

Vickie Hrabal, vice chair, called the meeting to order at 4:33 p.m. on Thursday, June 26, 2014, 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 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

No minutes were ready for approval.

CONSENT AGENDA

Staff asked that the commission consider moving Case No. HDC 2014-21 to the consent agenda. Since the packet went out, information was received from the applicant clarifying their intent and the proposal meets the guidelines. Mr. Bockmiller stated that staff would also like to add another case to the workshop agenda.

MOTION: (Wertman/Davis) I move we move Case HDC 2014-21 to the Consent Agenda.
DISCUSSION: None.
ACTION: APPROVED (Unanimous)

60 Broadway – Theresa M. DeWeerd – Replace Rear Porches, Case No. HDC 2014-21.

MOTION: (Davis/Wertman) Madam Chairperson, I reviewed the materials submitted in Case No. HDC 2014-21, and its associated staff report and recommendation, 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 evaluations and recommendations in this case as its own and grant a Certificate of Appropriateness to the applicant for Case HDC 2014-21.
DISCUSSION: None.
ACTION: APPROVED (Unanimous)

DESIGN REVIEW

227 South Prospect Street – Denise Ringley– Replacement Windows (Modification to Approved Application), Case No. HDC 2014-11.

Denise Ringley, 9494 Stottlemeyer Road, Boonsboro, Maryland, was present.

Staff Report. This structure is a contributing resource in the Prospect Street Local Historic District. The applicant received approval earlier this year to replace the picture windows with double-hung windows made by American Craftsman, 2100 Series windows. Since the windows were approved, Ms. Ringley was informed that American Craftsman no longer manufactures the approved windows in the size she requires. The model she is now proposing is a double-hung style and is available in the larger size.

Applicant/Commission Discussion: Ms. Ringley provided a sample window for the commission's consideration and noted that the new model is available with exterior grilles even though the model shown did not have the grilles. Grilles will match the existing two-over-two pattern.

MOTION: (Wertman/Davis) Madam Chairman, I have inspected the project plans and the property in question, and if constructed in accordance with these plans and the muntins of the windows are indeed the same as the ones that have already been replaced and approved the project is compatible with the character of the district for the reasons that the height is the same that is already there, and they are going to have the double-hung window in there with the two-over-two muntin pattern and it is going to be generally in harmony with the Architectural Design Guidelines for the Residential preservation Design 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 2014-11 (Revised).

DISCUSSION: None.

ACTION: APPROVED (Unanimous)

WORKSHOP

157 South Prospect Street – Kim Winders – Rear Porch Reconstruction.

Ms. Winders was not present. This item was not discussed.

43-47 West Washington Street – City of Hagerstown – Temporary Storefront Sign.

John Lestitian, Director of Community and Economic Development for the City of Hagerstown, was present.

The City owns the property at 43-47 West Washington Street, and also the remaining storefronts in this building known as 53 West Washington Street. The City is undertaking renovation projects in the building. The HDC recently approved a demolition on the rear of this building, and the City is currently working on plans for the storefront. The storefronts are currently in bad condition and need to be redone.

The initial plan was to ask for approval to build a temporary wall in front of the storefronts, similar to what was done by Washington County Public Schools near the Barbara Ingram School for the Arts. This would help to spruce up the storefronts and also secure the building and remove the blight until the City can secure the funds (realistically in spring 2015) to renovate the storefronts. Unfortunately the City's Public Works Department was overeager to help out and the storefront covering was installed before it could be placed on the commission's agenda. Mr. Lestitian apologized and said there was no disrespect meant toward the HDC or to the guidelines.

The storefront was framed up with metal framing and the structure was attached with minimal impact on the primary structure. Everything was painted white. Tentative plans call for an ENGAGEHagerstown logo and two comment areas (one would be for people to contribute ideas on what they would like to see here and the other area could be a mural). Mr. Lestitian noted that the City would be back for approval of the storefront, which Mr. Bockmiller has asked if the storefront could be restored to the original 1850-1860s. Depending on the amount of grant funding available, that restoration might be possible.

Ms. Hrabal asked if the recessed opening would be converted to a flat storefront. Mr. Lestitian stated that the storefront they are considering would have a shallower opening.

Ms. Allen was in favor of the City's course of action because it shows the community that the City is involved and it demonstrates activity and could be a catalyst. Short-term the HDC should be prepared with a response to it by staff to let developers know that the HDC would not react unfavorably to boarding up a storefront. Guidelines should be developed for these types things in response to the Urban Partners report. Mr. Lestitian noted that would help in positioning. If someone comes to the Economic Development office with a project, it would help if there are guidelines (gives certainty).

Ms. Hrabal noted that there are significant architectural features in this building and she hoped the City will save them (i.e., tin ceiling). Mr. Lestitian responded that if any salvageable items are

found the City will store them. Ms. Hrabal mentioned art deco doors and rugs that were custom-made to match the doors. Even if a piece of that carpet could be saved it would be good.

NEW BUSINESS

- Mr. Bockmiller asked for volunteers to help at the City's booth during the 150th celebration at the July 4 Fireworks at Fairgrounds Park.

OLD BUSINESS

Economic Development Demolition Policy.

Mr. Bockmiller stated that a subcommittee consisting of Mr. Gehr, Mr. Silas, Kathleen Maher, Planning Director, and he have been working on this document for almost two years. Members of the HDC received a copy of the draft at the last meeting for review. Under this new policy it is possible that some historic resources could be lost; however, significant reasons for the demolition would need to be presented.

Commission members had the following questions and observations about the new policy:

- Ms. Allen asked who is keeping track of "A" resources that are beginning to decay. Mr. Bockmiller stated staff is monitoring these resources. Tools available to staff include the Property Maintenance Code and the HDC's demolition by neglect language in the Zoning Ordinance.
- Ms. Wertman asked if the City could step in sooner with some decaying properties and purchase them. Mr. Bockmiller noted that buildings in distress would need to be prioritized for potential use under the revised demolition by neglect language. Buildings need to be a hazard before the property maintenance code steps in. Mr. Bockmiller pointed out that this process does not apply to "A" resources—they cannot be taken down under this policy.
- Ms. Hrabal asked about roofs that have visible cracks or holes or other structural issues. Mr. Bockmiller read the definition of "demolition by neglect," which deals with repair items that keep a building weather tight.
- Ms. Davis asked if there is a definition for "skilled employment" positions. In addition, a definition is needed for "upscale residential units" since this term is subjective.
- Ms. Davis said there is nothing in the language that states what needs to be provided to show financial hardship.
- Ms. Davis asked what percentage of "B" resources the City would be comfortable in losing downtown. Mr. Bockmiller said there would be a set number of demolitions with no more after the threshold has been met. Ms. Davis suggested attaching grants to the

demolitions so they all happen faster with a sunset and then reconsider (or a sunset at a particular date to revisit to see how the program has been utilized).

- Ms. Davis suggested looking into higher taxation for dilapidated buildings than fixed up buildings. Mr. Bockmiller stated that the City is looking at this and taxing rental properties at a higher rate.
- Ms. Davis asked if the City could work with insurance companies to compel maintenance, including periodic maintenance inspections by insurance companies to make sure buildings are being kept up.
- Ms. Allen said the policy must be parcel driven, not property owner driven.
- Mr. Bockmiller noted that on page 5 of the document, there is clarification language on what is common practice. If there is a building that is deteriorated to the point of falling down and becoming a public safety concern, the Chief Code Official can order it down without HDC approval.
- Ms. Davis asked whether the City's insurance would allow trained property maintenance volunteers.

Commission members discussed ways to get property owners on board with getting properties maintained. Mr. Bockmiller volunteered to set up a walk with commission members to walk around the district to compile a list of marginal buildings. Ms. Hrabal was interested in seeing a plan put in place that the commission does one side of a street a month. Mr. Bockmiller will pick out a demolition by neglect study area. Ms. Davis suggested putting together an endangered properties booklet.

Mr. Bockmiller will work up the changes discussed and the revised document will be emailed to the HDC prior to the next meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

ADJOURN

It was moved and seconded that the meeting adjourn (5:50 p.m.).

10/9/2014

Approved



Debra C. Calhoun – Secretary