

**Schenectady Historic District Commission**

**Meeting Minutes  
August 25, 2022**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Commissioner Yager called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

**II. ROLL CALL**

**PRESENT:** Patricia Yager, Chair; Dr. Dean Bennett; Shaun Andriano; Joe Fava; Zakhar Berkovich; Matt Smith, Senior Planner; Sylvia Jimison, Development Staff; Chris Marney, Assistant Corporation Counsel.

**ABSENT:** Richard Unger.

**III. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

None.

**IV. ADOPTION OF MEETING MINUTES**

Motion by Commissioner Fava, seconded by Commissioner Berkovich, to approve the Minutes of the July 28, 2022 meeting.

*Motion carried unanimously.*

**V. CALL FOR MEMBERS OF PUBLIC TO SPEAK ON AGENDA ITEMS**

None.

**VI. APPLICATIONS**

**A. Consideration for approval submitted by John Gula to replace the driveway. The premises is located at 1201 Stratford Rd. in the GE Realty Plot Historic District.**

John Gula appeared before the commission. He stated that the current asphalt driveway is about 15 years old and there are surfacing issues. He explained that he would like to replace it with a more decorative chip and seal driveway which lasts longer and doesn't require resealing every year.

**RESOLUTION**

Motion by Commissioner Andriano, seconded by Commissioner Fava to approve the application with the following conditions:

1. The project will be completed within one year.

And with the following finding of fact:

1. This is a Type II SEQRA.
2. The Commissioners cited Preservation Standards #2, #5, and #6 as the guidelines for their decision.

*Motion carried unanimously.*

**B. Consideration for approval submitted by Drs. John & Jamie Forsyth to remove a wall. The premises is located at 1198 Stratford Rd. in the GE Realty Plot Historic District.**

Dr. John Forsyth appeared before the commission. He stated that one portion of the stone wall in front was collapsing, so he removed it and seeded the slope. He explained that he should have in hindsight checked with the commission prior to removing it. He stated that the other section of wall is also collapsing and would like to remove that wall as well.

Commissioner Yager stated that there doesn't appear to be any evidence of the age of the wall. Commissioner Fava stated that he doesn't believe the wall is original to the house. Commissioner Berkovich stated that he lives on Stratford and many of the original walls on the street are substantial walls of stone and concrete, and it appears this wall was an attempt to recreate that look.

Dr. Forsyth stated that he spoke with the city historian Chris Leonard, and he believes it was likely installed in the 1980s.

**RESOLUTION**

Motion by Commissioner Berkovich, seconded by Commissioner Andriano to approve the application with the following conditions:

1. The project will be completed within one year.

And with the following finding of fact:

1. This is a Type II SEQRA.
2. The Commissioners cited Preservation Standards #2, #5, and #6 as the guidelines for their decision.

*Motion carried unanimously.*

**C. Consideration for approval submitted by Weston Shapiro to replace the driveway. The premises is located at 237 Green St. in the Stockade Historic District.**

Weston Shapiro appeared before the commission. He explained that he would like to replace his stamped concrete driveway that is severely deteriorated with pavers. He stated that it would be either a running bond or herringbone design with the 4 x 8 Holland Stone paver and bordered with the Roma II quarter brick in the Raven color.

Commissioner Andriano stated that a more historically accurate material would be granite and asked if the applicant looked into using it. The applicant stated that he did not. Commissioner Andriano stated that he had no objection, that it is an improvement from what is there and doesn't detract from the historic character of the property.

Commissioner Yager asked what color sand would be used for the installation. The applicant stated that it would be gray.

### **RESOLUTION**

Motion by Commissioner Andriano, seconded by Commissioner Fava to approve the application with the following conditions:

1. The project will be completed within one year.
2. The driveway will have a border in the Raven color as submitted by the applicant, and the field will be the Granite City color done in either a running bond or herringbone pattern with gray sand installed between the bricks.

And with the following finding of fact:

1. This is a Type II SEQRA.
2. The Commissioners cited Preservation Standards #2, #5 and #6 as the guidelines for their decision.

*Motion carried unanimously.*

#### **D. Consideration for approval submitted by Charles Dixon Jr. to repaint the house and install stairs on the rear deck. The premises is located at 125 North Ferry St. in the Stockade Historic District.**

Charles Dixon Jr. appeared before the commission. He stated that he recently purchased the house but that there are some safety concerns. He explained that the second story does not have an egress off the rear deck which he believes would be an issue in the event of a fire or other emergency. He presented the commission with some drawings of the stairs that his contractor, Artur Wachala, provided.

Commissioner Andriano asked why the contractor couldn't do a switch back on the stairs which would limit the visibility, instead of doing one long run into the yard. He also explained that the code enforcement office will likely need more detailed plans in order to

issue a building permit, and those would also help the commission in understanding the details of the stairs being proposed. He stated that the plans show the sizes of the lumber being used but doesn't provide measurements for details such as the railing height. He explained that the commission had approved plans in the past that had a lack of detail and the completed project did not meet the intent of the approval. He stated that he would like to try and avoid a similar situation which is why he is requesting more detailed specs for this project.

Mr. Dixon stated that the front steps and banister are deteriorated and need to be replaced. He explained that the contractor recommended widening the stairway and reorienting it to face North Ferry St. Commissioner Andriano stated that he doesn't believe there is enough information on how the steps would be oriented, what the handrails would look like, and what the dimensions and orientation of the stairs would be.

Mr. Dixon explained that for the painting of the property. He explained that the door will be painted Resolute Blue, the field color will be Loyal Blue, and the trim will be Extra White. Commissioner Berkovich asked what the applicant is proposing for the details. Mr. Dixon stated everything that is currently painted the peach color will be painted blue, and all the areas that are currently painted green, will be painted white.

### **RESOLUTION**

Motion by Commissioner Andriano, seconded by Commissioner Fava to table the portion of the application that addresses the rear deck addition and front step modifications due to it being incomplete.

*Motion carried unanimously.*

### **RESOLUTION**

Motion by Commissioner Bennett, seconded by Commissioner Fava to approve the painting portion of the application with the following conditions:

1. The project will be completed within one year.
2. The portions of the house currently painted peach, will be painted Loyal Blue (SW6510) from the Sherwin Williams paint collection.
3. The trim of the house currently painted green, will be painted Extra White (SW7006) from the Sherwin Williams paint collection.
4. The door will be painted Resolute Blue (SW6507) from the Sherwin Williams paint collection.

And with the following finding of fact:

1. This is a Type II SEQRA.

2. The Commissioners cited Preservation Standards #2, #5 and #6 as the guidelines for their decision.

*Motion carried unanimously.*

**E. Consideration for approval submitted by Kreshnik Kastrati and Jan Haeck to install a fence. The premises is located at 113 Union St. in the Stockade Historic District.**

Jan Haeck appeared before the commission. He stated that he found a salvaged gate that he would like to install next to the house. He explained that he believes it is historically appropriate because it is from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and that it fits in with other examples of gates throughout the neighborhood. Mr. Haeck explained that the fence will be sandblasted and repainted black and will either be hung from the house or from posts depending on whether they have permission from the neighbor. Commissioner Yager stated that if the gate is hung from posts, then that would reduce any damage to the house. The applicant stated that there are already heavy duty hinges installed on the house.

**RESOLUTION**

Motion by Commissioner Andriano, seconded by Commissioner Berkovich to approve the application with the following conditions:

1. The project will be completed within one year.

And with the following finding of fact:

1. This is a Type II SEQRA.
2. The Commissioners cited Preservation Standards #9, and #10 as the guideline for their decision.

*Motion carried unanimously.*

**E. Consideration for approval submitted by James & Jerri Lynn Cook to construct a rear addition. The premises is located at 6 North St. in the Stockade Historic District.**

Dan Morelli from SRG Architects presented the application. He explained that the homeowner would like to construct a first floor bedroom addition on the rear of the property to accommodate Mrs. Cook's mobility issues. He explained that it would essentially be a continuation of the existing kitchen addition and that the proposal already received an area variance for the setback from the BZA earlier in the month. He stated that they would be using a free-form foundation pour and would only need to excavate

down 16 inches. He explained that they are proposing the same shingles that exist on the kitchen extension.

Mr. Morelli stated that they are proposing vinyl siding because that is what exists on the kitchen extension, but is not opposed to using wood clapboard if that is what the commission recommends.

## **RESOLUTION**

Motion by Commissioner Andriano, seconded by Commissioner Fava to approve the application with the following conditions:

1. The project will be completed within one year.
2. One aluminum-clad window will be installed to match the window in the existing addition.

And with the following finding of fact:

1. There is currently vinyl siding on the existing rear addition and the extension of that addition will not result in it being visible from the right-of-way or the neighbors.
2. The visible portion of the rear addition is the roof and that will be matched in-kind with the existing roof.
3. This is an Unlisted Action under SEQRA and the Commission adopts a conditioned negative declaration on this unlisted action pursuant to SEQRA based upon the review and assessment of the Short Environmental Assessment Forms Parts 1 and 2, with the conditioned negative declaration being set forth in Part 3 of the Short Environmental Assessment Form.
4. The Commissioners cited Preservation Standards #9, and #10 as the guideline for their decision.

*Motion carried unanimously.*

### **F. Consideration for approval submitted by Haley Whalen to install a roof over the rear walkway. The premises is located at 35 N. Ferry St. in the Stockade Historic District.**

Haley Whalen appeared before the commission. She explained that the installation of a roof would help to manage all of the water at the rear of the building and prevent the paint deterioration from the rain splashing up. She also stated that the roof structure is pretty light duty and if it were to be removed in the future, it wouldn't create any lasting effects to the building. The wall, she explained, is concrete block and not part of the original structure.

Commissioner Andriano asked whether the post bases will be concrete sonotubes. Mrs. Whalen stated the concrete will be buried and you will only see the post. Commissioner

Andriano suggested using architectural anchors to make the connection between the base and the post, such as those produced by Simpson Strong-Tie, and also suggested having the base come up just a little bit so the post doesn't sit in water.

## **RESOLUTION**

Motion by Commissioner Berkovich, seconded by Commissioner Fava to approve the application with the following conditions:

1. The project will be completed within one year.

And with the following finding of fact:

1. This is a Type II SEQRA.
2. The Commissioners cited Preservation Standards #9, and #10 as the guideline for their decision.

*Motion carried unanimously.*

## **VII. Miscellaneous**

## **VIII. Adjourn**

Motion by Commissioner Fava, seconded by Commissioner Bennett, to adjourn the meeting.

*Motion carried unanimously.*

The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 p.m.