

FLINT HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes - DRAFT
May 14, 2020

Commissioners Present

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

Staff Present

Suzanne Wilcox, Director of Planning
Bill Vandercook, Planner I
Keizzy Anpalagan, GIS Technician
Kelly Thompson, Assistant City Attorney

ROLL CALL:

Chairperson Burnash called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m. Roll was taken and a quorum was present.

The meeting was via Zoom and phone conferencing as approved.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA:

Voice Vote

Motion to adopt the meeting agenda with revision.

M/S – Davis/Schipani

Unanimously carried.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING AND DISPOSAL:

Minutes for the meeting of February 6, 2020, were presented.

Voice Vote

Motion to approve the minutes of February 6, 2020.

M/S – Schipani/Neiswender

Unanimously carried.

PUBLIC FORUM:

No one spoke.

CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS/NOTICES TO PROCEED:

Applicant: *Robert Sims*

Property Owner: *Same*

Location: 422 West 1st First Street

Installation of a new roof

Mr. Sims presented his application. Mr. Sims noted the application request was for 422 West 1st Street, not 425 West 1st Street shown on the agenda. Mr. Sims requested to install architectural shingles on his

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roof. Commissioner Schipani noted the address on the application was correct, but incorrect on the agenda.

Commissioner Burnash asked the applicant when he would be starting the work. Mr. Sims said right away.

Commissioner Hurley asked Mr. Sims what materials he would be removing before re-shingling the roof. Mr. Sims explained he would be tearing off old roofing materials and installing new sheathing because he can't put shingles over the old boards because they are two inches apart. Mr. Sims said once this is completed he will install new roofing and trying to keep everything as authentic as possible.

M/S – Schipani/Neiswender

Motion to approve.

Motion carried.

Applicant: *Robert Sims*

Property Owner: *Same*

Location: 422 West 1st First Street

Installation of a shed dormer

Mr. Sims presented the application. Mr. Sims said the dormer would be located on the right side of the house. Mr. Sims wanted to show the dormer is appropriate to the neighborhood and the period. The wall will rise about four feet above the existing wall and it'll be eight feet wide and then the rafters will angle back to meet the roof about two-thirds of the way up. Mr. Sims explained the reason he needs a dormer is that he is adding a formal stairway to the front entrance of the house and to meet the building code needs a higher ceiling.

Commissioner Burnash asked if there will be any windows in the dormer. Mr. Sims said he planned on putting three small square windows in the dormer, which will be side by side. Commissioner Burnash asked Mr. Sims if the window would be divided into four pains. Mr. Sims said yes. Commissioner Burnash asked Mr. Sims if he had picked out the widows. Mr. Sims said he would be using wood windows that he will be painting.

Commissioner Burnash asked if the siding on the dormer would match the siding on the house. Mr. Sims said yes, everything will match, as close as possible.

Commissioner Burnash noted because the installation of windows was not included within the application the motion should include the addition of windows.

Commissioner Wright joined the meeting at 5:51 pm and said she had heard the applicant's proposal and Commissioner Responses.

Commissioner Schipani asked Mr. Sims where the dormer comes into the house. Mr. Sims said the dormer would be tight to the wall and extend eight feet towards the front door. Commissioner Schipani asked how would this affect the roof and does the application need to be adjusted if it was going to affect the roof. Mr. Sims said he it would not affect the roof.

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Commissioner Neiswender asked the Commission how in the past have they treated alteration and/or additions to buildings when considering the Sectary of Interior Standards. Commissioner Burnash said they have based this on a case by case basis by trying to decide if the addition or alteration should be allowed on this house or within this neighborhood. Commissioner Burnash noted the materials can impact whether or not the addition/alteration should be allowed.

Commissioner Neiswender asked Mr. Sims if he would be painting the entire house because there is going to be bare wood. Mr. Simms said he was planning on painting the whole house, hopefully before next winter.

M/S – Schipani/Neiswender

Motion to approve with the addition of the windows.

Motion carried.

Applicant: *Jon Mason*

Property Owner: Charlie Burt/Flint City Hard Cider

Location: 610 Martin Luther King

Installation of a handicap ramp

Mr. Burt or Mr. Mason was not present for the case review.

Commissioner Burnash said Mr. Mason said he wanted commissioner to review the application and take a vote on the application.

Commissioners concurred the work applied for was previously completed. Commissioner Neiswender said his firm worked on this project and needed to recuse himself from voting on the case.

Commissioner Burnash said the applicant did not realize he was in a Historic District. Commissioner Burnash said the material used for the handicap ramp was taken from the building. The handicap ramp is required by code and is similar to a ramp approved by the Commission for Carriage Town Ministries.

Commissioner Schipani said the applicant did a good job adhering to the historic neighborhood. Commissioner Schipani said the borders of Carriage Town have gotten confusing over the last several years. Commissioners concurred.

Commissioner Schipani made a motion to approve 610 Marin Luther King

M/S – Schipani/Davis

Motion to approve

Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

Capitol Theatre Signage

Mrs. Thompson addressed the Commission. Mrs. Thompson said Mike Reiter, City Building Inspector, reached out to Joe Martin of Uptown. Mr. Martin said he had not received any letters from the Historic District Commission. Mrs. Thompson explained Mr. Reiter hand-delivered a signed letter from the

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Commission and was met by a female who was sent a previous letter from the Commission. Commissioner Burnash believed she is the one who had signed all of the previously sent certified letters. Mrs. Thompson said she was unsure if this person would pass the letter given to her from Mike Reiter on to Joe Martin. Mrs. Thompson said Mike Reiter is prepared to issue citations and believes citation would have to go directly to the owners. Mrs. Thompson noted some ordinance provisions say depending on the nature of the violation citation could be issued to the landlords and tenant both.

Commissioner Burnash said they have been mailed and hand-delivered the letter, so they are on notice at this point. Mrs. Thompson agreed. Mrs. Thompson said as a show of good faith to the tenants' Mike Reiter could go out and meet with individual tenants and tell them verbally, show them another copy of the letter and provide them with an application from the Historic District. Mrs. Thompson said she didn't think a vote was required to move forward with having Mike Reiter go out to meet with the tenants, but there needed to be a consensus amongst the Commissioners. Mrs. Thompson said she can have Mike deliver the letters if the board feels it is appropriate.

Commissioner Burnash said there have never been fines or any kind of consequences for individuals violating the ordinance. Mrs. Thompson said the initial fine would be \$150, in addition to whatever the court imposes. Then noted each day is deemed another violation and those \$150 violations will stack. Commissioner Burnash asked if the Commissioners wanted to have Mike Reiter visit the tenants to allow them to correct the situation. Commissioners agreed to wait until the stay at home orders are over before having Mike Reiter make a visit to the tenants and owner.

Saginaw St. Bricks:

Mrs. Thompson said she is not aware of any changes. We are still waiting to get the downtown improvement plan that would include some bigger changes to the Saginaw Street bricks. Mrs. Thompson said Mark Adas was on notice that the historic District Commission wants to hear from him as soon as the plan is finalized. Commissioner Burnash said the Commission needs to be made aware of what is going on with the red bricks that were removed and where they have been put. Commissioner Burnash said the Commission should be involved in project development plans before they happen, not afterward.

Commissioner Burnash said they have been trying to get someone from DPW to come and talk with them about the status of past and future projects without any success for the last five to six years. Commissioners agreed plans on the downtown brick should not be completed without their involvement in the planning process. Mrs. Thompson said she would reach out to Betty Wideman, Mark Adas, and Rob Bincsik and reiterate the Commissioners' concerns that they should be included with ongoing planning.

Commissioner Davis asked Commissioner Burnash if she had spoken with Greg at the Art Council about the bricks. Commissioner Burnash said no, but she would call him to see what he had heard about the removal of Saginaw Street bricks. Commissioner Burnash said she had a discussion with Mayor Neeley and he indicated the original bricks will be put back and not replaced.

Demolition Blight:

Mrs. Thompson said this ties into the ordinance and resource list. The demolition blight policy should include HDC being notified if one of the HDC resources are included in the demolition list. Commissioner Burnash asked if the blight officer are they deputized. Mrs. Thompson said several

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neighborhood safety officers deputized through the police department, but they are generally designated to blight enforcement. When it comes to HDC concerns it goes to Building enforcement (Mike Reiter). Mr. Wilcox said code enforcement officers are grant-funded and limited by their funding source.

Commissioner Burnash asked Ms. Wilcox if she was aware if blight tickets have increased. Mr. Wilcox said she did not know. Then said COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on a lot of their work that they were doing and certainly the enforcement piece through the Administrative Hearings Bureau. Mrs. Thompson said she saw a lot more tickets for parking and things that came through 67 district court as opposed to the administrative Hearing Bureau and saw quite an increase before the pandemic.

Historic District Ordinance:

Mrs. Thompson noted that we have been talking about demolitions, blight policy, and updating the resource list which is the primary purpose of this being on the agenda. Mrs. Thompson said staff can work to cross-reference and correct the Historic District list so we can update the ordinances to reflect the change. Commissioner Burnash said the list and ordinance should be corrected and updated for the Commissioners.

Mrs. Thompson discussed printing out new binders, updating packets for the Secretary of Interior Standards, and compiling the resource list. Mrs. Thompson said she joined as a staff attorney about two years ago and knew some changes were made before her coming on to the Commission. Mrs. Thompson said if you are aware of specific changes these would be helpful to know about as we are updating the list.

ADJOURNMENT:

M/S –Neiswender/Wright

The meeting was adjourned at 6:34 p.m.

Unanimously carried.