



TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK
Historic District Commission

*William Childress, Chairman
Barbara Harms, Vice Chair*

www.oldsaybrookct.gov
302 Main Street
Old Saybrook, CT 06475
860-395-3131

*Diane Aldi DePaola
Laura Gray
Alan Cantor
Alternate Members
Richard Peters
Paul Knierim
Erin Sliva*

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
HYBRID MEETING**

**Tuesday, August 15, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.
Town Hall 2nd floor conference room
302 Main Street, Old Saybrook**

Public Zoom Link:

<https://zoom.us/j/98163391842?pwd=YUJOVmNBVEtwNm8zT2hiT0Q3R1FTdz09>

Meeting ID: 981 6339 1842 Meeting Passcode: 302302

Teleconference Dial-In: (929) 436-2866

One Tap Mobile: <tel://9294362866,,98163391842#>

I. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair, Barbara Harms called the meeting to order at 6:03pm

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Barbara Harms, Vice Chair – chairing for W. Childress
Alan Cantor; Laura Grey; Paul Knierim (seated for Diane Aldi DePaola), Richard Peters (seated
for William Childress); Erin Sliva (not seated)

Absent: William Childress, Chairman; Diane Aldi DePaola

Staff: Lynette Wacker, Assistant Town Planner; Krista May, Recording Clerk

B. Harms welcomed Erin Sliva to the Commission.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. **Election of Officer-** Secretary

<p>MOTION to elect Alan Cantor as Secretary of the Historic District Commission MADE by: R. Peters; SECONDED by: L. Gray; IN FAVOR: B. Harms, A. Cantor, L. Gray, P. Knierim, R. Peters; OPPOSED: None; ABSTAINED: None. APPROVED: 5-0-0.</p>
--

IV. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. Minutes – May 16, 2023 and June 20, 2023

MOTION to approve the regular meeting minutes of May 16, 2023 as presented;
MADE by: P. Knierim; **SECONDED by:** L. Gray; **IN FAVOR:** A. Cantor, B. Harms, L. Gray, P. Knierim, R. Peters; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINED:** None. **APPROVED:** 5-0-0.

MOTION to approve the regular meeting minutes of June 20, 2023 as presented;
MADE by: P. Knierim; **SECONDED by:** A. Cantor; **IN FAVOR:** A. Cantor, B. Harms, L. Gray, P. Knierim, R. Peters; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINED:** None. **APPROVED:** 5-0-0

B. Correspondence

None

C. Committee, Representative and Staff Reports

L. Wacker reported that the discussion about 64 Cromwell Place from the last meeting has resulted in the homeowner's consent to submit an application for Certificate of Appropriateness and it will be on the September agenda.

V. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. **Application for Certificate of Appropriateness as to Exterior Features** to construct an outdoor kitchen & fireplace. 68 North Cove Road (Map 31/Lot 15-1)
Applicant/Owner: Roderick & Heather Lavallee *Agent:* Waterview Landscaping
ACTION: Filed 7/19/2023; open public hearing, decision by 9/19/2023 (NLT 9/21/2023)

Brenda Barclay from Waterview Landscaping represented the owners Roderick & Heather Lavallee. Ken Reid – owner of Waterview Landscaping – was also present.

B Harms asked if any commissioner disqualified themselves and there was none. B. Barclay stated that the applicant sent a letter to the HDC that was presented on behalf of the owners. The letter was distributed to the commission members. The application to HDC includes drawings and B. Barclay introduced the plans by saying that this work is a many year project. At the moment, they are concentrating on the kitchen and cook area. B. Barclay talked about the chimney as the greatest concern because it is visible from the street. The chimney is all rock veneer and blue stone capping. The finest quality work will be done. Landscaping will block the view of the chimney. She explained that plans are woven together beautifully all materials have been brought together to make it one place.

B. Harms asked if there were any questions or comments from the public.

Bill and Laura Carapezzi (74 North Cove Road) fully support the Lavallee application and asks the Commission to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness.

Michael and Janet Klett (78 North Cover Road) fully support application. Their comment is that the work done has enhanced the property and the area and they ask the Commission to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness.

P. Knierim asked about trees. Trees tagged in green will be pruned as per annual maintenance. Trees marked in red will be taken down because they are a danger to the property. Jason Wilcox will be doing the tree work and will submit drawings and an application before work is done.

Kathy Connolly (60 North Cove Road), attending the meeting via zoom, commented that she and her husband Paul are shocked by the size of the structure. She finds it inappropriate and is strongly against the application. She added that this kind of application has never been approved before and should not be approved now. Paul Connolly joined the meeting in person. He commented that he and his wife were surprised to see structure go up. This has never been approved. It does not fit the district.

B Harms asked the Commission members for questions or comments before close of public hearing.

P. Knierim asked how the work relates to the HDC published criteria. B. Barclay had not seen any criteria. She did not know the HDC existed. B. Harms commented that there are signs announcing the district that have been posted for over 10 years. Residents are aware of the Historic District. Guidelines are published on the website. B. Barclay commented that the building codes are met. The home was built in 2001 so they did not know it was a historic home. B. Barclay thinks the design will blend well. B Harms noted that guidelines are on the website and pointed out that plantings are not a responsibility of the HDC. R. Peters added that applications that come to the HDC ask the applicant to explain what they are doing as it relates to the criteria and to articulate an answer to the question Item 3 and then HDC decides if it is appropriate for the District. P. Knierim asked B. Barclay to relate the project to specific criteria. A. Cantor asked how the application came about. B. Barclay responded that there was a stop work order and the application had to be submitted. It is the responsibility of the home owner to know about the HDC. A. Cantor commented that when he drove by the property, he was surprised the structure was there. The structure is 8 ½ feet tall and is clearly a change to the historic look of the district. It is visible from the water and the road. K. Connolly commented that in 27 years of living at 60 North Cove Road, she cannot imagine another time that this application would be approved. She hopes the commission will consider other decisions that had been made in the past. She added that this is not consistent and not an asset to the Historic District and asked the commission to please consider decisions that others would have made over the years.

B. Harms asked for more questions. There were none. Public hearing was closed at 6:42pm.

B Harms stated that this is a difficult situation and that the HDC is not an HOA but an Historic District Commission with a focus for appropriateness of the District. This is not a contributing house but it is within the District.

A Cantor spoke of consistency. He commented that the structure sticks out and is very different. By itself, it is not attached to the home and is very noticeable. P. Knierim stated that there is no question that the design and work is beautiful and consistent with the home. The Historic District Commission has had to confront after-the-fact applications in the past. Advance review of a project allows for negotiation with applicants. The District is a mixed neighborhood with homes represented from different centuries and decades. Home owners in the District are committed to keeping up the quality of the neighborhood and are trying to do nice work. P. Knierim stated that he is inclined to support the application.

A. Cantor asked if the HDC would have approved the application if the application had been made prior to work being started. R. Peters commented that he would have suggested alterations. L. Grey added that construction should fit within the flavor of the neighborhood. She would like to see it smaller in size - her concern is that the new structure is very tall and if there were other structures like it, it would look out of place in the district. B. Harms agreed and stated that this application would be setting a precedent for other applications to follow.

B Harms asked for a vote. P. Knierim made the motion to approve the application for Certificate of Appropriateness as to Exterior Features to construct an outdoor kitchen and fireplace for 68 North Cover Road. No member seconded the motion. The Commission cannot vote if there is no second to the proposed motion.

After some discussion, B. Harms asked again for a motion.

MOTION to approve application for Certificate of Appropriateness as to Exterior Features to construct an outdoor kitchen and fireplace for 68 North Cover Road;
MADE by: Peter Knierim; **SECONDED by:** Richard Peters; **IN FAVOR:** P. Knierim
OPPOSED: A. Cantor, L. Gray, B. Harms, R. Peters; **ABSTAINED:** None.
DENIED: 1-4-0.

Motion did not pass. It has been denied without prejudice and the applicant is invited to reapply. Representatives for the residents have heard the issues raised and the applicant can reapply right away (application needs to be filed with the Land Use office at least two weeks before the next meeting of the HDC which will be September 19th).

B Barclay asked for advice on how to proceed and was advised that they should review the criteria of the HDC (available online) and it was suggested that they can take advice from Land Use staff. R. Peters suggested the applicant look at Item 3 and be able to articulate how the proposal meets the criteria. B. Harms added that, during the discussion, she heard commission members expressing concern that the structure is not in keeping with the Historic District. Issues such as size, scale and height were discussed in the meeting. B. Barclay responded that she is not sure what the Historic District Commission is asking for but they will read the regulations and meet with Land Use staff. She commented that the residents want to do the right thing. B. Harms added that they should look at the HDC regulations, read the minutes of this meeting and talk to Land Use staff.

VI. **OLD BUSINESS**

A. **Historic Ghost Sign interpretive sign – D. Aldi**

Diane is not present so no report.

VII. **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 p.m. until the next regular meeting of Tuesday, September 19, 2023, 6:00 p.m., Old Saybrook Town Hall, 302 Main Street,
MADE by A. Cantor; **SECONDED by:** R. Peters; **IN FAVOR:** A. Cantor, B. Harms, L. Gray, P. Knierim, R. Peters; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINED:** None.
APPROVED: 5-0-0

NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED
HYBRID MEETING

Tuesday, September 19, 2023 at 6:00 P.M.
Town Hall 2nd floor conference room
302 Main Street

Check our website for dial in information
and additional meeting documents.

[Historic District Commission web page](#)