


CITY OF CLAREMONT
Historic District Commission Meeting
Thursday, February 25, 2016 7:00 PM
City Hall, Council Chambers

MINUTES
Approved 4/12/2016

I. Roll Call

Members Present: David Messier, Kristin Kenniston, Richard Wahrlich

Absent: Scott Pope

II. Review of Minutes from December 23, 2015

Corrections: None.

Motion: To approve the minutes of the December 23, 2016 meeting as written.

Made by: Mrs. Kenniston **Second:** Mr. Wahrlich

Vote: Unanimous in favor

III. Old Business

- **HDC 2015-00014 Victor & Dawna Jangel, 7 Marcotte Avenue** – for demolition of the building at **139 Main Street**. Tax Map 107, Lot 15. Zone: MU (Cont. from 12/23/2015)

Attorney Jennifer Shea, representing the property owners, asked the Commission to continue the hearing to the April meeting because there is still no purchase and sale agreement and the owners do not have the money to hire an engineer for the requested structural analysis.

Motion: To continue the hearing to the April 28, 2016 meeting.

Made by: Mr. Messier **Second:** Mr. Wahrlich

Vote: Unanimous in favor

IV. New Business

- **HDC 2016-00001 Real Steel Fitness LLC, 31 Lewis Place** – for signage at **66 Pleasant Street**. Tax Map 120, Lot 89. Zone: MU

Mr. Messier read the public notice.

Frank Sprague, one of the principals of Real Steel Fitness, presented the application. He said he would like to put up a wooden sign on the front of the building above the doors that would be approximately the same size as the Eserky sign. Color pictures of the proposed sign on the building were provided to the Commission.

The application submitted contains a photo of an affixed sign on the second floor façade and a second sign in the window to the left of the front doors. Mr. Messier said he understood that the proposed signage exceeds the allowable area and allowable number of signs in this district and that the proposal will require zoning approval. Mr. Sprague said he will not be putting a sign in the window – it would be only the sign above the doors.

Mr. Messier asked if all components of the (affixed) sign will be wooden and how would the wood be protected from the elements? Mr. Sprague confirmed that all parts of the sign would be made of

wood, but he did not know how they would be protected. He said he assumed that they would be painted or lacquered in some way. He said it would be made by a professional sign-maker. He also said that the sign would not be illuminated. Mr. Messier pointed out that there are light fixtures already on the awning and said that Mr. Sprague would not need HDC approval to use them unless he wanted or needed to change the design of the fixtures. The Commission had no further questions.

Mr. Messier noted that there were no members of the public present, so he did not open the public hearing.

Mrs. Kenniston read the architectural inventory for the property. The 1930 building was once used by Montgomery Ward. According to the inventory, the blank façade of the second floor (where signage is now placed) “hurts” the historical integrity of the building. It does, however, have interesting marble panels and trim. Mr. Messier pointed out the marble panel at the top of the building. He said the panel depicts the “goddess of commerce” and was used as a symbol on all Montgomery Ward buildings. The building is given a rating of two, primarily because of the second floor façade. The consensus of the Commission is that the rating is appropriate.

HDC Criteria	
1. Does the building have historic, architectural or cultural value?	The Commission agreed that the building has architectural value because of the marble panels and trim (and the association with Montgomery Ward); the interesting features are mainly at the top of the building, but it adds interest to the downtown. The link with Montgomery Ward might be considered a cultural and historical value.
2. Are the proposed exterior design, arrangement, textures, and materials compatible with the existing buildings or structures and to the setting and surrounding uses?	The proposed sign would be made of wood which the Commission agreed is compatible with others in the area. The Commission also agreed that the scale and arrangement is appropriate.
3. Are the scale and size of the proposed improvements compatible with the existing surroundings? (including height, width, street frontage, number of stories, roof type, façade openings such as windows, doors, etc., and architectural details)	The Commission agreed that this criterion is not applicable to this project.
4. How will the proposed improvements (signs, lights, yards, off-street parking, screening, fencing, entrance drive, sidewalks, and landscaping) affect the character of any building or structure within the district?	The Commission agreed that the sign will have a positive impact because it is attractive and well-designed. It creates a presence in the building and signifies that the building is being actively used.
5. What impact will the proposal have on the setting? To what extent will the proposal help to preserve and enhance the historic, architectural, and cultural qualities of the district and the community?	The building will be in use and bringing in income which will allow for its upkeep and thus its preservation. The use has no affect on the architecture. It adds to the vibrancy of the downtown.

6. Is the proposal in keeping with the Secretary of Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitation?	The sign does not change or affect the building in any structural way, so these guidelines are not applicable to this project.
---	--

Motion: To approve the application (#HDC 2016-00001) for one affixed sign as shown in the application contingent upon zoning approval.

Made by: Mrs. Kenniston **Second:** Mr. Wahrlich

Vote: unanimous in favor

Mr. Sprague said he must change the design of the front entrance doors to meet current building and fire safety codes. (This project was not included in the sign application.) He presented to the Commission a drawing showing the change from a centered set of double glass doors with glass panels on either side to two double glass doors separated by a central wood column.

HDC Criteria	
1. Does the building have historic, architectural or cultural value?	(No change from previous discussion)
2. Are the proposed exterior design, arrangement, textures, and materials compatible with the existing buildings or structures and to the setting and surrounding uses?	The building already has steel doors – they would be replaced by the same type of doors with a different configuration. Most of the buildings in the downtown have similar doors. They are compatible to existing and surrounding uses.
3. Are the scale and size of the proposed improvements compatible with the existing surroundings? (including height, width, street frontage, number of stories, roof type, façade openings such as windows, doors, etc., and architectural details)	Nothing is being changed height-wise or width wise – it is simply a reconfiguration.
4. How will the proposed improvements (signs, lights, yards, off-street parking, screening, fencing, entrance drive, sidewalks, and landscaping) affect the character of any building or structure within the district?	This criterion is not applicable to this application.
5. What impact will the proposal have on the setting? To what extent will the proposal help to preserve and enhance the historic, architectural, and cultural qualities of the district and the community?	The impact of this project will have a neutral impact.
6. Is the proposal in keeping with the Secretary of Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitation?	No part of this project is historic in character so it is not changing anything in the design that needs protecting.

Motion: To approve the redesigning of the entry doors as proposed.

Made by: Mrs. Kenniston **Second:** Mr. Wahrlich

Vote: Unanimous in favor

Mr. Sprague said that he may have to make changes to the back of the building to accommodate another stairway/egress issue. The Commission offered to continue this hearing to the next meeting, to which Mr. Sprague agreed.

Motion: To continue this hearing to the March 24, 2016 meeting.

Made by: Mr. Messier **Second:** Mr. Wahrlich

Vote: Unanimous in favor

V. Other

Mr. Wahrlich urged all to attend the Master Plan Public Forum on March 3, 2016 at 5:30 – 8:00 PM at the Claremont Middle School.

VI. Correspondence

VII. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn the meeting.

Made by: Mr. Wahrlich **Second:** Mrs. Kenniston

Vote: Unanimous in favor

The meeting adjourned at 7:27PM

Respectfully submitted by,

deForest Bearse

Resource Coordinator