

# May 19, 2008

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Chute, Ms. Gilchrist, Mrs. Rives, Mr. Smith, Mr. Talbot

ALTERNATES PRESENT: Mrs. Boyer, Mr. Kerr, Mrs. Rives

STAFF PRESENT: Mrs. Shade

OTHERS PRESENT: Mrs. Crumrine

PUBLIC HEARING

## **Laffont(cont'd) /128 Calhoun Street /Clay tennis court**

Ms. Gilchrist reconvened the Public Hearing at 7:35PM to consider the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness submitted 4/7/08 by Dominique and Frederic Laffont, 128 Calhoun Street, to install a clay tennis court surrounded by a fence constructed of 10ft tall cedar posts and black vinyl chain link fencing. She seated the members.

Ms. Gilchrist read an e-mail from Sandra Canning dated 5/15/08, in which she stated that the activity for construction along Calhoun Street has become unbearable. There are large trucks delivering materials all day long and they occasionally have to back into her driveway in order to make the turn in the road; in addition, speeding has been a problem. A copy of this e-mail is filed with these minutes and the original is in the applicant file.

Mr. Talbot said he did not think HDC had any jurisdiction over traffic during construction. Mrs. Rives noted there was nothing in the regulations about construction. The members agreed. Mr. Kerr said an applicant should be asked to do all possible to minimize the impact of construction; then that request would be on the record. Ms. Gilchrist said HDC could suggest, but could not make a condition of approval, anything having to do with construction.

Ms. Gilchrist said she would write a letter to Ms. Canning. The members thought it was important to reply to Ms. Canning to explain, that although they sympathize, they have no authority over construction.

Ms. Gilchrist read a letter from Harold Tittmann, of Tittmann Design and Consulting, dated April 25, 2008, advising the Commission the he and his clients, Dominique and Frederic Laffont, were withdrawing their application for a Certificate of Appropriateness because it was determined by the Commission that it would not be visible from the public way. A copy of this letter is filed with these minutes and the original is in the applicant file.

**MOTION:** To close the Public Hearing to consider the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness submitted 4/7/08 by Dominique and Frederic Laffont, 128 Calhoun Street, to install a clay tennis court surrounded by a fence constructed of 10ft tall cedar posts and black vinyl chain link fencing. By Mr. Smith, seconded by Mrs. Rives and passed 5-0.

Ms. Gilchrist closed the Public Hearing at 7:50PM.

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

REGULAR MEETING

Ms. Gilchrist called the meeting to order at 7:52PM and seated the members.

### **Laffont(cont'd) /128 Calhoun Street /Clay tennis court**

Application has been withdrawn.

### **Washington Club(cont'd) /92 Green Hill Road /Sign on building**

Ms. Gilchrist reconvened the discussion about replacing the old sign on the building. Mrs. Crumrine was present.

Mrs. Crumrine began by saying she would just like to get a yes or no answer on this application before discussing any other type of sign. She told the Commission that George Auchincloss and Dimitri Rimski did some research on the sign, but found nothing. Mrs. Crumrine said she also did some research and found nothing. However, she did meet an older gentleman in the town garage who said he remembers the sign. The plank is one solid piece of wood, approximately 90 years old. It was hand carved especially for the Washington Club. She commented that since the sign has been up on the building, there have been many positive comments; not only from members, but from others.

Ms. Gilchrist read some correspondence received since the last meeting:

Letter from Robert C. Hunt, Jr. no date

Letter from Douglas H. Greene dated 5/2/08

e-mail from Jane Paisley dated 5/7/08

Letter from Kathryn S. & John E. Kehoe dated 5/9/08

Letter from H. Ray Underwood dated 5/11/08

Letter from Nicholas N. Solley dated 5/13/08

Letter from Denise Pasch dated 5/17/08

All the correspondence was positive and in favor of the sign staying on the Washington Club.

Mr. Talbot asked which part of the sign is carved. Mrs. Crumrine replied the lettering was carved and then painted. She recently had the sign professionally cleaned and painted. Mrs. Rives asked if it had ever been determined how old the sign is. No. Mr. Kerr said he thought the sign was whimsical and asked how long the sign might last outside. Indefinitely.

Mr. Talbot said that if the sign were to stay, it would not affect the underlying architecture of the building. He said he is on the fence. He does like the whimsy and the sign could be removed at some point. Originally, they were looking at something more austere; letters on the fascia or using the billboards. Mrs. Crumrine said no one at the Club is supportive of using the billboards.

Ms. Gilchrist said she likes the sign a lot. It conveys the personality of Washington's past as an art colony. The hall has been a social center of town. It breathes some life into the center. A more formal sign would be a little too formal. Mr. Chute agreed.

Mrs. Boyer said that is just what she does not like about the sign. In addition, the dimension is off. People found the Hall for 50 years without the sign. She asked what percentage of people who use the Hall are

members or not. Mr. Talbot said that was not important because the Hall has a commercial history. Mrs. Rives stated the sign does not look like it belongs on this building.

Ms. Gilchrist asked if there was any more discussion. Mrs. Rives commented it looks like there are three choices; this sign, no sign or another sign.

MOTION: To approve the Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness submitted 3/25/08 by The Washington Club, 92 Green Hill Road, to install a removable wooden sign on the building as illustrated in the photographs submitted 5/19/08. This work is to be completed by May 19, 2009; or else this approval shall be void. By Ms. Gilchrist, seconded by Mr. Chute and passed 3-1-1.

Mrs. Rives denied because the sign is longer than the fascia board it hangs on and is not that visible from the road. Mr. Smith abstained because he was equally for and against.

Consideration of the Minutes

MOTION: To approve the 4/21/08 minutes as written. By Mr. Smith, seconded by Mrs. Rives and passed 5-0.

MOTION: To add an item not included on the agenda. By Ms. Gilchrist, seconded by Mr. Talbot and passed 5-0.

Ms. Gilchrist told the members she had a discussion with Phil Markert about ways to go about strengthening HDC regulations by being more specific in the Guidelines and perhaps cross referencing HDC rules with Planning and Zoning and the Plan of Development. Mr. Markert said he would like to bring Kelly Boling some time and have a discussion with HDC about working with Planning and Zoning. The members all agreed it would be good to strengthen their regulations and have greater ability to enforce them.

MOTION: To invite Kelly Boling and Phil Markert to a special meeting with HDC; date to be determined. By Mr. Talbot, seconded by Mrs. Rives and passed

5-0.

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting. By Mr. Chute.

Ms. Gilchrist adjourned the meeting at 9:05PM.

FILED SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

Respectively submitted,

Martha T. Shade, Clerk