**WASHINGTON HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

**Calhoun-Ives, Sunny Ridge and Washington Green Historic Districts**

**Minutes – Regular Meeting/Public Hearings**

**April 18, 2016**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jane Boyer, Tom Hollinger, George Krimsky, Alison Gilchrist, Phyllis Mills

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

ALTERNATES PRESENT: Susan Averill, Sally Woodroofe

ALTERNATES ABSENT: Louise Van Tartwijk

OTHERS PRESENT: Rod Pleasants representative for Terry and Kelley Pillow, 132 Calhoun

Simon Kneen and Paolo Secchia, 18 Sunny Ridge Road

Tom Martignetti, 10 Kirby Road

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

7:00 PM

1. Simon Kneen, Paolo Secchia, 18 Sunny Ridge Rd/install property entrance gates

Mr. Hollinger opened the Public Hearing at 7:10 PM to consider the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness submitted by Simon Kneen, Paolo Secchia, and 18 Sunny Ridge Road for property entrance gates. The Legal Notice which appeared in Voices Newspaper on April 9 and 10, 2016 was read by the clerk.

Mr. Kneen explained the purpose of the desired property entrance gate. The main objective is security and safety for children and pets due to delivery, landscaping and other vehicles just coming up the driveway without using caution.

Mr. Kneen displayed the photograph of the property without the gate, then pictures showing a gate in natural wood and another painted white (which would match the house). They currently have a post and rail fence that goes up one side of the driveway which is painted white so it would match a painted gate.

A commissioners asked what type of material would be used. It will be a natural cedar or painted white and the hardware would be zinc which is natural looking and inconspicuous. Hinges will be on the back of the gate and only nuts and bolts visible on the front. There might be handle on the back to open the gate.

Ms. Woodroofe wanted to know if the gate would be closed most of the time. Yes, it will be closed most of the time. If the gates are not powered a visitors can honk otherwise if there is a security system put in place an option would be radio command from the house. If there is an electronic mechanism installed at the gate, it would be on the ground and on the inside of the wall. The plates would be put under the grown.

Mr. Hollinger asked if there were any further questions or comments. There were none.

MOTION: To close the Public Hearing to consider the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness submitted by Simon Kneen, Paolo Secchia, 18 Sunny Ridge Road. By Ms. Boyer, seconded by Ms. Mills, passed 5 to 0.

The audio of this Public Hearing is available in the Land Use Office, Bryan Memorial Town Hall, Washington Depot CT.

1. Bailey and Tom Martignetti, 10 Kirby Rd./ extend perimeter fence along Kirby Rd. adjacent to the Green

Mr. Martignetti distributed a project plan booklet while explaining the request to extend the fence currently marking the perimeter of their property along Kirby Road and adjacent to the Green. The proposal is for a 3’ tall cedar picket fence between 4” x 4” run posts set at 8’ intervals. The owners are looking for something less dense than a stone wall even though several of their neighbors have them.

He explained the reasons for the request:

* Moving cars in front of the home create a hazard for their children.
* There is a lot of foot traffic across the front lawn.
* A fence would provide visual continuity along the front of the house defining the home as a single family residence and not a multifamily home
* A fence would direct visitors to the front entrance.

The commissioners asked:

- how far from the curb would the fence would be located ? - 8 feet (Mr. Martignetti checked with Zoning)

- what material would be used? - cedar

- how will the fence end? – wood posts

- will the fence be open on both ends? yes

- will there be granite posts? yes, peaked granite posts similar to the granite hitching post at the corner of the property line and would frame the front walkway

Mr. Hollinger asked if there were any further questions or comments. There were none.

The audio of this Public Hearing is available in the Land Use Office, Bryan Memorial Town Hall, Washington Depot CT.

1. Kelley and Terry Pillow, 132 Calhoun St/ construct single family residence

Rod Pleasants of McGiver-Morgan represented the owners Kelley and Terry Pillow. He presented revised plans for the construction of a single family residence. Currently the owners live on the property in the newly constructed guest house. Mr. Pleasants explained in detail the drastic reduction in the size of the residence saying that the home would end up being reduced by approximately one third. He then pointed to the portions of the home that were being modified or eliminated. The roof and the siding will remain the same. In previous discussions regarding the stones that will be used on the home, Mr. Pleasants assured the HDC that the stones would be as close to an exact match as possible. He was pleased to inform the Commission that a contractor found stones that exactly match the stones used on the former Bill Blass home. This type of stone was important for the Pillows because of the natural character of natural stones and because of the associated history. People in previous centuries gathered up stones from their land for use in construction.

A question was asked whether The Wheelers (adjacent neighbors) granted driveway access to the Pillows. That request was denied. The Wheelers did receive permission from the Pillows to plant numerous trees on the Pillow property for screening purposes. A lengthy discussion ensued discussing the types of trees, the number of trees and spacing between them.

Mr. Hollinger asked if there were any further comments or questions. There were none.

MOTION: To close the Public Hearing to consider the Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness submitted by Kelley and Terry Pillow, 132 Calhoun Street, to construct a single family residence. By Mr. Krimsky, seconded by Ms. Mills, passed 5 to 0.

The audio of this Public Hearing is available in the Land Use Office, Bryan Memorial Town Hall, Washington Depot CT.

REGULAR MEETING

1. Regular Business

A. Call to order

B. Seating of members, alternates

George Krimsky leaves and Mr. Hollinger seats Sally Woodroofe in his place for the Regular Meeting.

II. Pending Business

1. Simon Kneen, Paolo Secchia, 18 Sunny Ridge Rd., install property entrance gates

Mr. Hollinger asked the commissioners if there were questions or comments. Discussion topics included:

* Is there any tradition of driveway gates in Washington in recent years?

No. Driveway gates are becoming popular and have different connotations.

* What looks more appropriate – a flat top gate or a curved top as shown in the renderings.

A flat top gate is more in keeping with the existing fence on the left of the driveway.

* Appearance and utilitarian decisions – Which would be more suitable – a 3, 4 or 5 bar gate?

The commissioners weighed in and were in agreement that a five-bar gate was more utilitarian and

looked better.

* Should the gate be level with the stone wall or higher?

The commissioners provided their opinions.

In conclusion, it was agreed that a five-bar, curved top gate a little higher than the stone wall and made of natural cedar was the best option.

Mr. Hollinger asked if there were any further questions or comments and there were none.

MOTION: To approve the Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness submitted by Simon Kneen and Paolo Secchia, 18 Sunny Ridge Road, to install natural cedar rustic farm style property entry gates based on the design provided to the HDC at the April 18, 2016 meeting. Should there be a change in design, including the placement of the hardware on the back of the gate, the HDC would require the applicants to return to the Commission for another Public Hearing.

By Mr. Hollinger, seconded by Ms. Woodroofe (seated for George Krimsky), passed 5 to 0.

1. Bailey and Tom Martignetti, 10 Kirby Rd./ extend perimeter fence along Kirby Rd. adjacent to the Green

Mr. Hollinger asked the commissioners for comments. Ms. Woodroofe commented that she understands the reasoning behind the request but wondered what the applicants have in mind for future applications to the HDC. Mr. Hollinger said that’s the nature of owning an historic home. It is expected for people to return to the HDC as they proceed in making changes to an historic residence. Mr. Hollinger pointed out several applicants who have recently purchased land and homes in Washington and have come to the HDC numerous times. He pointed out that more importantly, the issue is having a picket fence right on the Washington Green. Ms. Boyer said that she doesn’t think it is appropriate to have fence located on the green which has always been an open green even going back to the early days of animals grazing on the green. Mr. Hollinger mentioned that the plans showed the fence being open on both ends. If the purpose of the fence is to contain small children, this design of the fence being open ended would not serve the purpose. One of the commissioners mentioned the names of other residents that have picket fences on the green. Ms. Gilchrist stated that picket fences have come and gone through the years. They are somewhat transient and are not in place forever. Discussions mentioned that in historical days, there have been picket fences in or around the green which are shown in historical photos. One specific photo shows a baseball game being played right on the green. The objection made by several members was that the new fence would be out in front and very visible where other fences on the green are way in the back and not placed directly onto the green. It will visually look like part of the green is being closed off.

Ms. Gilchrist stated that the HDC is not trying to turn the district into something frozen in time and that people who live there now have different needs. Mr. Hollinger said that the rule of thumb here is the question of whether or not it is incongruous with the Historic District and not that this is the way it’s always been. The HDC has to decide whether a picket fence is in keeping with the character of a house in the Historic District. Ms. Boyer, Ms. Mills and Ms. Woodroofe said the fence would definitely be incongruous.

Mr. Hollinger asked if there were any more questions or comments. There were none.

MOTION: To deny the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness submitted by Bailey and

Tom Martignetti, 10 Kirby Road, to extend the perimeter fence along Kirby Road adjacent to the Washington Green as it would be incongruous with the character of the Washington Green historic district.

YES Votes: Tom Hollinger, Alison Gilchrist

NO Votes: Jane Boyer, Phyllis Mills and Sally Woodroofe (Ms. Woodroofe was seated

for George Krimsky)

1. Kelley and Terry Pillow, 132 Calhoun St., construct single family residence

Mr. Hollinger opened the conversation by asking if the commissioners had any comments. Each commissioner expressed the opinion that reducing the square footage of the house was appropriate and were pleased with the new design. They expressed their appreciation for the efforts of the Pillows and McGiver-Govern in responding to the Commission’s requests. Throughout this process the compromises made between all parties has resulted in positive experiences for all involved. The new reduced size will be a more appropriate fit into the rural character of the Washington Historic District.

MOTION: To approve the Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness submitted by Kelley and Terry Pillow, 132 Calhoun Street, to construct a single family residence according to Drawing #’s

A-051.00, A-101.00, A-111.00, A-121.00, A-201.00, A-202.00, A-211.00, A-216.00, A-231.00, A-232.0, Proposed Grading Plan, Proposed Grading Plan Alternative 1, Site Plan S100   
By Mr. Hollinger, seconded by Ms. Boyer, passed 5 to 0.

III.Consideration of the Minutes – March 14, 2016

The commissioners reviewed the minutes of March 14, 2016 and made no revisions.

MOTION: To accept the March 14, 2016 Special Meeting/Public Hearing minutes as written.

By Ms. Gilchrist, seconded by Ms. Mills passed 5 to 0.

Consideration of the Minutes – March 21, 2016

The commissioners reviewed the minutes of March 21, 2016 and made no revisions.

MOTION: To accept the March 21, 2016 minutes as written. By Mr. Hollinger, seconded by Ms. Boyer,

passed 5 to 0.

IV. Other Business – Schedule Design Guidelines Workshop for May 2016

The commissioners present decided that Monday May 2nd, 7:00 PM was the best date. The meeting will be located in the Lower Level Land Use Conference Room.

V. Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn. By Ms. Boyer, seconded by Ms. Averill, passed 5 to 0.

Mr. Hollinger adjourned the meeting at 8:10 PM.

FILED SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

Janice Roberti, Historic District Clerk