

Michael Gehr, chair, called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m. on Thursday, May 23, 2013, in the Fourth Floor Conference Room, 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 S. Dozier (late), V. Hrabal, 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: April 25, 2013.**

**MOTION:** (Wertman/Silas) Mr. Chairman, I'll move we adopt.  
**DISCUSSION:** None.  
**ACTION:** APPROVED (Unanimous)

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**100 North Potomac Street - Blackwell<sup>2</sup>, LLC - Repaint Building (Facade and Grant), Case No. G 2013-01.**

**145 West Washington Street - Robert Goldsack - Sign and Grant, Case No. HDC 2013-18.**

**43 South Potomac Street - Flying Pie Co. - Sign and Grant, Case No. HDC 2013-19.**

**37 West Antietam Street - Somerlock and Stolz, LLP - Signs and Grant, Case No. HDC 2013-20.**

**34-36 South Potomac Street - Washington County Arts Council - Signs and Grant, Case No. HDC 2013-22.**

**13 East Washington Street (Alexander House) - WHAG TV - Sign, Case No. HDC 2013-24.**

**MOTION:** (Hrabal/Silas) Mr. Chairman, I have reviewed the materials submitted in Case Nos. G 2013-01, HDC 2013-18, HDC 2013-19, HDC 2013-20, HDC 2013-22, and HDC 2013-24, 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 their own and grant

Certificates of Appropriateness to the applicants in Case Nos. G 2013-01, HDC 2013-18, HDC 2013-19, HDC 2013-20, HDC 2013-22, and HDC 2013-24, and the grant applications.

**DISCUSSION:** None.  
**ACTION:** APPROVED (Unanimous)

**DESIGN REVIEW**

**121 Broadway – Rose Greenawalt – Replace East and West Side Windows,  
Case No. HDC 2013-17.**

Rose Greenawalt, 11903 Peacock Trail, Hagerstown, Maryland, was present. (Ms. Dozier arrived.)

Staff Report: This building is a B resource in the Potomac-Broadway Local Historic District. The applicant is proposing to replace ten windows on the east side of the building with nine-over-one vinyl windows with exterior grilles. The windows will resemble the existing windows. Only eight of the ten windows are visible from the street, but Ms. Greenawalt is proposing to replace all of them so they are the same. Windows on the west side of the building are not visible due to the narrow space between buildings. Ms. Greenawalt would prefer to replace these windows with one-over-one windows, but would be agreeable to installing the same style of window that is being requested for the east side. Staff recommended approval with exterior grilles on the six most-forward windows on the east side and two most-forward windows on the west side. Others are not visible from the street. This model was approved last month for a house on Hamilton Boulevard.

Applicant/Commission Discussion: Ms. Greenawalt did not have anything to add to the staff report, but asked if she could wrap the window frames rather than keep the wood which will require periodic maintenance. Mr. Bockmiller stated that the design guidelines do not recommend wrapping the frames so the wood should be maintained. Ms. Greenawalt stated that she is not replacing the windows on the front—just the windows on the sides. The grille pattern will be replicated as it currently exists.

**MOTION:** (Wertman/Hrabal) Mr. Chairman, I have inspected the project plans and the property in question and if constructed in accordance with these plans, with the nine-over-one windows replacing them as they exist now, the project is compatible with character of the district for the reasons that the materials are appropriate, the architectural detailing will kept the same, and general form and proportion to what's there now they're generally in harmony with the Architectural Design Guidelines for the Residential Preservation Design Districts and the character of the adjoining

Appropriateness to the applicant for Case No. 2013-17.  
**DISCUSSION:** None.  
**ACTION:** APPROVED (Unanimous)

**37 West Antietam Street – East Coast Bailbonds – Signs, Case No. HDC 2013-21.**

Gary Dembo, 37 West Antietam Street, Hagerstown, Maryland, was present.

Staff Report. The building is a B resource in the Downtown Local Historic District. Applicant seeks approval to replace an existing sign over the storefront with a 150 x 50-inch sign. The new sign will be made of aluminum and plexiglass and will have vinyl lettering. The face of the existing projecting sign will be replaced with the same material as the wall sign and will be two sided. Both signs will have a white background with red vinyl lettering. Staff recommended denial, depending on the nature of the vinyl lettering, which is inconsistent with the Design Guidelines. This is an industrial building and staff noted that the commission has exercised leniency on these types of buildings in the past.

Applicant/Commission Discussion: Mr. Dembo confirmed that the lettering will be vinyl in orange, not red. The vinyl lettering will be very thin and adhered to the signage material. Ms. Hrabal asked staff about the proposed aluminum/plexiglass material for the sign board. Mr. Bockmiller stated that typically signs in the Downtown District are made of wood or foam. They require sufficient mass to keep them from flapping in the breeze. Modern materials have been approved in the past and they are usually composite that resemble wood. Mr. Bockmiller was unable to recall signs in this district constructed of sheet metal.

Mr. Dembo told the commission he had the same type of sign approved in Prince Georges County, Maryland. He will not be drilling any additional holes into the building. Ms. Wertman asked if he considered the foam material since the sign will be next to the attorneys' sign which is made of foam. Mr. Dembo said he has used the same company for all of his signage. Ms. Hrabal said the thinness and shiny nature of the material does not appear historic. Mr. Dembo said there would be a minimal light reflection. Dr. Reed said the thinness and style of lettering and logo is what concerns her, more than the actual signage material. Mr. Bockmiller added that the commission has dealt with some plastic sign applications but the applicants in those instance were proposing a plastic material with a more traditional texture. Most signage proposals are for wood or etched foam which gives the appearance of painted wood. Mr. Dembo mentioned there is an aluminum-type sign across the street. Mr. Bockmiller stated that sign is most likely in violation and needs to be removed. Dr. Reed asked if Mr. Dembo could be more flexible with the signage material. Ms. Hrabal said the materials should resemble historic materials. Mr. Gehr stated his issue is with the material, and stated if a matte finish on the metal/plexiglass is available, that might work. The sign should resemble painted wood. Commission members recommended that he check with his sign company with the guidance the commission has given (toning down the

reflectivity and painted lettering and logo). Mr. Dembo stated that waiting until the next meeting

for approval of his sign will be a hardship for him.

The case was tabled to allow Mr. Dembo time to confer with his sign company about his options, toning down the reflectivity and the texture and painting the lettering on the sign.

**53 North Potomac Street/One West Franklin Street – Kurt Cushwa – Railing With Signs,  
Case No. HDC 2013-23.**

Kurt Cushwa, One West Franklin Street, Hagerstown, Maryland, was present.

Staff Report. This building is a B resource in the Downtown Local Historic District. Applicant seeks approval to install railing with interchangeable signs on the existing steps on the West Franklin Street side of the building. A metal railing rusted and fell off several years ago. Subsequently, the area has become a hangout. Police have suggested “No Trespassing” signs, but the applicant believes those types of signs convey the wrong message to visitors to the City Center. The sign structure will prevent loiterers from sitting on the steps and will provide an opportunity to advertise events happening in the City Center, such as the Western Maryland Blues Fest, and will be replaced on a regular basis.

Staff had no recommendation on this case. Temporary signs are regulated by the Zoning Ordinance and this proposal appears to conflict with that. The Downtown Design Guidelines recommend that banners be limited, and intentionally creating a fixture to display them on an ongoing basis seems inconsistent with this direction. Also, banners advertising off-premise events constitute an off-premise sign regulated by other provisions of the City Code. Staff suggested that if this arrangement can be approved, the panels be used only for permanent signage for businesses on this site. The HDC cannot approve this arrangement for temporary signs. Mr. Bockmiller added that this is an interesting situation because the owner needs to deal with the stoop situation. The door at the top of the stoop does not function at this time.

Applicant/Commission Discussion: There is a problem with loitering. It will be a simple iron railing and Keith at Icon Graphics said he could print out banners on an ongoing basis for everything going on in Hagerstown. Icon Graphics is one of Mr. Cushwa’s tenants in this building. Mr. Cushwa stated that Blaine Mowen, the City’s Chief Code Official, suggested reinstalling the railing system. Mr. Cushwa asked if the commission could approve the railings and with plain painted panels. Staff had no objection to the plain, painted panels.

Some commission members had concerns about “boxing up” the stoop and setting a precedent. Mr. Cushwa noted that the framework will prevent people from sitting on the stoop. Mr. Cushwa does not plan to remove the stoop because the door would still be in place. Dr. Reed and Mr. Gehr agreed that the proposed railing is reversible and would not harm the structure. Mr. Gehr had concerns about the changeable signs and would prefer that the signage be permanent. Ms.

Hrabal suggested a picket railing, but Mr. Cushwa felt pickets would look awkward and it would

**Historic District Commission  
MINUTES**

**May 23, 2013  
City of Hagerstown, Maryland**

reduce the opportunity for signage. Mr. Silas was in favor of demolishing the stoop, but Mr. Cushwa stated that a door without a porch would present a negative appearance. Ms. Hrabal, Ms. Dozier, and Ms. Wertman felt that the railing as proposed does not look historic; it is too modern for the building.

**MOTION:** (Hrabal/Wertman) Mr. Chairman, I move we continue Case No. 2013-23 until the next meeting.

**DISCUSSION:** None.

**ACTION:** APPROVED (Unanimous)

**37 West Antietam Street – East Coast Bailbonds – Signs, Case No. HDC 2013-21.**

Mr. Dembo stated that after speaking with his sign company he has decided to amend his application to go with wood MDO signs with painted lettering and logo. Both signs will be the same size as initially proposed.

**MOTION:** (Hrabal/Silas) Mr. Chairman, I have inspected the project plans and the property in question and if constructed in accordance with these plans, the project is compatible with character of the district for the reasons that the height is eight feet above the sidewalk, the materials are MDO with painted letters which is appropriate, and the general form and proportion are generally in harmony with the Architectural Guidelines for the Downtown Historic District and the character of the adjoining properties. Therefore, I move that the HDC grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the applicant for Case No. 2013-21.

**DISCUSSION:** None.

**ACTION:** APPROVED (Unanimous)

**WORKSHOP:**

Kip Young was present to discuss with the commission his plans for 160-162 South Potomac Street and 151 South Potomac Street.

**160-162 South Potomac Street:**

Mr. Bockmiller noted that the work being proposed by Mr. Young will probably qualify for facade grant. Mr. Young stated he would like to move his business, the Copper Kettle, across the

street to 151 South Potomac Street, because he needs more space. Work proposed for this address

includes:

- *Repair windows.* Mr. Young stated that he would like to add storm windows at 162 South Potomac Street to protect the original windows. Commission advised that the divider on the storm windows should match the sashes on the window being protected. The goal is to not hide the window detailing. Wooden storm windows should be painted; use of bare steel or bare aluminum storm windows should be avoided.
- *Repair cornice, hidden gutter, and mansard.*
- *Remove T1-11 siding on storefront and install a new roof on the pent roof over the storefront.* Commission advised that removal of the T1-11 siding will not be an issue. Mr. Young would like to replace the T1-11 siding with a more appropriate wooden storefront, which will be painted.
- *Paint exterior of building.* The plan is to paint the exterior with a more decorative color scheme. Commission noted that it does not have purview over paint color, unless a facade grant is being requested.
- At 162 South Potomac Street, Mr. Young would like to move the third floor fire escape to an interior location on the property. Commission advised that if the fire escape will not be visible from a public way, the commission would have to review the move, but could exercise more leniency. The HDC cannot prevent him from putting in a stairway because it is a life safety feature. The approval may require him to use enclosed pickets.

As a side note, commission members stated that any in-kind replacement does not need to be reviewed. A second workshop would be advisable once Mr. Young has more defined ideas of what he plans. Dr. Reed said it would be beneficial if Mr. Young could find historic photographs of the building to determine what the nature of the original materials.

151 South Potomac Street:

Staff suggested that the built-in sign board above the storefront be used for signage for the business. The modern signage on the north side of the building should be removed. Mr. Young is contemplating the following work for this building:

- *Repair overhang over storefront.*
- *Repair upper floor windows.*

**Historic District Commission  
MINUTES**

**May 23, 2013  
City of Hagerstown, Maryland**

- *Repoint block.*
- *Clean up metal on the parapet.* Mr. Gehr noted that the metal work on top of the coping may need to be repaired. Depending on its age, Mr. Gehr did not think it will clean up. It may have to be replaced with a newer coping.
- *Redwood facade on storefront.* Commission members did not believe changing the redwood storefront would be a problem. Mr. Bockmiller asked whether brick in the area now covered with redwood would be appropriate. Dr. Reed said it would be good to find out what is under the redwood. Mr. Gehr suggested checking the Washington County Free Library or the Historical Society for historic photos on both of the buildings discussed at this meeting.

Mr. Young stated that he will be pursuing facade grants for the work on these buildings. Mr. Bockmiller directed Mr. Young to speak with Andrew Sargent in the Business and Community Relations Division of the Community and Economic Development Office. (M. Gehr left the meeting.)

**NEW BUSINESS:**

None.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- Text Amendment for Economic Development - Mr. Bockmiller stated that the sub-committee needs to be reconvened.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None.

**ADJOURN:** It was moved and seconded that the meeting adjourn (5:26 p.m.).

6/20/2013  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Debra C. Calhoun - Secretary