

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Council Chambers, City Hall
70 Maple Street
Manistee, MI 49660

MEETING MINUTES

November 5, 2009

A Meeting of the Manistee City Historic District Commission was held on Thursday, November 5, 2009, at 3:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 70 Maple Street, Manistee, Michigan.

Meeting was called to order at 3:04 p.m. by Chair Kracht.

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Dave Carlson, T. Eftaxiadis, Teena Kracht, Nathaniel Neider, John Perschbacher

Members Absent: Maria DeRee (excused), Mary Murton (excused)

Others: Ed Kriskywicz (cdi), James Matthews, John Smith (435 River Street), Jon Rose (Community Development), Steve Harold (Manistee County Historical Museum) and Denise Blakeslee (Planning & Zoning)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

A request for Design Assistance was received from John Smith after the deadline for submission of applications. Since no formal action can be taken on requests for Design Assistance, Chair Kracht asked the Commission if they wanted to amend the agenda to include under new business the request from John Smith, 435 River Street for Design Assistance and Travis Alden, Main Street/DDA Director - Update will be moved to the first item under New Business because he has to leave the meeting early.

MOTION by Dave Carlson, seconded by T. Eftaxiadis that the Agenda for the November 5, 2009 Meeting be amended to add the request from John Smith, 435 River Street, Design Assistance and to move Travis Alden, Main Street/DDA Director - Update as the first item under New Business .

With a voice vote this motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

MOTION by Nathaniel Neider, seconded by Dave Carlson that the Minutes of the October 8, 2009 Meeting be amended to include "*John Perschbacher noted he was not consulted about the paint colors as had been arranged.*" After Steve Harold's report that a permit was issued to Elbert Purdom, 369 River Street for paint colors.

With a roll voice vote this motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

Travis Alden, Main Street/DDA Director - Update

Travis Alden, Main Street DDA Director - Spoke of the Tax Credit Application for the Purdom Building, they needed the photos printed out and a few changes to the plan. SHPO asked for him to send Part 3 of the application to streamline the request.

Nan Taylor of Michigan Historic Preservation Network will be working with SHPO to bring a Tax Credit Workshop to Manistee sometime in January or February.

The Design Committee has been working on the Banners for the empty storefronts. He passed out copies of the proposed banners. They have four types (outdoors, Festivals, local attractions, and characters).

ISO Grand Rapids Real Estate LLC, 401 River Street - Door (HDC-2009-25)

A request has been received from ISO Grand Rapids Real Estate LLC, 401 River Street for the installation of a service door into existing west wall towards parking lot as submitted with application HDC-2009-25.

Ed Kriskywicz (cdi) representing ISO Grand Rapids Real Estate LLC. - Mr. Kriskywicz spoke of the need to install a service door on the West wall of the building at 401 River Street. They are proposing a 3' x 7' metal insulated flush service door.

Steve Harold - Mr. Harold noted that the door would be visible from River Street and asked if a little more appealing door could be used. He asked if the door could be similar to the door on the rear of the building and if the door could be inset similar to the rear door on the building.

Ed Kriskywicz - Said he could find a panel door that could be inset.

Commissioner Perschbacher - Wanted to know if the door was required by the Building Inspector? If not he did not feel it could be justified.

Jon Rose - Said he could call Mr. Niesen, but could not say for sure it is required by code.

Discussion by the Commission if the door was needed and if the door should be inset.

MOTION by T. Eftaxiadis, seconded by Dave Carlson to approve the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to ISO Grand Rapids Real Estate LLC, 401 River Street for the installation of a service door into existing west wall towards parking lot as submitted with application HDC-2009-25. Conditioned that the entrance is designed to be compatible with the Historic Character of the building and designed to look similar to the back entrance door. The door is to be a solid panel door that is inset similar to the door on the rear of the building. Final approval of the door and paint color will be made by the Museum Director.

With a roll call vote this motion passed 4 to 1.

Yes: Carlson, Neider, Eftaxiadis, Kracht
No: Perschbacher

James Matthews, 334, 336, 338 River Street - Design Assistance

Commissioner Carlson declared a conflict of interest as the listing agent for the building at 334, 336, 338 River Street and removed himself to sit in the audience.

A request for Design Assistance has been received from James Matthews, 334, 336, 338 River Street. Mr. Matthews has made an offer to purchase the building and is requesting Design Assistance from the Historic District Commission on proposed plans for the building.

James Matthews - the building is in poor condition and the rear wall is failing and bricks are falling onto the riverwalk. The foundation appears to be shifting . He explained his proposal for the building highlights included:

- ▶ Tear down the portion of the building that is failing and leave an 8 foot wall and put in green space.
- ▶ Re-install a garage door where the new entrance was constructed and use the east store space as a private garage for his personal use.
- ▶ Construct a residence on the rear of the building.
- ▶ Re-install windows on the rear/sides of the building.
- ▶ Re-do the front similar to the photo obtained from the Museum.
- ▶ Contract is contingent upon getting approvals, expires end of November.
- ▶ Driveway will be cut through the sidewalk and curb cut installed on River Street.
- ▶ Showed a concept that included leaving portions of the brick wall and stepping it down to the rear wall.

Steve Harold - there was a different building on the west portion of the building. The Planing mill was stepped back 50 feet from the Street. In 1910 a Service Station was built in front of the Planing mill. In 1917 an Auto Show was held at the building. In 1922 Kann's Auto announced they were going to expand to the front of the building and built a red commercial front until 1955 the auto dealership on had access from the garage door. The 1981 Preservation Study showed a sketch of the building and the garage door was still in place at that time.

Jon Rose - spoke of the concerns that have risen about the demolition of a contributing building. While he feels the building is almost beyond repair the Commission must consider the consequences of setting precedence for removal of a portion of a contributing building. Suggested the Commission take their time to researched before any decisions can be made. The Planning Commission will need to hold a Public Hearing to review the proposed use of residence on the first floor, loss of parking spaces, and safety to pedestrians by adding a driveway across the sidewalk in the downtown district. This is a very complicated site and his feedback from Robb McKay State Historic Preservation Architect was not encouraging.

Commissioner Neider - the nature of the project is positive for the downtown.

Commissioner Eftaxiadis - Was the sidewalk the same width as when the building was constructed?

Steve Harold said that there is less than 25% difference.

Commissioner Eftaxiadis - So vehicles were going over the same amount of sidewalk. Do you have what is the latest dated facade?

Steve Harold - The photo he has shows what would have been a change in window sizes and the inclusion of the 1920's red brick.

Commissioner Eftaxiadis - was the North wall metal siding there all along? Or was it put over brick later?

Steve Harold - that is a complicated question because metal siding on a planing mill would have been typical. Since we do not know when the North wall was constructed (if it was part of the planing mill) we do not have a way to answer that question.

Commissioner Perschbacher - Would like to see the facade as it was shown on the picture. That was how he remember it looking growing up. It is a contributing building and he likes the idea of doing something with the building. It would be a major undertaking and he wants it to look as close to the photo shown.

Commissioner Neider - how do we insure the quality of work and how to do we make sure it is safe?

Jon Rose - We will need detailed plans to proceed. There is a concern about approving demolition of a portion of a contributing building.

Commissioner Eftaxiadis - the integrity of the building may require demolition if it cannot be made safe.

Jon Rose - a qualified person needs to advise the commission regarding demolition. It can only be approved if it is a viable conclusion for the building. The benefit to the applicant is not the issue.

Commissioner Neider - If it was not a contributing building would this be as much of an issue?

Jon Rose - Not as much of an issue.

Commissioner Neider - could we have it removed as a contributing building?

Chair Kracht - How do you remove it as a contributing building?

Steve Harold - It can be remove if it has lost all of the original features.

Chair Kracht - The Building is listed as a contributing building and a precedence will be set by the Commission. Regardless of the plan before the Commission they must consider all issues (including legal issues) for this process. The Commission must clarify the procedure for demolition of contributing buildings.

If it could be de-listed it would be easier.

Discussion on Demolition included:

- ▶ Careful consideration must be made to de-list any contributing building. By doing so you are taking away the owners ability to apply for tax credits in the future.
- ▶ An outside consultant, such as a preservation architect, should review the building and make a recommendation regarding the status of the building.
- ▶ SHPO should be contacted to see if they have any way to assist with the process.
- ▶ The applicant could submit their design to SHPO for a response.

James Matthews - said his purchase option runs out at the end of November and he wants to know what he needs from the commission.

It was suggested he apply for an extension on his purchase option. The Commission felt the concept of his project was appropriate, but without plans they are unable to make any determinations. The Commission needs to take careful consideration before approval of the demolition of any portion of a contributing building.

Commissioner Carlson returned to his seat.

John Smith, 435 River Street - Design Assistance

A request has been received from John Smith, 435 River Street for Design Assistance for his building at 435 River Street. Mr. Smith had previously removed the windows, door to the Oak Street entrance of his building and boarded up the entrance. At this time Mr. Smith is asking the Commission for permission to brick up the opening.

Mr. Smith also discussed other projects he wants to do to his building such as removal of the ice house on the rear of the building because it is falling down and what type of "shielding" the commission wants to see between the Artist Mall building and the Hallmark building.

The Commission thanked Mr. Smith for his request and due to the late hour they will schedule a worksession to discuss options for Mr. Smith. He said to give him a call and he will be happy to attend the worksession to answer any questions.

Commissioner Neider left the meeting.

Steve Harold left the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS CONCERNING ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

None

CORRESPONDENCE

Chair Kracht sent a letter to the owner of the Aaron's Building 359 & 361 River Street (The Outpost) asking them to attend the meeting and explain their plans for the cornice they removed.

The owners of the building were issued a permit by the Historic Overlay Committee as follows:

“Approval to remove existing cornice that the owner of the property feels is a safety issue. Permission is granted with the condition that the cornice must be replaced with something similar within 365 days (October 13, 2006).”

The owners recently put up sheathing which they told the Building Inspector was temporary to protect the building while they decided what to do.

The Commissioners discussed that the owners were made aware of the process and asked to attend today's meeting to discuss this issue and no representative was present.

MOTION by John Perschbacher, seconded by Dave Carlson that a citation be issued to the owners of the Aaron's Building 359 & 361 River Street for violation to the Historic District Commission Code.

With a roll call vote this motion passed 4 to 0.

Yes: Perschbacher, Eftaxiadis, Carlson, Kracht

No: None

STAFF REPORTS

Denise Blakeslee spoke to the Commission about the permits that were issued by Steve Harold this past month:

PNC Bank - 375 River Street - Signage

National City Bank will be changing to PNC Bank and a sign permit was obtained for the changes in signage.
This was issued permit #PHDC0924

Gary Diebel (Boathouse Grill), 440 River Street - Paint Colors

Paint Colors were approved for the building at 440 River Street (Boathouse Grill).
This will be issued permit #PHDC0926

Denise spoke to the Commission about the need to establish a policy for closing out permits and sending cards from the Commission thanking the property owners for improvements . These items will be place on a Worksession Agenda.

MEMBERS DISCUSSION

Chair Kracht discussed with the Commission the need to hold a worksession. Consensus from the members in attendance was that the majority of them would be able to make a worksession on Friday, November 13, 2009 at 1:00 p.m. Chair Kracht directed staff to schedule the worksession.

Chair Kracht asked members of the Historic District Commission if they have any items they want to discuss.

Commissioner Perschbacher - Spoke about mortar and that it cannot be made out of beach sand. He will be researching the issue further and will continue to report to the commission about his findings.

WORKSESSION

The Historic District Commission will hold a Worksession on Friday, November 13, 2009 at 1:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 70 Maple Street.

The Next meeting of the Historic District Commission will be on Thursday, December 3, 2009 at 3:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 70 Maple Street.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION by John Perschbacher, seconded by Dave Carlson that the meeting be adjourned. Motion passed unanimously.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 5:45 P.M.

MANISTEE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Denise J. Blakeslee, Recording Secretary