

From: Lois Laczko November 9, 2009 3:41:51 PM
Subject: Historic District Commission Minutes 10/01/2009 ADOPTED
To: SimsburyCT_HistComm
Cc:

ADOPTED

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MINUTES – REGULAR MEETING
October 1, 2009

I. CALL TO ORDER

Elizabeth Woollacott, Chairman, called the Historic District Commission to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices. The following members were also present: Evan Woollacott, Paul Lanza, David Freitas, and Marc Lubetkin. Also in attendance were Lynn Charest, Zoning Enforcement Officer and other interested parties.

II. APPOINTMENT OF ALTERNATES

Chairman Woollacott appointed Mr. Lanza to serve in the absence of Ms. Mead.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES of September 3, 2009 regular meeting

Chairman Woollacott made a correction to the minutes.

Mr. Woollacott made a motion to approve the September 3, 2009 minutes as amended. Mr.

Lanza seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Mr. Lanza read the legal notice.

IV. APPLICATION(S) FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS/DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE VOTE

09 – 05 Application of Marshall Epstein, Sandra Bourke and Edith Epstein, Owners, for a Certificate of Appropriateness for erection of a hoop house on property located at 25 East Weatogue Street.

Mr. Epstein, of Riverdale Farms, stated that they do farming on their land and they would like to expand with the addition of a greenhouse on their

property. The greenhouse needed to be on a flat area. He stated that they looked at several different areas to construct the greenhouse. Mr. Epstein stated that they felt the location, where the greenhouse was constructed, was appropriate because of the topography and because it was 200'-250' back. He also stated that he was not aware that they needed to come before the Historic District Commission because they did not need Zoning approval. He did not realize that there were different variances on each side of the street.

Mr. Epstein stated that this location was picked for the greenhouse because there is an underground irrigation system on the property; they could not construct the greenhouse further back. The other areas on the property would be too cluttered for this operation.

Mr. Epstein stated that this greenhouse will be state of the art, with hydroponics and fish. He stated that this will be a sustainable farm. It will also extend the season to approximately 11-12 months per year. He stated that this will be the first farm in Connecticut to have hydroponics.

Mr. Lubetkin questioned if the greenhouse had a concrete foundation. Mr. Epstein stated that the foundation was dirt and crushed stone. Mr. Lubetkin questioned what the cost would be to move the greenhouse. Mr. Epstein stated that the greenhouse itself cost \$75,000-\$80,000. Moving this structure would cost another \$30,000-\$40,000.

Chairman Woollacott stated that she did not have an issue regarding where the greenhouse was located.

Mr. Woollacott made a motion to approve the application of Marshall Epstein, Sandra Bourke and Edith Epstein, Owners, for a Certificate of Appropriateness for erection of a hoop house on property located at 25 East Weatogue Street as submitted. Mr. Lanza seconded the motion.

Mr. Lubetkin questioned what precedent the Commission would be setting if they allow this greenhouse to stay in this location. He stated that if they allow it for this application, they will need to allow it for others. Mr. Epstein stated that this is the only farm in the Historic District.

Mr. Lubetkin stated that moving the greenhouse does not make sense. He suggested that the applicant find a way to minimize the visual impact to the area. He suggested plantings in front of the structure to give it more curb appeal. Mr. Lubetkin feels that these would be the appropriate steps that the Commission should take to work with the community and to preserve the integrity of the property. Mr. Epstein stated that they are not done with the landscaping aspect of this project. He stated that they will consider the landscaping for aesthetic purposes. He stated that this will

be a state-of-the-art facility. Many people will be visiting the farm; they want it to look as good as it can.

The motion was approved. Mr. Lubetkin abstained.

Mr. Lubetkin stated that he was very surprised with the different tone the members had tonight compared to the last meeting when this issue was discussed. Chairman Woollacott stated that she got a better picture of the location of the greenhouse at this meeting. Mr. Lanza stated that, at the last meeting, the Commission did not know if the greenhouse was set back 200' or not. Sufficient information was given by the application at this meeting.

V. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Scenic Road Signage

Ms. Charest distributed the Detail Expenditure Status Report for the Historic District Commission. She stated that \$1,140 is budgeted for street signs. She stated that the signs that the Commission would like to purchase totals \$1,420.

Mr. Lubetkin stated that the HDC approved this purchase during the last fiscal year. Because this purchase order was not processed properly, it will be billed to this fiscal year. Ms. Charest stated that one option could be to get only a portion of the signage this year. Mr. Lubetkin stated that he would rather see the person responsible for not processing this invoice in a timely manner come before the Commission to explain why this happened.

Mr. Lanza stated that if they purchase a lesser number of signs, the cost may go up.

Mr. Woollacott suggested that the Commission make a request to Ms. Glassman for the extra money for the signs. This amount would total \$280.

Mr. Woollacott made a motion for a request to be made of Mary Glassman for the addition funding of \$280 for the scenic road signs. Mr. Lanza seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Open House for Historic District Property Owners

Mr. Lubetkin stated that after seeing the Historic District Commission's budget, he is not sure this event can take place. He stated that until a location is determined, the cost is unknown.

Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Grants

Ms. Charest stated that the RFP is currently being reviewed by Connecticut Culture and Tourism. It will then go on the Town's website. Proposals need to be into the Town by October 15th. She is hopeful that work can begin by November 1st.

Mr. Lubetkin stated that the Commission will need to review the proposals prior to their November meeting. He suggesting having people present their proposals at the November meeting or the Commission could have a special meeting to review the proposals. They could then make their decision at the November 5th meeting.

Mr. Lubetkin asked that Ms. Charest invite someone from the Planning Department and a representative from the Zoning and Planning Commissions to hear the proposals.

Ms. Charest stated that Mr. Peck is interested in pursuing the Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Grant. This grant can be up to \$20,000. Anything over \$5,000 needs to be matched. She stated that there was an historical architect at the Charrette that did this type of work. This architect will be writing a sample Ordinance for historic preservation for the Center of Town; there is no protection in the Center of Town.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS AS MAY PROPERLY COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION

Chairman Woollacott questioned if there was any recourse for the stoop on 39 East Weatogue Street. Ms. Charest stated that this is now a building code issue. Mr. Lubetkin stated that the Building Department could require the removal of the structure.

Mr. Woollacott made a motion to ask that the Building Official take an active role in correcting the stoop at 39 East Weatogue Street. Mr. Lubetkin seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Ms. Charest stated that there was an emergency roof repair for a homeowner. She stated that they did receive a building permit, although the homeowner was told that they would need to come before this Commission to get a Certificate of Appropriateness in order to finish the roof. She stated that the homeowner will be using the same shingle, which was approved by the Historic District Commission that was used on his barn, for the emergency repair.

Ms. Charest stated that the homeowners at 72 East Weatogue Street may be coming in for an informal application in the near future regarding an

addition to their house.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Lanza made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m. Mr. Lubetkin seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Elizabeth Woollacott, Chairman