

Woodstock Historic District Commission
Regular Meeting via Zoom
Wednesday, October 26, 2022, 6:30 p.m.
Minutes

1. Call to Order: 7:10 p.m. by Chairperson Gail Usher. Present: Commission Members Gail Usher, Stan Swanson, and Earl Manz; members of the public John and Suzanne Cimochoowski.
2. Appointment of alternates: None.
3. Public Hearing: 543 Route 169, for replacement of windows at the back of the First Congregational Church of Woodstock. Gail Usher read the announcement of the public hearing, then John Cimochoowski presented the plan for replacement of the large window at the back of the Church. The large window, which was installed in 1989-1990, has been found to have rotted so badly that it can't be repaired. The replacement window will be like those windows already on the side of the Church, aluminum clad. The presentation included many pictures of the window showing the rotting of both the trim and base of the current window. The plan is to eliminate the small half-round window at the top because of the expense of \$7000 to replicate the current shape. Instead it will be a rectangular shape, the same as the window beneath the half-round. The photographs in the presentation show that the window is barely visible from Roxbury Road, and can not be seen at all from anywhere else. After brief discussion, Earl Manz moved to close the public hearing; Stan Swanson seconded; unanimous approval. The Commission members discussed the proposal. It is important to note that no change is being proposed that impacts the character defining features of the District. Further, the window is relatively recent being put in place in 1989-1990 in a rear addition to the church that was built in 1989 and is not visible from Rt. 169 or Academy Rd. The Commission would prefer the window maintain the same outline, however it is sensitive to the significant expense for the church. The church representative indicated that they do not have the funds. The change from the exterior is minimal and can be reversed when and if the church has funds. If approved, the Commission will recommend photographs to document the 1989 window. Stan Swanson moved to approve the proposal as presented; Earl Manz seconded; unanimous approval.
4. Review of Minutes: The review of minutes was tabled until the next Regular Meeting.
5. Correspondence: Gail Usher received correspondence from the circuit rider and from the First Congregational Church of Woodstock concerning its application. No other correspondence.
6. Public Comment: None.
7. Project Consultations: None.
8. Old Business:
New Commission Members: The Commission needs two additional regular members and one additional alternate member. Efforts will be made to find the required new members.

Connecting with Residents: Woodstock Historical Society has asked for us to participate in a program with them for their annual meeting describing the Commission.

Circuit rider consultation: The circuit riders are concerned with the expansion of 599 Route 169, and would like to meet with the Commission to discuss how to protect the District and its defining characteristics.

Other: Gail Usher attended the Planning and Zoning meeting concerning the application by the owner's of 599 Route 169 to expand their retail business into the barn and for expanded parking. At the meeting the application for both expanding into the barn, and for additional parking was withdrawn temporarily and an amended application for expanding retail into the second floor of the house was filed. Planning and Zoning approved the amended application and also approved the addition of two dumpsters which are supposed to be screened and not visible. Importantly, the Town Attorney stated that where the Commission and Planning and Zoning have overlapping jurisdiction, the Commission takes precedence. During the P&Z public comment for the public hearing, G Usher commented that the applicant may require a Certificate of Appropriateness from the WHDC for the dumpsters, depending on their location and visibility. She encouraged the applicant to contact WHDC to arrange an appointment to discuss this. The Town has hired a zoning enforcement officer and Gail Usher will arrange for the Commission to meet the officer. The front porch and ramp of 599 Route 169 are still in non-compliance.

9. New Business: None

10. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Stan Swanson; seconded by Earl Manz. Unanimous approval at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Earl Manz, Acting Clerk.

These minutes may be published but the Commission does not approve them until the next regular meeting. The link to the Zoom meeting is .