

April 20, 2009

Public Hearing - Regular Meeting
7:30PM, Land Use Meeting Room

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Chute, Mr. Kerr, Mr. Smith, Mr. Talbot

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ms. Gilchrist

ALTERNATES PRESENT: None

ALTERNATES ABSENT: Mrs. Boyer, Mrs. Mills, Mr. Tilden

OTHERS PRESENT: Mr. & Mrs. Sam Averill, Ms. Demetriades Mr. Walker

PUBLIC HEARING

Averill /250 Calhoun Street /Erect small greenhouse on south side of barn complex.

Mr. Kerr, Vice Chairman, opened the Public Hearing at 7:33PM to consider the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness, submitted by Samuel J. Averill, 250 Calhoun Street, to add a small greenhouse on the south side of the barn complex. He read the legal notice which appeared in Voices on 4/12/09 and seated the members. Mr. and Mrs. Averill were present.

Mr. Kerr read letters from James & Ene Greenfield, 12 Ives Road and Tyler & Averil Smith, 135 Calhoun Street. Both letters were in favor of this application. The letters are in the applicant file and copies are filed with these minutes.

Mr. Kerr invited the Averills to come forward and discuss their application. Mrs. Averill said this is really their son's project, but he is out of town. She explained that their son has a friend with experience in carpentry and greenhouses and the two of them decided the farm needs a greenhouse to extend the growing season. Mrs. Averill said the south side of the barn is a logical location because it is sunny, there is access to water in the barn and is almost out of view from the road. The greenhouse will only be visible to those driving up Calhoun Street, otherwise, it is completely blocked by the barn.

Mr. Talbot asked if there will be glass on the roof as well as the sides. Mr. Averill said the roof is to be corrugated metal. Three large panes of glass (approx. 4'x6') installed at an angle; glass will cover the east end and the door will be on the west end. Mr. Talbot asked if the greenhouse would be accessible from the barn. Mrs. Averill replied no, it is not attached to the barn. Mr. Averill said the greenhouse is movable, but they expect to leave it where it is because it is very heavy.

Mr. Kerr asked if the greenhouse is large enough for the Commission to have jurisdiction over. Mr. Smith said even though it is movable, it is still a structure, and it comes under the jurisdiction of the Commission.

Mr. Talbot said he thought the greenhouse is great. It is a farm structure – somewhat temporary, made of appropriate materials.

Mr. Kerr asked if there were any questions from the public. There were no additional questions or comments.

MOTION: To close the Public Hearing to consider the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness

submitted by Samuel J. Averill, 250 Calhoun Street, to erect a small greenhouse on the south side of the barn complex. By Mr. Talbot, seconded by Mr. Chute and passed 4-0.

Mr. Kerr closed the Public Hearing at 7:41PM.

This Public Hearing was recorded on tape. The tape is on file in the Land Use Office, Bryan Memorial Town Hall, Washington Depot, CT.

REGULAR MEETING

Mr. Kerr called the meeting to order at 7:42PM and seated the members.

Pending Business

Averill /250 Calhoun Street /Erect small greenhouse on south side of barn complex.

Mr. Kerr asked the members if they had any discussion on this application. They agreed the greenhouse will be a good and necessary addition. Mr. Talbot thought the revised drawings should be referenced. He dated the six pages of information and revised drawings 4/20/09. Mr. Kerr suggested they be referred to as Appendix A. They were so labeled for the file.

MOTION: To approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness submitted by Samuel J. Averill, 250 Calhoun Street, to add a small greenhouse on the south side of the barn complex as shown in photos and revised drawings marked received 4/20/09 and labeled Appendix A. This work is to be completed by April 20, 2010; or else this approval shall be void. By Mr. Talbot, seconded by Mr. Smith and passed 4-0.

Consideration of the Minutes

MOTION: To accept the 3/16/09 minutes as written. By Mr. Talbot, seconded by Mr. Smith and passed 4-0.

MOTION: To include a discussion on the Averill letter regarding barn conservation. By Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Chute and passed 4-0.

Averill Farm – Barn Conservation.

Mrs. Averill read the letter she wrote to the commission. It is in the applicant folder and a copy filed with the minutes. The letter requests a grant from The Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation to help keep their 1828 barn complex serviceable for another 100 years. They are asking friends and neighbors to write a brief letter of support.

Mr. Talbot asked what the Commission could do other than the fact that the barn is in a designated historic district. Mrs. Averill replied just a note from the Commission saying how important the barn is to the town. Mr. Talbot remarked it is critically important. Mr. Kerr asked if a resolution from the Commission would suffice.

Mrs. Averill said the grant is relatively small; just enough to help them identify what needs to be done and to help them with stabilization of problem areas. She continued by saying that the representative from CT Trust said the Averill Farm has everything they are looking for: it is in an historic district, active agricultural use and is in the public view shed. He also said he has seen a lot of barns in much worse condition. Mr. Averill said the framing is in pretty good shape. He thinks the stone foundation should be fixed first.

Mr. Kerr asked if some of this work could result in an application coming before the Commission. Potentially. Mrs. Averill said the barn foundation cannot be seen from the road. Mr. Smith said the members have agreed they would like to see the barn go for another 100 years, so to HDC the value is maintaining the whole barn, even if some things need to be changed. Mrs. Averill said they don't want to make any major changes in how the barn looks or how it is used. Mr. Chute asked what is in the barn. It is used for storage; hay, old tractors, apple boxes.

The resolution reads as follows:

The Historic District Commission of the Town of Washington unanimously endorses the application of the Averill Farm, 250 Calhoun Street, for a grant from the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation to help keep their 1828 barn complex serviceable for another one hundred years. The Commission believes it is an essential part of the rural Calhoun-Ives Historic District.

Wexler /157 Calhoun Street /Preliminary Discussion

Elizabeth Demetriades and Patrick Walker, architects, presented a letter from Mr. Wexler authorizing them to represent him. They showed the commissioners a map of the property, photos and models (none were left for the file). The existing house sits back from the road. Ms. Demetriades said she did not think this would be a very visible project.

Mr. Wexler would like to get rid of the existing driveway and, in its place, use the old entry road as a driveway. He would also like to have a privacy gate on the driveway which would not be visible from the road.

Mr. Talbot asked about the barn. Ms. Demetriades said the barn is now used as a garage with unfinished 2nd story space which will become a studio/guest apartment/gym.

Ms. Demetriades said most of the property is protected wetlands so trees will not be removed. Mr. Talbot reminded her that the Commission cannot consider trees or plantings. She stated if the application needs to be reviewed as if there are no trees, it is important for all the commissioners to go look at the site. She said they want to proceed responsibly with respect to the Commission and also their client. Ms. Demetriades noted that the challenge from their perspective is to keep the house as invisible as possible. Mr. Talbot asked what type of materials they would use. They intend to use bluestone and cedar with a metal roof, possibly copper.

Mr. Smith commented that the Commission has struggled lately with the increase in size of structures. It is important to be able to tell that additions are additions in that they are smaller than the existing house. There is nothing small or farmhouse-like about these model buildings and he said he did not know how this would look through the trees. Mr. Talbot said fundamentally, the massing is about the same for all three of the models. Mr. Chute said he did not know how much would be visible from the road. Mr. Talbot thought the volume would be noticeable while driving by. Mr. Smith suggested they do whatever

they can to break up the long line of the structure. Mr. Kerr suggested it would be helpful to see a drawing of their favorite plan.

Mr. Talbot said he liked the concept of looking at a more modernistic approach and liked the curved roof idea. But, as Mr. Smith mentioned, it comes down to massing – how to keep it from being a large, out of context structure.

It was decided that the architects for Mr. Wexler should come for another informal discussion at the May 18 meeting.

Wodtke /81 Green Hill Road.

The Commission received a letter from Mr. and Mrs. Wodtke stating their picket fence had seriously deteriorated due to age and weather. They will be replacing it in-kind.

MOTION: To adjourn. By Mr. Chute.

Mr. Kerr adjourned the meeting at 9:20PM.

FILED SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

Respectfully Submitted,
Martha T. Shade, Secretary