

MEETING MINUTES OF THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION  
Tuesday, January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2017

**CONVENE:** Mr. Lescarbeau called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:** Mr. Lescarbeau, Mr. Shields, Mrs. Douglas, Mrs. Hints, Ms. Charren,  
Ms. Kenower, Mrs. Connell, and Mrs. Anderson

**ALSO PRESENT:** Michael DeLuca, Director of Community Development; Bruce  
Lofgren, Planning Technician; and Denise Russ, Clerk of the Board

**ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:** Mr. Lescarbeau welcomed our newest appointed Alternate  
member of the Commission, Judy Anderson.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

1C: Approval of HDC Minutes: November 7<sup>th</sup> and December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016

**A Motion is made by Mrs. Douglas and duly seconded by Mr. Shields** to approve the meeting  
minutes of November 7, 2016. **Motion passes 7 to 0.**

(Mr. Lescarbeau, Mr. Shields, Mrs. Douglas, Mrs. Hints, Ms. Charren, Ms. Kenower and Mrs.  
Connell).

**A Motion is made by Mrs. Kenower and duly seconded by Ms. Charren** to approve the  
meeting minutes of December 7, 2016. **Motion passes 7 to 0.**

(Mr. Lescarbeau, Mr. Shields, Mrs. Douglas, Mrs. Hints, Ms. Charren, Ms. Kenower and Mrs.  
Connell).

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**2PH: Middlebridge School – Construction of a gymnasium, 333 Ocean Road**

John McGreen, Attorney from Taft & McSally representing Middlebridge School; and Malcolm  
Kent, Architect, introduced themselves to the Commission.

Mr. Kent showed the Commission the revised Site Plan for the Middlebridge School and  
explained the proposal involving a 12,000 sq. ft. gymnasium, which is located to the west of their  
open playing fields. He noted the rural type structure will be located behind a line of trees, which  
will also be shielded by about 300 ft. from Hazard Avenue. The idea, he stated, is that it will  
operate almost in its own world and be separated from the surrounding neighbors.

He further explained the driveway is going to go through an existing opening in the stone wall on  
Hazard Avenue to a small parking area. There will be 12 ft. high lampposts running down the  
road to allow for general lighting on the roadway and wall-mounted lights attached to the

building. He added there is a pedestrian walkway that connects back to the school, which will have 3 ft. high lighting.

He stated the approach has been to keep the eaves low on the public sides of the building. The hipped roof will be clad with the same types of asphalt shingles that exist on the surrounding buildings. The exterior walls will be sided with red cedar shingles so as to resemble other buildings onsite and the trim will be grey. He stated the main entrance will have some stone steps, and there will be a wood wrap-around deck to allow people to exit out of the Fitness Room. There will be a translucent skylight. Regarding signage, the proposal is for a small sign to go over the entry door of the building.

Mrs. Douglas asked if the newly proposed lamps will match the existing ones, which she feels don't measure up to the site or the building because they are flimsy and cheap looking.

Mr. Kent stated the newer lamps are the same style, but are of a much better quality and heavy-duty to withstand the weather elements.

Mr. Lescarbeau asked what the wall fixtures for the building are going to be like.

Mr. Kent replied they will be a simple type of fixture.

Ms. Charren stated she likes everything about the proposed gymnasium and the plan.

Ms. Kenower stated she likes the fact that they are not building a huge parking lot.

Mrs. Hintsu queried that in terms of long range plans for the campus, will this also be used as a Performing Arts space; or are there plans for a separate structure to be built in the near future?

Mr. Kent replied that their existing gym, which used to be the old chapel, will be used for the proposed Performing Arts space.

Mr. Shields wanted to know whether or not they would consider planting deciduous trees or flowering trees, and are they replicating anything existing now in terms of species.

Mr. Kent stated they are suggesting there be a line of European Beech trees. Smaller flowering cherry trees will be planted in the front of the building, and Dogwoods will be planted to shield the parking lot.

Mr. Shields noted that the aluminum louvers are a major component of the elevation on the east and west sides; and he wanted to know if that was going to be a part of the ventilation system?

Mr. Kent stated just the middle is a part of the ventilation system; but the louvers are not anodized and will be coated a grey color to match the trim.

Mr. Shields also asked if there will be stone for the balustrade on all of the decks.

Mr. Kent replied because it is less than 30” in height, they don’t need a balustrade or a railing.

Mrs. Connell stated she liked the project and had no questions.

Mr. Lescarbeau asked if window casings would be installed, and also wanted to know if muntins on the sash been considered at all.

Mr. Kent replied they will be putting in window casings, but given the simple style of the building, muntins would not really be appropriate.

Mr. Lescarbeau asked if the roof was a full 12/12 pitch, and Mr. Kent replied it was a 6/12 pitch. He asked if they had considered something more traditional in the style of lighting.

Mr. Kent replied the lighting choices are very simple shapes and do compliment the architecture of the building.

Mr. DeLuca asked if the sign is internally or externally lit, or just a standard carved sign on wood.

Mr. Kent replied that the exterior sign on the building over the door is lit and has a concealed LED strip on it.

Mr. DeLuca went over his Staff report with the members and informed them that the applicant has already been approved by the Zoning Board for the necessary special use permits. He referenced the eight (8) conditions that the Zoning Board placed on the Middlebridge School and suggested they make note of them. He stated he has nothing but praise for the design and the way it has been incorporated.

He suggested the best way to follow through on the Landscape Plan is to interact with both the Staff from DiPrete Engineering and Mr. Kaufman while walking the site. Once completed, they could eventually draw up something on a plan that would indicate exactly what plantings are going in and where.

Mr. Lescarbeau asked if there was anyone present that wished to speak. There was none.

**A Motion is made by Ms. Charren and duly seconded by Mrs. Douglas to close the Middle bridge Public Hearing. Motion passes 7 to 0.**

(Mr. Lescarbeau, Mr. Shields, Mrs. Douglas, Mrs. Hints, Ms. Charren, Ms. Kenower and Mrs. Connell).

**A Motion is made by Mrs. Hints and duly seconded by Mrs. Connell to approve the recommendation of compatibility for the Middle bridge School application.**

**Motion passes 7 to 0.**

(Mr. Lescarbeau, Mr. Shields, Mrs. Douglas, Mrs. Hints, Ms. Charren, Ms. Kenower and Mrs. Connell).

## NEW BUSINESS

### **3NB: CLG Annual Report – Discussion and possible approval of 2016 Report**

Mr. DeLuca thoroughly described the report with the Commission and noted that he had to do some research to properly complete the report, including the gathering of each and every set of minutes. He explained that the HDC Ordinance, which was recently changed, actually happened prior to October 1, 2015. So in the last twelve month period, he stated, there were no changes and no procedural guidelines amended in that period.

**A Motion was made by Mrs. Douglas and duly seconded by Mr. Shields to approve the draft as presented and amended. Motion passes 7 to 0.**

(Mr. Lescarbeau, Mr. Shields, Mrs. Douglas, Mrs. Hints, Ms. Charren, Ms. Kenower and Mrs. Connell).

## OLD BUSINESS

### **4OB: District Expansion:** Discuss district expansions review of the revised district maps.

Mr. Lofgren presented the most recent drafts of the Boon Street and Central Street Districts. Mr. DeLuca suggested the members ask themselves if they can thoroughly and sufficiently defend what they are proposing, or do they want to revise. He suggested that the HDC decide what they want to advocate for in terms of a single or combined workshop with the Town Council.

- Ocean Road Expanded District - The members were apprised that the owners of 157 Ocean Road had submitted a letter opposed to inclusion in the proposed district. Upon discussion they expressed a very strong level of support for keeping the “twin” houses in the plan they send to the Council.
- Boon Street New District – Discussion of this proposed district led to consideration of adding the Thompson Playground in noting that it is where the railroad line once travelled and that the Town-owned “depot” structure was nicely designed to reflect an historical character and that it should be regulated.
- Central Street Expanded District – Discussion of the proposal focused on noting that this area has a very high density of older contributing structures in the currently “Voluntary “ district. Commisison members agreed that the expansion to include properties between Kingstown Road and Rodman Street should be strongly supported.

The Commission discussed the “pros” of leaving the proposed districts the way they are is that they become a bargaining chip of something to ‘give up’ during the Public Hearings. This helps the Town Council feel strongly about better defining the proposed districts, and it becomes a part of the give and take.

## **50B: Tax Credit Application Form and Protocol**

Mr. DeLuca informed the Commission that the Tax Ordinance was made effective on January 1, 2017, and future projects have to have qualifying exterior elements adding up to a minimum of \$2,000 worth of expenses to qualify for the credit. It would have to be approved administratively and would have to go through the process of requesting a Tax Credit on a form that is not yet available. He stated he will be working with the Tax Assessor on that form.

He further explained that each application will come through the HDC as a process; and they will be filing an application all after the job is completed. Each applicant has to bring in their receipts, itemizing their exterior versus interior expenses. Following discussion, it was decided that future applicants be given a Guide Sheet when the COA is approved that will instruct them to separate out their costs while they're doing the project. The following items were suggested to complete the initial process:

- Create an application form with Tax Assessor's office
- Informational guide/breakdown sheet that can be used when the full Public Hearing is held.  
Mailing describing program to the district members
- Publicity in the form of a Press Release
- Separate out the costs while their doing your project

Mr. Lescarbeau stated that the passing of the Tax Credit Ordinance is a big asset for the district expansion. He added that it should be made clear to the public that only those who live in the district can utilize it; and 20% of their project will be a direct credit. If their taxes are \$2,000 yearly and they have a \$50,000 renovation, they will pay no taxes for five years.

Mr. Lescarbeau stated that he would like to have a chance to talk to the owners personally to explain the Tax Credit Ordinance and make them aware of how 'user-friendly' the HDC is.

Mrs. Hints asked if the application needed to be written before the guidelines were completed.

Mr. DeLuca replied not necessarily; and while there is some crossover between the two forms, the guide sheet will come directly from the Ordinance, which dictates what the people need to do.

Mr. Lescarbeau stated he will create a draft and come up with an article, and Mr. DeLuca stated he will come up with the guide sheet for the next meeting. Mr. DeLuca stated perhaps by then he will have more knowledge of the Tax Assessor's position, and perhaps a timeline of action could be put together to roll out the tax credit into the historic district expansion presentation.

**REPORTS OF STAFF / COMMISSION:**

Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission Conference:

Mr. DeLuca suggested that the Commission should make their decision by next month's meeting as to whether or not they will be attending the April Conference. Once the Registration flyers come in, they can each fill one out and send them back to our office. Denise will then prepare a Purchase Order and send them all in together.

Mr. Lescarbeau informed the Commission that he attended the CLG Grant Selection Committee meeting and about 23 grants were given out of just over 30 applications, amounting to 1.3 million dollars. He noted this is his first time serving on this Committee, but stated the HDC should keep this in mind for next year for qualifying Narragansett projects. Besides being old and historic, the three criteria for applying are:

- The uniqueness of the structure
- The impact of the proposed work
- Public / Community Use, such as Town Halls and libraries

Everything is based on a point system, which are accumulated at the end.

When asked by Mr. DeLuca, Mr. Lescarbeau stated the projects can involve interior and/or exterior renovations and added that our Town Hall needs a lot of work and could benefit from one of these grants. He explained the window of application is October, and the committee likes to be on board with statewide notable, successful projects.

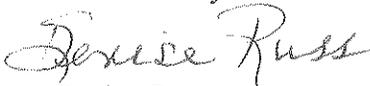
Mr. DeLuca suggested that he and Mr. Lescarbeau should meet with the Town Manager, James Manni to pursue possible projects for next year's grant round.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**A Motion is made by Mr. Shields and duly seconded by Mrs. Douglas to adjourn this meeting at 8:55 p.m. Motion passes 7 to 0.**

(Mr. Lescarbeau, Mr. Shields, Mrs. Douglas, Mrs. Hints, Ms. Charren, Ms. Kenower and Mrs. Connell).

Submitted By:



Denise Russ  
Clerk of the Board