

RIDGEFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
Lower Level Small Conference Room
Town Hall, 400 Main Street
Ridgefield, CT 06877
January 10, 2019

APPROVED MINUTES – SPECIAL MEETING

A special 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, January 10, 2019, 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
Joseph Gasperino
Harriet Hanlon (Alternate)
Mark Blandford (Alternate)

AGENDA

- 1) **304 Main Street – Install handrail on entrance of front steps**
- 2) **Election of Officers**
- 3) **Approval of the HDC Meeting Minutes – December 13, 2018**

MEETING

The meeting was called to order by Mr. O’Brien at 7:28 p.m.

1) **304 Main Street – Install handrail on entrance of front steps**

Dan Tewes, the homeowner, was present.

D. Tewes distributed paperwork with pictures of several homes with handrails at the entrance of their homes. D. Tewes just moved in, along with his parents and mother-in-law. He and his wife work in the healthcare business.

He said there were two main reasons why he wanted to put in the railings. The first reason was for the safety of both of their parents and the second reason was to receive U.S. Mail packages. His wife works from home and packages are not being delivered. He went the Post Office to find out why the mailman would not deliver packages to their home. The Postmaster advised him that by OSHA rules, more than 3 steps required a railing. Their home has four stairs, with five steps.

In looking at various homes, D. Tewes thought the wrought iron railing at the Lounsbury House looked nice. He consulted with a rail specialist (Jim Gustin), who said that because of how the stairs were set up, there was no way to anchor the rail in the center. Therefore, they would need to anchor at the pillars. The top set is 5 inches, which gives less leverage to hold the rail. The bottom has 8 inches. The walkway is five feet wide and the pillars are 8 feet apart. Two possible views would be an angle, or a swoop to the top. D. Tewes thought of

wood railing. However, that would require an additional handrail which wouldn't look nice. Therefore his preference is to use wrought iron. This material would look more of a smooth entry.

D. O'Brien asked if the handrails would run on both sides. D. Tewes said yes, it would run on both sides. The rails would be functionally strong and give a period look to the house. As to color, he would prefer black. Ideally, he would like to install the railing as soon as possible. Currently, his parents are using the veranda side to reach Main Street, but they need help to walk down.

M. Blandford asked if there was a sketch of the rails. D. Tewes said he would be able to provide one. D. O'Brien asked about the design. D. Tewes said it would start narrower at the bottom and get wider at top. S. O'Kane said the different heights on the riser could trip someone. D. Tewes said the measurements at the top was 5 3/4 inches. S. O'Kane said the black wrought iron would make perfect sense. M. Blandford agreed. J. Gasperino asked if the steps were concrete. D. Tewes said no, it was mahogany wood. D. Tewes said he wanted the railings to be more like the Jensen's house – classy. S. O'Kane said Jim Gustin could do actual layouts & profiles in black wrought iron. D. O'Brien asked in terms of look, D. Tewes said it would look fancier. S. O'Kane said the railings could come up and sweep up. Similar to how Rudy Marconi's house's railings looked. It could turn into the post at the top which would look elegant in black wrought iron.

D. O'Brien asked if there was enough specificity to approve. S. O'Kane said this is Jim Gustin's specialty. D. Tewes said he would email D. O'Brien sketches next week. D. O'Brien said the Commission could conditionally approve, pending receipt of the final sketches showing design in black wrought iron.

H. Hanlon moved and B. Tobin seconded a motion to approve as presented, the application for the installation of handrails on the entrance front steps, on the condition that the Applicant provide the Commission with final drawings and material specifications, all of which are acceptable to the Commission. Motion passed 5-0.

2) Election of Officers

H. Hanlon moved and S. O'Kane seconded a motion to elect Daniel O'Brien as Commission Chair and Briggs Tobin as Vice Chair for a one-year term ending on December 31, 2019. Motion passed 5-0.

3) Approval of the HDC Meeting Minutes – December 13, 2018

B. Tobin moved and H. Hanlon seconded a motion to approve the December 13, 2018 HDC meeting minutes, with Commission members who did not attend such meeting abstaining. Motion passed 4-0.

R. Moore moved and J. Gasperino seconded a motion to adjourn the Historic District Commission Special Meeting at 7:54 p.m. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L. Fields
Recording Secretary