

Michael Gehr, chair, called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m. on Thursday, October 22, 2015, in the Conference Room, Fourth Floor, City Hall. A roster of the members of the commission and the technical posts they fill are on file and available upon request. Also present were commission members L. Allen, C. Crumrine, C. Davis, P. Reed, S. Silas, and M. Wertman. S. Bockmiller, Development Planner/Zoning Administrator, and D. Calhoun, Secretary, were present on behalf of the Planning and Code Administration Division.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 8, 2015:

MOTION: (Davis/Wertman) So moved.
DISCUSSION: None.
ACTION: APPROVED (Unanimous)

CONSENT AGENDA

None.

DESIGN REVIEW

None.

WORKSHOP

108 North Potomac Street – William Simmelink – Replace Windows.

Staff Report: According to the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties listing for this building, the first and second floors date to the early 19th century; the third floor was added in the late 1800s. The existing nine-over-nine windows are not original to the building and there appears to have been several different grille patterns on the building over the years. The biggest issue will be deciding on an appropriate grille pattern.

Property Owner/Commission Discussion: William Simmelink, property owner, and Mark Schumacher, Builders First Source in Point of Rocks, Maryland, were present. Mr. Simmelink pointed out that there are three different grille patterns on the building now. He has consulted with the Western Maryland Room at the Washington County Free Library to attempt to determine the original grille pattern from historic photographs. Mr. Simmelink indicated the last time he discussed replacement windows with the commission the recommendation was for four-over-four windows. Dr. Reed stated there was a fire in the building next door in the 1940s and there are many photographs of the fire equipment on the scene—there may be a glimpse of

Mr. Simmelink's building in those photos. Mr. Bockmiller said he checked those photographs and the windows had already been replaced with one-over-one windows in the 1940s. Dr. Reed stated that historically four-over-four windows were rarely used. If the building was updated in the 1880s a more likely scenario would have been two-over-two. Another option would be six-over-six.

Mr. Simmelink and Mr. Schumacher had a window sample from Windsor Window Company in Iowa that Mr. Simmelink would like to use. It is a wood window with an aluminum-clad exterior and exterior grilles and true divided lights. The only windows to be replaced at this time are the front windows. Except for repainting, all the molding will stay the same. Some of the window sills will need to be rehabbed.

Commission members recommended that Mr. Simmelink use the two-over-two windows with a 7/8-inch bar.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

OLD BUSINESS

Comprehensive Plan Update – Urban Design and Historic Preservation Element.

The HDC's recommendations concerning the Urban Design and Historic Preservation Element were presented to the Planning Commission its last meeting. The HDC's recommendations were not received well. Mr. Bockmiller suggested that HDC members attend the Planning Commission's public review meeting on the Comprehensive Plan revisions. That hearing has not been scheduled yet, and HDC members want to be kept abreast of the hearing schedule.

Design Guidelines Review – Downtown.

Commission members and staff discussed the following revisions to the Downtown Design Guidelines:

Cover sheet will be made less busy by eliminating references to previous commissions.

Chapter 1 – Introduction.

- Amend language to include any new studies that were completed concerning the Downtown, including recent Maryland Main Street designation, Urban Partners study.

- Expand the rationale to include increased property values in historic districts, and a decrease in crime if properties are well maintained.
- Include mention of the City's investment in Downtown infrastructure, such as sidewalks and parking garages.
- Page 6 – State of Maryland tax credit information needs to be updated, including the name change to “Sustainable Communities Tax Credit.” Federal tax credits have not changed.
- Add information on City of Hagerstown incentives such as the Partners in Economic Progress (PEP) program, Sign and Façade Grant program, etc.

Chapter 2 – History of Downtown.

- Expand on the history of the Downtown, by adding three or four pages.
- Add maps to demonstrate how the downtown has grown over the years.

Chapter 3 – Architectural Styles.

- Use images from *A Field Guide to American Houses: The Definitive Guide to Identifying and Understanding America's Domestic Architecture*, by Virginia Savage McAlester (Knopf, 2013) (Ms. Davis offered to assist in getting permission from the publisher to use images, if necessary.)
- Concerning the local photographs, add the historic names of the buildings and street names.
- Use photographs from McAlester's to compare Hagerstown examples.
- Add an “Other Architectural Styles” section for use as a comparison.
- Compile the “Architectural Styles” section once and use it both the Commercial and Residential Design Guidelines.
- Expand and/or illustrate the “Glossary of Terms” found at the end of the guidelines.

Chapter 4 – Ordinary Maintenance.

- Add language about neglect: “Use City resources to prevent your property getting to a deteriorated point.” Demolition by neglect language might be better suited for another section.
- Expand the explanation and provide more examples. (Dr. Reed left the meeting.)

Chapter 5 – New Construction.

- Check new design requirements in CC-MU to see if there is a need to expand in this chapter.
- Add language to the effect of if a property owner has proof of historic elements on their building the building can be rebuilt the way it was.
- Update the section on “Materials” to include a list of new products that are acceptable for use on historic buildings and require less maintenance, such as HardiPlank, or a more energy efficient.
- The “Rehabilitation” section should mention that code issues, such as ADA compliance, still take precedence over historic preservation considerations.

- The last sentence in the last bullet point, under “Siding” is more suited for the chapter on rehabilitation, not new construction. However, it was suggested revising the last sentence in that bullet point to read, “Window, door, corner trim boards and siding must not cover up cornice or eave details *when constructing an addition onto an existing historic building.*”
- Move Section H, “New Additions,” to Chapter 6.
- In Section H, explain the meaning of the bullet “Avoid damaging or obscuring any historical features, and give examples of what types of features should not be obscured such as porches.

Commission members and staff concluded that the “New Construction” chapter is too long, and some of the information contained in Chapter 5 should be moved to Chapter 6.

Discussion will pick up the next time at Chapter 6, Rehabilitation.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

ADJOURN

It was moved and seconded that the meeting adjourn (5:45 p.m.).

11/12/2015

Approved



Debra C. Calhoun – Secretary