

LANDMARKS and HISTORIC DISTRICTS BOARD

Special Meeting Minutes February 8, 2017
Town Council Conference Room, Second Floor
Southampton Town Hall, 116 Hampton Road, Southampton

Board Members Present: Sally Spanburgh, Ed Wesnofske, Sarah Pleat, Bill Heine, Sheila Comparetto, Janice Jay Young

Absent: Stephanie Davis, Susan Sherry Clark, Sally Pope

Liaisons: David Wilcox, Director of Planning; Janet Johnson, Administrative Support

Guests:

- Lisa Cowell – Owner representing 8 Studio Lane, Shinnecock Hills
- Wayne Bruyn, Esq. – Attorney representing 8 Studio Lane, Shinnecock Hills
- Robert Strada, interested preservationist
- Annee Surchin, interested preservationist, author, reporter

MEETING AGENDA

Member Spanburgh opened the meeting at 7:05pm. She thanked the LHDB members present that were able to attend on short notice. Introductions of all those present took place.

Special Meeting to discuss 8 Studio Lane (“Stepping Stones”), Shinnecock Hills (Art Village):

Member Spanburgh noted the purpose of the meeting which was to determine the non-negotiable terms of a historic preservation easement for 8 Studio Lane. Member Wesnofske inquired about the need to hold a special meeting. Member Spanburgh responded that demolition of the buildings at 11 Ochre Lane (“Laffalot”), Shinnecock Hills (Art Village), which the owner of 8 Studio Lane is interested in relocating to her property, is scheduled for April 1st and therefore, due to procedural easement and landmark designation time requirements, the Town Supervisor authorized a LHDB Special Meeting.

Member Wesnofske asked if an easement acquisition offer had been made by the town to the owners of 8 Studio Lane. Member Spanburgh explained that the appraisal of the property cannot take place until the LHDB has provided input regarding the non-negotiable terms of the easement, and also that the offer price is not disclosed to the public and/or the LHDB until the owner accepts the offer and the public hearing takes place.

Member Spanburgh circulated information about the property histories of Stepping Stones and Laffalot to LHDB members prior to the meeting along with her preliminary ideas about what should and shouldn't be able to occur to 8 Studio Lane and its present and potential buildings forevermore to assist with and expedite the meeting's discussion.

Wayne Bruyn circulated to the LHDB a one page document with talking points regarding the potential landmark designation of 8 Studio Lane.

The LHDB had a lengthy discussion regarding the non-negotiable terms of an easement. Items discussed:

- Whether or not the property can receive additional accessory structures
- Whether or not structures already on the property can be relocated
- Whether or not any structures on the property can be altered or demolished
- Public visibility

Current photographs of the property around its entire circumference were reviewed. Member Wesnofske suggested that removing some of the hedges may make visibility better. Member Comparetto inquired if the side/north porch was going to be removed. Lisa responded that the porch will be reconstructed.

Guest Anne Surchin asked if there are drawings describing the owners plans for the property. Wayne replied that there are no final drawings/plans yet but shared another one page document showing the intended location of Laffalot should it be relocated to 8 Studio Lane.

Some of the conclusions reached by the LHDB were as follows:

- Three existing structures presently on the property (the house, the small shed/cottage, and the studio/ballroom) are considered historic and will be protected by the terms of the historic preservation easement.
- The larger apartment/cottage at the southeast corner of the property is not considered historic and should not be protected by the terms of the easement.
- If Laffalot is relocated to 8 Studio Lane, it will be considered historic and protected by the easement terms.
- The addition or removal of accessory structures at 8 Studio Lane will require a COA from the LHDB.
- Stepping Stones (the main house) can be altered, but cannot be moved or demolished.
- The ballroom and small shed/cottage can be moved but must stay on the property.
- None of the three historic buildings at 8 Studio Lane can be demolished.
- Any changes to 8 Studio Lane will require a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) from the LHDB.
- Exterior paint colors can be changed.
- Stepping Stones, the ballroom, and Laffalot must all be publicly visible by a pedestrian on Studio and/or Ochre Lane at all times of the year. If this is not desirable by the owner, the property (exterior only) must be opened to the public at least once a year for tour.
- The property must be maintained in a manner in which public visibility is not further impaired.
- Window air conditioners are not permitted.
- No substantial topographical changes are allowed.
- A pool is permitted but its size, details and location will require a COA from the LHDB.
- Mature trees cannot be removed, with the exception of those that need to be removed in order to allow Laffalot to be relocated to 8 Studio Lane. Lisa explained her intention to replace these trees with similar trees.

- 8 Studio Lane cannot be subdivided.

The LHDB reached consensus of the easement terms. Guest Robert Strada expressed his appreciation that Laffalot was being preserved; Anne Surchin agreed. Robert asked what would happen if the relocation of Laffalot does not work out. Wayne responded that there was a second party previously interested in obtaining Laffalot but they had since withdrawn their interest. He was confident that everything will work out with the relocation to 8 Studio Lane.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:38 pm.

NEXT MEETING: February 21, 2017 at 7:00 pm

Submitted by Janet Johnson; edited by Sally Spanburgh.