



Historic District Commission Meeting
Thursday, March 12, 2009
Council Chambers, City Hall, Claremont at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes
Approved 5/28/09

Meeting called to order by Chair Messier at 7:00 PM

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Jason Farrell, David Messier, John Hall, Brian Rapp, James Gagnon

City Staff: Michelle Aiken, Boards & Commissions Coordinator

Absent: Deborah Cutts, Trinity Earle

II. Continuation

- **(08-2008) 50 Pleasant Street, LLC, Daniel Mott, 165 South Main Street, Newport, NH** - A Certificate of Appropriateness Application has been submitted requesting approval to Replace Existing Front Door and Signage at **50 Pleasant Street**, Claremont. Tax Map: 120, Lot: 84, Zone B-1.

Mr. Mott provided copies of what the revised sign will look like and passed them out to the board. It will be a hanging sign plus a flush sign and some signage for additional parking in the rear municipal parking area. Chair Messier advised that it appears there is a lot of signage and it may be over the signage allowed. Ms. Aiken advised she has not seen the proposal for the new sign but anything that is over the allowance would require a variance from the Zoning Board Adjustment. Chair Messier asked how much they felt they could reduce the signage. He advised he would reduce it if they required it, but would rather go for a variance. He would be willing to reduce the parking sign. Mr. Mott believes that the hanging sign is the same size as the previous sign from Sophie & Zeke's. The sqft allowed is based on the sqft of the front of the building. Mr. Farrell asked if it is the sqft of the building or just the business. Ms. Aiken advised it was based on the sqft of the entire building not the business. Mr. Hall asked if it was wood or a type of composite. Mr. Mott advised it is made by a sign company and it is composite. Chair Messier wanted to be sure they were not going to go past the trim area with the signage. Mr. Mott advised that the sign will be within that area.

Discussion on the size of the signs. Mr. Mott advised that they would rather try to get a variance than reduce the size of the signs. Mr. Hall is comfortable with the sign and the logo is their trademark. Mr. Hall asked about the flood lighting. Mr. Mott advised the sign would be centered with the flood lighting. Mr. Hall is concerned with the hanging sign dimensions. Mr. Mott advised that the dagger is the same size as the Sophie & Zeke's original sign. Mr. Mott advised he will make sure the new hanging sign is the same location as the previous Sophie & Zeke's sign. Mr. Hall doesn't want to have the applicant have to re-apply, but if they do not receive approval for a variance then they would have to choose either the big flush sign or the dagger sign and he thinks that should be decided at this point. Mr. Mott advised that if they did not receive the variance they would go with the dagger hanging sign. Mr. Farrell would rather see a Connecticut River Byways parking sign. There was a question if the applicant would be allowed to use it to direct people to the parking lot. Mr. Farrell suggested the applicant see Nancy Merrill from the Planning & Development office and see if she could get a parking sign from the Connecticut Byways. Mr. Mott said he would be willing to do that.

Discussion among board members that they like one hanging sign and one flat, flush to the building sign and the parking sign to be simplified to a small “p” and the signage needs to stay in the allotted amount, unless they are granted a variance from the zoning board of adjustment.

Chair Messier advised the changes to the doorway had raised some concerns. They would rather have the aluminum design continued throughout instead of the wooden door. Mr. Mott advised they would like to come back in July for the redesign of the front of the building. The wooden door design was proposed for another restaurant that had been interested in utilizing the space, but not it is Gusanos and they may have different plans that they would like to work on at a later date.

Criteria #1 – the building has a low rating for its historical, architectural and cultural value of as it relates to the setting – Consensus

Criteria #2 - The applicant’s proposal is compatible with other buildings and signage in the area – Consensus

Criteria #3 – Not applicable

Criteria #4 - It will have a positive effect and impact on the setting – Consensus. Mr. Rapp advised he is comfortable with the oversized sign and feels that the pictures are a little deceiving and he thinks they will fit in better.

Criteria #5 - The applicant’s proposal will have a positive affect on the setting and will help to preserve and enhance the historic, and cultural qualities of the district and community – Consensus. Mr. Rapp advised it was good to see this and he feels that it is enhancing the district and Mr. Hall felt it will enhance and improve the downtown marketplace. Chair Messier likes the contemporary look of the new signs.

Criteria #6 – The applicant’s proposal is in keeping with the guidelines set out in the Secretary of Interiors Guidelines for Rehabilitation. – This is something we would look at when the front of the store is redesigned.

Motion to: approve signage with the conditions of two front signs one hanging sign and one flat sign approved within the measurements provided and a universal sign for parking and the total signage to stay within the allowed sqft of zoning pending approval by the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Continuation of the doorway design to the July 23rd Meeting.

Made by: Mr. Messier **Second:** Mr. Rapp **Vote:** Unanimous

Consensus that the signage is approved pending approval by the Zoning Board of Adjustment. If the Zoning Board of Adjustment does not approve the request then the applicant will be required to stay within the required Zoning square footage.

III. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to: To Adjourn

Made by: Mr. Hall **Second:** Mr. Gagnon **Vote:** Unanimous

Meeting Adjourned at: 7:40 pm

Respectfully Submitted By,

**Michelle Aiken,
Boards and Commissions Coordinator**