

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
HISTORIC DISTRICT #1  
REGULAR MEETING  
JULY 7, 2015**

**ATTENDANCE:** Stuart Sachs, Chair; Roger Weldon, Guy Horvath

**STAFF:** Paul Boucher, Planning and Zoning

**CALL TO ORDER.**

Commissioner Sachs called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. A quorum was present. He then requested that only one person speak at a time and that the speakers identify themselves by name and address. Following the conclusion of the applicant's presentation, the Chair will allow those who wish to speak in favor, followed by those who are opposed. The applicant will be given an opportunity to rebut the remarks and then the hearing will be closed.

**Certificate of Appropriateness: Application #2015-06 by Now Entity Inc., for a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a new single family residence at 340 Brewster Street in the Black Rock Historic District.**

Mr. Dahill Donofrio of Now Entity, Inc. came forward to present the project. He said that it was the first time he had come before the Commission.

Commissioner Sachs noted that the site plan lacked appropriate labeling for reference. Mr. Donofrio explained that the parcel would be subdivided and this site plan was for one building at 326 Brewster Street. Commissioner Sachs said that the drawings did not have the clear reference to the site plan noted on the packet, such as 1 of 4, 2 of 4, etc.

Commissioner Sachs asked about the reference to a modular block wall and the parking space behind #340 in a previous plan that was approved. The wall would prevent the use of rear parking area. Commissioner Horvath pointed out that there may be right of way issues, also.

Commissioner Sachs said that there were no references to walkways to the front door. Commissioner Horvath asked if there were any plans for a sidewalk that would run parallel to the access drive. Mr. Donofrio said there was not.

Commissioner Sachs explained that when there were landscaping issues that would be consistent with the neighborhood, the Commission could comment. He noted that the gas and water lines would require the removal of a large tree at the corner of the parcel. The tree needs to be preserved.

Another issue involved the grading and how the house was placed. Commissioner Sachs said that he was concerned about the fact that the other houses lined up. Mr. Donofrio said that the house had been placed for the best view from the porch. He added that there were some requirements for the setbacks. Commissioner Sachs said that in a historic context, it was expected to have the houses to have a similar orientation. The Commission reacts to the projects that are presented to them. He added that there were some concerns about the drainage on the property.

Commissioner Sachs said that he needed to see some detail on the block walls. He also asked about the lighting on the front and back. Anything that is seen from the public right of way is under the purview of the Commission. He also asked about the potential placement of the mailboxes. Sometimes they are referenced and shown on the plans.

Commissioner Sachs then asked about the elevation. He asked if the top of the chimney would have a square or metal cap. Mr. Donofrio said that it would be a stainless steel cap. Commissioner Sachs said that it would make a difference to the Commission if the cap was stainless steel or black steel.

Commissioner Sachs asked if the vents that were shown on the front of the garage were ornamental or functional. Mr. Donofrio said that they were functional. A discussion followed about the details and the location of the vents on the plans. Commissioner Horvath asked about soffit vents, and Mr. Donofrio indicated where they would be located on the plans.

The discussion then moved to the location of water table on the rear foundation. Commissioner Sachs pointed out that a significant portion of the rear foundation was exposed with current placement.

Commissioner Sachs asked about the garage doors, which are plain. He said that most of the garage doors in the neighborhood have windows in them. The character of the doors needs to be shown. The sides of the house have very few windows. The neighboring historic houses have more windows. The Commission is looking for things that mimic the neighborhood. Commissioner Sachs said that the neighboring houses did not have stainless steel chimney caps. He said that stone or ceramic were around. Mr. Donofrio said that a black cap was fine.

Commissioner Sachs said that the choice of the siding material was a concern. Mr. Donofrio said that the drawing indicated clapboard. Mr. Donofrio said that it was vinyl siding. The discussion moved to corner boards.

Commissioner Horvath said that many of his concerns had already been asked. He said that it would be good if the architect had modeled the house on the English cottage style. It might be good to incorporate the details into the design. He then spoke about a particular style of window. Palladian windows and gave some suggestions about the

windows. He noted that all the windows had picture frame type of trim rather than casings with sills.

Commissioner Horvath said that while the Commission has no purview in terms of color, but did have the right to discuss materials and textures. He said that vinyl siding was not the best choice and suggested clapboard. Commissioner Sachs asked about the various type of shingles that could be used. The vinyl siding can be identified from a distance.

Commissioner Sachs asked about the porch railings. He mentioned a recently installed picket fence on the neighboring property. He then suggested a particular type of pattern with spacing. The previous craftsmen would vary the pattern to demonstrate their skills.

A brief discussion followed about whether the paving, the drainage and the setbacks were within the purview of the Commission.

Commissioner Weldon pointed out that some of the neighboring properties appeared to be relatively close to one another. He asked if there would be any type of buffer for privacy. Discussion followed about details.

Commissioner Weldon asked about the height of the house. Commissioner Horvath said that the scale appeared to be 29.5 feet high from the finished floor to the peak. It was noted that the plans were actually a mirror image of the actual structure.

Commissioner Sachs said that the Commission had received a correspondence from the Black Rock NRZ, which will be discussed during public comment. He then asked if there was anyone present who wished to speak in favor of the application. No one came forward.

Commissioner Sachs asked how many were present. Five people raised their hands.

Mr. Robert Foley of 272 Brewster Street said that he was in opposition until further questions could be answered, such as whether the house would be representative of the architectural style of the district. He added that there were also concerns about the elevation. He said for the record, that he was in favor if only one was built on the parcel

Mr. David Barbor of 202 Pierce Place said that he was representing the Black Rock NRZ. He said that he wanted to be cooperative. He then read a letter into the record. (See attached) Mr. Barbor said that he hoped that the Historic District Commission was the body that would address the issue of the previous developer. He said that there had been a number of residents who had hoped that the building in the back would be more cottage like in scale.

Mr. Barbor also asked about the landscaping agreement that had been reached previously.

Ms. Carol Lyman of 340, said that she would like to see the house more like the cottage style homes. The plan doesn't show hedges along the driveway, which would be a privacy buffer. The retaining wall would block her from the easement that she has to park in the back of the property.

Ms. Holly Kotos of 77 Bartram Avenue, she said that she appreciated the neighborly way that the workers on the property have handled this. She said that she was opposed to this because the elevation should not be massive. There have been other proposals that had tall buildings on this lot. Relocating it on the property will help, but the Commission had told the previous developer that the Commission wants something more on a cottage style. She added that she had a problem with having the garages located in the house. The design of the particular house is not in keeping with the other houses in the neighborhood. When the other developer gave their first presentation, the commission felt that the two houses were going to look too much alike and like a development. This has to be kept in consideration and it is important to remember the history of this parcel, through the proposed condos, apartments, and duplexes. The community came together and arrived at a consensus of what would be acceptable. She said that she would support a developer with the correct scenario. It is important that Commissioners be aware of the history, along with the owner and the developer.

Mr. Gerry Manning of 195 Grovers Avenue, who is the Black Rock NRZ President. He said that he agreed with everything that has been mentioned so far. He said that there were many modifications that could be made by the Commission. He also mentioned the entry way to the property. The previous agreement about the access to the property and the visibility from the street. This entry way was a result of the destruction of the three car garage, which did not previously exist. He requested the Commission consider this, and pointed out that this was part of the deed constraints were placed on the property.

Mr. Kenneth Acorn of 104 Grovers Avenue - Mr. Acorn said that he would like to express appreciation to Ms. Lyman for restoring the cottage. The subdivision created the potential for an enclave of cottages and was pleased that the empty lots were purchased and would be developed. However, he did not support the proposal because of the type of project being proposed.

Mr. Donofrio said that he appreciated the input from the Historic Commission but pointed out those were things that would be in a perfect world.

Commissioner Sachs asked if there was anyone else who wished to address the Commission at this time. Hearing none, Commissioner Sachs closed the public hearing on 340 Brewster Street.

Commissioner Sachs then closed the public hearing portion of the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

## NEW BUSINESS

### **Application #2015-06 - 340 Brewster Street**

The owner notes that the application was for one house only and the lot number was # 326. Commissioner Horvath said that there were design changes that needed to be addressed.

**\*\* COMMISSIONER HORVATH MOVED TO DENY THE APPLICATION #2015-06 - 340 BREWSTER STREET WITHOUT PREJUDICE AND ENCOURAGED THE CLIENT TO RE-APPLY WITH THE CHANGES SUGGESTED DURING THE DISCUSSION.  
\*\* COMMISSIONER WELDON SECONDED.**

Commissioner Sachs said that the conditions would be elements of information for the application and part of the record.

Commissioner Horvath said that while there were items that were recorded on the deed, he was uncertain about whether the Commission could enforce the agreement that had been agreed to by the previous owner and the Black Rock NRZ, or the stipulations on the deed. He pointed out the Commission could have disparities about the interpretation. It would be important to decide by the book.

Commissioner Sachs agreed and said that it was a legal issue beyond their purview. While the agreement may meet the historic requirements and the NRZ's requirements, some of the items are not in the Commission's purview. One particular concern would be 310 Brewster Street. He said that he believed that the house would be in context in terms of height and moving the placement would correct this. Discussion followed.

Commissioner Sachs then listed the key concerns which included

- insuring all the drawing are appropriated labeled as discussed.
- making sure the pickets on the porch are spaced as discussed.
- insuring the wall material will be stone and not segmented concrete block.
- including walkways in the site plan.
- designing the windows and window sills as discussed.
- the adjustment to the placement of the basement windows and garage doors.
- the location of area lights if desired.
- the form and location of the buildings.
- the vents on the garage should be more functional and less decorative.
- the location and type of material of mailboxes.
- the soffit vents should be adjusted as discussed.
- the chimney cap should be black steel.

Commissioner Sachs pointed out that the consideration regarding similar looking houses, which was answered by only putting forward the plans for one house.

Commissioner Horvath said that one issue was the garages, which were highly visible from the road. The entries to the building would need to be more traditional. Having them more cottage like would be helpful.

**\*\*THE MOTION TO DENY THE APPLICATION #2015-06 - 340 BREWSTER STREET WITHOUT PREJUDICE PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Commissioner Horvath mentioned that Council Member Halstead had brought a residence to his attention that had a fence with barbed wire on top. He said that it was located on the southeast corner of William and Barnum. He had sent a photo of it to Mr. Guerrero.

### **OLD BUSINESS.**

#### **Minutes of February 2015; May 2015; June 2015**

Commissioner Sachs said that the Commission was not able to vote on the February 3rd minutes.

#### **May 2015**

**\*\* COMMISSIONER WELDON MOVED THE MINUTE OF MINUTES MAY 2015**

**\*\* COMMISSIONER SACHS SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### **June 2015**

**\*\* COMMISSIONER WELDON MOVED TO THE MINUTES OF JUNE 2, 2015.**

**\*\* COMMISSIONER HORVATH SECONDED.**

The following changes were noted:

Page 1, header – Please change from “City of Norwalk” to “City of Bridgeport”.

Page 1, footer – Please change from “City of Norwalk” to “City of Bridgeport”.

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JUNE 2015 AS CORRECTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* COMMISSIONER WELDON MOVED TO ADJOURN.  
\*\* COMMISSIONER HORVATH SECONDED.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services