

Memo for State Project # 142-149

To: William W. Britnell, P.E.
Transportation Principal Engineer
Department of Transportation

From: Tolland Historical Society Board
P.O. Box 107
Tolland , CT 06084

Noteworthy points to the informative presentation on DOT Project # 142-149

Overall the meeting was not as it was publicized.

Specifically:

Timing the meeting during the holidays was politic!

There was insufficient notice of the meeting.

There was uncertainty as to whether the public would be allowed to speak since it was billed as a "meeting". People are looking for a *Public Hearing*.

Parking was inadequate thus people left.

The meeting space was too small to accommodate the number of people who wished to attend.

People in the back of the room and hallway could not hear or see the presentation.

There were insufficient handouts for all.

Points to share concerning the Project:

It is important to note that the original green was a long RECTANGLE, extending from present Dunn Hill Road to include the grass area south of Old Post Road, between present Rt. 195 and the cul-de-sac that used to be the end the so-called East Carriage Road and also the cul-de-sac on present Cider Mill Road, including the area where the retaining wall now stands. Thus chipping away further at the frontage of numbers 2 and 4 Tolland Green where the steps will require moving is a further incursion into the green. Most of that whole section below Old Post Road has already disappeared under hardtop.

It is important to mention the inappropriateness of the traffic islands to a traditional New England town green.

The green is a town treasure that was a focal point of our recent 300th celebration and is now home to the new Tolland Founders Monument. It is also the staging point for two of our town's most beloved and well-attended annual events: the Memorial Day parade and the tree lighting. This plan would harm the historic nature of the green and alter the much-loved setting of these events.

It was noted that the original plan was about pedestrian safety and traffic calming, not congestion. Congestion is not the issue for townspeople. Further, the proposed project does not add historic value.

Additionally, it was noted that the Green has a financial impact on property values and in turn the community as a whole. Thus denigrating the historic nature with this project will devalue property values on the Green and elsewhere in Tolland.

Closing Thoughts:

All of the changes to the Green as outlined by the plan must come before the Historic District Commission for approval. While the DOT can go ahead without approval, now that a plan is somewhat final, the HDC has the ability to comment on each item and state the adverse effect it will have on the character defining features of the District. That request has been made to the HDC for January.

The Historic District Commission should be specific on each adverse effect. The Commission should request the opportunity to work with DOT to create a plan that solves problems at the same time as it preserves the character defining features of the District especially since the Tolland Green is significantly impacted and is listed on the National Register.

THS requests that the DOT work with the HDC to create the plan.

THS requests a Public hearing on the project in a larger venue with sufficient advertising for public attendance and input.

The Tolland Historical Society remains a ready partner in mitigation of this project.

The above comments are a collaborative effort of the Tolland Historical Society Board of Directors.

Sincerely,

Kathleen W. Bach
President

Attachments:

Copy of Historic District Commission Meeting Minutes from 12/16/15 which Historic District Commissioners wished to be forwarded to Mr. Britnell

DRAFT
Minutes
Tolland Green Historic District Commission
Conference Room B
Regular Meeting
December 16, 2015
7:00 PM

1. Call to Order: Mr. Gould called the meeting to order at 7:03 P.M.

2. Roll Call: Adoption of October Minutes

In Attendance: Jonathan Gould, Vice Chair; Kathy Back, Clerk; Anne Deegan, Tim Malone, Rod Hurtuk (Alternate)

Not in Attendance: Jodie Coleman-Marzialo (Chair); Tim Malone, Morgan Mariah Bumps (Alternate) Brenda Copithorne (Alternate)

Mr. Hurtuk was seated as a voting member.

Ms. Bach motioned to adopt the minutes of the November 18, 2015 meeting. Mr. Malone seconded the motion. Changes made: None. All were in favor. Motion carried.

3. New Business:

- a. Discuss the Tolland Green Informational Meeting

The Commission discussed the Tolland Green Informational Meeting. Many people were interested in attending the session but the room was not sufficient for the number of attendees and many were turned away. Thus, the meeting was not available to all so many were unable to glean the information or have their voices heard. Additionally, not all of those in attendance received the handout with the contact information.

In regard to the Tolland Green project, the Commission discussed traffic and medians. It was noted that the original plan was about pedestrian safety and traffic calming, not congestion. Congestion is not the issue. Further, the proposed project does not add historic value. Additionally, it was noted that the Green has a financial impact on property values and in turn the community as a whole.

The Town Council approved a specific plan and what is now being proposed as a plan is not consistent with that plan. The Commission was not satisfied with the last public hearing and inability for the public to voice their concern. It would like another meeting scheduled in a larger venue.

b. Discuss Next Year's Officers

The Commission discussed going forward with the same officers as in 2015. The slate will be voted on in January.

c. Public Comment - none

4. Old Business

Maintenance is being done on the Tobiason house.

5. Miscellaneous - none

6. Adjournment

Mr. Hurtuk motioned to adjourn the meeting and pay the clerk at 7:44 P.M. Mr. Malone seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa Pascuzzi". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lisa Pascuzzi

Clerk