



Historic District Commission Meeting
Thursday, September 28, 2017 7:00 PM
City Hall, Council Chambers

MINUTES
Approved 10/26/2017

I. Roll Call

Members Present: Kristin Kenniston, David Messier, Richard Wahrlich
Absent: Scott Pope, Abigail Kier

II. Review of Minutes from August 24, 2017

Corrections: None
Motion: To approve
Made by: Mrs. Kenniston **Second:** Mr. Wahrlich
Vote: Unanimous in favor

III. Old Business

IV. New Business

- A. **HDC 2017-00007 Rick Freeman, 25 Front Street:** For a 9 SF affixed sign at **51-59 Pleasant Street**. Tax Map 120, Lot 72. Zone: MU.

Mr. Messier read the public notice.

Mr. Freeman presented his application. He stated that Nana’s Collectibles had been at 64 Pleasant Street for 17 years, but the building is about to be renovated so the business is moving to 51 Pleasant Street. He would like to use the same sign that he has been using at 64 Pleasant Street. The sign is 3 ft x 3 ft. It will hang inside the front window.

Mr. Messier read the architectural inventory for the building. Mr. Messier added that the building has an Art Deco/classical reference on it. The building was rated as a 2. No information was available on the original owners or the architect/builder. Mr. Messier said the Latchis brothers were entrepreneurs in the theater business in Vermont and New Hampshire.

Mr. Messier felt there is some historic and architectural value, but was uncertain about cultural value. Mrs. Kenniston said she thought people went to the theater to get news of current events. Mr. Messier said there used to be vaudeville shows there, so there may some cultural value. The consensus of those present was that the rating of 2 was warranted (although Mr. Messier felt a 3 would not be inappropriate).

| HDC Criteria | |
|---|---|
| 1. Does the building have historic, architectural or cultural value? | The consensus was there are values in all three areas given the theater connection. |
| 2. Are the proposed exterior design, arrangement, textures, and materials compatible with the existing buildings or | All agreed that this criterion was not applicable. |

| | |
|---|--|
| structures and to the setting 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) | All agreed that this criterion was not applicable. |
| 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 only character affected is the building it's in; it shows there's a business in the building; it is an attractive sign; there's no negative impact to anything; the renovations to accommodate the store will have a positive impact on the building |
| 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? | Having an open business in the building has a positive impact; it is an attractive sign; hanging this sign inside the window is appropriate – it might not be if it were to be hung outside because of its dimensions |
| 6. Is the proposal in keeping with the Secretary of Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitation? | The sign does not affect any part of the building; it could be taken down without effect |

The consensus of the Commission was that there was no negative impact from this sign.

Motion: To accept this application as presented
Made by: Mrs. Kenniston **Second:** Mr. Wahrlich

Mr. Messier asked if anyone from the public wanted to speak on this application. No one did, so Mr. Messier closed the public hearing.

Vote on the motion: Unanimous in favor

B. HDC 2017-00008 Melissa Maranville, 40 Windy Hill Road: For a 40.8 SF sign at **14-20 Pleasant Street.** Tax Map 120, Lot 76. Zone: MU

Mr. Messier read the public notice. Ms. Maranville presented her application.

Mr. Messier said this location is known as the Stowell Block. The business will be located in the storefront on the farthest right. Ms. Maranville said her sign will be four feet shorter than the sign that was there previously. The previous border on the storefront within which the sign had been mounted has been removed due to rot. The proposed sign will be centered in the space, flush-mounted, with a 1-inch gap behind it to allow rainwater to flow through. The sign will say the name of the business, "Granite State Hobbies, R.C. Cars & Planes·Trains·Games & More".

Mr. Messier read the architectural inventory for the building. The building has been given a rating of 2. Mr. Messier read a few excerpts from the Otis Waite History about Mr. Stowell.

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| HDC Criteria | |
|---------------------|--|

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>1. Does the building have historic, architectural or cultural value?</p> | <p>It was agreed that the building has historic value because Mr. Stowell was an important figure in Claremont's history; its late 19th century architecture gives it architectural value; it has little to no cultural value. Everyone agreed with the rating of 2.</p> |
| <p>2. Are the proposed exterior design, arrangement, textures, and materials compatible with the existing buildings or structures and to the setting and surrounding uses?</p> | <p>All agreed that this criterion was not applicable.</p> |
| <p>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)</p> | <p>All agreed that this criterion was not applicable.</p> |
| <p>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?</p> | <p>The sign will be complimentary; it will work with other signs in the district; it will have a positive impact</p> |
| <p>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?</p> | <p>It will be good to have a business in the building with a sign to advertise it</p> |
| <p>6. Is the proposal in keeping with the Secretary of Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitation?</p> | <p>Removal of the sign would not affect the building</p> |

Motion: To accept this application as presented

Made by: Mr. Messier

Second: Mrs. Kenniston

Mr. Messier asked for public comment. There was none, so Mr. Messier closed the public hearing.

Vote on the motion: Unanimous in favor

- C. **HDC 2017-00009 Polish American Citizens Club, 142 Main Street:** For demolition of the house at **29 Union Street**. Tax Map 107, Lot 9. Zone: CR2

Mr. Messier read the public notice. David Parady, Vice President of the Polish American Citizens Club presented the application. The club has been at this location since 1958. They have used Esersky's lot for parking after hours. This is no longer possible. The house at 29 Union Street was purchased by the current owners as a DEA foreclosure and has been vacant for several years. Its interior is in poor condition. The club would like to demolish the building and merge the lot with their current parking lot.

Mr. Messier said there was a house on the site of the current parking lot.

There is a landlocked property behind the club that has a right-of-way between the club building and Leo's Market. The new parking area would be accessed from Main Street. The proposed parking lot plan will have to be reviewed by the planning board. The parking lot plan will also have to be reviewed by the HDC. Mr. Messier said the best course of action would be to continue the site plan portion of the application to another meeting at a later date. That way Mr. Parly wouldn't have to file another application and pay the fees.

Mr. Parly said the building has not been occupied since 2004 when it was auctioned

The club does not own the property, but the current owners submitted a letter of authorization for the club to seek this approval.

The Commission had no further questions. Mr. Messier opened up the discussion to the public. Someone asked for clarification of the review process. There were no other comments and Mr. Messier closed the public hearing.

There was no architectural survey for this house, so the Commission had to rely on a map of the historic district with different ratings shown for the buildings. According to the map, this building provides a minor contribution to the historic district. It was probably late 19th – early 20th century work force housing. There were probably three of them in a row. One of them has been already torn down (site of the current parking lot). The vinyl siding on the building completely covers all architectural details. The applicant has indicated that the interior is in poor condition and has been empty for 13± years.

Mrs. Kenniston said she was inclined to allow the demolition. While it is an historic house, the Commission has previously permitted demolition of another house with a similar rating. The architectural value is now gone. She felt it would “just sit there and rot – I don't see anyone coming in and developing it.” Mr. Wahrlich agreed.

| HDC Criteria | |
|--|---|
| 1. Does the building have historic, architectural or cultural value? | Everyone agreed it has minimal value in all three areas. |
| 2. Are the proposed exterior design, arrangement, textures, and materials compatible with the existing buildings or structures and to the setting and surrounding uses? | This criterion is not applicable to a demolition project. |
| 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) | This criterion is not applicable to a demolition 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? | This criterion is not applicable to a demolition project. |
| 5. What impact will the proposal have on the setting? | Removing a building that is becoming an eyesore will have a positive impact. It may not enhance |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>To what extent will the proposal help to preserve and enhance the historic, architectural, and cultural qualities of the district and the community?</p> | <p>the historic or architectural qualities of the area, but it may help the cultural qualities by providing a place for the club patrons to park. These houses have very little yard, no place for parking. The likelihood of this house being rehabbed is slim. Its removal won't have a negative impact and with a good site plan proposal, it could have a positive impact.</p> |
| <p>6. Is the proposal in keeping with the Secretary of Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitation?</p> | <p>This criterion is not applicable to a demolition project.</p> |

Mr. Messier said it is unfortunate to lose a little house, but not a very significant little house.

Mr. Messier started to draft a motion to approve the demolition of the house with a continuance of the site plan portion of the application and was asking the applicant for a date to which to continue the hearing when Mr. Pardy and Mr. Gentes

Mark Gentes, President of the Polish Club, said he had spoken with the owners about this idea. He did not know the building was historical. He said the owners want the club to have the building because they know the club needs a parking lot. They are hoping to design the lot so people will drive into it from Main Street and drive out of it along the driveway that currently goes with the house onto Union Street.

Mr. Messier said he is not arguing the merits of the case at this point. The motion is to allow the house to be demolished once the club takes ownership of it. Once the house is demolished, the design of the parking lot must be reviewed by the Commission as step two. He said he is just looking for a time frame for when the club might be ready to come back with the parking lot design. Mr. Gentes said he thought six months would be sufficient. It was agreed to continue the hearing to December 28th.

Motion: To permit the demolition of this building pending (the applicant's) ownership of the building and continuing the site plan review to the December 28th meeting.

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

V. Other

Mr. Wahrlich said the site plan for the Goddard Block project had been approved by the Planning Board. He said they are planning to do a complete rehab of the building costing \$5-6M. They will be adding on to the rear of the building. They will be pursuing historic preservation tax credits for the project. The frontage will stay commercial. There will be handicap accessed apartments in the rear on the ground floor; the upper two floors will be more apartments. Parking is an issue. They only have 17 spaces at present. They have gone through the Zoning Board to assist with that. The City is also involved in helping to find additional parking. They will be coming to the Commission at some point.

VI. Correspondence

VII. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn the meeting

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM

Respectfully submitted by,
deForest Bearse
Resource Coordinator