



TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK  
**Historic District Commission**

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

[www.oldsaybrookct.gov](http://www.oldsaybrookct.gov)

*Diane Aldi DePaola  
Laura Gray  
**Alternate Members**  
Richard Peters  
Alan Cantor  
Mary Kennedy*

**MINUTES  
SPECIAL MEETING  
Tuesday, September 28, 2021, 7:00 p.m.**  
Hybrid Meeting  
Town Hall 2<sup>nd</sup> floor conference room  
302 Main Street

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

**II. ROLL CALL**

**Members Present** – William Childress (remote), Barbara Harms, Diane Aldi DePaola (remote), Laura Gray (remote), Alan Cantor

**Members Absent** – Jan Furman, Richard Peters, Mary Kennedy

**Land Use Department Staff** – Lynette Wacker, Assistant Town Planner  
Also C. Maharbiz, HDC Recording Clerk

**III. REGULAR BUSINESS**

**A. Minutes**

Chairman Childress, on behalf of Richard Peters, requested that the following be added to the August 17, 2021 minutes under Section IV (New Business), Subsection A (Certificate of Appropriateness), in the discussion on windows: “When asked about the make and material of the proposed windows, the applicant stated that he had not selected the specific brand yet, but that they would be wood.” B. Harms requested that the following be added in the same section: “Muntins shall be on the exterior and interior of the window glazing and shall give the appearance of true divided light windows.”

<b>MOTION</b> to approve the regular meeting minutes of August 17, 2021 as amended; <b>Made by:</b> B. Harms; <b>Seconded by:</b> W. Childress; <b>In Favor:</b> W. Childress, B. Harms, D. Aldi DePaola, A. Cantor; <b>Opposed:</b> None; <b>Abstained:</b> L. Gray; <b>APPROVED:</b> 4-0-1.
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B. **Correspondence** – None

C. **Committee, Representative and Staff Reports** – None

#### IV. **OLD BUSINESS**

##### A. **Historic Ghost Sign – Discussion of Phase 2 Restoration**

Barbara Harms stated that the amount needed to complete the Stokes Brothers part of the sign is \$22,500. At the last meeting, the HDC discussed pledging the \$2000 that is allocated for “other” in the budget toward the sign. B. Harms stated that she submitted the application for a grant from the Community Foundation in the maximum amount of \$5,000 and has not found any other grants for which to apply. B. Harms then presented several ideas to raise funds. First, she discussed the upcoming Arts & Crafts Fair on the weekend of October 2 and 3 as a way to get exposure about fundraising. Although HDC would not be able to promote the ghost sign on the fairgrounds, B. Harms received permission from The Kate to set up a table adjacent to the fair. She suggested having before and after pictures of the ghost sign at the table along with a collection box and flyers explaining how to donate. In addition to promotion at the Arts Fair, another idea suggested by B. Harms would be to have the banner that HDC still has put back up on the building, to apply to get the ghost sign restoration information on the electronic sign, and to place posters in adjacent store windows. Finally, B. Harms discussed sending donation letters. Last year, HDC sent out 742 letters and received 48 donations from the letters. B. Harms does not believe that this was a great return on investment and suggested doing a targeted letter appeal. She also encouraged the HDC members to personally donate to the fund. B. Harms asked if HDC members agree with having a presence at the Arts Fair, if other members are available to attend, and any other ideas for raising funds.

Chairman Childress thinks it is a great idea to partner with the Arts Fair, but he cannot help as he is out of town. Alan Cantor asked whether B. Harms analyzed the dollar amount that was received from the 48 donation letters. B. Harms stated that she did not, but that the amounts received were not significant and were no more than \$100. D. Aldi DePaola suggested sending a letter to the individuals that donated previously along with a targeted group such as individuals personally known to HDC members. Chairman Childress agreed with sending a targeted appeal to the 48 individuals who previously donated. L. Gray stated that now that money is being raised for the second half of the sign, individuals that previously donated may donate again. Chairman Childress stated that the Stokes sign is more significant than the Crowley sign and it may be a theme of appeal to raise funds. B. Harms suggested attending the next Historical Society meeting to make an appeal to them. L. Gray suggested putting the logo on a coffee mug as well as selling a memento of the store. B. Harms requested that L. Gray investigate how much that would cost and what the mugs could be sold for. She also requested that L. Gray promote on social media. A. Cantor asked if it would be possible to put an after image of what the sign would look like at the location where it would appear. B. Harms explained that it is not possible to do that because

the HDC does not know exactly what the sign will look like as it is being shrunk to fit using lettering that has been recovered; there is also no picture that shows the exact replica. B. Harms would have to request Canning if they can make a replica of what it will look like, but that may not be timely. L. Gray asked if there is any money from off budget town accounts. Chairman Childress stated that there was some discussion about using rescue funds, but he does not think that is certain at this time. B. Harms agreed that the allocation of such funds is still being resolved and the HDC may receive something, but she does not know about off budget accounts mentioned by L. Gray. Chairman Childress asked if there are any photographs from Ted Levy's book about Main Street to evoke the feeling of the store. B. Harms has a picture of gentlemen in front of store that she plans to use at the Arts Fair. A. Cantor stated he would be out of town and could not attend Arts Fair, L. Gray stated she could help for about an hour. D. Aldi DePaola suggested selling notecards or reusable bags. B. Harms would like for a commission member to take the initiative on any fundraising merchandise sales. D. Aldi DePaola stated she could do that.

B. Harms concluded discussion by stating that HDC will move forward with attending the Arts Fair. She also stated that she will include an article in the December events and will contact other papers who previously published stories about the Ghost Sign to write another piece. Chairman Childress stated that it is essential that every commission member donate to the effort, in any amount, so the HDC can state that every member is behind it. D. Aldi DePaola stated that she will research mugs and bags as a potential fundraiser. L. Gray asked about fundraising through a GoFundMe page. L. Wacker stated she could investigate whether a 501(c) can set up a GoFundMe page and explained that donations can come through the Patronicity website, which charges a fee; although Sustainable CT will not match funds raised through Patronicity, HDC can do crowd funding and she will look into re-activating the Patronicity site. L. Wacker stated that a lot of donations that were received came with cards and notes remembering the Stokes Brothers store. She suggested reaching out to senior residents with fond memories of the store such as through the Estuary Center newsletter. L. Wacker also raised the issue of protecting the sign that has already been restored as it currently has no legal protection. She printed out information to consider about preservation easements and the use of contracts to maintain the façade for a certain number of years, which she will email to members. Chairman Childress agreed that it would be an excellent idea and explained that the contract is a form of a deed or easement to the town prohibiting defacement or removal of the sign, which is fairly common practice.

## VI. ADJOURNMENT

<b>MOTION</b> to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m. until the next regular meeting of <b>Tuesday October 19, 2021</b> , <b>MADE by:</b> A. Cantor; <b>SECONDED by:</b> D. Aldi DePaola; <b>VOTED IN FAVOR:</b> W. Childress, B. Harms, D. Aldi DePaola, A. Cantor; L. Gray; A. Cantor; <b>OPPOSED:</b> None; <b>ABSTAINED:</b> None; <b>APPROVED:</b> 5-0-0.
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Respectfully submitted,  
Carolina Maharbiz, Recording Clerk