



TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK  
**Historic District Commission**

*William Childress, Chairman*  
*Barbara Harms, Vice Chair*  
*Jan Furman, Secretary*

[www.oldsaybrookct.gov](http://www.oldsaybrookct.gov)  
302 Main Street  
Old Saybrook, CT 06475  
860-395-3131

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

**MINUTES**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**Tuesday, April 18, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.**  
Hybrid Meeting  
Town Hall 2<sup>nd</sup> floor conference room  
302 Main Street, Old Saybrook

I. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman W. Childress called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. **ROLL CALL**

**Members Present in Person** – William Childress, Diane Aldi DePaola, Barbara Harms

**Members Present via Zoom** Laura Gray, Paul Knierim

**Members Absent** – Jan Furman, Richard Peters, Alan Cantor

**OS Historical Society members present:** Wayne Harms, Tedd Levy, Marie McFarlin

**Staff Present** – Lynette Wacker, Assistant Town Planner; K. May, HDC Recording Clerk

III. **REGULAR BUSINESS**

A. **Minutes from Regular Meeting February 21, 2023**

<p><b>MOTION</b> to approve the regular meeting minutes of February 21, 2023, as presented; <b>Made by:</b> D. Aldi DePaola; <b>Seconded by:</b> B. Harms; <b>In Favor:</b> W. Childress, P. Knierim; <b>Opposed:</b> None; <b>Abstained:</b> None. <b>APPROVED:</b> 4-0-0.</p>
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**Minutes from Special Meeting February 23, 2023**

W. Childress and B. Harms were the only voting members present so there was no quorum.  
Minutes to be presented again at the next meeting scheduled for May 16th.

**B. Correspondence** – L. Wacker presented the latest issue of CT Preservation News.

**C. Committee, Representative and Staff Reports** – No business.

#### IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. **Certificate of Appropriateness as to Exterior Features** to replace brick veneer with cedar clapboard siding, install shutters, replace all windows, 4' expansion to existing porch with new metal shed roof & screens, remove chimney, demolish attached garage and construct new detached garage and driveway at 142 North Cove Road, Map 32/Lot 60-8.

*Applicant/Agent: Denise VonDassel, Architect*

*Owner: Paul J. Knierim & Gregory J. Nickett*

Paul Knierim recused himself from the discussion. Laura Gray joined the meeting via zoom. Denise VonDassel presented on behalf of the owners:

The Property, across the street from the water, was constructed in 1985. It is a narrow lot but on the deeper side. Things to do:

1. The gable will be cedar;
2. Screen porch needs to be expanded out 4ft to width of porch and a shallow shed roof will be installed. It will have a traditional appearance with a door out to the side with stairs to the lawn. Screen panels will be used instead of screen doors;
3. The garage will be demolished and a new two car garage will be built. A little bit of the garage will be seen. It will be distinguished from the house using cedar and an asphalt shingle roof.
4. Windows will be replaced. Dormer windows have already been replaced. Others will look like the new ones already installed. The north gable end will have shutters – cedar plank will be used as found on the detached garage.
5. Chimney will be removed and replaced with propane. The interior chimney serves the fireplace.

W. Childress asked for questions and comments: D. Aldi DePaolao likes that the picture window is being taken out and the brick taken down. The look is more traditional. B. Harms commented that some of this plan had already been approved and she likes that the owners are doing everything in a traditional way. L. Gray likes the design and had no additional comments. W. Childress agreed and added that he thinks the application was well done. Visiting members from Old Saybrook Historical Society had no questions.

<p><b>MOTION</b> to approve the application as presented; <b>Made by:</b> B. Harms; <b>Seconded by:</b> D. Aldi DePaolao; <b>In Favor:</b> W. Childress, D. Aldi DePaola, L. Gray, B. Harms <b>Recused</b> P. Knierim <b>Opposed:</b> None; <b>Abstained:</b> None. <b>APPROVED:</b> 4-0-0.</p>
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**V. OLD BUSINESS**

In February, B. Harms suggested that a letter be sent to residents in the Historic District from the HDC. It would be a friendly reminder of what the District is and provide an explanation to residents to help them understand what is required. Residents should not contract work on their homes and then ask permission later. B. Harms commented that she likes the letter. W. Childress wrote the letter. It has not been sent yet but it will be mailed to all residents in the historic district. W. Childress has the names and addresses and can make labels. L. Wacker will provide letterhead and envelopes with stamps. This is an update – no vote is needed.

**VI. NEW BUSINESS****A. Historic Ghost Sign – Interpretive Sign – D. Aldi**

D. Aldi DePaola reported information about an Interpretive Sign for Main and Sheffield Street. There is a foundation in NY state that funds historical interpretations signs that are blue and yellow in color. A question about the space of this lot was asked. The size depends on a survey – permission might be needed. This will have to be explored and then a size determined. L. Wacker commented that no permission is required from Land Use but it should be coordinated with the land owner and it needs to be paid for. The price of the sign will depend on its' size.

D. Aldi DePaola is looking for direction on how to move forward. There is money for special projects in the budget until the end of June 2023. L. Gray asked what is planned for the sign and if it will talk about Crowley and Stoke Brothers. It will talk about the area and how it was a meeting place. How much information it includes will depend on how big the sign can be and how much it will cost. L. Gray told the commission that one business there was a dry cleaning and alteration shop run by Pauline Gazzo (who is in her 90s). Her daughter is still alive and her name is Nancy Gazzo. There was also a dentist office upstairs in the 1940's owned by Dr. Wolf.

**MOTION** to explore what needs to happen to move the project forward, seek approvals and examine funding options for the interpretive sign at the Ghost Sign location;

**Made by:** P. Knierim; **Seconded by:** L. Gray; **In Favor:** W. Childress, D. Aldi DePaola, L. Gray, B. Harms, P. Knierim **Opposed:** None; **Abstained:** None. **APPROVED:** 5-0-0.

**B. CLG grant application by OS Historical Society – Marie McFarlin**

CLG grant application has been sent with a letter of support from HDC but the OS Historical Society wanted to share a couple of items that the organization is working on over the next couple of months

**CHALKER HOUSE also known as MARTIN HOUSE**

Built in 1735, this house is located at 1560 Boston Post Road. The front is sturdy but the part built in 1950 is crumbling. They hope to save the front of the building. It is rare to come across such a structure and an Architectural Historian reported that should be preserved. The building needs a place and a purpose, however. It could be an education or visitors center. The parking lot of The Preserve in Essex/Westbrook Road was an option at one time but no longer. There were other locations suggested but have been rejected. Other options cannot be discussed at this time. Tedd is not giving up yet but the end is in sight.

A background document was distributed to the committee. The deadline of the effort to save the building is Spring of 2023. The owner, who lives nearby, wants to demolish it and clear the lot. The cost will be to lift and move the structure. L. Gray commented that she has been inside and has pictures. She agreed it is worth saving. Time is a problem. It has to be moved and then reconstructed. If the building could be used as a visitors center it needs to be maintained and staffed. L. Gray asked if it could be placed on Chalker Hill Farm with David Brown. It could be a visitor center for hikers or on the point. A visitors' center could be opened seasonally and feature displays.

T. Levy reported that to disassemble building, move it to a new location and then reassemble it would cost \$50,000. Funding from individuals might not be possible but there is a general feeling that donors are funded out.

**OSHS BROCHURE WITH OS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

Historic sites are all over the town. The brochure will be a map and with descriptions of historic places. A document was distributed to the group listing 80 historic places in Old Saybrook not including North Cove District and Pennywise Lane. Historic sites in Old Saybrook include landscapes, monuments and structures.

**“IS THERE A FUTURE FOR OUR PAST” FORUM AT THE KATE**

This will take place on Sunday, October 22, 2023 from 2:00pm. The Hon. Sara Bronin, Chair Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (appointed by President Biden) will be a guest and Dave Williams from ICRV radio will host. A grant proposal to fund the talk will be submitted. W. Harms commented that preserving districts on the shoreline - not just Old Saybrook – would make it a bigger draw. The Kate draws audiences from all over CT.

**THE HOME TOUR**

The Home Tour, consisting of five houses, will take place on Saturday, June 24, 2023. Three of the homes are owned by women. All had preservation. Common Goods garden and other gardens (two on Cricket Court, one on Church Street) will also be featured.

L Gray commented that all of this information presented is important and preservation needs to be a priority. She suggested establishing a “10 most endangered places” list and then make a plan.

The plan could explain how much preservation is needed and explore what can be done before it’s needed. She asked what if a historical site becomes available and we find there is no plan for preservation? James Pharmacy came up for sale at a price of \$1.2 million. Can a fund be created or is there a non-profit to collect money from individuals? M. McFarlin commented that the OS Historical Society started in 1960 and it took 14 years to buy the Samuel Art House. All agreed it’s not an easy problem to solve.

## VII. ADJOURNMENT

<p><b>MOTION</b> to adjourn the meeting at 7:15p. until the next regular meeting of Tuesday, May 16th, 2023, 11:00am, Old Saybrook Town Hall, 302 Main Street, <b>MADE by</b> D. Aldi DePaola; <b>SECONDED by:</b> W. Childress; <b>VOTED IN FAVOR:</b> L. Gray, B. Harms, P. Knierim; <b>Opposed:</b> None; <b>Abstained:</b> None. <b>APPROVED:</b> 5-0-0.</p>
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Respectfully submitted,  
Krista May, HDC Recording Clerk