

TOWN OF BRISTOL, RHODE ISLAND

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION



**Historic District Commission Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 6, 2025
at 7:00 PM
Town Hall - 10 Court Street, Bristol Rhode Island**

Written comments may be submitted to the Historic District Commission via regular mail addressed to:

Historic District Commission, Bristol Town Hall, 10 Court Street, Bristol RI 02809 or via email to ntoth@bristolri.gov

1. Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM, and the Pledge of Allegiance was promptly recited afterwards.

In attendance: Church, Allen, Lima, Ponder, Bergenholtz, O'Loughlin, Page, Teitz, and Toth

Absent: Millard

2. Review of Previous Month's Meeting Minutes

2A. Review of minutes of the January 6, 2025, meeting.

Lima: Are there any comments or changes to the minutes of the January meeting?

Allen: On page 9, 4th paragraph, the applicant's name is "Mello", not "Melo". Also, on page 10 where it is discussing the plywood falling apart, it's on the exterior not interior, and the name is "Thai", not "Tai".

Lima: Anything else? Can we have a motion?

Church: Sure.

Motion made by Church to accept the minutes of the January meeting as amended; Seconded by Bergenholtz

Voting Yea: Allen, Ponder, Church, Lima, O'Loughlin, Bergenholtz, and Page

Lima: I want to welcome our new member, Robert Page.
Thank you for coming aboard.

3. **Application Reviews**

3A. 24-174: 35 Central St, Donna Brown: Discuss and act on replacement of wood clad replacement windows with wood clad replacement windows in kind, replacement of door, not on street frontage.

Andrew Brereton present on behalf of Donna Brown.

Brereton: I am here to speak on behalf of my friend, Donna Brown.

Toth: We have permission from her.

Brereton: I saw the project and met Scott Harkin who is the General Contractor. He showed me around the job site. I will answer any questions. My understanding is that you have the packet with the information on the products and the work done. I used to be a carpenter.

Teitz: Can you identify which windows and doors and provide the specs on the door?

Toth: Pages 45 and 46 do that.

Brereton: I believe there is information on that. It is a fiberglass door, Thermopane with mullion grills installed.

Lima: It's in the back of the house?

Brereton: Correct. The addition is not part of the original house.

Allen: And the door is already installed?

Brereton: Correct.

Allen: And the windows are installed?

Brereton: Correct.

Allen: Were the original windows wood?

Toth: We pulled from file from last 15 years. The windows are clad wood windows, and they are putting in clad wood windows as a replacement, so it is a replacement in kind.

Allen: We didn't know that from last time.

Toth: Correct.

Ponder: Did you get a description of the old door verses the new door?

Toth: There are photos in packet as well as the specifications for the new door.

Brereton: I apologize, Donna texted me the packet and I have been looking at it on my phone.

Teitz: Pages 56 and 57 are the old ones, and page 58 is the new one.

Brereton: Yes.

Teitz: Page 48 is the new door where it says existing.

Ponder: Yes.

Lima: I'm looking at the old record to see if there is anything about the door.

Allen: Was a fee assessed?

Toth: Yes, for the application and the work without a permit. I brought it to the attention of building official.

Lima: Are there any questions or comments? Is there anyone in the audience who would like to speak for or against this? Can we have a motion?

Ponder: I will.

Motion made by Ponder to the accept application as presented; Seconded by Page.

Voting Yea: Ponder, Allen, Page, Lima, Bergenholtz, and O'Loughlin

Secretary of Interior Standards: #9

3B. 25-01: 553 Hope St, MaKenzie Marshall: Discuss and Act on replacement of door on street frontage.

MaKenzie Marshall present.

Marshall: I am here seeking approval to exchange the front door from aluminum to wood and glass which would align more with the other buildings and storefronts in the area.

Church: You found it in the basement?

Marshall: Yes.

Church: It is probably original to the building.

Marshall: It would fit perfectly as there were no modifications and was maintained.

Lima: What are you going to put there?

Marshall: Not sure. We're just cleaning up and bringing it back to life.

Lima: Anyone have any questions or comments? Is there anyone in the audience who would like to speak for or against this application?

Amanda Marshall: I am for it. I know what the door looks like and it is great to have.

Lima: Can we have a motion?

Allen: Sure.

Motion made by Allen to approve the application as presented with a finding of fact that the door was found in the basement of the building and it might be original to the building. Seconded by Church.

Voting Yea: Ponder, Page, Allen, Lima, Church, O'Loughlin, and Bergholtz

Teitz: Think also Standard #5 as it is basically distinct materials to be preserved.

Secretary of Interior Standards: #5, #9

Project Monitor: Ory Lima

Lima: If there is anything you need, just contact Nick.

Toth: The green sheet will be available online. You don't need a building permit, just drop the door in and you are good to go.

Lima: When the certificate is ready, just put it in the front window or somewhere in the front of the building where it is visible.

Marshall: Absolutely. Thank you.

Lima: Thank you.

3C. 25-04: 9 Church St, Dean Nadalin: Discuss and Act on installation of metal railings on front stairway.

Toth: I did speak to Dean and thought he was aware of the date. He was intending to come, and he may be running late.

The application was put off later in the meeting and came back around to it.)

Dean Nadalin present.

Nadalin: My wife said a railing needs to go up. My wife says that her parents are getting old, and it is needed for safety so people can get into the house. Mary has fallen before. So, I am here to get approval for the railing. I went around Town and took photos of others. What is unique about this railing is that the spindles are set at a 45° angle.

Bergenholtz: Are you going to use a brass ball or the lamb's tongue?

Nadalin: Lamb's tongue.

Ponder: That's the one you would go with?

Nadalin: Yes.

Church: It is attached to the stairs and not the building.

Nadalin: Correct.

Teitz: One on each side?

Nadalin: Yes.

Bergenholtz: Is the door surround carved stone?

Nadalin: Yes. It is the only one in Bristol. The railing does not connect to the house.

Bergenholtz: Always thought it was dangerous at night especially.

Nadalin: It goes into Town property. We added the blue stone steps and one thing we noticed is that skateboarders like to use it and the railings would prevent that as well.

Lima: Are there any more questions or comments? Is there anyone in the audience who would like to speak for or against this? Can we have a motion?

Allen: I'll do it.

Motion made by Allen to accept the application as presented; Seconded by Ponder.

Voting Yea: Page, Lima, Allen, Ponder, Bergenholtz, O'Loughlin, and Church

Secretary of Interior Standards: #9

Project Monitor: Chris Ponder

Lima: Just put the certificate on the front of the building where visible.

Nadalin: Thank you.

3D. 24-161: 366 Hope St, Thomas M. Bergenholtz: Discuss and Act on replacement of 11 Windows.

Thomas M. Bergenholtz present.

Bergenholtz recused.

Bergenholtz: What we are doing is getting new windows for the 3rd floor of the property which is not part of the original building, and it was added later. The tenant was there for 54 years. Her whole family lived there at one time. She couldn't go up/down the stairs anymore and it became a safety issue for her, so she moved to an assisted living place which is much better for her. We couldn't do anything on the 3rd floor with her there. We have been there for 10 years. Moving forward, we need to get it done. We need windows put in and we will redo the place on the inside. We have obtained quotes for windows from many companies. Windows are expensive. Going with Marvin.

Allen: What is the clad on the outside?

Bergenholtz: It is in the spec sheet. Windows will be black outside and inside.

Teitz: What is the material?

Bergenholtz: Extruded aluminum. I don't think it is a wood product.

Allen: It says it is clad but doesn't say the material.

Lima: Says ebony clad exterior.

Bergenholtz: Ebony is the color. I know it is not cedar.

Church: Could be vinyl or aluminum.

Allen: Doesn't show it in the specs.

Bergenholtz: It is the same as windows on Thames Street.

Lima: Ok we did approve it.

Allen: Now all wood?

Bergenholtz: Yes.

Allen: Typically, we need some proof they are failing and can't be repaired.

Bergenholtz: They are in really tough shape.

Allen: Usually, people take photos close up.

Bergenholtz: You are welcome to come and see them.

Allen: We may have to do a sight visit.

Bergenholtz: If I could salvage them, I would.

Allen: We need to schedule a site visit.

Church: In the meantime, you can find out what the cladding is. Are they 4 over 4?

Bergenholtz: Yes.

Church: True divided light?

Bergenholtz: Yes.

Allen: I think it is simulated.

Church: Yes, simulated with space bar.

Lima: It looks like 2 over 1.

Bergenholtz: You mean the existing, yes.

Lima: Yes, 3 in the front have 2 over 1.

Toth: Do you know when the addition was built?

Bergenholtz: There is some indication that it was in the 1930s. I don't have anything going back far.

Toth: Just so we know it's not a recent addition.

Church: The roof line was changed.

Bergenholtz: Yes. It used to be like Holstrum's house with railing and everything else. Then they put dormers there.

Church: I can see some here.

Bergenholtz: One section is a little flat roof. There used to be a tower that blew off during a hurricane.

Ponder: Are all of the windows up there?

Bergenholtz: Yes.

Ponder: I don't have a problem with 4 over 4 but just need to do a site visit.

Bergenholtz: Just let me know.

Lima: Some windows are 2 over 2 and some are 2 over 1.

Bergenholtz: There's a lot of different windows there. Each one is worse than other.

Lima: This was 1993.

Church: Could we make a motion to have the site visit with possible vote at site?

Lima: It depends on if we can get a quorum.

Teitz: If you have a quorum. Do the vote outside of the house, not inside, just in public.

Church: It will keep you from having to come back. You just need to coordinate with Nick.

Bergenholtz: Sure.

Ponder: I vote to continue.

Motion made by Ponder to continue the application for a site visit and possible vote at the site; Seconded by Allen.

Voting Yea: Lima, Ponder, Allen, Church, Page, and O'Loughlin

Bergenholtz: Any idea when?

Toth: It depends on the availability. I just have to post it 48 hours in advance.

Bergenholtz: I just want to get going. The sooner the better.

Church: Are you available anytime?

Bergenholtz: For you, absolutely.

Lima: Good luck and thank you for what you are doing.

Bergenholtz: Thank you.

3E. 25-05: 19 Byfield St, Heath Robbins & Elena Bao:

Discuss and act on proposed addition to house and restoration and remodeling of carriage house, landscaping, and other features.

Heath Robbins and Elena Bao, John Lusk, and Daniel Cusmano present.

Bergenholtz recused.

Lusk: We are here for a concept review. We did away with the garage and reduced the size of the project to make everything a better fit. There are updated drawings and perspectives. I also included cut sheets and product materials. The materials for the windows, roofing, cupola are compatible with the historic house. The details of the millwork are there. We do have some calculations about the original addition coverage which was more than the addition we want to put in now. It shows everything from the original house to the addition to what we have now.

Church: The numbers are acceptable. I have never heard of an Acoya tree.

Lusk: It is pine which has been treated. It looks like wood, and it is insect resistant. It was used on Pivotal Brewing. It is like Azek but wood.

Church: Is there a change to the barn?

Lusk: It has been downsized from what was shown before, no living space, mostly storage.

Church: So, workshop/office?

Lusk: Somewhat. It is not intended as a residence. Basically, an accessory building, bringing it back to more original.

Church: I like that original house walls are still visible, and the addition isn't overpowering. We wanted something that was subservient to original house.

Allen: That's great.

Lusk: Another thing, along the street we are continuing the low stone wall which will be similar to what goes between the properties. It is very respectful to neighborhood.

Lima: Are there any questions or comments?

Church: Metal roof?

Lusk: Canopy on the carriage house, but nowhere else.

Ponder: What is the material for the bulkhead, metal?

Cusmano: Yes, metal.

Lima: Anything else? Is there anyone in the audience who would like to speak for or against this?

Bill Chittick: I understand what Lusk said regarding the revised plans, but the ones I have here are from a week or so ago.

Lusk: These are the old ones. You can see the new plan right here and again when you look at the site itself. Basically, no garage, no pergola, and the addition is brought a little closer. Worked details to make it fit better. Fewer windows there.

Chittick: So, there are two questions. One relates directly to this and other is I was wondering if the HDC was aware that a few months ago a 190yr old chimney was removed.

Toth: The issue was that the chimney was becoming structurally unsound.

Chittick: So, the only solution was to tear it down? Something couldn't be done to preserve it?

Allen: The homeowners tried but couldn't come up with a solution, so we did approve the demolition.

Chittick: They couldn't cap it at roof ridge?

Allen: No.

Chittick: My view of this is southwest. The images on here I personally don't like from a design standpoint. What I don't like about the addition is that it has a 4 equal hipped roof design with a cupola on top. It looks like a Florida lanai and not New England at all. I think a 4 equal hip roof sets a bad precedence for the district. Hipped roofs in the area are more federal. Occasional Ls of buildings might have a hipped roof, but to have 4 is too Gulf Coast Florida. I just want to express that. A-1.01 shows it from what I see from my house. That is my view. A-1.01 drawing and A1.06 is the photo of that same looking southwest towards the property from my house. It is just a bank of windows. Eight banks of 6 over 6, a million panes too many. You don't see that on any other house. It just doesn't fit in Bristol. Not on Byfield street especially. Unadulterated 19th century view. It was there until 1960, not sure what happened to it.

Chittick: Regardless of when the addition was done 1860 to 1880 or could be later, by 1960 or so it was removed. No matter where I look in any direction it's perfect 19th century. I would be disappointed if it changed. I think it could be better. The HDC shouldn't stoop to that level.

Elena Bao: You said that you had a photo of the view you have?

Chittick: Yes.

Teitz: You can't introduce into evidence.

Bao: I just wanted to see it personally.

Teitz: Just walk around and show the members of the Commission and then email it to Nick.

Chittick: Here it is. (Shows picture on his phone to the Commission.)

Marianne Pellegrino: Our properties are one against the other. It seems like an awful lot of building for a small space. I agree that it doesn't fit neighborhood.

It is not historical and just looks like a lot of building in a small space. It just doesn't fit. Thank you.

Tamara Barnie: I think it looks fabulous. I looked at the printed proposal. It also seems that it is going to be behind everything and not visible from the yard. I think it looks great and makes sense to me.

Lima: I would like to indicate that we received a comment from Jonathan Feinstein on 1/28/25. Reads letter into the record.

Tom Bergenholtz: I was at the Zoning Board meeting and had a question. When at Zoning for this, there was something that they were seeking a hardship for because of variances. Does that hardship still exist?

Lima: Andy?

Teitz: The HDC does not look at the hardship point of view, just appropriateness. Zoning could say yes and the HDC could say no that it is not appropriate or vice versa.

Bergenholtz: Question to John. Is there still a hardship involved with the new plans to go to Zoning? I assume that it is going to Zoning. I think the historic part is not only in the building itself but also with the land. To put all of these buildings on a lot that it seems to be crowded. I understand Jonathan's comment, but people who live in the back and on the sides, there is a historic part of this that has to do with land use.

Lusk: Historically, the land use was much greater. It had over 300sqft more than what is there now. A hipped roof carriage house was originally there. The gabled roof that is there now is not original. Right now, we did do away with garage. Less lot coverage. The house itself and the addition are less than 30%. We were scheduled to have meeting with Zoning, but it got changed, and we will be going back. Also, we considered a pergola. The lot coverage is less than 35% total. One image we have here from 1903 shows an addition on top of the original addition.

Cusmano: The hipped roof was a design solution to maintain similar roof slopes to keep below existing roof. The new addition is much smaller to the existing home.

Lusk: The way to bring a new addition is to be a little different from the original, but to blend it in to work with the main house without overshadowing it.

Sally Butler: I just wanted to say it is beautifully done and is very sensitive to what was there and what is there now. I support this project. Definitely worthy.

Deborah Blair: I also strongly support the project. It has got plenty of room for it. I think people should do what they need to do on their property.

Lima: Is there anyone else who would like to speak for or against this project?

Bao: This email was sent by Rosemarie Sirois at 34 Byfield. Reads letter from Rosemarie into record. We have a few other neighbors that couldn't be here, and I spoke to at least 10 neighbors who are very supportive and have received great feedback. I believe it keeps with the character with the Town and the street. I did research about the density of lot coverage of homes on Byfield, Church, and Milk. My findings were that over 56% of the homes exceed 30% coverage that would meet Zoning. Currently, the density of this area is quite dense. Currently, my lot has 22% coverage which is extremely sparse for the area. It is A-typical of the area. 86% of the homes in the area have greater lot coverage than mine. It is a large lot and a substantial amount of open space is still available. It maintains an open feel from the street. I feel comfortable that it does not overpower lot. With all due respect to Mr. Chittick, I think he is overstating view from his home.

Teitz: Finish your testimony.

Bao: The view from behind is not a clear view anyway. There are obstructions like trees, hedges, etc. I feel comfortable. The additions are part of the character of the neighborhood. I feel what we've done enhances and is in keeping with the character.

Lima: Thank you. Everyone set?

Dean Nadalin: The State of Rhode Island in the last 2 years has allowed ADUs across the State. He's presenting an ADU. I just looked at the plans and I think it looks great. With that law, there is no question whether it is appropriate.

Lima: Thank you.

Lusk: Thank you for everyone taking the time to share opinions on this. We all care about the historic environment. If you look at the encroachment, I really do think this proposal is the best fit. We don't want to be a part of something that would take away the character of district. I do feel it fits the house and the neighborhood. Picks up on the historic character and does not overpower the house.

Lima: Thank you.

O'Loughlin: I think it looks great. My concern is the windows on the addition. Those do look more modern than the rest. I'm just curious about the 3 by 3 design choice.

Lusk: The windows are a little different to separate the addition from the house. What we did it on that particular façade from the street. We didn't want something to give a false sense of history.

Church: I would like to make a motion.

Lima: Okay.

Motion made by Church to approve the application as presented; Seconded by Ponder

Voting Yea: Church, Lima, Page, Ponder, Allen, and O'Loughlin

3, 10,

Secretary of Interior Standards: #3, #9, and #10

Project Monitor: John Allen

Lima: Please put the certificate in the front where it is visible for everyone to see. Good luck and thank you.

Lusk: Thank you.

4. **Concept Review**
5. **Monitor Reports & Project Updates**
6. **HDC Coordinator Reports & Project Updates**
7. **HDC Coordinator Approvals**
8. **Other Business**

Church: Let's report on questions we had at last meeting.

Toth: Pick and Pay pulled a permit late last year to fix the fence, but it hasn't done so yet.

Lima: They have a year?

Toth: Yes.

Lima: Okay, plenty of time.

Church: Okay.

Toth: They are to put a fence back in kind.

O'Loughlin: There is a temporary cardboard sign advertising cigarettes do we have any say?

Teitz: Code enforcement does.

Lima: We'll have Ray Falco check it out.

Toth: I will put you in contact with him.

O'Loughlin: Okay.

Toth: Regarding the Thames Street fence, we need to do more research to see what was approved as well as the Tong Fon vestibule. Due to things going on with other projects taking longer, it was put on the back burner for a bit. I did speak with Andy and we are doing research. I did some research on the fence on Hope Street, and no permit was pulled. I forwarded it to the Code Enforcement Officer. I did discuss the lattice work with Mary.

Allen: Can I make a motion to talk about Bradford Street?

Teitz: Let's finish other things first. Nick and I spoke about the fence on Thames. The approval goes back some time in the early 2000s, might be earlier. Might be when the warehouse was removed. I thought it was after Jim bought it from bankruptcy.

Church: After a living fence was on the parking garage.

Teitz: The original fence is much earlier than that. Not an easy thing to research.

Lima: You may want to talk to David Andriozzi. He may remember it.

Allen: I was on the Board when we made that temporary yearly.

Teitz: I thought it was for the parking structure. We'll find out.

Allen: Okay.

Church: What about the gutter issue?

Toth: I reached out to them, and they said that they will do it in the spring and it will be a fiberglass product. A fiberglass gutter that matches the original profile would be administratively approved. Also, I reached out to 37 Burton, and I haven't heard back. They didn't finish pulling the permit. Also, just so everyone is aware Robert Ruggerio will be returning next month. It should be a hefty one. There is new ownership and just so you are aware, they have approval from the State and federal government. The State has released its RFP for the 2025 grant, due in March. With the closure of the school, Diane has requested to bring up having the Guiteras School designated as a historic site on the National Historical Registry.

Teitz: Make a motion for that one.

Motion made by Lima to discuss the Terrace School;
Seconded by Allen

Voting Yea: Church, Lima, Page, Ponder, Allen,
O'Loughlin, and Bergenholtz

Bergenholtz: It was a survey we received which was pretty clear that it was a key component. My understanding was that the school was sinking. I would rather concentrate on Wood Street than the school.

Church: It's sinking?

Bergenholtz: Isn't it?

Teitz: It's not sinking. The water level is rising.

Toth: The idea is we're trying to get the National Register.

Lima: I would say that we should not push the Guiteras School off of the list. We should be looking at New Goree and Wood street, Guiteras School abandonment, and possible uses should be done from the historic district point of view. It should come from the Town and the state historical preservation.

Bergenholtz: What is Diane suggesting?

Toth: The National Register for historic tax credits for future use whether it be a new Town building or sold off. Basically to get it done so it is ready to go. She just wanted to get everyone's opinion.

Teitz: I began doing research for the Town on this school. The legal question is if it can be sold. I do think it is historically significant as it sits on a gateway in the Town. I think it is worth preserving. The building was designed from a home on Poppasquash which burned down. I think it is important historically as indicated by Nick. It would help provide additional avenues for funding for rehabilitation.

Catherine Zipf: A student wrote a draft for the National Registry. That draft was for academic purposes for a National Registry nomination. It was very sharp. The National Registry nomination has been approved to move forward. The question is if we are using CLG money for this, what is needed to get it up to snuff. There is no need for a consultant. Can we edit what was already done instead of using monies? I can volunteer to get it there.

Lima: Thank you.

Toth: That's it.

Bergenholtz: A hefty meeting does it imply many changes.

Toth: No, just a lot of stuff to go through. The applicant needs to bring edited versions of State and federal approvals. It is hefty paperwork. It was already approved by State and federal government. Park services already looked at it. It is a lot of stuff that has been previously seen. It is a large packet.

Church: Was it a concept review?

Toth: They were going to come back with details.

Lima: Have them supply the packets so you don't have to. Have them submit one to you to review and then have them make enough for everyone else.

Toth: I will do that.

Lima: Are they going to do it when they first come before us? Are they going to have us go through it?

Toth: I don't know. It is a new ownership team. They have been meeting with us and the Town with every department in Town. The new team is ready to go, just doing interior clean up.

Church: It was pretty basic. There were not that many areas that we were going to be making approvals.

Toth: They understand.

Lima: Hopefully they will be able to give a tour to see the interior so we can understand and how it's going to be reflected in the finished product. What they did with American Tourister, and if they do something similar, I think that would be something that would work in their best interest. I thought it was very interesting.

Ponder: I did the American Tourister tour.

Church: Parts were coming off in the wind.

Toth: They will bring in everything next month. I will send out instructions on viewing the application online.

Ponder: It was a very general approval to get started.

Teitz: It was more than a concept because it was exterior stuff and the windows was a big thing.

Allen: According to Nick, it was not approved.

Toth: No. It was pretty general.

Teitz: Demo was limited to a concrete block building.

Ponder: It was just to get started and then they were going to come back with more details.

Teitz: The water tower is gone.

Lima: Yes.

Motion made by Allen to discuss Bradford Street; Seconded by Ponder

Voting Yea: Ponder, Lima, Allen, Page, Church, Bergenholtz, and O'Loughlin

Allen: About 4-5 months ago, we approved a porch on a duplex. The owner claimed he was a craftsman. The approved lattice at the bottom is the cheapest looking plastic. Mary said she would go back and look. Mary okayed it, but I don't think that's in the purview of a Project Monitor to approve and I would like to reopen that.

Bergenholtz: Has someone approached the homeowner and asked?

Allen: Mary said she approved it.

Teitz: Did she approve it as plastic or approve it not realizing it was plastic.

Allen: Originally didn't realize it was plastic. I think she went out there and said it was okay. I really think this is setting a bad precedence.

Lima: We had others try to put it in and we have been clear to have it wood.

Bergenholtz: It needs to be corrected.

Church: Can we do anything?

Teitz: John, you said it was wood lattice work?

Ponder: I believe it said that it needed to be wood.

Allen: Mary said since it was a small area that he couldn't find something that would look good.

Bergenholtz: And we approved the diagonal slats? I'm surprised.

Allen: I don't think we did.

Lima: We need to figure out if it was approved.

9. Adjourned at 8:41 PM