

**Town of Washington  
Washington Historic District Commission  
Calhoun-Ives, Sunny Ridge and Washington Green Historic Districts**

**Minutes- September 17, 2018**

Members Present: Phyllis Mills, Susan Averill, Jane Boyer, Sally Woodroffe, Tom Hollinger

Alternates Present: William Fairbairn, Dimitri Rimsky, Louise Van Tartwijk

Staff: Janice Roberti, Historic District Clerk  
Richelle Hodza, Zoning Enforcement Officer

Others: Philip Farmer, Washington Club President  
Tanya Cicarelli, Club Hall Manager  
Nellie and Michael Condon, Washington Club members

Mr. Hollinger called the meeting to order at seven o'clock and seated the regular members

Pending Business:

Continued Public Hearing-Application for COA/The Washington Club/92 Green Hill Road/construction of a platform tennis court.

Mr. Hollinger reminded the alternates that they may contribute to discussion during the public meeting and encouraged them to ask questions.

Mr. Philip Farmer and Ms. Cicarelli represented The Washington Club.

- Mr. Farmer restated that the impetus for the project is to encourage more use of Club Hall, he also stated that he thought the courts would have very little visibility from the road (RTE.47)
- Additional features, such as new steps from the lower courts to Club Hall would help with the summer youth tennis program
- The proposed terrace would be a benefit to the use of the lower level of Club Hall
- Mr. Farmer said he will have two letters of support for the project from abutters for ZBA, The Gunnery and the Congregational Church. The Gunn Memorial Library is more neutral as they have expressed concern about the parking. The Club will need to work with them on this issue.

Mr. Farmer, as requested from the previous hearing by the commission, provided new architect drawings, a topographical map of the Club Hall area and a sheet with pictures of the type of lighting and stone to be used in the proposed terrace. Previously he had provided material related to the construction materials to be used in the court (it will be an aluminum surface with chicken wire fence sides on 12 ft. poles,) and examples of the trellis work.

Commission members asked Mr. Farmer questions about the following:

Q. Is the location shown the same or is it moved?

A. It is the same location, the court can't be moved closer to the library because of a 7ft variance. The club lot narrows as it gets closer to the library.

Q. Will the terrace require digging into the lawn beside Club Hall

A. Not really, it will be below the grade of the hill and not visible from Rte. 47

Q. How tall are the lights for the proposed court?

A. 20 ft.

Q. What material will be used in the construction of the court?

A. Aluminum with chicken wire fencing on 12ft poles, there would be trellis work around the underside of the court to cover the supports

Q. Will Club Hall look more like a modern building with the court behind it

A. There won't be any change in the appearance of the building.

Q. What will the lights look like?

A. The handout shows the proposed lights for the court. They will be 20ft. tall.

Q. What materials would be used for the proposed steps going down the hill next to The Gunnery's gym?

A. Most likely pressure treated ties with gravel steps and landings.

Q. What materials would be used in the proposed patio and wall?

A. Blue stone for the patio and a small 1ft high wall of stone.

Q. Are the two windows on the plan of the building next to the patio there now?

A. yes, they are already there.

He then asked the public in attendance if they would like to say anything. Mr. and Mrs. Condon both expressed support for the proposed court.

At this point Mr. Hollinger expressed the concern that the proposed court is incongruous with the historic nature of the Green, the issue of incongruity is clearly one of the standards under the CT statutes by which historic districts must make their decisions. The suggestion was then made by Mrs. Averill that the court be located further down the slope and closer to The Gunnery playing field located at the bottom. Mr. Farmer added, the court, as currently designed will already be a matter for Zoning Board of Appeals, this was affirmed by Richelle Hodza, Zoning Enforcement officer. The proposed stairway will also require a variance from ZBA.

Mr. Hollinger asked for comment from the commissioners and alternates about the idea of moving the court lower down the slope. Commissioners generally felt that this was more acceptable. It was noted that moving it would lessen the impact of the lighting in the Green area. By moving to the lower location the court would fit more with the neighboring athletic field at The Gunnery.

Mr. Hollinger asked the commission if there were any other questions. There were none.

MOTION: There being no more questions or comments a motion was made to close the Public hearing for The Washington Club, 92 Green Hill Road for the construction of a paddle tennis court. By Mrs. Woodroffe and seconded by Mrs. Mills, passed 5-0

Mr. Hollinger called the meeting to order; all regular members were seated,

Mr. Hollinger asked to move the consideration of the minutes to be the second item and moved Pending Business to be the first item on the agenda.

Pending Business

1. Application for a COA/The Washington Club/92 Green Hill Road/construct a platform tennis court

Mr. Hollinger summarized the comments from the public hearing.

He then expressed his concern about how the Historic District Commission has its charge to protect and preserve the historic nature of the districts under its purview. Following along with Connecticut statutes, the commission must decide if a proposed structure or addition is incongruous with the historic nature of a district.

Mrs. Boyer and Mrs. Woodroffe expressed the similar feeling about the proposed court. The location and the lights were seen as a problem for the Green.

On the issue of the steps the commission was in accord and agreed that steps made of pressure treated ties and gravel would be fine.

There followed some discussion about the proposed terrace. Mrs. Boyer was concerned about the size of the stones and shape to be used.

Mr. Hollinger asked the commission how they felt about the concept of moving the proposed court down the hill closer to The Gunnery athletic field as close as ZBA would allow. There was general agreement that given the object preserving the historic nature of the Green and concern over lighting that the relocation of the proposed court would meet these objections. That a granting of a COA with noted restrictions and recommendations would be acceptable.

MOTION: To approve the Washington Club/92Green Hill Road/construction of a platform tennis court, steps to go down the hill toward The Gunnery fields and tennis courts, and a small 12x24 terrace alongside the Club Hall on the south side at the back end of the building.

With the following conditions:

- The court location will be moved 18 feet down the hill, preferably to The Gunnery property line, the court will be 30 feet by 60 feet, constructed of aluminum, as shown on drawing No.ST.01, surrounded by a chicken wire fence on 12 ft. poles
- Lighting and play on the courts will not extend past 10 p.m.
- Recommend that there be eight light poles that would be lower than the proposed 20ft light poles if feasible, no light poles can exceed 20ft in height.

- The steps will be constructed of pressure treated ties with gravel steps and landings as shown on the plan No. ST.01, and will have railings as shown in drawing No. ST.01
- The proposed patio of 12x 24 feet as shown on No. ST.01 will be constructed of blue stone with a one foot high stone wall constructed in the New England manner of a dry stone wall. On the south side of the Club Hall.

By Mr. Hollinger and seconded by Mrs. Averill, passed 5-0

### Consideration of the Minutes for August 20, 2018

Members reviewed the minutes, there were no additions or corrections

MOTION: To approve the August 20, 2018 minutes as written. By Mrs. Boyer, seconded by Mrs. Woodroffe

### Delay of Demolition

Mr. Hollinger asked Mr. Fairbairn, as a professional expert, and chair of the ad hoc Delay of Demolition Ordinance committee to report to the commission on the progress of crafting such an ordinance. He reported that he has contacted Attorney DiBella, the new town attorney, to review the possibility of this type of ordinance but has not yet heard back from him.

There was some discussion regarding the possible fate of the Pickett house and barns/sheds in New Preston which are currently in an estate that will be soon settled. The commission expressed worry about these structures but since they are not in an historic district the commission can only express its concern over the future of these buildings. Mr. Fairbairn mentioned that the town has expressed some interest in the buildings and the possibility of expanding parking in New Preston. He also added that others in the community might be interested in purchasing the structures for possible commercial purposes. The barn/sheds do have a place in New Preston history where they served as ice houses in earlier times and the house is clearly an historic building from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### Village District Act

Mr. Hollinger has yet to speak to Mr. Solley, chair of the Zoning Commission about this piece of legislation and how it might be used to protect the historic nature of the center of New Preston and portions of New Preston Hill. He said that he is still planning to ask Zoning for their opinion/help with this idea.

In addition, he will ask Mr. Solley if zoning has given thought to a noise ordinance in residential areas. It was noted the town already has strict lighting ordinances.

### Business Not on the Agenda

Mr. Hollinger made a motion to include items not on the agenda

- 1) A response to the commission's letter from Mr. Guttman re: sculptures at "the Rocks"  
By. Mr. Hollinger, seconded by Mrs. Boyer, passed 5-0

Mr. Hollinger read a letter from Steven Guttman in response to the commission's letter questioning the number of statues on the Rocks property visible from a public way. Initially, permission was granted for two sculptures but according to Mr. Guttman there are now five. Mr. Guttman noted the location of the additional sculptures and said that they would be screened by landscaping. The commission urged Mr. Hollinger to write a response to Mr. Guttman and point out that for historic commissions landscaping is invisible and does not in our view negate that a structure, statue etc. is visible from a public way.

Commissioners were urged to confirm the number of sculptures visible from a public way, and to do it once leaves are off the trees.

Mrs. Averill made a motion to include business not on the agenda

- 1) Corrections to the commission members' address listings

By Mrs. Averill, seconded by Mr. Hollinger

Commission members offered corrections to their personal information for a revised commission members list. Richelle Hodza offered to compile the corrected list as the commission's clerk, Janice Roberti, is retiring and unable to complete this before her departure.

There being no further business a motion was made to adjourn

MOTION. To adjourn

By Mrs. Boyer seconded by Mrs. Woodroffe, passed 5-0

Submitted subject to approval

*Thomas H. Hollinger*