



Town of Colchester, CT

127 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, Connecticut 06415

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Monday, April 10, 2023
Town Hall Meeting Room 1
Regular Meeting
MINUTES

RECEIVED
COLCHESTER, CT
2023 APR 12 PM 1:22
Gayle Furman
TOWN CLERK

Members Present: E. Sharon, Chairman, T. Congdon, S. Stefanowicz, H. J. Smith

Absent: L. Akerman, R. Kvederas

Also Present: D. Turner, BOS Liaison, D. Sorrentino, Planning Director

1. Call to Order - Meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.
2. Additions to Agenda - E. Sharon added the following items to the Agenda:
Under Old Business #7, as item b: Update on new signs for the Historic District.
Under New Business #8, as item c: Schedule 3rd grade visits to Colchester School for Colored Children.
Under New Business #8, as item d: General discussion of condition of Town Green and Youth Center.
3. Minutes of Previously Held Meeting - March 13, 2023
Motion by T. Congdon to approve minutes of Regular Meeting of March 13, 2023, 2nd by S. Stefanowicz.
Vote was unanimous, motion carried.
4. Public Hearings - None.
5. Five Minute Session for Public - No public present.
6. New Applications - None.
7. Old Business
 - a. **Certificate of Appropriateness - COA 2023-001** – of the Town of Colchester Planning & Zoning Department for (1) maintenance of the gazebo on the Town Green; (2) removal of the existing utility closet, utility pole and light located southerly of the gazebo and installation of new electrical utility appurtenances.
D. Sorrentino showed historical images of the gazebo/bandstand that were obtained since the last HDC meeting and reviewed the photo presentation of the proposed work to be done to the gazebo, in its current form. Discussion ensued about the proposed repairs, the timeline of more substantial repairs/remodel and issues related to design, funding and construction.
Commissioners feel that the gazebo repairs and electrical utility work are inextricably linked. If a Certificate of Appropriateness is issued for only the gazebo repairs, that the electrical cabinet will never be adequately addressed. D. Sorrentino showed a photo of the equipment that is inside of the cabinet and discussion ensued regarding the history of the electrical service and cabinet, what it is used for, and alternatives to the current condition. Per discussion with the engineer, relocation of the cabinet to the area near the bus shelter is financially unrealistic. Relocating the electrical equipment underneath a redesigned gazebo is too long of a timeline to address current

needs. Other alternatives discussed included: (1) rebuilding a smaller, shorter, gable-roofed wooden cabinet in the same location, on a foundation or concrete piers, but rotated to be parallel with the southerly line of the gazebo; (2) utilizing a small, shed type of structure to house the electrical equipment; or (3) placing a new cabinet in the raised landscape bed closer to the gazebo where it can be concealed with landscaping. Commissioners prefer option (3) but only if the cabinet were substantially shorter in height than the current cabinet, say 2-3' above ground level. D. Sorrentino will contact the engineering firm and inquire about re-organization of the electrical equipment and potential for use of a shorter cabinet enclosure. In order to not have to wait a full month, T. Congdon recommended that the Commission convene a Special meeting later on in April to again address this application, which was scheduled for Tuesday, 3/25/23.

b. Update on new signs for Historic District

T. Congdon gave update on new Historic District signs to be prepared by Bacon Academy students. The cost will be \$400 as compared with \$2,500 for a professional sign company. Commissioners asked D. Sorrentino to inquire of potential funding sources for the anticipated \$400 expense.

8. New Business

a. Discussion of cost proposal from Brewster Architects, LLC – Gazebo/Bandstand

D. Sorrentino briefly presented the proposal that was requested at the last meeting by Arthur Liverant, and is the result of email correspondence between D. Sorrentino, B. Brewster and E. Sharon. The proposal is \$4,800 for "Town Green Bandstand Refurbishment Sketches" broken down as \$1,400 for Field Measure & Documentation, and \$3,400 for Concept Design Sketch Renderings and Design Meetings. The scope is for Brewster Architects to prepare sketch plans and elevation renderings: (1) of the original bandstand design based on historic documentation; (2) of the current configuration based on field documentation; and (3) of a refurbishment that addresses issues raised by HDC members. Discussion ensued regarding funding for the current proposal, costs for actual design and construction, as well as time frames. D. Sorrentino will forward the proposal to the Bacon Academy Trustees to inquire about potential cost sharing.

b. Discussion of concept drawing for Town Green Bus Shelter

D. Sorrentino presented a sketch plan of a colonial style bus shelter for the Commission's consideration. Particulars of the design were discussed. E. Sharon recommended changes to the concept, T. Congdon expressed concern that it was too large, H. J. Smith indicated that with the new location the temporary bus shelter that is currently there is adequate. Modifications to the temporary shelter to ensure safety, seating and ADA access were discussed as well as the Town's requirements for competitive bids. D. Sorrentino will contact Carefree to ascertain the status of the temporary bus shelter and inquire of cost to modify it or construct a new one.

c. Schedule 3rd grade visits to Colchester School for Colored Children.

Commissioners discussed dates and assigned HDC members as guides for the 3rd grade class tours to be held in June.

d. General discussion of condition of Town Green and Youth Center.

Commissioners and staff discussed the status of the improvement project on the Town Green. H.J. Smith brought up the following concerns: the wood on the benches appears to be drying out; lamp posts are damaged and showing rust; edges of the cinder path are exposed and unsupported; that all benches face the street; whether there are supposed to be concrete pads for benches not yet purchased; and reclaiming of the portions of the Green lawn areas damaged by construction equipment. Discussion ensued. Concerns will be relayed to Town Engineer Sal Tassone. It was noted that the Youth Center roof would be replaced in the near future.

9. Communications

10. Adjournment – Motion to adjourn by T. Congdon, 2nd by S. Stefanowicz. ***Vote was unanimous, meeting adjourned at 8:36 PM.***

Respectfully Submitted By: Demian A. Sorrentino, Planning Director