

**BOROUGH OF FENWICK**  
**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
**REGULAR MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING – JULY 11, 2020**  
**VIRTUAL MEETING, 9:00 AM**

A Regular Meeting and Public Hearing of the Fenwick Historic District Commission was held using the Zoom meeting format on Saturday, July 11, 2020. Notice of the meeting was posted in a timely manner on the Fenwick kiosk and on the website.

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

Members Absent: None.

Others Present: Marilyn Ozols, ZEO and HDC Compliance Official, George Penniman, Carol Robertson, Charlie Robertson, Brooke Girty, Jonathan Keller, Peppi Jones.

**1. Call to order.**

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

**2. Public Hearing: 20 Fenwick Avenue, map 10, lot 52.** Carol Robertson, owner and applicant. Application HDC20-023 to renovate existing structure in order to restore or replicate the original structure and decorative elements.

Carol Robertson and George Penniman, architect, presented. C. Robertson stated that they are proposing to redo the front as originally proposed but also add rooms over the garage. G. Penniman added that they are

- adding a small bay on the back;
- removing the elevator and previous addition to balance the composition on the back;
- adding a second floor over the garage that respects the design on the old photo, takes away the flat roof, and mimics the massing of the roof and dormer;
- and reducing the three bays in the garage to two in order to create a small entry porch in keeping with the other porches.

In response to questions, he stated that

- the eyebrow dormers on the new second floor are like those in the old photos and are for ventilation with screens behind louvers;
- the balcony on the south side in the old photo is not coming back;
- the new second floor will be over the entire footprint of the garage;
- they tried to recall the design of the old door on the south side in the canopy over the garage doors;
- the railing across the front is not wrapping, but is stopping at the corner;
- there are already bay windows on the south side, but they are replacing them with insulated glass with simulated divided lights and have specified Marvin;
- the vinyl siding will be removed and the new siding will be wood clapboard;
- they are hoping that detail will be uncovered which they can replicate on the rest of the building;
- there will be no PVC, plastic, or aluminum;
- they may use Azek if it is necessary to replace rotted wood, but that will depend on circumstance;
- the roof will be asphalt shingles; l
- light fixtures have not been selected and they will return when they are;

- the railings will be wood – square on the lower level and turned wood replicating the existing railings on the upper levels;
- there will be no increase in height except for over the garage, so the house should still be in context with its neighbors; and
- they are not changing the footprint except for the bay in the rear.

V. Bulkeley stated that this is one of the Touchstone Houses since it was built between 1870 and 1920 and members agreed that it was nice to see something going back to its original form based on the old photos. They noted that the flat roof had been a bone of contention when it was done and this design addresses that.

After asking for public comment and any additional input, **on a motion by V. Bulkeley seconded by P. Jones, it was voted unanimously to close the public hearing and go into regular session.**

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

### 3. Possible Action on HDC20-023, 20 Fenwick Avenue.

V. Bulkeley stated that there are details that are not clear, such as light fixtures, and as the project proceeds, the applicant will need to return with these prior to construction/installation.

M. Ozols clarified that relative to details, they have approval to replicate what is uncovered but will need to return if they propose to change any details. Members concurred.

Based on the discussion in and after the hearing, **D. Neely moved to approve the application as presented and to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for Application HDC20-023, 20 Fenwick Avenue, to renovate the existing structure in order to restore or replicate the original structure and decorative elements. P. Jones seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.**

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

**On a motion by D. Neely, seconded by P. Jones, it was voted unanimously to go back into public hearing.**

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

4. **Public Hearing: 6 Pettipaug Avenue, map 10, lot 39.** Edith Gengras, Trustee, owner; Brooke Girty Design, applicant. Application HDC20-024 to raise house and add new foundation, remove and replace items that cannot be raised, add northwest and north side addition, extend existing west porch and add screens, enlarge dormer at north attic, add window at south side second floor, remove first floor at northeast wing to create garage, remove existing north side shed and decks, remove east and west side first floor bays, add west side pergola and bluestone patio, and miscellaneous other.

Brooke Girty presented. She stated that the proposal is to

- upgrade the cottage, which will involve raising it to add a foundation, heat, and insulation;
- move the kitchen to the east where there is more room and add a pergola;
- remove the flat roof shed surrounded by a stockade fence on the north side, noting that it is not original; and
- renovate the existing two-story wing which looks original to include a garage.

She displayed a model noting that the pergola is not depicted actual size because of the difficulty constructing it on a model and the detail on the side not being changed was omitted in order to complete the model on time.

D. Neely expressed concern with the pergola, indicating that it upsets the balance on a Touchstone House. B. Girty responded that it is in the back. V. Bulkeley clarified that it is set back on the side and it would have been helpful to see the model in person to understand this. Members noted that the photos of the model had just been received so there had not been sufficient time to review them in context with the rest of the application.

In response to questions, B. Girty stated

- there is still a lot going on the east side - the gambrel and bay are still there but the detail is not shown on the model;
- the bay on the east side first floor has been removed to create a place for an outdoor shower;
- they have kept the front of the house and made the changes in the rear and have respected the old house;
- they have kept the window in the staircase and the bays where they are seen;
- they have cleaned up the flat roof and stockade fence addition;
- they have only gone outside the footprint slightly and it is in the rear;
- they have added windows in the front, which better balances the design;
- the materials will match what is currently on the house;
- the house, which is still on the original brick piers, will be raised to get the foundation under it and then lowered but may not be at the exact same height;
- if they find rot they will have to replace it, but they do not need to come back if the new work is interior; and
- no demolition is planned except for the garage.

V. Bulkeley referenced Marion Grant's history of Fenwick and *300 Years of Connecticut Architecture*, noting that this house is described as an outstanding example of the shingled home in Connecticut. She added that this is a Touchstone House and the Commission must think carefully when allowing changes; the proposal looks good and many Touchstone Houses have been changed, but this house maybe bears more attention than others.

B. Girty summarized that the application is primarily for winterization including insulation, heat, air conditioning, electrical and plumbing upgrades, and reshingling the whole house.

B. Keeney stated that she would have liked to have seen better photos of the model and more timely submission of the photos so that members would have had time to review them better relative to the existing structure. D. Neely noted that the 3d model for 20 Fenwick included clear detail and was submitted with the original application. V. Bulkeley added that the Commission can postpone a decision if the information is not submitted in a timely manner. B. Girty questioned why the extensive work at 20 Fenwick did not require a paper model but 6 Pettipaug did. D. Neely responded that the 3d model submitted for Riversea (20 Fenwick) was very clear and included the same level of detail as a paper model; if a 3d computer model looks exactly like a model members can see, it is acceptable; but it must have clarity from all angles and be easy to understand with no "gray" areas.

After asking for public comment and any additional input, **on a motion by D. Neely seconded by P. Jones, it was voted unanimously to close the public hearing and go into regular session.**

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

Against: None.

Abstain: None.

## **5. Possible Action on HDC20-024, 6 Pettipaug Avenue.**

D. Neely noted that it is attractive but she still has concerns about the pergola sticking out on the side, which takes away from the look of a touchstone house. V Bulkeley noted that it is attached to the house and HDC has approved other pergolas provided that they were attached and not free-standing. She added that her concern is that there are still items in the presentation where details were not presented. She

reminded the applicant that nothing can be done that hasn't been approved as part of the Certificate of Appropriateness. S. Pulver stated that it was a beautiful plan and the pergola is a nice touch.

Based on the discussion in and after the hearing, **V. Bulkeley moved to approve the application as presented and to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for Application HDC20-024, 6 Pettipaug Avenue, to raise the house and add a new foundation, remove and replace items that cannot be raised, add a northwest and north side addition, extend the existing west porch and add screens, enlarge the dormer at the north attic, add a window at the south side second floor, remove first floor at the northeast wing to create a garage, remove the existing north side shed and decks, remove the east and west side first floor bays, add a west side pergola and bluestone patio, and miscellaneous other items as shown on the plans. P. Jones seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.**

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

Against: None.

Abstain: None.

**On a motion by P. Jones, seconded by V. Bulkeley, it was voted unanimously to go back into public hearing.**

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

Against: None.

Abstain: None

**6. Public Hearing: 8 Nibang Avenue, map 10, lot 2.** Christopher Jones, owner; Penelope Jones, applicant. Application HDC20-027 to install birdfeeder.

V. Bulkeley stated that the birdhouse is tastefully done and HDC should not spend a lot of time on it. Members agreed that it was pretty and they had no objection.

After asking for public comment and any additional input, **on a motion by V. Bulkeley seconded by D. Neely, it was voted unanimously to close the public hearing and go into regular session.**

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

Against: None.

Abstain: None.

**7. Possible Action on HDC20-027, 8 Nibang Avenue.**

Based on the discussion in the hearing, **V. Bulkeley moved to approve the application as presented and to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for Application HDC20-027, 8 Nibang Avenue, to install a birdfeeder. D. Neely seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.**

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

Against: None.

Abstain: None.

**8. 29A Pettipaug Avenue, map 10, lot 20-1.** Robert & Ann Pulver, owners; Scott Pulver, applicant. Modification application HDC20-022 for porch lights.

Scott Pulver recused himself and presented. He stated that the fans had rusted and did not spin so he replaced them with lights. He added that he would take the lights down if HDC did not approve.

Members stated that they are nice, and are "beachy".

Based on the discussion, **V. Bulkeley moved to approve the application as presented and to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for Application HDC20-022, 29A Pettipaug Avenue, to install new interior porch lights. P. Jones seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.**

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

Against: None.

Abstain: None.

9. **7 Pettipaug Avenue, map 10, lot 28.** Frankel Family Investments LLC, owner, Brooke Girty Design, applicant. Modification application HDC20-025 for trellis on garage wall.

Members had reviewed the submission and had no objection.

Based on the discussion, **V. Bulkeley moved to approve the application as presented and to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for Application HDC20-025, 7 Pettipaug Avenue, to install a trellis on the garage wall. P. Jones seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.**

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

10. **104 Sequassen Avenue, map 11, lot 19.** 104 Sequassen Avenue LLC, owner, Brooke Girty Design, applicant. Modification application HDC20-026 to add wraparound porch on north side and revise hardscape per landscape plan.

J. Keller and B. Girty presented. J. Keller stated that after considering the comments made as part of the approval last year to do the waterside of the house, they decided to also do the front porch in order to make the house more Fenwick looking. They now plan to do all of the work in the fall. B. Girty stated that this porch design was actually approved when the Havilands owned the house and it makes the house look more like a Fenwick house. She added that the other part of the application is the landscape plan that will remove the existing raised granite patio, which will be a big plus for the property, and clarified that this application is only for the north side of the house since the south has already been approved - it will create a wraparound porch like so many other houses in Fenwick.

V. Bulkeley stated that the porch is certainly in keeping with Fenwick, is an improvement, and was discussed at the time that the house design originally came before HDC. B. Girty stated that they always wanted the porch, but the house was large at the time for its surroundings so the porch was eliminated; now the point has grown into the house and the porch is more appropriate. J. Keller added that the house is more grounded with the porch.

Based on the discussion in and after the hearing, **V. Bulkeley moved to approve the application as presented and to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for Application HDC20-026, 104 Sequassen Avenue, to add a wraparound porch on the north elevation and revise the hardscape per the landscape plan. P. Jones seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.**

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

11. **Approval of Minutes:** June 6, 2020.

**V. Bulkeley moved that the minutes of the previous HDC meeting on June 6, 2020 be accepted as written. B. Keeney seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

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

12. **Old Business / Other Business.**

**a. Fee Schedule**

V. Bulkeley stated that she had done a great deal of research and although the present fee schedule is not out of whack, there are areas that could be adjusted. She added that it is difficult to determine categories ranging from simple to major and the most objective way to do this is to relate the fee to the cost of the work. Projects less than \$500 in value, such as raised garden beds, bird feeders, split rail fences, and the like, would only be charged \$50 and on the average, this lower fee would still balance out since the cost of each meeting is shared by all the applicants. Members agreed that this lower fee is more equitable and

might encourage people to apply for the smaller projects. V. Bulkeley stated that the Commission cannot generate income but can defray the cost of processing applications, inclusive of staff time. It was agreed that this does that but that applications submitted piecemeal increase the cost of processing and application should be complete at submission. Members discussed modification applications and noted that these are for modifications of open C of A's only. Members also discussed after-the-fact applications and agreed not to change this but noted that it is intended for significant design or construction changes, not for installations that can easily be removed. Members agreed that the fee schedule as presented is both realistic and more equitable.

**D. Neely moved to approve the revised fee schedule and forward it to the Burgesses with a request that it be adopted. V. Bulkeley seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.**

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

**Proposed Fee Schedule:**

Modification of existing C of A	\$ 100
Renewal of Expired C of A	\$ 50
0 - \$499	\$ 50
\$500-\$999	\$ 75
\$1000 - \$4,999	\$ 100
\$5000 – 24,999	\$ 250
\$25,000 - \$99,999	\$ 500
\$100,000+	\$1,000
After-the Fact Application	\$1,000

**b. Design Criteria.**

Members reviewed the proposed amendments to the Regulations and Design Criteria making changes as appropriate. They agreed to add more information on lighting and to include a submission checklist similar to the sample provided. These will be added and circulated. The proposed amendments will be scheduled for public hearing at the September regular meeting.

During the discussion, it was noted that the Touchstone Houses are those that were constructed between 1870 and 1920. They can be identified in the listing of structures in the 1975 Study Report. Unfortunately, many have been demolished or altered.

**c. Complete Applications.**

Members discussed that applications should be complete at the time of submission and a complete application will include the required models. Both paper and computer generated 3d models will be accepted, but computer models must have the same level of detail as a paper model would, as in the one submitted at this meeting for 20 Fenwick Avenue.

**P. Jones moved to add election of officers to the agenda. D. Neely seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

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

**Election of Officers.**

After discussion, **P. Jones moved to elect the following slate of officers: Chairman – Matt Myers, Vice Chairman – Valerie Bulkeley, Secretary – Debbie Neely. B. Neely seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

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

**13. Adjourn.**

**On a motion by V. Bulkeley, seconded by P. Jones it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 11:44 a.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn M. Ozols, Acting Clerk