

**HISTORIC DISTRICT &  
HISTORIC PROPERTY  
COMMISSION**

Allison Sanders, Chair  
Matthew Kehoe, Vice Chair  
Gilbert Weatherly, Clerk  
Lori Fusco  
Marianne Gustafson

*Alternates*  
Pam Brown  
Peter Gaboriault



**TOWN HALL**  
238 Danbury Road  
Wilton, Connecticut 06897

**Meeting Minutes**  
**July 3, 2018**  
**Town Hall Annex Room A 7:30 pm**

RECEIVED FOR RECORD  
TOWN OF WILTON  
2018 JUL 12 A 8:30  
BY: ACF

- I. Call to order at 7:32 pm
  - a. Attendance: Commissioners Sanders, Weatherly, Fusco and Gustafson were seated. Alternate Brown present not voting.
  - b. Minutes: Sanders moves to approve June 5, 2018 minutes and Gustafson seconds. There is no discussion. Vote to approve is unanimous.
- II. Review Draft Statement re proposed roundabout at Rt 106 and Belden Hill Rd was discussed and minor revisions were suggested. The revised statement is included in these minutes as follows:

TO: Marissa Washburn/CONNDOT

FROM: Wilton Historic Districts and Historic Properties Commission

DATE: July 3, 2018

RE: Proposed Traffic Calming Solutions for intersection of Rt 106 and Belden Hill Road, Wilton, CT

The intersection of Rt.106 and Belden Hill Road in Wilton is an area rich with historic properties, two clearly visible from the crossing. The Historic District Commission cautions the DOT that the historic nature of the landscape and the neighborhood must not be unduly impacted by any traffic calming plans that are contemplated. Three of the four corners of the intersection, each containing an antique structure, will be disturbed. An intrusive solution will ruin the historic nature of the area, and cause irreparable harm.

On the north-west corner at 311 Belden Hill Road is the c. 1835 James Gilbert House. It is listed on Wilton's Cultural Resource Survey: Phase I - 1989, which states in part: "the 3-bay, 2-story, gable-ended house marked the transition from the Federal to the Greek Revival styles. It has been reworked in the Colonial Revival style which renders it more Federal in appearance than it did originally, as the entrance hood with an arched soffit and side-lighted door frames as well as the 6-panel door itself are mid-20<sup>th</sup> century additions.

Typical of historic houses, the building is set fairly close to the road, and is somewhat elevated on gentle knoll. It would suffer significant loss of its street-front presence, such as mature sugar maple trees and lawn, if a roundabout or signalized structures were to be employed to control traffic at the intersection.

Diagonally across from #311 is the c. 1940 #320 Belden Hill Road, on the south-east corner. It is listed on the recently compiled Cultural Resource Survey: Phase 2, 2018, which states it is: "A one-and-a-half-story vernacular Cape-style house built in 1940 . . . This house is a good example of a later and more modest interpretation of the Colonial Revival style. Based on the Cape form, this house displays a more interpretative quality with a simple form".

It is "set approximately 30 feet back from the road and a paved driveway is located south of the house. The lot is lined by stone walls and mature trees and shrubs provide a privacy screen along the northern edge of the thot. A large lawn is located on the south side of the driveway". A poorly planned traffic modification would have a significant negative effect on the property.

Another historic house, c. 1870 at 302 Belden Hill Road, sits at the south-west corner. The house is somewhat protected by a screening of trees and shrubs, but the land adjacent to the intersection slopes down. A significant amount of re-contouring would undoubtedly be needed to provide a platform for a roundabout, which would have a negative impact on this historic structure, causing loss of screening, decreasing distance from the road, and raising the noise level.

The fourth corner, on the north-east, is also a knoll with a lawn, open, with a sign and some low evergreen plantings. The home on that corner is set far back from the road, and is heavily screened by trees and shrubs. The appearance of the corner contributes to the rural character of the intersection, and provides a good visibility for drivers.

Attachments: Historic Resources Inventory Sheets: 311 Belden Hill Road; 320 Belden Hill Road

III. POCD Update and Discussion: Sanders briefed the Commissioners on the status of the POCD and key Commission objectives were discussed.

IV. GIS Mapping was discussed, a level containing Local Historic District information will be added this year according to P&Z.

V. 213 and 300 Danbury Road were discussed. Chair Sanders submitted a statement to P&Z

after attending a public hearing on 213, which was read into the record:

From: "Sanders, Allison" <Allison.Sanders@WILTONCT.ORG>  
Date: June 26, 2018 at 2:18:39 PM EDT  
To: planningzoningcomm <planningzoningcomm@WILTONCT.ORG>  
Cc: "Nerney, Robert" <bob.nerney@WILTONCT.ORG>, "Weatherly, Gil" <Gil.Weatherly@WILTONCT.ORG>, Marianne Gustafson <mgustaf1@gmail.com>, Lori Fusco <loriafusco@optonline.net>, "Brown, Pamela" <pamela.brown@WILTONCT.ORG>, Peter Gaboriault <peter@bpaw.com>, Rob Sanders <rsanders@rsarchct.com>  
Subject: 213 Danbury Road

Greetings,

I attended the P & Z hearing last night about 213 Danbury Road, and would like to set the record straight regarding several misstatements that were made by the developer/architect and his attorney, Mr. Healey about the style, age and historic significance of the structure.

According to the Historic Resource Survey of 1989 by architectural historian Mary McCahon, the Fillow-Ogden House was built c. 1875. The house is NOT a saltbox, as described by the developer, but is "picturesque vernacular". From the survey, 213 Danbury Road is "an important survivor from Wilton's quieter agricultural days. It contributes to the character of the area. . . the house has been extensively reworked, but it still retains enough of its original detailing to be architecturally significant in an area that is losing its original residential/agricultural character." The best known owners of the house were Charles and Anna Orem, who lived there from 1918 - 1946. I attach a scan of the entire record for your review.

Once again, a nicely sized, historic structure is being cleared away for a much less appealing replacement. Details such as vinyl siding, wall to wall carpeting inside and general shabbiness are not reasons to demolish a building - such surface details are taken care of when the architectural integrity is restored to a structure. It is generally easier to demolish a structure than

The building design that was presented is a depressing demonstration of what passes for commercial architecture these days. This graceless, boxy structure is an unwelcoming addition to Route 7. It could just as easily be a warehouse. The surface application of some pilasters etc is an unsuccessful attempt to add "historical" details to a structure that needs serious attention to its basic form and massing, not to mention the unfortunate decision to under-design the facade that faces Rt. 7. While I was heartened to hear the dialogue between the Commission and the developer about design aspects of the project, the fact is that the developer does not have much guidance or expectation from the Town. If this project does not convince people that a design process review is an absolute necessity for Rt 7, I don't know what will.

Allison Sanders  
Chair, Historic District and Historic Properties Commission

VI. New Topic: Town Owned Historic Properties. Gustafson proposed and Weatherly

seconded this addition to the agenda. Chair shared a list Town owned historic properties, two of which are in Local Historic Districts

VII. Public Comment: Vickie Mavis of Ridgefield Road and Sara Curtis of Cannon Road voiced their concerns regarding the proposed zoning changes and new development plans at 300 Danbury Road.

Adjournment: 9:12 pm