3 2022, at 11:30 a.m.

The following members were present:

Dan O’Brien, Chair
Mark Blandford (Alternate for Briggs Tobin)
Rhys Moore
Sean O’Kane (Recused)
Kam Daughters (Alternate for Harriet Hanlon)

AGENDA

The meeting was called to order by Mr. O’Brien at 11:27 a.m.

Ms. Hildegard Grob, Executive Director was present from the Keeler Tavern Museum. Mr. Craig Studer of Studer Design Architects was present as the landscape architect. Mr. Don Sturges of Finer Homes Inc. was present as the site contractor. Mr. O’Kane recused himself from the Commission’s consideration of the application, but was participating in the meeting on behalf of Keeler Tavern Museum with whom he has a professional relationship.

Mr. Studer said that he was working within a residential neighborhood and he needed to make sure people could walk safely and have the lighting be visible with the proper amount of illumination and spread of light. There were some lights put up for the HDC commissioners to view before the meeting last night that showed the illumination and spread.

Fixtures:

Tree mounted down lights (Grand Accent) were attached to the front tree on the northern corner. The spread and intensity could be adjusted. Mr. O’Brien asked if it had been set to full brightness. Mr. Studer said it was at full brightness. Mr. O’Kane asked if it was dimmable and if all lights were LED. Mr. Studer said the lights were dimmable and LED. But illumination was a matter of the bulb. And the adjustment could only be done upon installation at the fixture. There were two dials on the fixture, adjustable with a key. These were rated for 3000K and all the others at 2700K, which were considered a warm light. Mr. Blandford said the existing lights appeared too bright. Mr. Studer was looking at the safety aspect and that the new lighting will not be as high as the current light in that particular tree. In the tree in the

front, there were seven lights, but they would not be as bright as the current lighting. This was the only place where there were this quantity of lights clustered together.

Ms. Daughters asked, were these the same lights as going by the driveway, the cluster of three lights. Mr. Studer said yes. These lights were shrouded and adjusted to be down lights. This helped with the illumination.

On the Visiting center's existing stairs and parking lot, the proposed single post light was a Colonial series H with the Nightsky opti-shield system. This light would sit on top of an 8 ft. post.

Moving along to the back, two lights would be on the new trees. They anticipated them growing. Shown on the outside was a sample. The lights would be shielded from the neighbors. All these lights were cast bronze.

For the proposed maple trees, the tree lights would be mounted high without damaging the trees. Only four were shown on the plan, each having long shrouds. On next page, the mini wash lights would be mounted 6 inches off the ground on the stone walls. These lights would also illuminate the three sets of stairs, risers and stone walls. On the walls, they would stick out 1 ½ inches.

The small mushroom path light in the packet had been changed. The sample outside had an umbrella as opposed to mushroom shape. The umbrella shape has been preferred by Keeler.

Mr. O'Kane said the illumination from the path light was low. Was that a function of the 2700K or was that the spread? Mr. Studer said 2700K was a little lighter than the 3000K. But that was also a function of the bulb. He would double check that. The fixtures were 10 ft. apart. But the lighting was meant to give direction. The light could be brightened to 3000K, but the 10 ft. spread was not considered far apart. Mr. O'Kane said if the lighting could be brighter, maybe there could be fewer fixtures. Mr. Studer said he would look at the bulb in the fixture. He had another project where the life of the bulb meant a higher operational cost. LED had better illumination value than incandescent.

Mr. Studer mentioned that the existing lighting switches were all over the place. To currently illuminate outside, it took approximately a half hour. They were looking into combining switches into a centralized location.

They would be installing four parking lot post lights down by the overflow parking below to the east of the carriage barn, with down lighting similar to the Boys & Girls club. The poles would be 9 ft. tall. In back by the spruce trees, there would be 4 pole fixtures. These illuminations would spread to the right and left with no light behind them. Two other lights would be buried in the spruce trees. The poles were not high. The LEDS had adjustable lumens within their fixtures. That source was 8 ft. 6 inches high. The spread was based on the taller pole. Mr. O'Kane said he measured the poles at the Congregational Church which were 9 ft. The trees were 10-12 ft. The sources of light would be blocked in a couple of years and wouldn't be seen by the neighbors to the east. Mr. Studer would email the updated fixture specifications and revised quantities of fixtures that had been changed.

Mr. Blandford asked about the hours of operation. Ms. Grobe said the museum was open 11am-4pm most days and one day 11am-6pm. On the weekends for events, they would be open from 7pm until the event ended. Private events would end at 10pm. The flagpole and visitor's center should be lit as safe

navigation was paramount. Ms. Grobe and Mr. Studer both said the lights would be on only when someone was at the Keeler location.

Mr. O’Kane asked about fixture spacing. On the path from the Visitor’s center to the Museum, the fixtures were all on the left hand side. Mr. Studer said that was because the path was existing. He was not looking to redo existing walkway. Mr. O’Kane said on the new lighting, would it be possible to alternate the fixtures. Mr. Studer said yes, depending on the planting. Mr. O’Kane said it was an aesthetic question. Mr. Studer said from where the little stairs, all fixtures were shown on one side but he could alternate if these were new. It was only on existing that there was a cost issue. He also wanted to point out that in some areas, the fixtures were spread out farther than 10 ft. For example, in the handicap parking area, there was sufficient lighting therefore 10 ft. was not required.

Mr. Studer said if there was proper illumination, a bulb could be taken out of fixtures not needed. However, he didn’t want to take a fixture out to reduce illumination. Mr. O’Kane asked if the five path lights on the west side of the Visitors’ Center along the path from Main Street were necessary. Mr. Studer said they were required. Mr. O’Brien agreed a bulb could always be taken out of the fixture.

Mr. Studer said to illuminate the path through the garden, lights would be under the dogwood.

Mr. Studer said some ground and flood lights were not being replaced at this time. But all flood lights were being replaced.

Mr. O’Kane asked if the old tavern’s West door path was lit. Ms. Grobe said the street light illuminated that area quite a bit. Mr. Studer said there were two lights on the tree.

On the Building door exits by code, lights had to be installed. It wouldn’t be seen by the road, but these lights would have a historic look.

Mr. Studer said the whole parking light would not have the same illumination. Mr. O’Kane said all the post lights from the original lighting plan had been deleted in this area. Mr. Blandford said it was thoughtful putting the lights in the trees. Mr. Studer said he would be getting the photometrics in a week or two and would be emailing them to the Commissioners. Mr. Blandford said he liked the in-ground fixtures.

Mr. Blandford moved and Ms. Daughters seconded a motion to approve the lighting plan as presented subject to receipt of the photometrics and acceptance of such by the HDC Commissioners. Motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Moore moved and Mr. O’Kane seconded a motion to adjourn the Historic District Commission Meeting at 12:18 p.m. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L. Fields
Recording Secretary