

**TOWN OF CHAPLIN, CONNECTICUT
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

**MINUTES OF A PUBLIC HEARING AND BUSINESS MEETING
HELD ON April 8th, 2014 IN THE CONFERENCE RM, CHAPLIN LIBRARY**

Public Hearing

Jean Givens asked Warren Church to chair the meeting, and Church called the hearing to order at 7:03 PM. Members present were Warren Church (vice chair), Jean Givens (chair), Catherine Lynch (secretary), Paul Peifer, Catherine Smith (alternate), and Paige Westerfield (alternate). Paige Westerfield was seated for Kitty LeShay. Also present were Daniel, Carrie, and Silas Cowles, and Diane Cox.

Church read the public notice published in *the Chronicle* on March 28th, 2014, regarding an April 8th hearing of the Chaplin Historic District Commission on the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness by Daniel and Carrie Cowles to modify deck railing and install a patio at 50 Chaplin Street.

Carrie Cowles described the proposal to add a patio at the base of the deck on the east side of the house. The patio would be made up of flat field stones already on the property and would be in a rounded shape on axes of roughly 15' by 30'.

The current deck on the rear, east side of the house is 10' to 12' above the ground. The top railing is 30" above the deck, there is a 2' spread between railings, and no balusters between posts. This creates a safety concern, especially for small children (like Silas). The proposal to modify the deck as presented by C. Cowles involved adding new, 36" tall "two-by-two" (i.e. 1.5"x1.5") balusters at intervals of 5.5" along the east and south sides of the deck. New balusters on the south side would be visible from the street. There was some discussion of building codes and permits, none of which are pertinent, and of the condition of the deck. While paint color does not fall within the purview of the Commission, some Commission members suggested that a darker color would make the new balusters less noticeable from the street.

C. Cowles also discussed an idea for the future of replacing the existing, narrow stone paths in the garden at the rear of the property with gravel paths in the shape of a cross and edged with brick. There was a general sense in the ensuing discussion that, although gravel paths do require Certificates of Appropriateness, the location of the garden is so far from the street as to not be significantly visible.

Church closed the hearing at 7:24 PM.

Business Meeting

Church opened the meeting at 7:24 PM. The same members and guests were present.

1. Approval of the minutes. Peifer **moved** and Givens **seconded** approval of the minutes of January 14th, 2014. They moved and seconded **amending** the minutes as follows: In the "Public Hearings" section, under "Hearing – Application for a CA by Warren and Peggy Church," "Option 1," line one, the word "southwest" be replaced by "westerly;" under "Hearing 2," line two, the word "southwest" be replaced by "westerly;" under "Hearing 3," line three, the word "southwest" be replaced by "southeast." In the "Business Meeting" section, under "2.C Lynch Application," line one, the word "accept"

be replaced by “approve.” The vote in favor of approving the minutes as amended was unanimous.

2. Consideration of the application from Daniel and Carrie Cowles. Givens **moved** and Lynch **seconded** approval of the Cowles’ application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to install a patio and modify the deck as presented at the Hearing. Commissioners noted that the new deck balusters would not be very visible from the street and were needed for safety. The patio would be consistent with others in the district. Commission members commended C. Cowles on the clear graphics and photographs that accompanied the application. The vote to approve the application for a CA was unanimous.

3. New Business. Correspondence. Lynch reported on the contents of the HDC mail box at Town Hall, including a memo regarding new rules as of Nov 7th, 2013, on reimbursement for sales tax and three issues of *Connecticut Preservation News*. As this newsletter is already available in the Library, the commission followed past practice and distributed the issues to those interested.

Commission Chair. Jean Givens announced her intention to step down as Chair, while remaining a member of the Commission, effective at the Annual Meeting in September. In preparation for this, she is working on organizing the Commission files. In response to a question from Peifer, Givens said that this would be an appropriate time to update and distribute to Commissioners, especially the two new members, the sketch map of properties in the District.

4. Old Business. 47 and 142 Chaplin Street. There has been no movement on applications for Certificates at these two properties.

Church closed the meeting at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Catherine Lynch
Secretary

The next scheduled meeting will be held on May 6th, 2013, and these minutes are subject to approval at that time.