

Michael Gehr, chair, called the meeting to order at 4:42 p.m. on Thursday, December 12, 2013, 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. Davis, and V. Hrabal. 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 31, 2013.**

**MOTION:** (Hrabal/Davis) Mr. Chairman, I move that the minutes be approved as presented.  
**DISCUSSION:** None.  
**ACTION:** APPROVED (Unanimous)

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**129 North Potomac Street – John Wesley United Methodist Church – New Storm Windows and Façade Grant, Case No. HDC 2013-58.**

**465 North Potomac Street – Andrew Durham – Fence and Gate, Case No. HDC 2013-60.**

**64 West Washington Street – Rahim Abbassi – Wall Sign, HDC 2013-61.**

**10 Public Square – What’s NXT – Temporary Banner, HDC 2013-62.**

**MOTION:** (Hrabal/Davis) Mr. Chairman, I have reviewed the materials submitted in Cases HDC 2013-58, 2013-60, 2013-61, and 2013-62, and façade grant application for HDC 2013-58, 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 2013-58, 2013-60, 2013-61, and 2013-62 and façade grant for HDC 2013-58.  
**DISCUSSION:** None.  
**ACTION:** APPROVED (Unanimous)

**DESIGN REVIEW**

**69 Broadway – Richard Tydings – Rear Porch Alterations, Case No. HDC 2013-59.**

Richard Tydings, 14022 Poplar Grove Road, Hagerstown, was present on behalf of the property owner.

Staff Report: This property is a B resource in the Potomac-Broadway. Applicant proposes to replace existing wood handrail system, decking, and two supports posts. New decking boards will be 5/4 boards; new handrails will consist of 2 x 4s and 1½ x 1½ -inch pressure-treated pickets; support posts will be 4 x 4-inch pressure-treated wood. The owner of the property does not plan to paint or stain the wood. Staff recommended approval, with the condition that the wood be painted or stained after it has seasoned, in accordance with the Design Guidelines. The railing system has no historic value. It's only 20-30 years old. Photos were submitted showing the decking. Part of the work has been done on the top floor. Mr. Bockmiller added that the modern picket design can be easily retrofitted to more closely meet the HDC's guidelines by adding a flat board across the tops and bottoms to conceal them.

Applicant/Commission Discussion: Mr. Tydings stated that he will need to discuss the commission's recommendations with property owner to find out if the owner would be amenable to the condition that the wood be painted or stained. Mr. Gehr noted that the requirement for painting or staining is part of the commission's guidelines and is something that is requested from all applicants. Concerning the trim board on the tops and bottoms of the pickets, Mr. Tydings indicated that adding the board would not be a problem. Staff noted that the trim board would be required for all the railings on the rear porch.

**MOTION:** (Hrabal/Davis) 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 the character of the district for the reasons that the materials being wood are appropriate; the construction with the pickets covered top and bottom with an outside top and bottom rail; and the rails will be painted or stained after they have seasoned; will make it generally in harmony the Architectural Design Guidelines for the Residential Historic District and the character of the adjoining properties. Therefore, I move that the HDC grant a Certificate of Appropriateness to the applicant for Case No. HDC 2013-59.

**DISCUSSION:** None.

**ACTION:** APPROVED (Unanimous)

**414 West Washington Street – Oliver Hornick – Porch Alterations, Case No. HDC 2013-63.**

The property owner, Oliver Hornick, 414 West Washington Street, Hagerstown, Maryland, was present.

Staff Report: This property is a Landmark. Applicant seeks approval for removal of existing plastic corrugated siding and storm windows from an enclosed rear porch; removal of rotted studding and 2 x 4s; and replacement of a rotting door. New siding will be vinyl to match as closely as possible the existing wood siding on the rear of the house. Existing jalousie windows will be replaced with three double-sash, tilt-in, vinyl windows with a one-over-one configuration. The rear porch is marginally visible from West Washington Street; however, it is visible at a distance from North Burhans Boulevard. There are four intervening properties; Mr. Hornick stated that the property is approximately 200 feet from Burhans Boulevard. Staff recommended approval of the application. This project is similar to the recent porch enclosure project on North Locust Street, and would be an improvement over current conditions.

Applicant/Commission Discussion: Mr. Hornick said he would like to use the smaller siding, which is almost a perfect match to the existing wood siding. Proposed siding is “Savannah Wicker” Certainteed Monogram 46 vinyl siding. There is nothing historic about the materials being replaced. New windows will be one-over-one. There are many different window configurations on the building. Mr. Gehr observed that this porch has been altered in that it was originally an open porch that was enclosed. Ms. Hrabal said there is enough distance from public ways that the substitute materials will be marginally visible. She agreed that the proposal is an improvement over the existing enclosed porch.

Mr. Hornick asked about removing rolled metal sheeting from the second floor open porch and replace it with wood spindles. Mr. Bockmiller advised that some minor modifications may be necessary if using pre-made railings to keep an historic appearance. Mr. Gehr also cautioned that Mr. Hornick needs to keep current building code requirements in mind because historic railings are shorter than the current code requirement of 42 inches high.

**MOTION:** (Hrabal/Davis) 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 the character of the district for the reasons that the materials that are being replaced are on a nonhistoric addition with limited visibility, from Washington Street very limited down the sides of the house and then very distant from Burhans Boulevard. The materials are closer replicating what should have been there vs. what is nonhistoric materials on there now. Windows proposed for replacement will be more uniform and pleasing configuration, also distant from Burhans Boulevard and not very visible from public ways which would make it generally in harmony the Architectural Design Guidelines for the Residential Historic

District and the character of the adjoining properties. Therefore, I move that the HDC grant a Certificate of Appropriateness to the applicant for Case No. HDC 2013-63.

**DISCUSSION:**

None.

**ACTION:**

APPROVED (Unanimous)

**WORKSHOP:**

**6-8 South Potomac Street – Bridge of Life Church – Façade Alterations.**

Scott Bowen, MSB Architects, was present on behalf of Bridge of Life.

Mr. Bockmiller stated that the church is planning a rehabilitation project for the front of the former Snow White Grill property. The façade of this building has been reconfigured numerous times over the years which has created a complicated situation from an historic preservation standpoint. Currently the building has a flat roof but there are historic photographs of the building that show a gabled roof. Mr. Bockmiller said he found one distant shot of the building at the Historical Society showing a residential use on the second floor with a formal entrance and storefronts on the first floor.

The church would like to rehabilitate the building (which is part of the church complex). Over time the Snow White Grill façade has gained historic significance of its own. Staff has been discussing the project with the architect in terms of reconstruction of a window in the middle that was in place in the 1930s. They are also proposing another entrance with a fan light and a single window to the side. Mr. Bowen needs guidance from the commission as to which version of the façade has priority in terms of design. To create a continuous residential façade creates a false sense of history; however, the church doesn't want a series of storefronts on the front. Mr. Bowen interjected that the church may not have objections. He is scheduled to meet with the church in the near future.

Mr. Bowen stated that the church's first priority will be to remove the faux stone façade. Until the condition of the brick under the faux stone can be determined, the church will not know whether the brick will be good enough to use. Commission members were concerned that once the faux stone is removed the possibility exists for the damaged brick to be exposed for a long period of time. Mr. Bowen explained that since the church's main priority is the façade, that project could begin as early as this coming spring.

Suggestions by the commission included:

- Design the façade as two separate buildings.
- Use a mansard roof over the smaller right portion of the building.

- The second door should be plain, rather than utilize a second fan light above. If the two sides are going to look different, the doors should not be the same.
- Align the door and window above it on the left side.
- Once the faux stone is removed it may reveal clues as to the original size of the windows.

Mr. Bowen stated that if the underlying brick is deteriorated, they have three options: 1) removing a thin layer; 2) add a whole new veneer; or 3) install a thin brick system, which would allow them minimize any increases in the footprint. Mr. Bockmiller noted that he has noticed that the bricks that have been exposed near the sidewalk are powdering away.

Ms. Hrabal said she had no issues with removing the Snow White Grill carrara glass façade. Mr. Gehr suggested that the glass could be used elsewhere in the building. Mr. Bockmiller added the Agricultural Center near Sharpsburg might be interested in having it. Mr. Bowen stated that he surmised the church will most likely decide to install a brick veneer rather than use remnants of the Snow White Grill.

Ms. Hrabal was concerned about the time frame for replacement of the façade. Mr. Bockmiller discussed the pitfalls of creating a false sense of historical development.

If it is determined that the façade will be retained, there probably will not be anything on the other side. Ms. Hrabal was in favor of a design that shows two separate buildings, even though on the inside it would be used as a single building. If the church decides to go with the two-building approach, the break should be right to the left of the door to the Snow White Grill. Commission members were comfortable with the removal of the grill storefront. Mr. Gehr encouraged the church to find a use for the carrara glass if it is removed from the façade. Pieces could be incorporated into a design for the lobby or it could be architectural salvage. Mr. Bowen stated that a design with two different facades would help address some concerns over the cornice work.

This workshop constitutes guidance only and does not constitute HDC approval.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **Treatment and Definition of Routine Landscaping.**

Mr. Bockmiller stated that routine landscaping is not an issue that the HDC currently considers. He recently was asked about replacement of a deteriorating curved pedestrian walkway on Park Lane. The property owner would like to remove the sidewalk and was considering replacing the concrete with crushed stone. The replacement walkway would stay in the same track.

Mr. Bockmiller stated that the proposed work included rehabilitation of and changes to steps and brick pediments that are separating. He asked the commission to think about standards for routine landscaping. Ms. Allen said she would be concerned about inconsistencies from property to

**Historic District Commission  
MINUTES**

**December 12, 2013  
City of Hagerstown, Maryland**

property. In the past the commission has reviewed pools, playground equipment. Mr. Bockmiller stated that he does not envision heavily regulating landscaping since the city does not have the resources to enforce it. He also does not want to get into regulating trees one way or the other. Ms. Hrabal questioned whether the HDC would review requests to cut down the Linden trees planted by Governor Hamilton's wife along Oak Hill Avenue. However, other than the big historic trees, she believed the commission should only focus on landscaping if changes would affect the contour of the land or if there are structural considerations. Mr. Bockmiller will investigate whether the City is charged with protecting the Linden trees on Oak Hill Avenue.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

None.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None.

**ADJOURN:** It was moved and seconded that the meeting adjourn (6:17 p.m.).

1/9/2014

Approved



Debra C. Calhoun – Secretary