

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
STRATFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MAY 5, 2015**

ATTENDANCE: Susan Tabachnik, Acting Chair; Jasmin Richards; Frank Borres

STAFF: Diego Guevara, Design Review Coordinator

CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:47 PM. A quorum was present. She introduced the seated commissioners and reviewed procedures for the hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS: Application #2015-02 by Charles Aibangbee for a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace siding; restore the front porch, and restoration and replacement of windows at 860 Clinton Avenue in the Stratfield Historic District.

Mr. Charles Aibangbee identified himself as the owner of 860 Clinton Avenue and the applicant.

The Chair asked Mr. Aibangbee to elaborate on his application and the nature of his intended project. Mr. Aibangbee stated that the bulk of the work he intended to do was the replacement of siding, while the rest involved the porch and windows. He stated that the house had 65 windows eligible for replacement or restoration, and that he intended to replace the bulk of them with wood, but some he was asking to replace with vinyl, though he stated he was aware of the commission's stance on vinyl. The Chair stated that it was not that commission, but rather a government guideline for historic homes that prohibited vinyl.

The Chair asked to see a sample of the window intended as a replacement, and there was some discussion as to the suitability of the window in question, before determining the window was comparable. The Chair asked how many windows needed to be replaced versus how many needed to be restored. Mr. Aibangbee stated that all of the front windows needed to be replaced, as well as the gutters, as there were electric wires running through the windows at present. He

further stated that the back windows were in good enough condition to be restored. The Chair noted that the gutter replacement was not noted in the application, and Commissioner Borres stated that he could come back for the gutter aspect. The Chair asked if Mr. Aibangbee had researched gutter options in order to find the least obtrusive option, and further inquired about his plan for replacing the diamond shaped windows. Mr. Aibangbee indicated that he intended to order both from Home Depot. The Chair presented Mr. Aibangbee with the contact information for Torrington Sash and Door Works. The Chair stated that they appreciated Mr. Aibangbee coming before the commission, and said that the front of the home is of paramount importance at the moment. She further stated that vinyl was not an option for replacement, and that should he need another resource, the company Urban Miners was another option.

In regards to the siding, the Chair asked if the intention was to replace cedar shingles with cedar shingles. Mr. Aibangbee stated that it was, and that his intention was to paint the rest of the siding to make it as uniform as possible. Mr. Guevara asked if the intention was to remove and replace all of the siding, and further asked if the siding had already been removed on one side. Mr. Aibangbee stated that it was his intention, and yes, it had been. Commissioner Borres stated in future, Mr. Aibangbee should wait until coming before the commission. Mr. Aibangbee responded that he understood, and that at the time, it had been done to prevent water from coming into the house.

In regards to the porch, the Chair asked if there were pictures available, and if there had been plans laid out for said porch. Mr. Aibangbee stated that his intention was to sand, paint, strip the floor and replace the rotted steps. Mr. Guevara asked if he intended to make any structural changes, and Mr. Aibangbee answered in the negative. The Chair recommended West End Lumber, and asked Mr. Aibangbee if the porch was constructed in a tongue and groove style. After some debate and examination of provided photos, it was determined that the commission could not make an accurate determination about the porch as they did not have enough detailed information to approve the scope of the repairs. The Chair directed Mr. Aibangbee to federal grant programs that could compensate Mr. Aibangbee for a percentage of the costs put into historic restoration.

In regards to the garage doors, the Chair asked Mr. Aibangbee what his intentions were for replacing them. He stated he intended to replace them with vinyl. The Chair stated he would need to find someone to replace the existing wood doors with wood doors, and noted there was a business in Fairfield that may be able to assist. Mr. Aibangbee stated that, at present, the garage door was immovable.

The Chair clarified that the items the commission was able to discuss at present would be the siding, windows, and front porch, and that, for future reference, sanding and painting were not

under their purview. She asked Mr. Aibangbee if he had anything else he would like to report before the public hearing concluded.

Mr. Aibangbee asked the commission what the express purpose of the commission was, and what benefit it provided to the homeowners in the area. Commissioner Borres stated that every member of the commission lives in the district and are invested in maintaining the historic quality of the homes, and furthermore, by keeping to these standards, the commission helps ensure that the value of the homes in the area stays high.

Mr. Aibangbee expressed his dissatisfaction with the process for approval involving the Historic District Commission, and noted his frustration with the commission's limited resources and purview in respect to aiding homeowners with the economic costs of restoring a historic property, as well as taxes. The members of the commission expressed their dedication to doing so by offering information about opportunities for state and federal grants, affordable local resources for restoration and their own knowledge reserves as a point of contact for homeowners, and noted that their purview is economically limited. They further stated that Mr. Aibangbee's concerns would be best addressed with a city councilman or state senator.

The Chair closed the Public Hearing at 8:35 PM.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Application #2015-02- 860 Clinton Avenue

****COMMISSIONER BORRES MOVED TO APPROVE ASPECT ONE OF APPLICATION #2015-02 BY CHARLES AIBANGBEE FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS TO REPLACE SIDING AT 860 CLINTON AVENUE IN THE STRATFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:**

- 1. REPLACEMENT MUST BE DONE FACE BY FACE, NOT FLOOR BY FLOOR.**

****COMMISSIONER RICHARDS SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

****COMMISSIONER BORRES MOVED TO ASPECT TWO OF APPLICATION #2015-02 BY CHARLES AIBANGBEE FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS TO RESTORE THE FRONT PORCH AT 860 CLINTON AVENUE IN THE STRATFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS.**

- 1. SANDING AND PAINTING ARE ACCEPTABLE.**
- 2. BULLNOSE MUST BE MAINTAINED.**

3. **NO ARCHITECTURAL CHANGES MAY BE MADE, INCLUDING WOOD REPLACEMENT OR ELIMINATION OF ANY PREEXISTING STRUCTURAL ELEMENT.**

****COMMISSIONER RICHARDS SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

****COMMISSIONER TABACHNIK MOVED TO CONTINUE THAT MATTER OF THE GARAGE ON 860 CLINTON AVENUE.**

****COMMISSIONER RICHARDS SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

****COMMISSIONER BORRES MOVED TO ALLOW ASPECT THREE OF APPLICATION #2015-2 BY CHARLES AIBANGBEE FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS TO RESTORE WINDOWS AT 860 CLINTON AVENUE IN THE STRATFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:**

1. **ONLY RESTORATION MAY TAKE PLACE, NO REPLACEMENT UNTIL FURTHER INFORMATION IS GARNERED AND PHOTOS ARE PROVIDED.**
2. **NO VINYL MAY BE USED.**

****COMMISSIONER RICHARDS SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Chair closed the application.

OLD BUSINESS

Commissioner Richards stated that property from a previous application involving Mr. Tim Shipper currently has an illegal business sign on the property.

The Chair asked if she had called to file a complaint, and Commissioner Richards stated that she hoped this would serve as a complaint, and that she would like it investigated. The Chair stated that she believed the sign is a temporary matter.

Commissioner Richards asked if the standing application had any new developments, and Mr. Guevara stated that there was no new information.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Chair stated that the approval of the following minutes would be deferred to the next meeting, in the interest of waiting for Commissioner Michael Smith:

1. DECEMBER 2013
2. JULY 2014
3. OCTOBER 7, 2014
4. NOVEMBER 2014

JANUARY 2015

****COMMISSIONER BORRES MOVED TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 2015 MEETING MINUTES.**

****COMMISSIONER RICHARDS SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

FEBRUARY 2015

****COMMISSIONER RICHARDS MOVED TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 2015 MEETING MINUTES WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANGES:**

1. PARAGRAPH ONE, PAGE ONE- FORWARDS TO BE CHANGED TO FORWARD.

****COMMISSIONER BORRES SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

****COMMISSIONER BORRES MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

****COMMISSIONER RICHARDS SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

City of Bridgeport
Stratfield Historic District Commission
Regular Meeting
May 5, 2015
The meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Page 6

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Ramos
Telesco Secretarial Services