



TOWN OF OLD LYME

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Old Lyme Historic District Commission

Regular Meeting Monday, July 10, 2023, 9:00 a.m. Memorial Town Hall Minutes

This meeting was conducted with in-person and remote (conference call) attendance options.

Attendance:

Regular members: Dini Mallory (Co-Chair), John Noyes (Co-Chair), Russ Todd

Alternate members: Edward Pinn

Absent: Carolyn Wakeman (regular), Debra Czarnecki (regular), Tammy Hinckley (alternate)

Guests: Misha Semenov-Leiva, David Deveaux, Geri Deveaux, George Kannabis, Mary Seidner, Bob Cope, Charles and Andrina Monte

Call to order, Quorum call, Approval of June 5, 2023, regular meeting minutes

John Noyes called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. A quorum was present. Edward Pinn was authorized to vote in place of Carolyn Wakeman.

Russ Todd moved, seconded by Edward Pinn, to accept the June 5 regular meeting minutes as presented. In favor: D. Mallory, J. Noyes, R. Todd, E. Pinn. Opposed: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

Public Comment: none

Communications & Correspondence:

We received an email and photos from Kevin Cole noting that the A&P's location on Lyme Street was incorrectly described in the HDC's recent column in the *Old Lyme Events* magazine. The A&P was next to the Ice Cream Shoppe, which was a gas station and garage, in a building (now demolished) between the garage and the house at 36 Lyme Street.

Action: Notify Carolyn Wakeman (Martha Hansen).

Secretary's Report: Active CofAs

Status of CofAs and Other Situations Being Monitored: The HDC is currently tracking and/or monitoring 14 properties involving active CofAs or other situations.

1. Ferry Road sidewalk: the project is estimated to begin in September 2023. A one-year extension of the STEAP Grant has been approved due to project delays.



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2. 6 Lyme St.: HVAC and Screening – on 7/10 agenda
3. 33 Lyme St.: fence replacement – finished
4. 38 Lyme St.: renovations continue – expired 5/2/22
5. 47 Lyme St.: bluestone walkway edging – on 7/10 agenda
6. 47 Lyme St.: driveway edging – on 7/10 agenda
7. 54 Lyme St.: generator and propane tank screening – on 7/10 agenda
8. 55 Lyme St.: new rear entry shed – finished
9. 55 Lyme St.: new rear walkway – finished
10. 71 Lyme St.: awaiting a CofA for changes to the fence
11. 76 Lyme St.: chimney removal – expires 2/6/24
12. 78 Lyme St.: outbuilding renovations – finished
13. 84 Lyme St.: (Lyme Academy of Fine Arts): new signs have been installed but protrude into the public right-of-way on the sidewalk
14. 90 Lyme St.: Lyme Art Association skylights – expires 11/7/23
15. 96 Lyme St.: Florence Griswold Museum signs – expires 2/6/24
16. 97 Lyme St.: garden shed – expired 7/13/22
17. 100 Lyme St.: (RTPEC): caretaker's cottage renovations – expires 2/6/24
18. 106 Lyme St.: generator – CofA needs to be submitted

Historic Plaques: no update

Action: Notify the owners of 38 Lyme Street and 97 Lyme Street and ask for an update (Martha Hansen).

Light pollution: Misha Semenov-Leiva

The HDC is interested in lighting consistency in the Historic District as it affects security lights and fixture types. Misha Semenov-Leiva has worked with the Connecticut River Gateway Commission on dark sky lighting code recommendations for the towns in the Gateway. Light pollution along the Connecticut River is a concern because it is a major migration pathway and excess light at night can confuse migrating birds. It also affects insects and plankton in the water and obscures our view of the night sky.

Misha recommended the integration of dark sky regulations, including color temperature, into residential areas. He suggested trying to emulate gas lights, rather than allowing bright LED or fluorescent lights, in historic districts. The darksky.org website recommends appropriate lighting (lumens) standards for various locations (hardscape, parking, rural, small towns, etc.); the standards also cover the timing of lights and shielding for bulbs to soften the light.



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Manufacturers now have dark sky compliant fixtures. Westbrook, CT has instituted some dark-sky appropriate lighting codes.

Russ Todd said that the Old Lyme Zoning Commission has adopted a CT River Gateway Dark Sky Zone extending from the Lieutenant River, but only part of this lies in the Historic District. Misha thought that such a zone should apply to the entire town and certainly to the entire Historic District. The new Old Lyme zoning regulations following the Gateway zone recommendations apply only to houses 4,000 square feet and larger, and to new construction. Dini Mallory asked whether any towns in Connecticut with historic districts have dark sky regulations. Misha recommended checking the lighting codes not only in Westbrook but in the Charlestown, RI.

Russ Todd asked about the kelvin color temperature guide for historic lights. Misha replied that there are fixtures that match the bulb to the color of the flame.

Action: Look into dark sky code recommendations for a Special Meeting in August (Russ Todd). Check Charlestown, RI, dark sky lighting codes (Dini Mallory).

Public Hearing: 47 Lyme Street, driveway edging: William and Jane Bachman, represented by David and Geri Deveaux of Deveaux Architects.

The Bachmans submitted a CofA application to change the bluestone front walk edging from metal to granite cobblestones to match the driveway edging. The edging will be flush with the ground and the walkway surface to facilitate mowing. The section of the walkway next to the town sidewalk will be made of continuous bluestone slabs if possible; otherwise it will be of beveled bluestone blocks to ease the transition from the walkway to the sidewalk, which is not level.

Additional information on the size of the cobblestone driveway edging and the length of the driveway where the edging was used was submitted as requested at the June meeting.

Russ Todd moved, seconded by Dini Mallory, to approve the CofA for the new walkway edging of granite cobblestones along the long edges of the walkway, on the following conditions: that the edging is flush with the walkway and ground; and that the section of the walkway next to the town sidewalk will be composed of continuous bluestone slabs if possible, and if that is not possible then of beveled bluestone blocks to ease the transition from the walkway to the town sidewalk. In favor: D. Mallory, J. Noyes, R. Todd, E. Pinn. Opposed: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

Public Hearing continued: 1 Boston Post Road, shed: Jim Graybill submitted a CofA application for a new prefabricated shed located near the southerly property boundary and



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farther from Lyme Street than the house. An old shed, which was in a different location, was in poor condition and taken down when the new driveway was installed. No CofA application was filed for removal of the old shed, and the new shed was erected before a CofA application for it was filed. Jim Graybill was not able to attend the meeting.

George Kannabis, a neighbor, said that the new shed is very visible from his driveway as he enters his property. He thinks it is too close to the boundary line. He would not object to the shed if it were located farther back on the property and screened from view. He also feels that the shed material and style is not in keeping with the Historic District and that it devalues his property. Mr. Kannabis checked with the Zoning department and was told that no zoning application had been filed.

John Noyes noted that the HDC considers structures visible from streets or other public ways, and that HDC CofA approval should always precede any Zoning Commission approvals. The HDC had understood that the current location of the shed does comply with zoning setback regulations but will check on that. Russ Todd commented that the HDC is concerned that any structures are consistent with the historic character of the Historic District.

The HDC is required to decide on CofA applications within 60 days of their filing. The Commission will not meet again before that 60-day period has run. There are too many questions about the shed's material, style, location, and possible screening, and about zoning setback concerns and neighbor objections (voiced at the June meeting and today) for the Commission to approve the CofA application today. Mr. Graybill will be invited to resubmit a new application for the September meeting.

Edward Pinn moved, seconded by Russ Todd, to deny the CofA application as submitted. In favor: D. Mallory, J. Noyes, R. Todd, E. Pinn. Opposed: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

Action: Write a letter returning Jim Graybill's check and asking him to submit a new CofA application (Martha Hansen).

Public Hearing: 54 Lyme Street, propane tanks, generator and screening, front door and transom: Richard and Carol Jones submitted two CofA applications – one for the new vertical propane tanks and screening and other work related to the Matilda Browne studio, and one for the front door and transom on the main house. The projects were discussed. John Noyes objected to the installation of vertical tanks as opposed to horizontal tanks.



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Edward Pinn moved, seconded by Russ Todd, to approve the CofA as submitted for the vertical propane tanks, generator, and screening, and for the framing of the door and electrical panel on the east side of the studio. In favor: D. Mallory, R. Todd, E. Pinn. Opposed: J. Noyes.

Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

Russ Todd moved, seconded by Dini Mallory, to approve the CofA application as submitted for the main house front door and transom repair/upgrade. In favor: D. Mallory, J. Noyes, R. Todd, E. Pinn. Opposed: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

Public Hearing: 59 Lyme Street, LYSB, recycling bin fence replacement: Mary Seidner, Bob Cope. Mary Seidner stated that the current enclosure was built before the town provided recycling bins. It is now a very tight fit for both trash and recycling bins, and it is falling apart. LYSB is seeking to replace the fence and expand the size of the enclosure by extending it 18 inches to the north. The enclosure is located at the rear of the house but is visible from Lyme Street. The proposed new cedar fence will be the same design as the old one, with cedar post caps.

Russ Todd moved, seconded by Dini Mallory, to approve the CofA as submitted with the condition that the post caps be similar to the caps on the existing handrail posts. In favor: D. Mallory, J. Noyes, R. Todd, E. Pinn. Opposed: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

Public Hearing continued: 6 Lyme Street, HVAC and screening: Elizabeth Fowler. Ms. Fowler was unable to attend today's meeting. Dini Mallory and Carolyn Wakeman visited the property and met with Andy Kain, the contractor who will be screening the units. The units on the south side of the house can easily be screened. Andy Kain suggested screening to match the picket fence in the front of the house, rather than the wood-like PVC lattice mentioned in the CofA application. Evergreen plantings could also be used for additional screening. The HDC needs information on the size, spacing, material, and location (distance from house and from mechanicals) of the pickets proposed for screening, and information about access to the screened mechanicals.

The unit on the north side aligns with the front edge of the house close to the side entrance door and is visible from Lyme Street. The HDC would like to know if an alternate location farther back from Lyme Street is available for that unit.

The HDC needs more information before it can decide on this application. The timing (60 days) on this CofA application will expire before the next Commission meeting in September, so the application needs to be denied. The Fowlers will be asked to submit a new CofA application for



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the September meeting, including with it information about the size, spacing, specific locations, and proposed material of the picket fence screening and about a possible alternate location for the north side unit.

Russ Todd moved, seconded by Edward Pinn, to deny the CofA application as submitted. In favor: D. Mallory, J. Noyes, R. Todd, E. Pinn. Opposed: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

Action: Write a letter to the Fowlers asking them to resubmit the application with the additional information in time for the September meeting (Martha Hansen).

64 Lyme Street preliminary discussion: Charles and Andrina Monte submitted a CofA application to replace the windows and glass in the store fronts of the Nightingale Café and the Hair Gallery. The proposed new windows will be approximately the same size as they are now, but will have insulated glass and a vinyl white composite framing. They plan on keeping the architectural framing around the existing windows. The other windows in the building have been replaced, and the new store windows would match them.

Russ Todd stated that he would like to know if there is another option for the material of the window frames that is more wood-like. He also noted that the new glass will be insulated glass, which is different than the old glass and can change how the color appears.

Charles Monte replied that the glass is the same as the double hung windows that were installed last fall. He has a sample at home. He brought a sample of the proposed window frame material and size of the window frames. The frames, and especially the dividers between sheets of glass, are significantly wider than the original ones due to the weight of the proposed double-paned insulated glass and new specifications for the strength of the framing.

Russ Todd asked if he could bring to the CofA hearing a sample of the glass for the HDC to view.

John Noyes said the HDC needs to know what the new dimensions of the grids will be compared to the ones that are there now.

Russ Todd said that the proposed new windows differs from the original design, so any research that can be done to find replacements closer to the original would be great. The Montes agreed to find out about other materials and options for replacing the windows, and the HDC will contact Preservation CT and SHPO for advice and information on possible grants to help with the cost.

Andrina Monte mentioned that she has many family photos of historic buildings in Lyme and Old Lyme and is not sure what to do with them to make sure they are available as part of the historic record. Commission members mentioned organizations that may be interested in the



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photos, including the Lyme Historical Society archives at the Florence Griswold Museum with which Commission member Carolyn Wakeman is familiar.

Action: Get in touch with preservation CT and SHPO and find out what grant/funding options are for the replacement windows; contact Carolyn Wakeman regarding Andrina Monte's historic photos (Martha Hansen).

Co-Chairs' Report: Dini Mallory, John Noyes: Dini Mallory is preparing a report on the HDC's Lyme Street Strolls. John Noyes commented on the status of the Halls Road Improvement Committee's zoning overlay district proposal and said that Edie Twining of the HRIC had been invited to attend the September HDC meeting to discuss the impact of the proposed overlay zone on the Historic District. He also noted the special meeting on August 21 to discuss HDC signage policy and thanked Russ Todd for agreeing to prepare material on sign illumination for that meeting.

Enforcement communications: Dini Mallory reported on several enforcement concerns. Progress is being made, and the HDC is working with ZEO Eric Knapp to resolve the issues.
Action: Send note to Alisha Milardo re trash cans at RTPEC (Martha Hansen).

New and Ongoing Business: National Votes for Women trail marker: Select a new location with Holly Cox by Wednesday, July 19, and inform Tim Griswold. HDC approval needs to be noted on town department forms. Edward Pinn will write a column about Boxwood for the next issue of *Old Lyme Events*.

Adjournment:

Russ Todd moved, seconded by Edward Pinn, to adjourn the meeting at 12:14 p.m. In favor: D. Mallory, J. Noyes, R. Todd, E. Pinn. Opposed: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Martha Hansen