

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

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

MEETING MINUTES

December 3, 2016

A Meeting of the Manistee City Historic District Commission was held on Thursday, December 3, 2016 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: T. Eftaxiadis, Teena Kracht, John Perschbacher, Mary Russell, Lee Trucks

Members Absent: Aaron Bennett (excused), Vacancy

Others: Joe Hollander (Hollander Development), Steve Hassevoort (In Form Architecture), Ken Borenitsch (394 & 415 River Street), Tamara Buswinka (AES), Eric Gustad, Thad Taylor (City Manager), Lynda Beaton, Mark Fedder (Museum Director) Steve Harold (Museum Curator) and Denise Blakeslee (Planning & Zoning Administrator)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Staff asked that the agenda be amended to allow for public comments on the request before the commission begins deliberation.

MOTION by T. Eftaxiadis, seconded by Mary Russell that the agenda be approved with the addition to allow public comments after the developer makes their presentation on their request.

With a voice vote this motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by John Perschbacher, seconded by Mary Russell that the minutes of the November 3, 2016 meeting be approved as prepared

With a voice vote this motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

HDC-2016-24, Hollander Development, 400 River Street – Request for Certificate of Appropriateness

A request has been received from Hollander Development, 400 River Street for a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition of the existing building to street level and construction of a three story building as submitted with plans on file.

Chair Kracht wanted to interject before the Commission discussed the request. She asked that Mark Fedder, Museum Director discuss the research that he performed on the site. Mr. Fedder researched the property and the building was constructed in 1954 as the Kennedy's Store, the property was purchased in 1964 by Milliken's renovated and opened in 1965. In 1988 they demolished buildings to the west and constructed an addition and recovered the existing store. Chair Kracht stated that this **new information** demonstrates a portion of the building is **may be** over 50 years old and ~~as such~~ **if so** should be treated as a contributing building.

Denise Blakeslee handed out a copy of the Executive Summary from the 2007 survey report. Only one building was identified as potentially being considered a contributing building that was not identified on the National Register of Historic Places nomination form and that was 449 River Street which ultimately was not added as a contributing building because *the architectural style and its significance are different from historic context of the Manistee Commercial Historic District. Therefore, it is not recommended as a contributing structure to the Local Historic District.*

When the request was received Ms. Blakeslee had asked the Chair if the request for demolition could be included with the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness or if a Demolition Permit was needed. Chair Kracht said she did not believe so. If Ms. Blakeslee had known that it was required she would have had the applicant include it in their request.

Due to time restraints an immediate response was requested. The request was via telephone. Chair Kracht's response was predicated on information from three independent credible sources that nothing remained of the Kennedy Store beneath the false stucco siding of the 1988 renovation. Further professional historical research done in the museum archives by Director Mark Fedder cast doubt on this assumption. Given this new information and given HDC Policy #8 "Defining a Contributing Building," and precedent (the Planning Mill and the Ice House) Chair Kracht asked the commissioners how they wished to proceed.

MOTION by T. Eftaxiadis seconded by John Perschbacher to proceed with the request for an Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness and if approved it would be subject to receipt and approval of a demolition permit.

With a roll call vote motion passed 3 to 1.

Yes: Eftaxiadis, Perschbacher, Kracht
No: Russell

Chair Kracht stated the request is for a Certificate of Appropriateness but the cover letter from the applicant reads:

As we discussed, we need approval of the overall concept of the design, including size and configuration, massing, relationship to the sidewalk, material types, window configurations, etc. to allow us to proceed with the

more detailed design that will follow and to allow us to continue to pursue funding sources for the project. We are happy to come back to the commission with additional detail on final materials, colors, light fixtures, door hardware, signage, mortar color, coping details, etc. as this information is developed.

Ms. Blakeslee asked that they request clarification from the Applicant.

Joe Hollander, Hollander Development – Said that they need concept approval to move forward with the project, they will be bringing information back to the commission for final approval. They want to work with the Commission.

Steve Hassevoort, In Form Architecture – reviewed the major changes to the design since last meeting including:

- Added masonry on the corner, creating a three story brick component
- The connector (main entry to the apartments) was moved to the east slightly and is recessed approx. 12 feet.
- Added bulkheads under the storefront windows, doors will be added to the stores once tenants are identified and needs for space is addressed.
- West Side – they have discussed making it a little more residential in appearance i.e. townhouse design and will be bringing that back to the commission; masonry on first level will be designed to create a more vertical feeling; use similar materials, bay windows.
- Maple Street – extended the storefront component
- North Façade/River – lower level windows were reconfigured, looking to add a deck, still working on final design, added brick to break up façade

Commissioner Trucks entered the meeting at 3:38 pm

Reviewed the streetscape photos showing the current building vs the new building. Mr. Hassevoort brought samples for the commission including windows, siding, brick, storefront framing.

Chair Kracht reminded all present that the Historic District Commission is concerned only with the exterior appearance of the buildings in the context of the Historic District and approval of projects is based on meeting the Standards established by the United States Department of the Interior.

Chair Kracht asked if there was any public comment on the request.

Kenneth Borenitsch, 394 & 415 River Street – This is a 1,000% improvement over existing non-contributing building; this is a great project that would bring more activity downtown!

Tamara Buswinka, Community Development Director, Alliance for Economic Success – Ms. Buswinka spoke of previously serving on the ~~Historic District Commission~~ **“historic district commission”** and thanked the commissioners for their service. She spoke economic prosperity and listening to the needs of the community including need for more housing, employers in the area cannot attract employees due to the lack of housing. This is a great economic opportunity for our community and AES strongly supports this project, the eyes of Michigan are on how we move through this process. She also spoke of the economic positivity this project brings and the economic benefits of people living downtown and how more people want to live downtown and

how the members of the Coast Guard are living in Ludington who serve in Manistee because there is not affordable housing.

Eric Gustad, previously served on the Planning Commission, City Council and serves on various boards. Spoke of the need for this project and thanked Mr. Hollander for wanting to invest in our community and the Commissioners for their service. His father worked downtown in the 70's and he spoke of the changes that have occurred over the years. Providing housing downtown will continue to promote the character and charm, but we need to move forward with new opportunities and it is key to work together. Manistee needs to be competitive to get development, there are challenges for development including financing, it is critical for cooperation, compromising for projects. He did the math 45 units at income between \$40,000 and \$45,000 would generate \$1.8 million in salaries in downtown. Manistee cannot attract workers without housing and there is a need for new housing for the community to grow.

Thad Taylor, City Manager thanked the commission to allow the public to speak, the commission is to focus on the exterior of the building, building components and allowing the use of alternate materials that are allowable. For this project to be successful the City Council, Planning Commission and Historic District Commission have to be partners and focus on how to make it happen and be a success for our community.

Lynda Beaton, speaking as a realtor thanked Mr. Hollander for investing in the community. The design is impressive and she really likes the appearance of the front of the building. Spoke of how lakefront homes always shows pictures of how the waterside of the buildings looks and the importance of the riverfront façade. A little more definition would be nice.

Joe Hollander invited the commission and public to contact him directly with any questions.

Chair Kracht thanked the speakers. She then reminded the commissioners that the commission is concerned only with the exterior appearance of the buildings in the context of the Historic District and applying the Standards established by the United States Department of the Interior. Chair Kracht read the following from the Historic District Reference Book. "Though commissioners may face pressure from individuals...to make a certain decision, commissioners must remember that their role is to protect the community's historic resources. That is why they are appointed; Commissioners should keep in mind that they are only reviewing the proposed work that is presented to them – not the personal life or the financial situation of the applicant. The Commission should always make their decisions based on the Standards. It should be aware of any precedence it may be setting with its decision and; work to develop a record of consistency."

The request was reviewed against Guideline #8 Infill Construction.

Chair Kracht spoke of the height not being broken up enough; roof line needs to be broken up more, expressed concerns about brick, use of horizontal siding, too much railing.

Commissioner Eftaxiadis used the Secretary of the Interiors Standard #9 for his review, The State Historic Preservation Office has the name of the Historic District as being the Manistee Commercial District; applicant did a nice job on the new design to incorporate comments from last meeting. Eastern/South façade reflects what was discussed but is not compatible with River Street. The east portion of the south façade is ok. West 60 % of building is incompatible with the district, breaking the mass would be appropriate; height massing particularly is

incompatible with the character of the buildings across the street or the buildings that were historically there. Expressed concerns about the massing of the north side of the building and the importance of the riverfront façade. The applicant should rework the designs similar to what was done on the east portion of the building on River Street.

Commissioner Trucks has no strong objections, noted that storefronts are typically inset in the district, no concerns about the residential component.

Steve Hassevoort, In Form Architecture – spoke of how the north side of the building has a very different character, this side of the building traditionally was utilitarian/industrial in appearance and simpler less intricate.

Chair Kracht – expressed concerns about not enough brick, horizontal siding, too much railing.

Final comments from the commission were as follows:

Commissioner Trucks – has a favorable impression of the project.

Commissioner Russell – has a favorable impression of the project.

Commissioner Perschbacher – favorable and that we can work together to get a good project.

Commissioner Eftaxiadis – expressed his concerns about compatibility with the district.

Chair Kracht – Some problems, massing is an issue, appreciates changes that were made. Northside could have an industrial look, with tweaking there is a possibility that it could meet the standards, appreciates the efforts to develop the building that would enhance the downtown. This is an anchor corner and noted the view coming from the north entrance to the downtown.

The Commission did not take formal action on the request.

Election of Officers 2017

According to the By-Laws of the City of Manistee Historic District Commission their annual election of Officers is held at the December Meeting for the following year.

Chair - At this time the meeting was turned over to Denise Blakeslee who asked for nominations for the Position of Chair.

T Eftaxiadis nominated Teena Kracht for the position of Chair. Nominations were asked for three times. There being no further nominations were closed.

With a roll call vote, Teena Kracht was elected Chair of the Historic District Commission for 2017, 5 to 0.

Yes: Perschbacher, Eftaxiadis, Russell, Trucks, Kracht
No: None

Vice-Chair - Denise Blakeslee asked for nominations for the Position of Vice-Chair.

Teena Kracht nominated John Perschbacher for the position of Vice Chair. Nominations were asked for three times. There being no further nominations were closed.

With a roll call vote, John Perschbacher was elected Vice - Chair of the Historic District Commission for 2017, 5 to 0.

Yes: Eftaxiadis, Russell, Trucks, Perschbacher, Kracht
No: None

Appointment of a Recording Secretary 2017 - The Historic District Commission will appoint a Recording Secretary to handle the administrative functions of the office.

Motion by Teena Kracht, seconded by Mary Russell that Denise Blakeslee be appointed Recording Secretary for the Historic District Commission for 2017.

With a roll call vote, Denise Blakeslee was appointed Recording Secretary of the Historic District Commission for 2017, 5 to 0.

Yes: Perschbacher, Eftaxiadis, Trucks, Russell, Kracht
No: None

By Law Review - Annually the Historic District Commission shall review their By Laws at their regularly scheduled meeting in January. No changes were made to the By Laws.

OLD BUSINESS

Due to the time items Routine Repair and Maintenance and Expired Permits: 347& 349 River Street, Paula Rozmarek and 411 River Street, Jeff Gordon will be added to the January meeting agenda for discussion.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS CONCERNING ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

None

CORRESPONDENCE

None

STAFF REPORTS

Denise Blakeslee, Planning & Zoning Administrator – Commissioners were invited to the RRC Certification on January 20, 2017.

The Next meeting of the Historic District Commission will be on Thursday, January 5, 2017 at 3:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 70 Maple Street.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION by John Perschbacher, seconded by T. Eftaxiadis that the meeting be adjourned. Motion passed unanimously. MEETING ADJOURNED AT 4:49 P.M.

MANISTEE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Denise J. Blakeslee, Recording Secretary