

NORTHVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
December 20, 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, Field, Hoffman, Murdock, Tartaglia
Absent: Argenta, Gudritz
Also Present: Mayor Roth
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: November 15, 2017

MOTION Field, support by Hoffman, to approve the November 15, 2017 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

6. PUBLIC HEARING:

GUIDOBONO BUILDING DEMOLITION
341 E. MAIN

Chair Allen explained that at the November 15, 2017 meeting, the Historic District Commission had found the application for this request to be complete, but had also committed to asking the City Attorney to review the language in the HDC's *Guidelines for the Consideration of Applications for the Demolition or Moving of Structures Within the Northville Historic District*.

The City Attorney had reviewed the Guidelines language and found that in order for this application to be complete, the property must first be offered for sale.

Therefore, following Roberts Rules of Order, the previous motion needed to be amended, as the application was not complete.

After brief discussion regarding process, Commissioner Field offered the following motion:

MOTION Field, support by Hoffman, that based on the City Attorney's opinion, the HDC amends the previous motion of November 15, 2017 regarding the request for demolition of 341 E. Main Street, and now finds that the application is incomplete. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Chair Allen further explained as the application was now found to be incomplete, no public hearing could be held this evening. The applicant would need to determine whether they wanted to offer the property for sale, or whether they wanted to amend their application.

Ed Funke, Guidobono Building Company, presented the HDC with a list of 15 approved applications for residential or commercial demolition within the Historic District. None of those applications – some of which involved notable buildings – required the applicants to offer their buildings for sale. He questioned how the HDC could decide in November that the application was complete, and now, a month later, could rescind that decision.

Mr. Funke reviewed some of the history of the proposal, including gathering the opinions of two structural engineers, and receiving the opinion of the City Attorney. He also reviewed the March 2007 approval of the demolition of 311 E. Main Street, a similar building to the structure being discussed this evening. In the case of 311 E. Main Street, no structural engineer's report was required.

Planning Consultant Elmiger explained that the requirement for a report from a structural engineer approved by the Historic District Commission had been added two or three years ago.

Mr. Funke addressed the cost of the ongoing HDC process, added to the initial cost of the purchase, along with work already done to the interior of the building. Was there an end in sight? They had purchased the property in December 2016, and had been before the HDC five times.

It came out in discussion that the applicants could amend their application. The structure could be modified and added to, without a full demolition. If the applicants chose to offer the property for sale, pricing, time on the market, etc., would be part of the application for demolition.

Mr. Funke reiterated that he felt precedence had been set for the 15 approvals for demolition he had presented this evening. None of those applicants were required to offer their properties for sale or have a certified written report by an HDC-approved structural engineer.

Mr. Funke asked for more precise direction regarding how long the structure had to be offered for sale. Planning Consultant Elmiger said the applicant needed to present information after they had researched the property, spoken with appropriate realtors, offered the property for sale, etc. It was up to the applicant to convince the HDC that good faith reasonable efforts had been made to sell the property.

Commissioner Field emphasized that the HDC had to follow the Guidelines for demolition. While the Guidelines could and probably should be rewritten in order to provide clarity, tonight the Commission had to respect what the Guidelines required. Additionally, he would not support a weak attempt to sell the building. Sometimes commercial buildings took a long time to sell.

Commissioner Tartaglia said he didn't want to get involved with a discussion of defining a "reasonable" period of time for offering a building for sale. In his business, he knew that prime commercial properties could go quickly. He cautioned against using residential realtors for a commercial sale.

Mr. Funke asked if they should return to the January meeting to offer a proposal for a reasonable period to offer the building for sale. Chair Allen replied that he thought they only needed to return after the effort to sell the structure had been made.

Seeing that discussion had ended, Chair Allen closed this agenda item.

7. CASES TO BE HEARD – BY CASE

CASE #1

**PERFECT IMPRESSIONS/MY LITTLE PARIS WALL SIGN
141 E. MAIN STREET**

Rachit Pasricha, Perfect Impressions Graphic Solutions, Farmington Hills MI, was present on behalf of this application for a wall sign at 141 E. Main Street. They had received approval for a wall sign and projecting sign at the August 16, 2017 meeting. Since then the landlord and business owner had agreed to change the overall layout and sign design, as shown in tonight's supporting documents.

In response to a question from Commissioner Murdock, Mr. Pasricha said they proposed moving the projecting sign from the door to the right hand side of the window.

In response to a question from Commissioner Hoffman, Planning Consultant Elmiger said that the application met the HDC's application requirements.

MOTION Hoffman, support by Field, 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 Murdock, to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work as presented, referencing Northville Historic District Design Standards 4-21 materials, 4-24 signs, and 5-18 paint and color. Motion carried unanimously.

CASE #2

**OLD VILLAGE SCHOOL
405 W. MAIN**

**WINDOWS, DOORS, ROOF,
FENCE, PAVING, WALLS,
LANDSCAPING, OUTDOOR PLAY
AREA, PLAY EQUIPMENT**

Members of the Northville Public Schools team present on behalf of this application were:

Mary Kay Gallagher, Superintendent, Northville Public Schools
Misty Raatz, TMP Architecture
Jeff Hamilton, Auch Construction

Superintendent Gallagher and Ms. Raatz provided brick samples and showed an illustration of where the new brick would be placed next to the old. The match was near perfect.

Chair Allen reminded the development team that there had been previous conversation regarding matching the mortar joints in order to provide a seamless appearance.

Ms. Raatz described the EFCO single-hung window system that was proposed, which provided a replica with a grid system. Chair Allen noted that the mullion were exterior and would be read as

4 over 4 with shadow lines.

In response to questions from Commission Hoffman, Planning Consultant Elmiger said that cut sheets had been provided for the light fixtures and the existing sign would no longer be used.

Ms. Raatz said they were no longer using the drop off lane shown on the north side of the building. They also submitted a highlighted section showing the height and location of the fence.

In response to questions from Commissioner Murdock, Ms. Raatz described the lighting at the two front entrances on the north elevation, as shown on Sheet A.3.1.

Ms. Raatz said that the black and white photograph they had of the window frame system did not show a perspective of the doors that existed at that time, and there was no evidence of original colors. They would match the doors to the window frame system.

Commissioner Hoffman asked if the cleaning system would protect the existing masonry. Ms. Raatz pointed out that the specs for the cleaning system had been provided, and they were working with a specialist in historic preservation regarding the cleaning process.

Commissioners Hoffman and Field complimented the applicants on the level of detail provided in the application.

Chair Allen initiated a discussion regarding adding new sidewalk along Cady Street. Ms. Raatz acknowledged the advantage to further pedestrian connection. However, the need for a retaining wall coupled with dealing with the grade change in the area made adding a sidewalk an expensive solution, and was beyond the allocated budget for the project. Superintendent Gallagher said the School Board had also requested any cost savings be used for other needed projects in the District. Also, it was their understanding that the City was responsible for sidewalks. The District could investigate the possibility of leveraging the District's pricing while the contractor was on site, if the City wished to fund the improvement.

Chair Allen suggested eliminating the arbor vitae shown on the plan to buffer the parking lot from Cady, and use shrubs instead. Perhaps the savings there could be put toward constructing a sidewalk. Also, the zebra grass shown as a buffer for HVAC equipment would not serve that purpose.

Ms. Raatz said that the zebra grass had already been changed to evergreen shrubs.

Chair Hoffman said that he felt the team was doing a wonderful job preserving one of the finest downtown buildings.

In response to questions from Chair Allen, Mr. Hamilton said they were completely rebuilding the parking lot, dropping it down somewhat in order to facilitate entry to the building, and help with handicap accessibility.

Chair Allen acknowledged that the infrastructure elements such as adding the sidewalk and the design of the parking lot were not under the HDC's purview. He indicated he was ready for a motion.

MOTION Field, 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 Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation, in particular Standards 1, 2, 7, 9 and 10, and Northville Historic District Design Standards 4-6 windows, 4-9 doors, 4-10 ornament, 4-21 materials, 4-24 signs, 4-27 rear façade, 5-2 maintenance, 5-7 roofing, 5-14 windows, and 5-18 paint and color. **Motion carried unanimously.**

8. ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEWS: None.

9. DISCUSSION:

OLD VILLAGE SCHOOL ELEVATOR DRAWINGS

Chair Allen noted that the elevator drawings requested at the November 21, 2017 meeting had been provided.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Seeing that there was no further comment, Chair Allen adjourned the meeting at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Cheryl McGuire
Recording Secretary

Approved as published 01/17/2018