

**BOROUGH OF FENWICK
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING – MARCH 6, 2021
VIRTUAL MEETING, 9:00 AM**

A Regular Meeting of the Fenwick Historic District Commission was held using the Zoom meeting format on Saturday, March 6, 2021. Notice of the meeting was posted in a timely manner on the Fenwick kiosk and on the website.

Members Present: Matt Myers, Valerie Bulkeley, Deborah Neely, Beverly Keeney, Patsy Jones, Mike Reynolds (Alternate), Ashley Gengras (Alternate).

Members Absent: Scott Pulver (Alternate).

Others Present: Marilyn Ozols, ZEO and HDC Compliance Official, Frank Gilhool.

1. Call to order.

Chairman Myers called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. A quorum was established (Myers, Bulkeley, Neely, Keeney, Jones).

2. 2 Agawam Avenue, map 10, lot 8. Michael & Margaret Reynolds, owners and applicants. Modification application HDC21-002 for exterior lighting.

M. Reynolds recused himself for this application and presented. He shared screen to show the landscape plan with the proposed locations of the lights and indicated that they would be controlled by a light switch and the light would be reflected downward. He added that they would not be installing a post light as shown on the plan and that there will also be path lighting in the courtyard controlled by a switch. Members noted that landscape lighting less than 2 feet in height and no brighter than 20 watts does not require a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Relative to the cupola, M. Reynolds stated that at the previous meeting he was not aware that cupolas at the Berluti and Renshaw houses are lighted. He added that he does not have a photo of the Berluti cupola when it is lit because of electrical issue that needs to be repaired, but the Berluti's have indicated that it is generally lit from dusk to dawn; that it contains an onion light like he has proposed; and that the proposed light at 2 Agawam will be subtle, for accent only, and will not look commercial. He also stated that he had provided a photo of the Renshaw light at night, but that it appears brighter in the photo than it actually is.

B. Keeney agreed that the light is not bright and noted that it is a pretty accent and the Commission should consider its regulations in any decision. D. Neely added that a precedent has been set and nobody has noticed the lighted cupolas as inappropriate. V. Bulkeley added that originally cupolas had a purpose and were not for decoration or light but this has changed over time.

No members expressed continued concern with the cupola lighting as proposed. M. Reynolds reiterated that it will be kept at a low wattage and that he will have a dimmer switch on this light and most likely on the other lights in the application.

Based on the discussion, **D. Neely moved to approve the application as presented and to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for Application HDC21002, 2 Agawam Avenue, to install landscape lighting and to allow the garage cupola to be lit. V. Bulkeley seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.**

For: Myers, Bulkeley, Neely, Keeney, Jones.

Against: None.

Abstain: None.

3. 10 Sequin Avenue, map 9, lot 64. Francis & Kimberly Gilhool, owners, Francis Gilhool, applicant. Modification application HDC21-003 to enlarge previously approved bluestone patio.

P. Jones, V. Bulkeley, and B. Keeney indicated that although they are abutters, they can review the application objectively.

F. Gilhool presented. He stated that he had not notified the abutters as required. Abutters P. Jones, V. Bulkeley, and B. Keeney indicated that they were aware of the application. M. Myers stated that the Commission would hear the application but the applicant must send the plans to abutters Wilson and Christensen and if they express any issues, the Commission will reconsider the application at a special meeting. F. Gilhool agreed to this and stated that the patio will be the same bluestone set in stone dust as was previously approved but will be increased in size from 12'x26' to 23'x31'. Members asked if a fireplace is proposed on the west side. F. Gilhool stated that it is existing but unused and he will be bricking it closed. He added that there will be a hedge up against the house but it will not be higher than 4' and will not block any views; but that the hedge shown on the plan, which is not part of this application, is intended to be higher than 4' in order to block views of the adjacent garage. This hedge will be discussed at a future meeting. Members had no issues with extending the patio.

Based on the discussion, **D. Neely moved to approve the application as presented and to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for Application HDC21-003, 10 Sequin Avenue, to enlarge the previously approved bluestone patio from 12'x26' to 23'x31'.** B. Keeney seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

For: Myers, Bulkeley, Neely, Keeney, Jones.
Against: None.
Abstain: None.

4. **Approval of Minutes:** February 6, 2021.

V. Bulkeley moved that the minutes of the previous HDC meeting on February 6, 2021 be accepted as written. D. Neely seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

For: Myers, Bulkeley, Neely, Keeney, Jones.
Against: None.
Abstain: None.

5. **Old Business / Other Business.**

a. Hedges. V. Bulkeley stated that existing hedges are increasing in height from the approved 4' maximum. M. Ozols stated that she will notify owners.

Members discussed hedges in general, noting that the planting of high hedges detracts from the original openness of the community and blocks the view of the water which is part of the Borough's character; 4' gives definition but does not affect views. It was noted that the regulations now specify that hedges with the effect of creating a wall require Commission review and are discussed in the Design Criteria. M. Reynolds noted that allowing higher hedges around swimming pools could be problematic since they can impact views as much as other locations do and residents may question why they cannot have similar screening in other areas. M. Ozols reminded the Commission that an exception such as around pools should not be routine, but each application should be reviewed on its own merits and circumstances; applicants should understand that it is a site specific review.

b. Lighting. Members discussed lighting. M. Ozols cautioned that when lighting is included in an application with a significant number of components, it sometimes does not receive the full review that it should. She reminded the Commission that they should refer to their checklist when reviewing comprehensive applications to make sure that no aspects are overlooked.

c. Pending Applications. M. Ozols stated that she received an application for ac units at 8 Agawam Avenue and screens at 24 Agawam Avenue but they were received too late to meet legal notice deadlines for this meeting, and asked if the Commission would be willing to schedule a special meeting. The Commission agreed and a date will be determined.

6. **Adjourn.**

On a motion by V. Bulkeley, seconded by D. Neely it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:53 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn M. Ozols, Acting Clerk