

**FLINT HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 7TH, 2023**

Commissioners Present

Heather Burnash, Chair
Beverly Davis, Vice-Chair
Michael Hurley
Stephanie Wright
Kurt Neiswender

Staff Present

Max Lester, Int. Zoning Coordinator
Tyler Bailey, Small Business Specialist

Absent: None

ROLL CALL:

Chairperson Burnash called the meeting to order at 5:41 P.M. Roll was taken, and a quorum was present.

The meeting was held in person as well as via Zoom and phone conferencing as approved.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA:

Max Lester noted a correction to the parcel identification number of 715 East St. Chairperson Burnash asked for a motion to adopt the agenda with corrections.

The motion was carried unanimously by voice vote.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING AND DISPOSAL:

Minutes for May 4th and July 1st, 2023 are not yet available.

PUBLIC FORUM:

Chairperson Burnash opened the floor for public comment on anything not on the agenda. There were no public comments.

CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS/NOTICE TO PROCEED:

APPLICANT: *Moses Timlin*
PROPERTY OWNER: *Flint Manhattan Place, LLC*
LOCATION: *402 Garland St. (PID# 40-12-484-017)*
SCOPE OF WORK: *Demolition of Structure*

Moses Timlin and Joe Martin are representing Flint Manhattan Place, LLC. Mr. Timlin stated their intent when the property was acquired was to restore and maintain the building, however there were no records of building inspections. An inspection by the City of Flint showed that the building is hazardous and not in compliance with building safety laws. Mr. Timlin is requesting the demolition of the structure because it is unsafe for human occupancy. Jack Hippe, a Building Inspector for the City of Flint, discussed the troubled legal history of the property and clarified the current owner is not at fault for the poor state of the building.

Max Lester read a letter sent from the Carriage Town Historic Association signed by Nick Kedovary, voicing opposition to the demolition of the structure.

Chairperson Burnash opened the floor to public comment.

Sierra *[last name inaudible]* spoke against the demolition and discussed the past uses of the building and the architect of the building. Commissioners acknowledged that the building is in such a state that full restoration would not only be costly, but will also require significant rebuilding to the point of potentially losing historic status.

Cade Surface, resident and member of the Carriage Town Historic Neighborhood Association, spoke in opposition of the demolition. Mr. Surface mentioned the town charter and the history of the Carriage Town becoming a historic district as well as the history of the building's architectural style and previous uses.

Sam Farrah, a resident of a different historic apartment building, spoke in opposition to the demolition, noting that comparing a rehabilitation to the construction of a new building is not a like comparison and that more solutions should be sought to avoid demolition.

Tyler Bailey, Small Business Specialist for the City of Flint, spoke to his experience with buildings being neglected and the value of new housing in the area.

Commissioner Wright made a motion to adjourn the case to the next meeting to allow for more discussion and deliberation. The motion failed to carry.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to adjourn and request information from the applicants as to whether there are any other potential funding opportunities to restore the building before moving for demolition. The motion failed to carry.

Commissioner Neiswender acknowledged the history and connection speakers have for the building, but the information shown indicated the building is a public safety hazard and the decision has to follow the ordinance that governs the Commission. Commissioner Neiswender motioned to approve the Notice to Proceed for demolition. Commissioner Hurley seconded the motion.

Mr. Timlin clarified the ordinances laid out by the Historic District Commission and went into further detail on why the building is uninhabitable.

Commissioner Burnash acknowledges that at a certain point repair would leave the building as unrecognizable. Then went on to thank those who attended for speaking out.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Davis, no

Commissioner Hurley, yes

Commissioner Wright, no

Commissioner Burnash, yes

Commissioner Neiswender, yes

M/S – Neiswender/Hurley

3 yes, 2 no, 0 abstain

The motion failed.

Commissioner Burnash outlined the appeal and reapplication process.

APPLICANT:

Moses Timlin

PROPERTY OWNER:

Flint Manhattan Place, LLC

LOCATION:

116 W. First Ave. (PID# 40-12-484-015)

SCOPE OF WORK:

Demolition of Structure

Moses Timlin and Joe Martin are representing Manhattan Place, LLC. Mr. Timlin stated the presentation is overall the same. This property is adjacent to 402 Garland St. and the buildings are connected. Mr. Timlin spoke on the structural analysis for the building and stated his belief he addressed the main concerns during review of the previous case.

Commissioner Wright made a motion to approve the Notice to Proceed for demolition.

Commissioner Neiswender seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Davis, no

Commissioner Hurley, yes

Commissioner Wright, yes

Commissioner Burnash, yes

Commissioner Neiswender, yes

M/S – Wright/Neiswender

4 yes, 1 no, 0 abstain

The motion passed.

Nick Kedovary, President of the Carriage Town Historic Neighborhood Association, expressed concern that this building's demolition was approved and believes it was an oversight due to it potentially affecting the stability of 402 Garland St. which is around 40 years older and was not approved for demolition.

Chairperson Burnash added that the appeals process for decisions is open to any person, not specifically the applicant.

APPLICANT: Moses Timlin
PROPERTY OWNER: DFPH, LLC
LOCATION: 433 W. Second Ave. (PID# 40-12-481-001)
SCOPE OF WORK: Demolition of Structure

Moses Timlin is presenting on behalf of DFPH, LLC.. Mr. Timlin stated they have been trying to acquire the property for recovery and several fire incidents have occurred causing irreparable damage. Mr. Timlin is seeking the demolition of the building with the supporting documentation and pictures provided. Commissioner Wright acknowledged the significant state of disrepair the property is in.

Chairperson Burnash opened the floor for public comment. No one spoke.

Commissioner Hurley made a motion to approve the demolition request. Commissioner Neiswender seconded the motion. Mr. Timlin presented a letter from a contractor describing the estimation of cost to restore the building.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Davis, yes

Commissioner Hurley, yes

Commissioner Wright, yes

Commissioner Burnash, yes

Commissioner Neiswender, yes

M/S – Hurley/Neiswender

5 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

The motion passed.

APPLICANT: John W. Keeler
PROPERTY OWNER: Arid Club of Flint
LOCATION: 715 East St. (PID# 41-18-206-012)
SCOPE OF WORK: Construction of back deck and an ADA ramp

John Keeler is presenting on behalf of the Arid Club of Flint. Mr. Keeler has already demolished the previous ramp prior to coming to the Commission and is seeking to construct a new ramp out of wood matching the deck they also intend to construct. Commissioner Burnash clarified this will use similar materials to what existed previously and match the footprint.

Chairperson Burnash opened the floor for public comment, no one spoke.

Commissioner Hurley made a motion to approve the application as submitted. Commissioner Wright seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Davis, yes
Commissioner Wright, yes
Commissioner Neiswender, yes

Commissioner Hurley, yes
Commissioner Burnash, yes

M/S – Hurley/Wright

5 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

The motion passed.

APPLICANT:

Kurt Neiswender, AIA

PROPERTY OWNER:

Communities First, Inc.

LOCATION:

422 W University Ave (PID# 40-12-457-008)

SCOPE OF WORK:

Signage for a new mixed use apartment building

Kurt Neiswender is presenting on behalf of Communities First, Inc. and stated that he will abstain from voting on this matter due to a conflict of interest.

Mr. Neiswender stated the apartments are close to completion and they are now seeking approval for their proposed signage. The signs are intended to be backlit by LEDs on a canopy along University Ave and Grand Traverse. The awning is approximately 10 feet above the sidewalk.

Chairperson Burnash opened the floor for public comment, no one spoke.

Commissioner Hurley made a motion to approve the application as submitted. Commissioner Wright supports the motion.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Davis, yes
Commissioner Wright, yes
Commissioner Neiswender, abstain

Commissioner Hurley, yes
Commissioner Burnash, yes

M/S – Hurley/Wright

4 yes, 0 no, 1 abstain

The motion passed.

APPLICANT: Selah's Red Tent
PROPERTY OWNER: Leslie Beemer
LOCATION: 807 East St. (PID# 41-18-206-016)
SCOPE OF WORK: Remove aluminum siding and shutters and turn back into wood. Repair porch including wood, skirting, and spindle railing. Repair porch posts, remove carpet. Add a four foot tall wrought iron/decorative aluminum fence in front, side, and backyards.

Leslie Beemer is presenting on behalf of Selah's Red Tent. Ms. Beemer is requesting to update the deteriorating siding with new material, repair the porch and posts, and add new decorative fencing. Ms. Beemer's contractor believes the original wood siding, while in suboptimal condition, is salvageable. The back porch was damaged in a fire; however, the railing is fine. Their goal is to restore the porch to what it looked like previously. Ms. Beemer notes concern on gaps in windows harming energy efficiency, which is a goal of spending for money she has received to repair the property. Ms. Beemer would like to add glass block windows for the basement to the application.

Chairperson Burnash opened the floor for public comment, no one spoke.

Commissioner Hurley made a motion to approve the application with amendments to add the requested glass block windows for the basement and remove vinyl windows from the materials list. Commissioner Neiswender supported the motion.

Commissioner Neiswender asked for clarification of the proposed use of the property. Ms. Beemer wants to use the property for doula services as a nonprofit, in which someone will need to live at the property full time. Commissioner Neiswender recommended consulting with an architect to ensure the building abides by codes for commercial use. Commissioner Neiswender seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Davis, yes
Commissioner Wright, yes
Commissioner Neiswender, yes

Commissioner Hurley, yes
Commissioner Burnash, yes

M/S – Hurley/Neiswender

5 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain
The motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS:

Legal opinion: The legal opinion requested in April is still in progress by the Legal Department.

NEW BUSINESS:

No new business at this time.

ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Neiswender motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m. Commissioner Wright seconded the motion.

M/S: Neiswender/Wright

Unanimously carried via voice vote.