

NORTHVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
October 18, 2017
Wednesday 7:00 P.M. – Northville City Hall – Council Chambers

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL:

Chair Allen called the Historic District Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Allen, Argenta, Field, Gudritz, Hoffman, Murdock, Tartaglia
Absent: None.
Also Present: Planning Consultant Elmiger

2. PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

MOTION Hoffman, support by Field, to approve the agenda as published. **Motion carried unanimously.**

4. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES: September 20, 2017 and Subcommittee Meeting October 4, 2017.

MOTION Hoffman, support by Gudritz, to approve the September 20, 2017 minutes as published. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Commissioner Argenta reviewed the minutes and the motion from the October 4, 2017 Subcommittee meeting. The Subcommittee consisted of Commissioners Argenta and Field.

MOTION Argenta, support by Field, to approve the October 4, 2017 Subcommittee minutes as published. **Motion carried unanimously.**

5. REPORTS:

- A. CITY ADMINISTRATION:** None
- B. CITY COUNCIL:** None
- C. PLANNING COMMISSIONER:** None
- D. OTHER COMMUNITY/GOVERNMENTAL LIAISONS:** None

5. PUBLIC HEARING: None

CASE #1

GUIDOBONO BUILDING
341 E. MAIN

DEMO – RETURNING

Planning Consultant Elmiger gave the background for this agenda item, noting that the motion at the September 20, 2017 public hearing regarding this request included 2 items:

1. One of the City's pre-approved consulting structural engineers review the report by the applicant's structural engineer and provide the Commission with a letter regarding that review, and
2. The HDC Commissioners would each take a tour of the building with Mr. Funke and Mr. Guidobono.

Planning Consultant Elmiger said the 2nd condition of the motion – that each HDC Commissioner take a tour of the building – had happened. However, the review of the applicant's structural engineer's report by one of the City's pre-approved consulting structural engineers was taking a little extra time.

Planning Consultant Elmiger explained that four years ago the City made informal agreements with three structural engineering companies that had historic preservation experience; those companies had agreed to be the City's on-call structural engineers. Planning Consultant Elmiger had called the three companies. Two said they were not interested in assisting with this particular project. The third did appear to be willing to do the work, and they were working out an agreement with that company.

In conversation with the three companies, all had indicated that an actual site visit would be necessary. The work would entail a site visit, a review of the applicant's report, and a written opinion about the conclusions in the applicant's structural engineer's report.

A side discussion was held regarding finding 2-3 more structural engineers to draw from in the future.

Chair Allen said that when safety was used as grounds for a demolition, a certified written report by a structural engineer was required. He asked Planning Consultant Elmiger if she thought the work could be completed in time for the November 15 meeting.

Planning Consultant Elmiger said she was hopeful that it could be complete, but she couldn't guarantee that. She explained that it was up to the Commission as to whether or not to require a report from one of the City's pre-approved structural engineers.

Chair Allen invited the applicant to speak.

Ed Funke, Guidobono Building Company, was present on behalf of this continued application to request a demolition permit for 341 E. Main Street. Eric Guidobono, owner, was also present.

Mr. Funke said they were disappointed that another month had passed and nothing had been accomplished. There appeared to be insurance issues between the City of Northville and whatever engineering firm was chosen. Mr. Funke was concerned that there would still not be a report or perhaps even an engineering company approved by the City by the November meeting. They had hoped to be much further along with this project.

Mr. Funke added that it was important for the record to show that they originally had plans to renovate the building and had submitted plans to do so. He explained some of the design elements of that original plan, and explained further that they had originally planned to raise the building, remove the existing basement, excavate and construct a new basement, and then lower the building back down. But when they started to peel off the lath and plaster, they realized that the structure was probably not going to survive jacking it up while the new basement was installed.

Mr. Funke said that comments had been made that with their construction experience he and Mr. Guidobono should have known about these problems before they purchased the house. From day one they did know that they were going to be putting in a new basement.

Mr. Funke reiterated that it was their fear that they would reach the November 15 meeting and things would still not be resolved.

Chair Allen said that at the November HDC meeting, the Commission would have to decide how to move forward, should they still not have a report from one of the City's pre-approved structural engineers.

Commissioner Argenta referred to the September 20, 2017 motion, which read:

MOTION Hoffman, support by Field, that the Commission delay the decision regarding the demolition request for 341 E. Main Street to the next scheduled meeting, so that:

- 1. One of the City's consulting structural engineers will have time to review the report by the applicant's structural engineer and provide the Commission with a letter regarding that review, and*
- 2. The applicant provide access to the building to members of the HDC for a walkthrough.*

Commissioner Argenta said he thought that when they made the motion, one of the City's pre-approved structural engineers was going to be hired to do a separate report. He had concerns about one company reviewing another company's work. He thought this opened the door to possible litigation.

Commissioner Field thought the September motion was unclear in that his understanding was the City's pre-approved structural engineer was definitely going to visit the site; the motion did not state that specifically. The motion seemed to read that a review could be done without a site visit, even though earlier in the meeting a site visit was clearly referenced.

Planning Consultant Elmiger said that all the pre-approved structural engineers agreed that a site visit would be necessary. The work would involve 3 steps: a site visit, a review of the applicant's structural engineer's report, and then a written opinion as to whether that report came to reasonable conclusions as to whether or not the structure could be rehabilitated or not. The motion indicated that the report would be reviewed; in order to review the report a site visit had to be made.

Commissioner Field thought the original motion should be clarified.

Commissioner Argenta reiterated his concerns about asking one professional to review the work of another professional. It would be better to have a completely separate report.

Discussion followed. A completely new structural engineer's report would be more costly than a review and an opinion letter as originally envisioned by the motion.

Planning Consultant Elmiger pointed out that the City's pre-approved structural engineers had specific experience with historic renovation.

Mr. Funke said they had already paid for a structural engineer's report. In the end they would have two separate reports from two different certified structural engineers. How would it be determined which one to use?

Commissioner Hoffman said that when he had offered the original motion, he had meant for *review* to be taken broadly. He would expect someone who was going to review the original report to make a site visit, consider their own expertise, look at the report and then agree with elements of the report or perhaps recommend elements of the report that needed further study.

Chair Allen said the demolition standards stated that the following was required: *Certified written*

report by a structural engineer licensed in Michigan as to the structural soundness of the building and its adaptability for rehabilitation. Any dangerous conditions should be identified. So any structural engineer would not just be reviewing the original report; they would be offering an independent report. Commissioner Field said he would like that read into the record.

Motion Field, support by Argenta, that the City's pre-approved structural engineer's report will include an assessment of the structural soundness of the building and its adaptability for rehabilitation. Any dangerous conditions should be identified.

Chair Allen asked Commissioner Argenta to recommend further structural engineers, if possible.

Mr. Funke asked if the cost for the second report could be capped. Chair Allen thought the cost would be around \$1500.00. The consensus of the Commission was not to place a cap on the cost.

Planning Consultant Elmiger reviewed the scope of the work: the City's pre-approved structural engineer would look at the building, review the original report, and provide their own opinion. The question was whether the Commission felt this was necessary information.

Chair Allen called the motion.

Motion carried unanimously.

In response to comments from Commissioner Field regarding the September 18 meeting minutes, Mr. Funke clarified that while they had submitted plans in early 2017, they had pulled those plans before they could be reviewed by the HDC, and therefore the Commission had never approved the plans.

Commissioner Argenta also referred to the September 18 minutes, where a member of the public had made a comment that if the decision were delayed for 30 days, perhaps someone would come in with an offer to purchase the property. Had this occurred?

From the audience, Ron Bodnar said he had made that comment. He understood that it was a requirement for the owner to offer the property for sale before any demolition occurred. During the following discussion, Chair Allen recognized audience member Janice Johns, who thought any demolition application had to first show that an attempt had been made to market the property, as listed on page 1, paragraph 6 of the Demolition Guidelines. In any event, Commissioner Argenta noted that there were no current offers, and Mr. Funke stated the property was not for sale.

Chair Allen explained that this item would be carried over to the November 15 meeting, and closed the discussion.

CASE #2

JASON MOSS

547 W. MAIN STREET

RETAINING WALL & PAINT

Jason Moss, 20659 Lexington Court, Northville MI, was present on behalf of this application. Mrs. Moss was also present.

Mr. Moss explained that repairs needed to be made to the brick wall that was part of the porch; this had mistakenly been described as a retaining wall.

Commissioner Argenta distributed pictures he had taken of the home earlier in the day. He agreed that the brick wall was really the side of the porch.

Mr. Moss explained that the bricks in question had absorbed moisture and were literally falling out and coming apart. They planned on replacing those bricks and grout to match what was there now.

Mr. Moss referred the Commission to an 11 x 17 sheet that showed the proposed paint scheme. He explained that as they had started the demolition of the grouted materials they had discovered a layer of green paint. Their submission showed that some of the house was going to be painted a particular shade of Sherwin Williams deep red; they would like to put that on hold, in order to have time to make a better informed decision regarding color choice. In the meantime, they would make the house weather tight and paint it to match what was there now - a tan color as shown on a sample he provided.

Chair Allen noted that the home had previously been painted white and then, in the late 80's, been sandblasted. Was that the reason the brick had deteriorated? Commissioner Field thought the deterioration had been caused by water runoff from the roof.

Mrs. Moss said that she had hoped to find photographs of the home from earlier time periods; she had just been able to find photographs when the bricks were painted white. They had hoped to discover the original colors and try and match that. As Mr. Moss had stated, they had discovered some boards with some green on them. They were still searching for earlier photographs. In the meantime, they would use the tan paint as a placeholder.

Chair Allen asked if the tan color had an identification number. Mr. Moss said they were doing a color match; it was not a standard color.

Mr. Moss explained that there was a small amount of siding that could not be seen from the street, but was visible in the photos. That siding would have to come down when the new flashing was installed, and they would replace it with Hardie Board cement siding.

Commissioner Argenta said he had walked all the way around the house and he agreed that the siding in question was not visible from the street.

Commissioner Hoffman reviewed the work that was being done on the house. Tonight the Commission was looking at siding, brick repair and paint. The Subcommittee had already approved certain other emergency maintenance repairs.

Planning Consultant Elmiger said the emergency items approved by the Subcommittee included roof replacement, the fascia and soffits, and the brick repair on the original structure.

Commissioner Argenta said he thought the brick repair approved by the Subcommittee included the brick along the porch wall; to be thorough this could also be included in tonight's motion.

MOTION Field, support by Gudritz, to accept the application as complete. Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Allen opened the meeting for public comment. Seeing that no one came forward to speak, Chair Allen brought the matter back to the Commission.

MOTION Hoffman, support by Gudritz, to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work as presented, referencing the Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation, in particular Standards 1, 2, 6 and 8, and Northville Historic District Design Standards 5-2 maintenance, 5-17 siding, and 5-18 paint and color, with the color to match existing. Motion carried unanimously.

CASE #3

ALICIA RACINE

PAINT

118 E. MAIN STREET

Alicia Racine, 501 W. Cady Street, Northville, MI, was present on behalf of this application to paint the lower level façade of the commercial building at 118 E. Main Street.

Ms. Racine said they were proposing to paint a portion of the exterior of the building. They would be using Benjamin Moore Black (PM-9) and Gold 58, as shown on the submitted rendering.

In response to a question from Commissioner Hoffman, Ms. Racine said that the building had been recently painted, and repairs would not be necessary.

MOTION Hoffman, support by Murdock, to accept the application as complete. Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Allen opened the meeting for public comment. Seeing that no one came forward to speak, Chair Allen brought the matter back to the Commission.

MOTION Argenta, support by Hoffman, to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work as presented, referencing the Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation, in particular Standards 9 and 10, and Northville Historic District Design Standards 5-18 paint and color. Motion carried unanimously.

CASE #4

GRAPHIC VISIONS/ADORN FINE FLOWERS

SIGN

118 E. MAIN STREET

Brad Petty, Graphic Visions, 1857 Northville Road, Northville, MI, was present on behalf of this application to install a new projecting sign at 118 E. Main Street. Business owner Alicia Racine was also present.

Mr. Petty distributed a revised rendering, noting that in order to meet ordinance message unit standards, the word *Artisans* had been removed. The sign would be installed where the old Brown Dog Creamery sign had been. They would use Sherwin Williams black and Gold Leaf.

The Commission discussed the number of message units present on the sign. Was it possible *Adorn Fine Flowers* was a single message unit, being the name of the business? If so, perhaps *Artisans* could remain.

Planning Consultant Elmiger said that the Building Official would make the determination regarding message units.

Commissioner Field suggested that the motion could include approvals for counting the message units both ways.

Commissioner Murdock said the photo showed the proposed sign shadowing the sign of the business next door. Were any alternate locations considered?

Mr. Petty said because of the construction of the façade, the proposed sign location was the best choice. He reiterated that it was also the same location of the previous Brown Dog Creamery sign.

Chair Allen suggested restoring the window transom. After brief discussion, Ms. Racine said she thought this a good idea, and would look into accomplishing this.

Chair Allen indicated he was ready for a motion.

MOTION Gudritz, support by Murdock, to accept the application as complete. Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Allen opened the meeting for public comment. Seeing that no one came forward to speak, Chair Allen brought the matter back to the Commission.

MOTION Hoffman, support by Field, to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work as presented, referencing the Northville Historic District Design Standards 3-21 materials, 4-24 signs, and 5-18 paint and color. The motion approves the design submitted on September 26, 2017 or the design submitted October 10, 2017. Motion carried unanimously.

CASE #5

160 MAIN

OUTDOOR COOLER

158 E. MAIN STREET

Brian Maiorana, 36157 Parklane Circle, Farmington Hills MI was present on behalf of this application, as was William Carpenter, A3 studios Architects, 1441 E. Maple Road, Suite 312, Troy MI. The applicants had received approval for the proposed building modifications at the August 16, 2017 HDC meeting, and had also received approval of the project from the Planning Commission at their August 15, 2017 meeting. They were before the HDC this evening to amend the plans for the southern elevation to install an outdoor walk-in cooler, screened from view by a new fence. This change would also require amendment to their approved Final Site Plan.

Mr. Maiorana said that they had completed most of the interior demolition on the building. When they discovered that the existing walk-in refrigerator was not salvageable, they looked at alternative layouts for the kitchen floor plan, and also kept in mind previous concerns

regarding the south façade where the gas meters and transformer were located. They were proposing to locate a new walk-in cooler on the exterior of the building. In order to do that, they would wrap a fence around the transformer in a U-shape, thus shielding most of the components in the back, including the cooler. Also, they would change the location of the rear entrance door to where there was currently a boarded up window. The fence would be similar to what was already in the Town Square.

In response to a question from Chair Allen, Mr. Carpenter said they would be removing the existing wal-paks. They had contacted the DDA, and the DDA felt the uprights in the Town Square would compete with the wal-paks, so they removed them.

In response to questions from Commissioner Field, Mr. Carpenter showed on the plans a 4-foot opening along the south side where the building could be accessed. There would be a portion of the fence on the east, and on the south and west.

Discussion followed regarding the location and height of the fence. The cooler would be 7'4" high; the fence was proposed at 9 feet. However, the ordinance prohibited fences over 6 feet in height.

Mr. Carpenter said they had been unaware of this height restriction. He suggested installing cladding on the cooler. Mr. Maiorana said they could decorate the cooler to make it more aesthetically pleasing.

After further discussion regarding the height of the cooler and possible ways to screen it, including landscape plantings, Planning Consultant Elmiger said any screening would need to meet zoning ordinance requirements. This proposal represented a modification to the Final Site Plan, and would have to go before the Planning Commission. The HDC could require that the cooler be fully screened, and leave it up to the applicant and the Planning Commission to figure out how to screen the unit and still meet zoning ordinance requirements.

Commissioner Hoffman asked if this was the first outdoor cooler in the Historic District. Planning Consultant Elmiger said it was the first large outdoor walk-in cooler.

Commissioner Hoffman asked about noise requirements, in terms of noise generated from the compressor. Mr. Maiorana said he thought noise would be reduced, as the existing compressor was located outside, and that compressor was older and less efficient. He was confident the new compressor would not be an extra noise burden.

MOTION Field, support by Gudritz, to accept the application as complete. Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Allen opened the meeting for public comment. Seeing that no one came forward to speak, Chair Allen brought the matter back to the Commission.

MOTION Argenta, support by Hoffman, to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work as presented, referencing the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, in particular Standards 9 and 10, and Northville Historic District Design Standards 4-6 windows, 4-8 cornices, 4-9 doors, 4-21 materials, 4-27 rear façade development, 5-18 paint and colors,

with the further understanding that the 7'4" high cooler will be fully screened. **Motion carried unanimously.**

8. ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEWS: None.

9. DISCUSSION: None.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Seeing that there was no further comment, Chair Allen adjourned the meeting at 7:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Cheryl McGuire
Recording Secretary

Approved as submitted 11/15/2017