

**FLINT HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**November 16th, 2023**

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**Commissioners Present**

Beverly Davis, Vice-Chair  
Stephanie Wright  
Michael Hurley  
Kurt Neiswender  
Megan McAdow  
Cade Surface

**Staff Present**

Max Lester, Int. Zoning Coordinator  
Brian Acheff, Zoning Coordinator  
Dalton Castle, Planner I

**Absent:**

Heather Burnash, Chair  
Samantha Farah

**ROLL CALL:**

Chairperson Davis called the meeting to order at 5:34 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.

Heather Burnash, absent  
Beverly Davis, present  
Michael Hurley, present  
Kurt Neiswender, present

Stephanie Wright, present (arrived after roll)  
Megan McAdow,  
Cade Surface, present  
Samantha Farah, absent (listening via zoom)

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA:**

Commissioner Neiswender motioned to adopt the agenda. Commissioner Hurley supported the motion.

*M/S – Neiswender/Hurley*

*Motion carried by voice vote.*

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING AND DISPOSAL:**

**September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

Minutes for the meeting of September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023 were presented. Commissioner Hurley made a motion to accept the minutes of September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023 as presented. Commissioner Neiswender supported the motion.

*M/S – Hurley/Neiswender*

*Motion carried by voice vote.*

**PUBLIC FORUM:**

Vice-Chair Davis opened the floor for public comment.

Derek Dohrman and Travis Gilbert announced they are attending in support of the two proposals for 529 Martin Luther King Ave.

**CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS/NOTICES TO PROCEED:**

**Applicant:** *AMAG, LLC*  
**Property Owner:** *Communities First, Inc.*  
**Location:** *529 Martin Luther King Ave.*  
**Scope of Work:** *Demolition of three existing single story retail spaces (roughly 8,500 sf)*

Ray Embach and Michael Wright are representing AMAG, LLC. Mr. Embach presented the proposed project.

Commissioner Hurley asked if the application is just for the demolition. Mr. Embach said yes, they have a separate application for the following new construction.

Commissioner Hurley made a motion to approve the application with amendment to the wording regarding new construction. Commissioner Neiswender supported the motion.

Vice-Chair Davis asked about the status of the optometry business that is currently located in one of the buildings proposed to be demolished. Mr. Wright said an offer has been made to have them operate in the proposed new construction’s retail space.

Commissioner Surface asked the applicants about the efforts made to try to incorporate the existing structures into the design of the proposed new construction. Mr. Wright said the option was considered, but they had determined it would prove too much of a financial hardship to restore and incorporate the existing structures.

Commissioner Wright asked what percentage of the apartments are subsidized. The response from the applicant was inaudible.

**Roll Call:**

Heather Burnash, absent	Stephanie Wright, yes
Beverly Davis, yes	Megan McAdow, yes
Michael Hurley, yes	Cade Surface, yes
Kurt Neiswender, yes	Samantha Farah, absent

***M/S – Hurley/Neiswender***  
***The motion carried.***

**Applicant:** *AMAG, LLC*  
**Property Owner:** *Communities First, Inc.*  
**Location:** *529 Martin Luther King Ave.*  
**Scope of Work:** *Remodel/reuse of existing 6 story Marian Hall building into mixed use, retail, and multi-family housing (approximately 55,500 sf) and the construction of a new 5 story mixed use, multi-family housing (approximately 124,000 sf).*

Ray Embach and Michael Wright are representing AMAG, LLC. Mr. Embach presented the proposed project.

Commissioner Hurley confirmed with staff that the commission had previously approved the reuse of Marian Hall and stated the application should be amended to not include that section.

Commissioner Surface asked the applicants to describe the sense of place they are trying to maintain with their design decisions. Mr. Embach explained the use of brick and limestone in the new construction to blend in with the treatment on many downtown buildings. He then discussed the design decisions made to make the area more pedestrian friendly. Mr. Embach explained their goal was to design a structure that fit in with the aesthetic of surrounding buildings while also being unique. Additionally, they had designed it such that the height of the structure would not clash with surrounding buildings.

Commissioner Surface asked if the choice in height of the building was to be “subordinate” or if other factors were involved. Mr. Embach said there were several factors involved and fortunately they aligned with the building standards of the maximum height they could construct to. Commissioner Surface said he appreciated the honesty and then asked about the decision to shift the level of detail on the building when it reaches the corner of MLK and 2<sup>nd</sup>. Mr. Wright said the intention with that part of the design was to break up the mass of this large building and try to create an illusion of having two buildings next to one another.

Commissioner McAdow asked about the income requirements for the proposed apartments. Mr. Wright said it will be mixed with the lowest being 30% AMI then going up to market rate. He clarified these decisions were based on a study they performed on average local income.

Commissioner McAdow expressed her dislike of the design for this area, adding that she would have preferred lighter materials over the proposed dark ones.

Commissioner Neiswender made a motion to approve the application with amendment to remove the section on Marian Hall which had already been approved. Commissioner Hurley supported the motion.

Commissioner Neiswender noted minor changes in the design following the previous meeting. He made particular notes of the improvements in connecting the new and old structures.

Vice-chair Davis asked about the current occupants of Marian Hall. Mr. Wright explained that Odyssey House, which is currently operating out of Marian Hall, will be moving to the former Baker College campus. There was a discussion on how Odyssey House operates.

Roll Call:

Heather Burnash, absent  
Beverly Davis, yes  
Michael Hurley, yes  
Kurt Neiswender, yes

Stephanie Wright, yes  
Megan McAdow, abstain  
Cade Surface, no  
Samantha Farah, absent

*M/S – Neiswender/Hurley*  
*The motion carried.*

**OLD BUSINESS:**

No old business at this time.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

An election for a new Chair will be held at the next meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

*M/S – Neiswender/Hurley*

The meeting was adjourned at 6:29 p.m.

*Unanimously carried.*