

This is the first time the Commission will be using the new
Section 15A Historic Preservation by Special Permit regulation
Please review very carefully so you understand the purpose and considerations

Public Hearing

- 1. Request for a special permit to allow for demolition of residential structure listed on Haddam Survey of Historical and Architectural Resources. 140 Dublin Hill Rd. Map 06/ Lot 042. Applicant: Tim Brewer**

Background

The property at 140 Dublin Hill Road is listed on the **Haddam Survey of Historical and Architectural Resources.**

The owner has applied for a demolition permit to remove the structure. The demolition of a structure on the **Haddam Survey of Historical and Architectural Resources** requires the granting of a special permit from the Planning and Zoning Commission.

The Zoning Regulations conclude that the historic structures have a historic, cultural, architectural and economic significance and contribute to a healthy and thriving future for the Town of Haddam. It also concludes that Haddam derives much of its charm and unique appearance from its architecture and from its history.

The Haddam Historic Society describes the structure as follows:

“The Leverette Spencer House is one of the best and most well-preserved examples of workers’ housing in Higganum reflecting the growth of the area’s industry during the second half of the 19th century and development of neighborhoods for employees at the factories. Although other factory housing remains in the area, most have been significantly altered. The house at 140 Dublin remains untouched, and although a modest cottage, it does exhibit “Gothic Revival” architectural details that give the building character and is a humbler version of the more ornate managers’ or factory owners’ dwellings. This tangible link to the working-class families of our town represents those who labored in the local mills and factories and put Higganum on the map in the 19th and 20th centuries. It illustrates how families came from foreign shores with little in their pockets and were able to toil and save to achieve the American dream of owning a home which to raise a family.”

“The building also plays an important role in the streetscape of the Dublin Hill neighborhood and the evolution of Higganum as a 19th century industrial center.”

“The Haddam Historical Society objects to the demolition of this important building on the grounds that it is identified by the State Preservation Office, the Greater Middletown Preservation Trust and the Haddam historical Society as a significant historical and architectural property.”

Purpose

The purpose of the Regulation is to insure all feasible and prudent alternatives to the demolition have been considered.

To date the applicant has not submitted or discussed any alternatives to the demolition.

Often owners of historic buildings argue the town regulations are forcing the demolition because they prevent alternatives or creative solutions.

That is not the case in Haddam.

The regulation allows for the modification of the following requirements to facilitate alternatives.

- Lot coverage,
- Lot area,
- Lot frontage,
- Front, side and rear yard setbacks and
- Parking requirements.

We also adopted an **Adaptive Historic Re-use Regulation** which allows for alternate uses even in a single family zone. For instance a single family home could be converted to a professional office or a multi-family to generate enough revenue to justify the preservation.

Considerations

The regulation requires that you consider the following during your deliberations :

- 1.) the impact of historic preservation recommendations on the overall project,
- 2.) the availability of other architecturally appropriate alternatives which preserves the building,
- 3.) the ability to allow higher densities and modifications to the regulations to allow the greatest number of alternatives and to compensate for the preservation; and
- 4.) the impact of the demolition on the property, surrounding properties and the overall historic character of the area.

Haddam Plan of Conservation and Development

When considering a special permit you are also required to consider the recommendations in your **Plan of Conservation and Development**.

There is a section which is entitled - ***Heart & Soul of Haddam***. This section indicates the following: *“There are places and features in Haddam that, if lost, would fundamentally change the character of the Town.”* Higganum Village is one of those places.

The section includes this recommendation:

“Preserve historic buildings. *While most of Haddam’s historic non-residential buildings are located within the three village centers, many historic village buildings have been lost over time and are neglected or vulnerable to demolition. To make sure that Haddam’s villages continue to be special and unique places with a sense of history and place, it is critical to preserve the remaining historic buildings and public open spaces.”*

There is also an entire section on Higganum Village in the POCD. This section discusses its Historic Background and recommends the following:

“5. Where possible, pursue efforts to protect the remaining open space surrounding Higganum and to preserve the historic settlement pattern of compact villages surrounded by open land by respecting the village boundaries.”