

APPROVED
HDC MEETING
NOVEMBER 7, 2019 – 7PM

Members Present: Chair Rodney Rowland, Vice Chair Jeff Hughes, Kate Murray
Elaine Nollet, Irene Bush and Judy Groppa.

Not Present: Tom Maher

Chair Rowland called the meeting of the New Castle HDC to order at 7:00 pm. He advised that the public hearing was postponed and there were three work sessions on the agenda. The Chair asked that anyone wishing to speak, must please sign in.

1. Continuation of Public Hearing for Ellen and Randy Bryan, 34 Wentworth Road, Map 16 Lot 64, for stone retaining wall – POSTPONED.
2. Work Session for Peggy Lamb and Steve Joselow, 12 Cranfield Street, Map 17, Lot 33 for new garage

Guests: Bill Soupcoff, TMS Architects.

Mr. Soupcoff brought a site plan showing the footprint of the existing house which was built somewhere in the 1920's, with an addition of about 12' across the width of the back of the house facing the water, which was built sometime later. The setbacks are 15' on the sides and the back, and a 20' front setback. The three main areas of addition being proposed are 1. To make a cover over the front entry for inclement weather, in which they propose to replicate the details of the current entry. 2. On the back which is the water side, they propose to lower the roofline. The back of the house is a three story high façade, a flat wall with no logic as to the placement of windows and large panes of glass so big that they look like black holes in the evening. The applicants feel that the height at the back is not very attractive and would like to bring the scale of the building down by lowering the roof. 3. On the right hand side as you face the house, they would like to add a one car garage, 14' x 24', which requires a variance for the setback. They applied for a building permit and got rejected; Attorney Tim Phoenix is preparing the application. The Chair advised that the HDC board does not usually review matters until a variance has been obtained but as this is a work session and the board is not voting, he let them proceed.

Soupcoff pointed out the attractive, gable roof on the house, however the double windows with 10" muntins in the middle are not very appealing. They would also like to extend the front entrance with the pediment to about 7' from the building but it will still be within the front setback. He provided sketches which are meant to be conceptual showing the front entry and the projection over the front door, the single windows on the front of the house, as well as the proposed garage. The

back shows the lower roof which will bring the scale down. The sketches show each side with the proposed elevation.

Elaine Nollet stated the garage looks to be two story with the dormer on the front. Soupcoff stated they kept the pitch of the garage roof to mimic the roofline of the house. The house has deep rake boards which is unusual, not many houses have this. The rake boards are about 10" wide and create shadow lines and add a lot of character to the house.

There were too many large windows with no muntins and they would like to replace several double and triple windows with one large window. The windows would all have shutters on them. On the back elevation they are proposing a French door system across the back of the house, under the lower roofline. They are not sure of the window manufacturer they will use but they are looking at Marvin double hung wood windows with aluminum exterior and the muntins would look like the real thing.

The Chair advised that he was in receipt of two emails from abutters and that both have concerns about the garage. Rowland recommended that the board do a site walk before going any further, adding that it should be scheduled at the end of this month before the next meeting, and after a variance for the garage is approved. He stated that if the applicants were not going to get a variance in November, having a site walk was not advisable as he would prefer to have it just prior to hearing so it was fresh in board members' minds. The Chair read the emails from abutters, Driscoll and Almgren, which object to the massing of the garage. Rowland stated that garages are something the Board has allowed in the historic district but the garage should not be the feature of the property and this one has become an entity of itself, especially compared to what is an attractive original home.

Groppa opined that the architecture of the garage is heavy and the location so far front that it becomes a big feature and also makes the house look very suburban. Soupcoff said the garage does not come out any farther than the existing home, and is actually set back 2' from the house. Elaine Nollet stated she had driven by and was worried about the setback, adding that the design is elaborate and simpler would be better. Comments from the Board were that the shed roof and the arched door make the garage seem rather elaborate. The Chair stated the arch is an architectural feature that currently doesn't exist on the house and a rectangular door would be more appropriate; he also thought the dormer was too much but applauded that they are following the rake board lines and the returns help it to blend some.

Kate Murray asked if they removed the dormer would it make the roof look lower. Soupcoff stated they would like to keep the roof consistent with the pitch of the existing house, but they could lower the roof a little and get rid of the dormer. The architect suggested the Board consider the elliptical entrance as

there are several examples of elliptical doors in New Castle and it is not the only curved element on the house, noting the curved windows on the side. The Chair stated that the abutters' letters are correct in that you don't see a lot of garages in the district and if the Board approves this design, it would set a precedent as this is not a simple design. He asked that a compromise be made on the design as there are no garages in this neighborhood. Judy Groppa asked if the garage could be set back more and was advised that they are trying to connect it to the existing mudroom and it cannot be situated behind the mudroom as there wouldn't be enough room to turn a vehicle.

Elaine Nollet said the good news is that the back of the house is not visible from the street but the Chair said that will be determined at the site walk. The windows wrap around a bit to the side of the house and if the garage is moved, they may be seen from the street. Soupcoff asked if the Board thought the windows that wrap around were inappropriate and Rowland's opinion is that it's a lot of glass. Nollet thought that overall the windows were an improvement and they had done a lot to make the house look lovely.

Soupcoff had pictures of an arched window with raised panels instead of shutters that Peggy Lamb suggested. Kate Murray stated said she liked the arched window but not the raised panels. The Chair consulted his calendar to try and determine a date for the site walk as the Board will have to determine whether the back of the house is visible. Rowland also thought the front portico was elaborate as there are not many 7' deep porticos. The typical door surrounds in town are a foot or so deep, they are not ornate and fancy, and he would like to keep within the character of the neighborhood.

The Chair advised he would stay in touch with Pam Cullen in the town clerk's office on their variance process and that the December 5th hearing would be another work session. The applicants will need a variance for the side setback for the garage as well as for the lot coverage as it is non-conforming. The house is 25' back from the street so it is within the front setback.

3. Work session for Thomas and Lisa Breen, 46-48 Cranfield Street, for demolition of existing structure, Map 17, Lot 28.

Guests: Mr. and Mrs. Breen; Brendan McNamara, Architect

The Chair stated that the HDC Board did a site walk last week at this location, adding that the intent was to talk about and vote on demolition. However, abutters were notified and it was advertised as a work session, not a hearing, so he advised to wait until the next meeting for a vote on the demolition. Mr. Breen said he would wait until next month for a vote. Mrs. Breen asked if she could submit an application tonight and the Chair advised her to submit two applications, one for demolition and one for the house.

Brendan McNamara said the intention is to clarify whether the Board is supportive of demolition and the location of the house as approved by the ZBA. If so, the house details can be discussed.

Judy Groppa stated she is not in favor of demolition as she thinks the house has a tremendous presence in the neighborhood and there is so much original fabric in the house. Granted the chimney is gone and there are cuts to the existing supports of the house, but if you were to save the original material, this house really has presence. Kate Murray is fine with demolition as she cannot imagine attempting to salvage it as they would end up starting over. She also likes the current positioning of the house but re-positioned, it looks like it still has that attitude. Elaine Nollet agreed that the house needs to come down. Jeff Hughes was also in favor of demolition and he was also comfortable with re-orientation of the house.

Brendan McNamara stated the HDC's purview is to control the detailing of the new house so its history is preserved through the design of the new house. The Chair agreed, but this is a structure that's been there for over 100 years and has character so it is difficult to approve demolition. Tom Maher had been to the site walk and advised the Chair that he is conflicted, but that the condition of the house is bad enough to warrant demolition and the time to save the house was over a decade ago.

Irene Bush stated she is also conflicted but can see demolition is warranted. Kate Murray said she wished the Board's purview included colors because she believes it is part of what's interesting with this house. If it was going to be the same color, it wouldn't be so noticeable that it was a different house. Mrs. Breen said they were conflicted as well and have tried their best to preserve it. Murray advised that they gave it a good go. The Chair stated he would also have to support demolition after seeing the house adding that there is not much to save and even if you tried, we wouldn't see much of what we see today.

Mr. Breen stated that with regard to the orientation, they still have to apply for shoreline permits, and wanted to know if the Board might approve the re-orientation. The Chair advised that before the site walk, he was dead set against turning the house, but after the site walk believes it still has its quirkiness. With all the shrubbery, you cannot even see the façade of the house, so once the shrubs are gone, you won't even know the house shifted.

McNamara passed proposed plans out to the Board, one for Cranfield Street and one for Shore Lane. The Cranfield Street side has a new front door which breaks up the front façade. Currently the door to the Cranfield apartment is on the right hand side. Kate Murray asked if the apartment was added on but it was actually two separate homes and at one time was a store.

McNamara showed a slightly enlarged version of the existing house stating that aesthetically the difference is that the current house is a Victorian/Greek revival

and they propose to return the house to its original Colonial appearance. Murray asked about the Victorian elements and was advised primarily the door, soffit overhangs and the entrance were Victorian. McNamara stated they could keep the house in the manner it currently is, as that is part of its history, but New Castle has more colonial houses. When you go into the house, it is clear that colonial was the original design.

McNamara's drawings do not have larger overhangs and they have discussed increasing the overhangs another 4". It wouldn't be in a manner such as moldings but essentially flat lumber. The entrances, as shown on the plan, are appealing to the 1700's as opposed to the late 1800's.

McNamara was asked if he was going to put mudsills on the house and he advised that because this is new construction, there will not be a mudsill as the house will have graduated clapboards. The chimney is an entirely faux chimney but they will use Moran water struck bricks; it is the same brick that would have been used but it is cut veneered brick. The Chair stated the chimney seems short given the scale of the house. McNamara advised they can go up higher but back when the house was built, to reduce labor they only put what was minimally necessary. Rowland asked if they were increasing the depth of the roof. Yes, by 4" as they are using wood windows and want to protect them as they are not vinyl clad, so the additional depth of the roof overhang will help with maintenance. Rowland said the overhangs presently on the house are quite substantial so he thought increasing the overhangs was a good idea. Kate Murray agreed as it is part of its character. McNamara stated that adding 4" will bring it to the 8" range and the overhangs are currently about 12". It's unadorned but it does have 6" copper half round gutter, which in the end fulfills the dimensions. They are avoiding the moldings of the great revival. There is no clear right and wrong on this particular house so they are looking for feedback from the Board.

The Chair asked about the doors, stating that the door that faces Cranfield Street is a little simpler and has less glass. McNamara advised that Shore Lane has southern exposure so it can bring more sun into the house. The Chair thought the door had a lot of glass, especially with the glass windows down the side. Jeff Hughes stated he likes the design but also was not sure about the door on Shore Lane. It is in a prominent location and will stand out.

Graduated clapboards are appropriate; the roof material on the porch on the left is stainless steel & copper. Rowland asked about the detail where the houses join, as the plans look like its 5" trimboard to delineate the two structures and seems to be blending it in more. McNamara stated the corner board is coming down to delineate but he is also showing the downspouts which are concealing the 5 1/2" cornerboard. The houses are actually at two different planes as they were not built at the same time. McNamara said the drip edges of the two structures were not aligned and he has brought them into alignment.

The gutters are going to be copper half round, as it weathers and tarnishes over time it becomes dark brown. Copper is practical because when the sun hits it, it warms and melts so it can deal with the snow and water. Copper gutters do not go green but darken over time; they are installing copper in the valleys also.

Irene Bush asked if they plan on installing shutters and were advised they do not as the windows are so beautiful. The windows have thick old fashioned mahogany sills.

The Chair stated the concerns are the height of the chimney and the amount of glass in the door on Shore Lane. McNamara confirmed with the Board that it is fine with graduated clapboards and no mudsill and asked if they agreed with the expansion of the soffit and they agreed.

4. Work session for John and Caroline Barrie, 57 Oliver Street, Map 16, Lot 28 to review changes made after HDC approval.

Guest: Shannon Alther from TMS Architects.

Alther stated the goal from the last meeting was to discuss with the Board the changes that occurred at the Barrie home and how they might be addressed. He presented plans depicting the house at the start of the project and where they are today. He asked the Board for comments as to where they can make adjustments and to clarify how to move forward as he would like to get the contractor squared away.

Page 2 of Alther's package shows the new construction and changes that have been made to the house. The back of the house is not visible from the street so it's not important. However, some construction occurred because of the condition of the back of the house.

In the Proposed Elevations at the lower right hand corner of page 2, the red indicates changes made such as the 3 season porch to a four season room, and the roof shape changed a little on the North elevation. There was also a slight modification in the roof slope on the West elevation. And of course, the paneling of screen panels and expansion of the side entry as the contractor built the roof 8' longer to cover the window well.

The Chair stated he does not like the panels on the West elevation. Alther stated that was originally planned as a porch with screens and is now a four season room with upper glass panels. Rowland advised that if you want a four season space then it should be made to look like the rest of the house, adding that they have 6 over 6 windows on the house and the porch should probably have only one or 2 windows, not 3 windows, and it should have clapboards and blend with the main body of the house. Elaine Nollet agreed about the porch windows, but doesn't think the extension on the roof is detrimental.

On the third page is the rake extension added to the south gable of the main body of the house. They also extended the overhang over the short gable that runs to the west. The contractor was working and the Building Inspector said "that's what I would have done" but obviously that is not what they originally intended. The contractor was trying to do his due diligence but didn't come back to the Board and he should have. This is probably the biggest issue on this side but Alther understands why the contractor did this as the entire sill of the house was rotted. The options are that they can leave it, or they can cut it back 9-10".

They removed the main center chimney, but rebuilt the pillar of the chimney and will put brick on it. We have basically the same look intended except for the rake overhang. The Barries didn't want to demolish the house but once they got into it, it was much worse than they thought. Alther then asked for the Board's thoughts and comments. Elaine Nollet stated she likes the look of the rake overhang and that neighbors had commented that it looked good. However, the Chair stated he did not like the returns. Alther asked if they kept the rakes but cut the corner or the triangle off the returns, if that would help, and they could also add in some horizontal trim. Rowland stated that the original lines were very simple and he would like to head back in that direction adding that they should not draw attention to the depth added to the gable, but should attempt to minimize it.

Groppa asked if there was a gutter along the roof. There was an existing gutter across the front with downspouts and the new gutter is shown on page 4. In contrast to the two rakes added to the main house that went out 8"-9", the contractor left flat spots to add gutter back to help with the water issues to bring the style and profile back. Alther likes the white gutters because they blend in with the building. The plans show the door and widened pediment that was approved by the Board. The contractor put the clapboards at 4 1/8" or 4 1/4"; Alther proposed grading the clapboards starting at 2" or 2 1/4" and going up to 2 1/2". Once the clapboards get below the window, they can blend into the clapboards that are there. They have not sided the front of house but the south side is sided and the architect stated they could pick a line and grade the clapboards and at some point get them to meet.

The Chair stated that it looks like they put a water table on already. Alther said they had and he told the contractor to stop there and not do anything else at this time. They removed a beam sill as it was rotted out; they were able to take out the sill and pour a new foundation sill about 12" high and put pressure treated wood for the sill itself. The water table helped cover the joint between the two. There wasn't any room to add stone or granite and the water table made some sense. The Chair asked if it could be part of the graduated clapboard process and Alther stated it could. Groppa thinks it would help a lot to graduate the clapboard.

Jeff Hughes pointed out that the application had Marvin windows. Alther stated that they have the colonial styling in Andersen windows, with the same features that were originally intended. The mullion size is virtually the same as there is only 1/16" difference. Hughes wanted the change documented.

Alther proposed to address the water table and the first 3' to 4' of clapboards on the East elevation and to put gutters as intended. He will come back with details for the Board as to how they can simplify the rake ends on the North and South and also to add a little trim detail at the window casings.

The canopy over the West door entrance will have square posts. With regard to the panels on the screen porch, Alther will come back to the Board with options, whether to leave the glass or replace the panels with clapboards. The Chair advised that the panels and glass are a big concern and advised they could change it to two windows with traditional clapboards below or go back to the three season porch which was approved before with the screens. Alther will speak with the homeowner as to what they would like to do.

The Chair stated that the door looks good. Alther said he would provide the Chair with a written list so he can verify what was talked about this evening. The Chair asked if he would be back for a hearing next month and the architect stated he will finish the post at the canopy overhang and work on the front elevation clapboard as they would like to get things done before winter. He will also come back before the Board with the trim for the rake overhang.

5. Approve minutes from October 3, 2019

M/S/P Jeff Hughes moved to approve the minutes of October 3, 2019 as amended; Kate Murray seconded; all approved.

6. Any New Business, CLG update, Building Inspector

The Chair had a phone conference with the preservation company and the Division of Historical Resources, who manages the grants. Work should begin in a week or so. The survey will be done in a phased approach and the focus will begin with the oldest part of the district as well as outlying historic sites that are not part of the district. The Division of Historical Resources urged us to apply for a second grant which the Chair will do this week so we can roll right into phase two. The first phase will be done about June or July and although the survey is starting now, they will wait for leaves to drop to get accurate pictures of architectural features.

The Chair spoke to the Building Inspector about 57 Aldrich Street and they considered it miscommunication. The Chair considers it lack of communication. The Building Inspectors were well aware of the changes but did not communicate

them to the Chair. Hopefully they will pay more attention if they know the Board is paying attention.

With regard to the fence, the Chair received an email that the Building Inspector had approved the fence. Irene Bush asked if the fence was supposed to have lattice at the top. The Chair stated that the Board very clearly stated the fence cannot be attached to the house and it is to be 6'. Murray asked if the fence is higher than 6' can the certificate of occupancy be rescinded. Judy Groppa said the fence is attached to the house and they have no way to get to their back yard.

Maher sent an email to Rowland stating he believes communication is the problem and it is a work in progress. Neither Building Inspector communicates with the Chair. Instead all concerns come to the Chair, when the Building Inspector should be addressing and inspecting these concerns.

Elaine Nollet suggested the Chair write an article about the HDC process and put it in the Island Items as it is read by everyone. The Chair stated he has done so in the past and has also has put it in the annual report. Nollet stated that a couple of homeowners on Cranfield Street applied for a garage and were denied adding that the street is attractive without garages.

7. Adjournment

Jeff Hughes moved to adjourn at 8:30 p.m.; Kate Murray seconded; All approved. Adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Diane L. Cooley Recording Secretary