

*Royalston Historic District Commission*  
*Royalston, Massachusetts, 01368*

Meeting Minutes

Date: December 15, 2011

Attendees: Bob, Chris, Ken, Pierre (secretary), Rick (late). All were active voters.

The meeting started at 7:35 PM. In absence of the HDC chairperson and vice-chairperson the members present unanimously elected Bob to preside at this meeting.

Bob decided to start with the Public Hearings. Pierre explained that although the commission had only required a public hearing for one application, he had scheduled public hearings for both, following section E.2.g.3 of the HDC policies and procedures. Due to the Thanksgiving holiday there was not enough time to send an abutter notice about the second application, potentially followed by a public hearing notice should any abutter request one, while still respecting the legal delays.

Public Hearings

Bob opened the public hearing at 7:40. No public comments had been received and the only member of the public was the applicant, Mark Smith,

Application 2011-11-01 about the rear deck railing at 7 South Royalston Road

Mark presented the application. Bob asked a few questions as he was not present at the last meeting but no controversy arose.

Bob then closed this public hearing and opened the second one.

Application 2011-11-02 about the front rail at 7 South Royalston Road

Again Mark presented the application. Pierre noted that the rail was not properly installed; the height above the door threshold is much less than the height above the ground. Pierre also pointed out that most metal railings in the Historic District consist of just a single or double rail (such as 4 & 5 on the Common, Town Hall, Church, 9 South Royalston Rd). There are three properties with grid style railings: the library, on the side steps of the Bastille and on the long front stairs at 10 South Royalston Rd. Those railings are more elaborate than those at 7 South Royalston Rd, except the top section at 10 South Royalston Rd which is virtually identical. A discussion then followed about the changes in railing styles over time and metal vs wood. It was also pointed out that the railing at 7 South Royalston Rd is very conspicuous, being in the center of the house and very close to the street. Mark stated he did not ask for the front railing; the FHA forced it on him.

Bob then closed the public hearing and opened the regular meeting.

Old business

Application 2011-11-01 about the rear deck railing at 7 South Royalston Road. Pierre stated that as the Public Meeting made it clear, he thought the construction was necessary and would have no significant impact on the historic character of the District. Thus he motioned to accept the application and to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Application 2011-11-02 about the front rail at 7 South Royalston Road. During a fairly long discussion, several commission members expressed their concerns about the 1950 railing style, in light of the age of the building (one of the oldest in town) and the conspicuous location of the railing. Pierre asked the applicant if he wished to continue the application to a later date and to revise the proposal without incurring much extra delay. Mark declined. Bob then made a motion to reject the application. It was seconded and the vote to reject was unanimous. It was made clear to the applicant that he could propose another railing design if he wished.

### Minutes

The members read the minutes of the November meeting and noticed a mistake in the last paragraph. Ken motioned to approve the minutes as corrected. Chris seconded. All voted in favor.

### New business

Chris sounded the committee about constructing a smaller addition to his house at 2 on the Common. Contrary to the former proposal it would not replace the kitchen ell, but it would be adjoining to it, like the former barn was. It would look like a barn, perhaps even without clapboard. The project is still very preliminary. The commissioners listened, asked questions and showed sympathy to the concept but made no commitments.

### Meeting adjourned

Bob adjourned the meeting at 9 PM

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "P.A. Humblet". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Pierre A. Humblet,  
Secretary