

**Historic District Commission
MINUTES**

**February 13, 2020
City of Hagerstown, Maryland**

Michael Gehr, chair, called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m. on Thursday, February 13, 2020, 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, R. Powell, and S. Silas. S. Bockmiller, Development Planner/Zoning Administrator and D. Calhoun, Secretary, were present on behalf of the Planning and Code Administration Department.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

January 23, 2020.

MOTION: (Allen/Powell) I move to accept (the minutes of January 23).
DISCUSSION: None.
ACTION: APPROVED (Unanimous)

CONSENT AGENDA

**38-40 East North Avenue – Bob Jones and Jennifer Jones – Roof Replacement,
Case No. HDC 2020-02.**

**One East Franklin Street – City of Hagerstown/Eric Deike – Air Conditioning Unit,
Case No. HDC 2020-03.**

101 West Irvin Avenue – Melissa Hohl – Fence, Case No. HDC 2020-04.

No one was present in the audience to speak against the cases.

Mr. Gehr had a question about Case No. HDC 2020-02 and whether the scalloped shingles will be used. He visited the site and it did not appear that the work that has been done so far included the scalloped shingles mentioned in the application. Mr. Jones said the scalloped shingles have been installed as stated in the application.

Ms. Allen had concerns about the placement of the air conditioning unit for Case No. HDC 2020-03. She asked if it was possible to locate the unit somewhere other than along the front of the building. Mr. Gehr stated that because the unit will be serving the offices on the first floor on the north side of the building, the unit needs to be as close as possible.

MOTION: (Silas/Powell) Mr. Chairman, I have reviewed the materials submitted in Cases 2020-02 and 2020-04 and their associated staff reports and recommendations, and I have viewed the properties in question. The staff reports recommend approval of these applications as consistent with the

applicable standards adopted by this commission, and no one has appeared at this hearing with concerns about, issues with, or objections to these applications. Therefore, I move that this commission adopt the staff evaluations and recommendations in these cases as its own and grant Certificates of Appropriateness to the applicants for Cases HDC 2020-02 and 2020-04.

DISCUSSION:

None.

ACTION:

APPROVED (Unanimous)

MOTION:

(Silas/Powell) Mr. Chairman, I have reviewed the materials submitted in Case 2020-03 and its associated staff report and recommendations, and I have viewed the property in question. The staff report recommends approval of this application as consistent with the applicable standards adopted by this commission, and no one has appeared at this hearing with concerns about, issues with, or objections to this application. Therefore, I move that this commission adopt the staff evaluation and recommendation in this case as its own and grant a Certificates of Appropriateness to the applicant for Case 2020-03.

DISCUSSION:

None.

ACTION:

APPROVED (YES – Silas, Powell, Gehr; ABSTAIN – Allen)

DESIGN REVIEW

None.

WORKSHOP

The order of the workshops was re-arranged to accommodate the architect for 7 East Washington Street who was unavoidably detained and would arrive later.

27-29 West Antietam Street – Proposed Parking Lot – Adam Hager/Frederick, Seibert & Associates, Inc.

Staff Report. The owner is planning to construct a parking lot in the area where a building was recently demolished. Due to the narrow width of the property, it will be difficult to comply with the landscaping requirements. The Planning Commission has primary control over landscaping. Planning Commission members heard this proposal at their last meeting and had no objection to the plan. Staff suggested that the owner work with the HDC to make some effort to maintain the street wall.

Adam Hager of Frederick, Seibert & Associates, Inc., 128 South Potomac Street, Hagerstown, Maryland, and Joel Merrbaugh, 16317 Broadfording Road, Hagerstown, Maryland, owner of the property, were present.

Mr. Merrbaugh purchased the property and demolished the building. His plan is to construct a parking lot and rent the spaces. Mr. Hager stated that they have been working with City staff in the Planning Office and the City Engineer's office. Mr. Merrbaugh and Mr. Hager met with the Planning Commission last night. Concerning maintaining the streetscape, Mr. Merrbaugh plans to use a metal fence he salvaged from a demolition project in the first block of Jonathan Street. The fence will be cleaned up and painted. The sections are six feet long and four feet tall and will use square metal posts. The fence will extend across the front of the property and six feet along each side. Mr. Hager explained that traffic will enter the parking lot from West Antietam Street and exit at the back of the property. Mr. Merrbaugh obtained a 24 x 50-foot easement from the adjacent property owner to allow parking lot patrons to use the property to the rear to access an alley located east of Mr. Merrbaugh's property.

Mr. Bockmiller explained that he brought this to the HDC for its feedback, although the commission cannot regulate the use of the property. A site plan will be necessary and the HDC will have an opportunity to review the site plan, including how the street wall is incorporated into the project. Mr. Powell had concerns about site lighting. Mr. Bockmiller indicated site lighting is a site plan issue; site plan standards require that the lot be illuminated if it is to be used after dark. The Planning Commission will ultimately review and approve the site plan, including the lighting provisions.

In response to a question by Ms. Allen, Mr. Hager stated that Mr. Merrbaugh is considering options to address cut-through traffic. Ms. Allen also questioned whether the plants and shrubs used in the landscaping bed will get enough water based on their location. Mr. Hager stated they are considering different species of plants that may not require as much water and are shade tolerant. He added there is a spigot on the property. Commission members had no concerns with the proposed steel posts anchoring the sides of the fence. Mr. Bockmiller pointed out that the end posts should be more substantial/thicker than the fence pickets themselves. Mr. Powell suggested that Mr. Merrbaugh consider a powder coating for the fence since it would be more durable than paint.

7 East Washington Street – MJ Wojewodzki, AIA/Quinn Evans Architects.

MJ Wojewodzki of Quinn Evans was present on behalf of the Alexander House.

Ms. Wojewodzki reviewed the project and the proposed work on the building. They have applied to the National Park Service (NPS) for funding since applications to the state of Maryland have not been successful. However, they did meet with the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) several times for feedback. The MHT has reviewed major elements of the proposal with the National

Park Service and relayed to the architects the NPS comments on the plan. One issue concerns replacement windows. Originally the windows had grilles, however, this building has ten floors. The question is what will be practical given the number of windows that need to be replaced.

Scope of Exterior Renovations:

Windows. They met with the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) for advice on replacing the windows. Currently there is aluminum cladding from a 1978 renovation over the former metal window frame. Originally the windows on the building varied between six-over-six or eight-over-eight depending on the size of the windows. In the 1970s one-over-one vinyl windows were installed. Their first choice is to remove the vinyl windows and replace them with one-over-one aluminum windows. Ms. Wojewodzki stated that wood multi-pane windows do not exist. The MHT was willing to consider one-over-one windows with a historic profile for that reason. On the second floor there are rectangular windows that sit behind what was the original arched openings. The MHT has advised that the arched windows should be retained. Staff suggested doing grilles up to a certain floor height.

Mr. Silas stated that in the past, one way to mitigate lead dust was to clad windows. If the cladding is removed the painted window is exposed. Ms. Wojewodzki said the cladding will remain to avoid the lead issue. The first floor storefront has aluminum cladding which they would like to remove; however, there are cost concerns. Mr. Silas stated that the state is only concerned about lead dust when it deals with residential rental, but you need to be safe to avoid lawsuits. Ms. Wojewodzki said they will be working with the National Park Service with regard to the window replacements on the first floor.

The wood windows that used to be the lobby and the ballroom area will remain. Loose paint will be removed and the hardware will be replaced. The upper windows are in apartment units. Concerning the upper windows, commission members agreed that the original style windows should be used up to the entablature (the windows in the first row of brick on the third floor).

Façade Work. The East Washington Street and South Potomac Street facades will be cleaned and damaged areas will be repointed. Existing louvres under the windows have been removed. To avoid issues with brick infill not matching the existing brick they are proposing to fill the area with an insulated wall and install a painted panel over the insulated wall to complement the color of the brick. The MHT was amenable to this proposal.

Ms. Wojewodzki stated that they plan to refurbish the storefront to reflect the original appearance as much as possible. There are historic photographs they will be using to accomplish this. Several storefront windows have been infilled with cast stone panels and some jeweler display boxes. The non-historic entry way on Public Square will be replaced. A corner space will become usable, leasable space once more. Originally this space was a coffee shop; however, all vestiges of that use are gone. A ramp will be constructed in the square to provide accessibility to this area. The proposed ramp will complement the pavers in Public Square.

Miscellaneous Items. In the alleyway on the east side of the building there is an old fire escape that will be replaced with a new metal fire escape with fiber glass tread and a shed roof for egress. On the back side, a new mini-split HVAC system will be installed for the residential units. The line sets for those condensers will not reach the roof. To get around that they proposed to mount a frame on the south side between the fourth and seventh floors. The frame will be minimally visible from Washington Street and will be painted to match the brick. The MHT has no concerns about this and the NPS service also had no comment. The plan is to keep it as discreet as possible and avoid maintenance issues.

Commission members had no other questions or comments. Ms. Wojewodzki stated that they will be submitting the full package and cost estimate to the state for tax credits for the residential parts and to the National Park Service for Part 2.

Mr. Bockmiller advised Ms. Wojewodzki that the final submittal will need to provide specific models for all the replacement windows and the other materials and finishes.

NEW BUSINESS

181 South Walnut Street – Joint Veterans Council of Washington County – Courtesy Review of Proposed Fence.

The Washington County Joint Veterans Council applied for a fence permit to install a heavy gauge metal, 18-inch tall fence to delineate the area of the Vietnam War Veterans Memorial. Staff had no comments; commission members had no concerns.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

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ADJOURN

It was moved and seconded that the meeting adjourn (5:30 p.m.).

3/12/2020

Approved



Debra C. Calhoun – Secretary