

**VILLAGE OF PITTSFORD**  
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD**  
**REGULAR MEETING:** Monday, April 12, 2021 at 5:30 PM

**Present:**

**Chairperson:** Bill McBride  
**Members:** Virginia Searl  
Ken Morrow  
Mark Harrington  
Jeff Pollock

**Village Attorney:** Jeff Turner  
**Building Inspector:** Steve Lauth  
**Recording Secretary:** Marina Pacheco-Walker

**Call to Order:**

**Motion by Chairperson McBride, seconded by Member Pollock,** to call the meeting to order.  
**Vote:** McBride – yes, Morrow – yes, Harrington – yes, Searl – yes, Pollock - yes. *Motion Carries.*

Attorney Turner explained that Chairperson Cove is not in attendance and proposed that the Board move to appoint Member McBride as acting Chairperson for the meeting.

**Motion by Member Searl, seconded by Member Harrington,** to appoint Member McBride as acting Chairperson for the meeting.  
**Vote:** McBride – abstain, Morrow – yes, Harrington – yes, Searl – yes, Pollock - yes. *Motion Carries.*

The Recording Secretary read the following statement:

Pursuant to Governor Cuomo’s recent Executive Orders and due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the Village Hall will be closed to the public during this meeting. The public can watch the live meeting online from the videoconferencing link made available on the Village of Pittsford’s website or Facebook page.

**7-10 Schoen Place – Pavilion Sign**

**Present:** Jennifer Collins, Owner

**Application: Submitted, date-stamped, and reviewed by Building Inspector on 3/30/2021.**  
Ms. Collins presented plans for a sign to identify the newly constructed pavilion at 7-10 Schoen Place. Sign will be 24.00” x 150.00” matte black with a blue border and white lettering to say:

“COLLINS PAVILION AT SCHOEN PLACE”. Ms. Collins mentioned that the blue border will be identical to the border that is on the sign on the currently existing pavilion nearby.

Chairperson McBride asked if the sign will cover the entire cupola space in width in height and if there is a background behind the sign. Ms. Collins confirmed that to be correct.

Chairperson McBride opened the floor to comments and questions from Board Members.

Member Searl stated that the sign seemed perfectly reasonable for the new construction.

Member Pollock also agreed that the sign was reasonable.

Member Harrington added that he commends Ms. Collins for having the job done so quickly and professionally.

Building Inspector Lauth asked which version of the sign the Board would like to approve, version of sign with plain black background or version of sign with blue border on the black background. Several Members agree to allow Ms. Collin’s to choose her preference.

**Motion by Member Searl, seconded by Member Harrington,** to approve as submitted the application of Jennifer Collins for a sign, with or without a blue border, at the Pavilion at 7-10 Schoen Place. No conditions. Findings of Fact: The sign appears to conform the Village sign ordinance and is appropriate for the new structure.

**Vote:** McBride – yes, Morrow – yes, Harrington – yes, Searl – yes, Pollock - yes. *Motion Carries.*

**Decision Filed in the Office of the Village Clerk on April 12, 2021.**

#### **44 Lincoln Avenue – Window Replacement**

**Present:** Peter and Molly Coons, Owners

**Application: Submitted, date-stamped, and reviewed by Building Inspector.**

Chairperson McBride explained that the application was a complicated issue and wanted to begin by asking the homeowners what they want and then to describe what they had been advised by window specialists Jim Liebel and Steve Jordan.

Mr. Coons explained that he would like replacement windows. Currently none of the windows on his home open. They have either broken panes or ropes and pulleys that are no longer operational. Mentioned that the windows are original windows from 1925 and are in great disrepair. Mr. and Mrs. Coons had Jim Liebel, Steve Jordan and 3-4 other companies provide quotes for the windows. They explained that Jim Liebel provided a quote to build all new windows and that the quote was expensive so they looked for other options.

Mr. Coons stated that in his meeting with Steve Jordan, Mr. Jordan stated that the windows could be repaired, providing a conflicting message with Mr. Liebel, but that Mr. Jordan's schedule would not allow him to begin work on the windows for 2 years. Mr. Coons stated that time was a factor as the house was very cold due to the windows and they could not be looked through in the winter due to condensation.

Chairperson McBride asked if Mr. and Mrs. Coons had gotten a financial estimate on what the two recommended specialists were charging and what their timeframes to begin the project would be.

Mrs. Coons explained the Jim Liebel was offering to make new windows and provided a price of \$51,800. Steve Jordan did not provide a quote, but provided a "report" outlining three options for each window. Mrs. Coons further explained that Mr. Jordan was unavailable by phone and that she is unable to identify which windows have which options pursuant to his report. Mrs. Coons mentioned that Mr. Jordan's report stated that their storm windows were in good condition and that she disagreed with that assessment because there are storms on her bedroom window that they cannot see out of. Mrs. Coons said that she found the report to be confusing. Mrs. Coons stated that the report cited price as between \$1,400 to \$2,000 per window. For 25 windows the price was approximately 50 thousand dollars, very near the price that Mr. Liebel had provided.

Chairperson McBride asked what the price of replacing the windows with seemingly identical windows would be. Mrs. Coon asked if he was asking specifically about the quote for replacement by Jim Liebel. Chairperson McBride said the question was open to anyone that they received a quote from. Mrs. Coons answered that they also got a quote from Rochester Colonial for all wood windows. Mrs. Coons stated that the windows from Rochester Colonial were approximately \$29,000 without installation and that they could have them installed for around \$10,000. Mr. and Mrs. Coons expressed that they were going to be spending a large amount of money either way and because of that their preference is to have something new rather than to repair something that is 100 years old. They explained that they have already spent a lot on renovating the inside of the home due to the state it was in upon purchase and that they would like to get the windows that they want, within reason.

Chairperson McBride added that he is aware of both Jim Liebel and Steve Jordan as being experienced, credible workmen to perform this function and although their opinions differed, they both have the experience and credibility to work on the windows.

Mrs. Coons added that it is their preference to go with the Rochester Colonial windows. It is a wood for wood replacement with new and more efficient windows that would open. As Mr. Coons had stated, they were cold all winter and now it is summer and they cannot open any windows to get a breeze.

Chairperson McBride asked if Mr. and Mrs. Coons could describe the difference between the currently existing windows and the Rochester Colonial windows being proposed.

Mrs. Coons explained that she was not a window expert. Explained that the windows should look close to the currently existing ones. Further explained that the Rochester Colonial wood replacement windows were used elsewhere in the Village.

Chairperson McBride asked if Building Inspector Lauth had anything to add.

Building Inspector Lauth stated that the Rochester Colonial option are solid wood replacement windows. They will have grid patterns that match the patterns on the existing windows and the difference would not be discernable from public way. Further explained that the Rochester Colonial replacement would give them a modern window, tilt-in, energy efficient windows with insulated glass and a 25-year warranty. Building Inspector Lauth cited the 2-year waiting period and stated that he hopes the Board will help to accommodate in that regard.

Chairperson McBride asked if the applicant had anything further to add.

Mrs. Coons answered that she has done due diligence in contacting everyone available to repair the windows and when it comes down to timing and finance, they are most comfortable with the wood for wood replacement.

Chairperson McBride asked Member Searl her opinion regarding how this application is affected by the Historic Preservation guidelines, codes and requirements.

Member Searl began with the history of the house. It was built in 1925, has wood siding and originally had asbestos shingles on the roof to resemble slate. There may be a rubber imitation slate shingle on the home now. The builder of the home was Pierce Rylot. Both the home and the garage are contributing structures in the National Register for the Pittsford Village Historic District. The home is a two-story craftsman style with jerkin head roof and a general "8 over 1" window sash.

Member Searl read from the Village Preservation Ordinance: "the purpose of the preservation ordinance states, the Village of Pittsford Board of Trustees recognizes the historical and architectural significance, integrity, uniqueness of exterior design or construction should be conserved, protected and preserved to maintain the archetypal architectural character of Pittsford Village. The Village is an Historic District and the National Register of Historic Places. The purpose of our ordinance is to promote the general welfare by among other things, providing for the protection, perpetuation and utilization of buildings within the village that reflect the special elements of the village's historical, architectural, cultural, economic or aesthetic heritage for the following reasons:

1. To foster public knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the historical and architectural character of the Village and the accomplishments of its past.
2. To protect and promote the economic benefits of historic and architectural preservation to the Village, its inhabitants and Villagers.
3. To protect property values in the Village.

4. To promote and encourage continued private ownership and stewardship of historic buildings in the Village.”

Member Searl reviewed the Board’s general advisory powers; “The Board shall use the standards set forth in this chapter, the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation, the Village of Pittsford design guidelines and/or, any other locally developed standards for review.”

Member Searl explained that the Secretary of the Interior is in charge of all things preservation and that it is the function of the Board to evaluate and render a determination upon an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness, approve modifications, or conditions, or to deny such application. It is also the function of the Board to evaluate and render a determination upon an application for a Certificate of an Economic Hardship, approve modifications, or conditions, or to deny such application.

Member Searl explained the definition for rehabilitation, as defined by Village Code, as “the act or process of making possible a compatible use for property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features of the property which convey its historical, architectural and cultural values.”

Member Searl reviewed the criteria by which the Board may approve the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness:

- A Certificate of Appropriateness may be issued only if the Board determines that the proposed work shall not have a substantial adverse effect on the esthetic, historical, or architectural significance, and value of the property itself, the district, or neighboring properties in such districts.
- Any alteration to any exterior architectural feature of any building or structure in the Village, in any construction of any building or structure in the Village shall be compatible with the properties in the Village.

Member Searl reviewed the principles applying to compatibility as the general design and character of the proposed alteration or construction, relative to existing features of the property, that the neighborhood context, visual scale and visual compatibility with the proposed alteration or construction in relation to the property itself. The importance of historic physical and visual features, to the significance of the property. Architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced whenever possible.

Member Searl cited the Secretary of Interior Standards for Historic Rehabilitation;

Standard #2: “Historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved...The removal of historic materials, or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.”

Standard #5: “Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques are examples of craftsmanship that characterize the properties and shall be preserved. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced”

Member Searl cited the Village of Pittsford’s Design guidelines: “Windows are among the most important character defining features of a historic home...they add depth to the façade and provide visual interest by reflecting light. Poor maintenance will result in unattractive windows that do not operate smoothly, accumulated layers of paint, broken sash cords, and chains will cause the sash to bind. These conditions can be easily corrected by either a carpenter or a handy homeowner. Peeling paint, broken glass, and failing putty are unsightly, but also easily fixed. Beware of a tradesman who tells you that your windows can’t be repaired. Usually, they can...Owners may be concerned that their historic windows are not as energy efficient as replacement windows. Caulking window openings and installing weather stripping will help stop air infiltration and energy loss, repairing and installing sash locks will help the meeting rails meet tightly, and therefore stop drafts. Interior and exterior storm windows will further reduce energy loss, despite false marketing claims, historic windows with properly fitted storms have virtually the same thermal efficiency as a new window and will last much longer because of superior quality wood.”

Chairperson McBride asked if there were any questions on the citations provided by Member Searl before moving forward.

Member Searl asked the homeowners if they were aware that the Board had a copy of the letter that they were provided by Mr. Jordan. Ms. Coons expressed frustration that the Board would have the letter as it was meant to be for the homeowner to provide to the Board.

Mr. Coons stated that at the time of Jim Leibel’s response he was made aware that certain members of the Board did not approve of the replacement. After that had happened, Mr. Jordan was recommended and that he was in favor of repairing the windows rather than replacing them. Mr. Coons expressed that it “felt like a set-up” that Mr. Jordan was recommended to them with the solution that was favored by the Board. Mr. Coons stated that the guidelines and standards cited by Member Searl should be read to every perspective homebuyer.

Mrs. Coons also added that she was also referred to a gentleman in Central New York, whom she reached out to numerous times and did not receive a response. Mrs. Coons stated that she was told that it was the homebuyers’ responsibility to know what living in the Village’s preservation district entails, however, she was not informed or asked to sign anything acknowledging that she understood. Mrs. Coons spoke with her attorney on the matter and they were not aware of anything to that effect either. Mr. and Mrs. Coons expressed that they felt they had done more than enough due diligence to attempt to satisfy the Board.

Chairperson McBride asked Attorney Turner to provide legal context regarding the Village’s preservation ordinance. Attorney Turner explained that what he focuses on in the ordinance is that architectural features need to be repaired rather than replaced whenever possible. He

questioned as to whether or not a two-year waiting period, where you are unsure of when completion of the project will be or if the project is even possible to repair, was reasonable or unreasonable. Attorney Turner stated that a Supreme Court Judge would likely agree that a two-year waiting period is unreasonable. Attorney Turner further explained that at this point the matter is not about hardship, but about what the ordinance requires and what is best for this property. Further stated that if "everything was equal" and repair was plausible, then it would be a reasonable option, but the caveats of this case, and the added waiting period adds a different twist that the Board must consider very carefully.

Member Pollock stated that he had read the letter and also finds the two-year waiting period to be unreasonable.

Chairperson McBride added that it was both Mr. Liebel and Mr. Jordan who cited two year waiting periods. Building Inspector Lauth confirmed that Mr. Liebel had also stated that he would not be able to begin the project for at least a year to 18 months.

Attorney Turner pointed out that Mr. Liebel's services would be for replacement, not repair. Building Inspector Lauth confirmed this.

Member Searl asked the homeowners if they paid Mr. Jordan at all. Mr. and Mrs. Coons confirmed that they did not pay anyone who provided a quote.

Mr. Coons asked if Mr. Jordan had come because Member Searl had asked him to. Member Searl confirmed. Mr. Coons stated that Mr. Jordan did not make it clear when they met that he was coming to provide a quote on behalf of the Board. He stated that Mr. Jordan said that he came as a favor and did not make it clear that he was there on official business of the Village. Mr. Coons stated that he wished he would have known.

Member Searl explained that the ordinance grants the Board the right and opportunity to hire an independent expert to evaluate conditions when the Board needs further assistance. Further stated that Mr. Leibel is an excellent craftsman, but he only builds windows, he does not repair them.

Chairperson McBride responded that he understood that Mr. Leibel did not build new windows for the Mason Stone house but "significantly repaired" existing windows.

Member Searl stated that Mr. Jordan has been repairing windows for 50 years and has a nationally recognized book on window repair. Mr. Jordan wrote a report of the windows and deemed them repairable. Member Searl further stated that she is unsure of that they were given by Mr. Liebel, but he deemed the windows as unrepairable and therefore, in her opinion, Mr. Liebel is not an expert. She stated that the Board saw no evidence to support Mr. Leibel's conclusion that the windows were not repairable. The Board did receive evidence from Mr. Jordan that the windows are repairable. Member Searl stated that while she recognizes that at this

point no one has been identified who is able to repair the windows as quickly as they would like, but that does not mean that there is no one in the City of Rochester who can. Further stated that she is working very hard to find more craftsmen who can repair windows, but it is not legitimate to say that they cannot wait two years when they have not asked anyone to repair the windows who is qualified to do so.

Mrs. Coons mentioned that she reached out to Bob Corby, who referred someone in Central New York. She attempted to reach out to him numerous times to no avail.

Chairperson McBride stated that there were 6 people that were recommended by the Board. Member Searl replied that the contractors on that list will not repair windows.

Building Inspector Lauth stated that Mr. Leibel does do excellent work, as evidenced by his work on the Mason House. Further stated that the Board provided a list to the homeowners, and the evaluation of Mr. Jordan as someone recommended by the Board should be valued.

Mr. Coons noted that it is improper to find someone else to provide an opinion just because the Board did not like the initial evaluation. Further noted that the waiting period might be two-years and Mrs. Coons has already spent nearly half a year following up with contractors at the request of the Board.

Member Harrington stated that he has a lot of empathy towards Mr. and Mrs. Coons and understands what they are going through. Member Harrington has an old country house with 52 windows, and to honor the different standards of the Village, it took approximately 4-5 years to have his windows fixed. He stated that in the meantime, his home was not habitable. Member Harrington said that based on his personal experience, and the conditions of today where craftsmen are becoming scarce and in high demand, it is very optimistic to believe that the project will be started within 2 years.

Member Morrow stated that in his home he was able to employ a carpenter to employ a carpenter to free the windows from the paint, install new ropes and connect them to the counterweights, and install a wood board between the front and back sash in order to repair the windows on his home.

Mr. and Mrs. Coons maintained that the issues with their windows are more severe than that and worry that if someone comes in to simply scrape away paint or putty that they could potentially cause more damage.

Building Inspector Lauth further explained to the Board the pricing as it was laid out by Mr. Jordan. Attorney Turner reminded all attendees that the focus of this discussion is not the cost, as the meeting was not a hardship hearing. The focus is on whether or not a repair is reasonably possible.



**Motion by Chairperson McBride, seconded by Member Harrington,** to approve as submitted the application of Peter and Molly Coons for replacement windows by Rochester Colonial at 44 Lincoln Avenue, with the conditions that the new windows will match the previous ones by way of muntin's and openings, and that the windows removed by Rochester Colonial will be donated to an architectural salvage company at no cost to the applicant.

**Vote:** McBride – yes, Morrow – no, Harrington – yes, Searl – no, Pollock - yes. *Motion Carries.*

**Decision Filed in the Office of the Village Clerk on April 12, 2021.**

### **36 E. Jefferson – Window Replacement**

**Present:** Mike Grosvenor, General Manager of Renewal by Anderson

**Application: Submitted, date-stamped, and reviewed by Building Inspector on 2/25/2021.**

Mr. Grosvenor presented plans on behalf of the homeowner Mrs. Gyles, for a wood composite window supplied by Renewal by Anderson. Mr. Grosvenor explained that his division of the company does not produce wood windows, but does produce the composite which has been designed and engineered to replicate the appearance and performance of wood windows. He further explained that the composite windows have been approved by many historical preservation boards across Western New York and nationally. Mr. Grosvenor explained that he has come before this board and been rejected for the same windows before and he felt that he may be rejected again in this instance based on the previous discussion, however, he agreed to appear before the Board as a favor to the applicant.

Chairperson McBride asked Mr. Grosvenor if the original windows were currently on the home. Mr. Grosvenor confirmed that he understands that they are original by their appearance and dated look.

Chairperson McBride asked for clarification regarding the proposal. The proposal is to replace the original wood windows with composite windows and also to change the style of the windows. Mr. Grosvenor confirmed that is the case.

Member Searl asked for clarification as to which window openings will have the change in style. Mr. Grosvenor explained that the front facing windows on the home are a picture window with two side windows, they are three windows in one opening. Then on the left side of the home are two double hung windows that are mulled together. The homeowner is seeking to install a gliding window in all of those locations.

Member Searl asked why they are proposing gliding windows rather than double hung. Mr. Grosvenor explained that to have gliding windows is the preference of the homeowner. Further explained that the window to the right of the door, at the request of the owner, would be replaced with a triple gliding unit. The center unit would be a fixed window and the two side panels will glide inward over the top of the fixed panel.

Chairperson McBride asked if there are any other gliding windows currently on the house. Mr. Grosvenor answered that there is a vinyl plastic gliding window on the back of the home that is not original to the home. Per his estimate it appears to be approximately 15 years old. Mr. Grosvenor also mentioned that the home had been resided with vinyl plastic siding.

Member Searl explained that the historical survey of the home shows that it originally had asbestos shingles and that a common method of encapsulating and abating the asbestos is to install vinyl siding over them.

Attorney Turner mentioned that it is unlikely that there is an approval on record for the vinyl siding. Member Searl agreed that it is unlikely.

Attorney Turner asked why the windows are being replaced. Mr. Grosvenor answered that there is extreme rot on several of them. Member Searl added that it is very common when putting vinyl siding over asbestos shingles that the window trim and frames retain moisture which causes rot.

Member Searl asked if the rot will be removed as a part of the window replacement. Mr. Grosvenor confirmed that rot removal is part of the removal process before installing the new windows and that the rot is part of the sash of the current windows and going into the frame as well.

Member Searl stated that on this house in particular she does not object to the Renewal by Anderson windows if they were double hung. Further stated that this is a post-war home, cape-cod form, built in 1953, and that the wood of the windows would not have been constructed with high quality, old growth wood, and therefore a replacement is appropriate. Member Searl warned Mr. Grosvenor to be very cautious as they will likely come into contact with the asbestos shingling.

Chairperson McBride asked Member Searl for clarification that she is supportive of the material of the windows but objects to the change in style. Member Searl confirmed and explained that double hung windows were most appropriate for the cape-cod style of the house.

Mr. Grosvenor explained that the other request of the applicant was that the replacement windows do not have the grills, or mullions, as the original windows did, and referenced a cape-cod style home next door as an example. Member Searl asked if the windows are two over two with horizontal grills. Mr. Grosvenor confirmed. Member Searl stated that is an unusual design, and further stated that she would not object to double hung windows if they were one over one.

Chairperson McBride stated that he believes that as long as the double hung style of the window is retained that he is accepting of a change in the materials.

Several Members agree to table the application to allow Mr. Grosvenor an opportunity to confer with his client about using double hung windows as the Board will not accept gliding windows.

Mr. Grosvenor asked if it is possible that the sliding window at the back of the house was installed without Board approval. Chairperson McBride stated that is likely the case.

**Application is tabled by the Board.**


## MINUTES

**Motion by Member Searl, and seconded by Chairperson McBride,** to approve the Historical Preservation Board Minutes from March 8, 2021.

**Vote:** McBride – yes; Morrow – yes; Searl – yes; Harrington – yes; Pollock - yes. *Motion Carries.*

**Motion by Member Harrington, and seconded by Member Pollock,** to adjourn the meeting.

**Vote:** Morrow – yes; Searl – yes; Harrington – yes; Pollock - yes. *Motion Carries.*

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Marina Pacheco-Walker, Recording Secretary