

This meeting was held remotely via Zoom and was broadcast to the public via the Planning and Code Administration Department's YouTube channel. All HDC members participated in the meeting off site.

Michael Gehr, chair, called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m. on Thursday, June 11, 2020. A roster of the members of the commission and the technical posts they fill are on file and available upon request. Also participating virtually were commission members L. Allen, R. Powell, and M. Wertman. City Staff members participating at City Hall included S. Bockmiller, Development Planner/Zoning Administrator; M. Flick, Planner; and D. Calhoun, Secretary.

Approval of Minutes:

May 28, 2020.

The minutes were not ready for approval.

CONSENT AGENDA

**27 West Antietam Street – Adam Hager for Joel Merrbaugh – Parking Lot Lighting,
Case No. HDC 2020-20.**

There was a workshop at the previous meeting and the applicant made adjustments to his proposal to reflect comments by the commission during the workshop. No one had any comments or concerns about this proposal.

MOTION: (Wertman/Powell) Mr. Chairman, I have reviewed the materials submitted in Case HDC 2020-20 and its associated staff report and recommendations, and I have viewed the property in question. The staff report recommends approval of this application as consistent with the applicable standards adopted by this commission, and no one has appeared at this hearing with concerns about, issues with, or objections to this application. Therefore, I move that this commission adopt the staff evaluations and recommendations in this case as its own and grant a Certificate of Appropriateness to the applicant for Case No. HDC 2020-20.

DISCUSSION: None.

ACTION: APPROVED (Unanimous: Allen, Powell, Wertman)

DESIGN REVIEW

15 East Avenue – Sean Bartel – Remove Chimney, Case No. HDC 2020-18.

Staff noted that since the last meeting when this case was tabled, the applicant withdrew his application.

WORKSHOP

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Landmark Nomination – Saylor House at Kiwanis Park.

Staff Presentation: Megan Flick, Planner, presented the case. The City of Hagerstown is applying for a Landmark Overlay District at the Saylor House, which is the small stone house in Kiwanis Park that was built between 1790 and 1810. It was documented in the Maryland Inventory of Historic Places in 1975. In 2015, the Washington County Historical Trust began to work with the City to stabilize and partially renovate the Saylor House.

The intent is to preserve the Saylor House as an important historic landmark in Hagerstown. This designation is necessary to qualify the building for certain grant funding sources and relaxation of some regulations. A detailed history of the Saylor House is included in the meeting file.

Mr. Bockmiller added that this is a one-and-a-half story stone building, located in the floodplain. Floodplain designation restricts the type of renovation work that can be done on buildings; however, landmark designation would relax some of the regulations concerning renovation. The likelihood of flooding is low based on its elevation. Mr. Bockmiller explained the significance of the 100-year floodplain. He suspected this is in the floodplain because of the proximity of the stormwater management pond associated with the adjacent office park.

The role of the HDC is to review the materials submitted and make a recommendation to the Planning Commission on this issue as part of the rezoning process. The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing and forward a recommendation to the Mayor and Council. The Mayor and Council will then hold their own public hearing and vote to amend the map to add the Landmark Overlay District.

Commission Discussion: Commission members were in favor of protecting the building through landmark designation. Mr. Gehr observed that the house is in good shape considering its age. It will be a nice addition to the City's historic inventory.

- MOTION:** (Wertman/Powell) I move that we recommend the historic landmark overlay status for the Saylor House in Kiwanis Park.
- DISCUSSION:** Ms. Allen questioned the distinction of this single-site location. Mr. Bockmiller stated that one of the City’s motivations for doing this is to help secure funding through preservation grants and helps get past certain current regulatory hurdles to renovation based on its location in a floodplain. Ms. Allen questioned how the boundary will be determined. Mr. Bockmiller responded that the landmark designation will be drawn around the house only. Ms. Wertman asked if the goal is to make the Saylor House a tourist attraction for historic presentations. Mr. Bockmiller stated that the work is being done by the Washington County Historical Trust and the plan is to use the building for a classroom for teaching historic preservation skills.
- ACTION:** APPROVED (Unanimous: Allen, Powell, Wertman)

Mr. Bockmiller will prepare a recommendation letter and route it to the commission for review prior to sending it on to the Planning Commission.

216 South Prospect Street.

Mr. Bockmiller reported that there was a devastating fire about three weeks ago at this location. The building was significantly damaged. The City is looking at it to determine what its future might be. The building has been vacant for several years.

Commission members discussed the problems associated with vacant structures in Hagerstown. Ms. Allen asked for a list of how many historic properties are currently vacant. Ms. Flick stated that she is currently updated the vacant and underutilized structures map. She will provide a copy to the commission once it is complete. (Ms. Flick left the meeting.)

Transition to In-Person Meetings after June 29.

The Mayor and Council are going to back to in-person meetings on July 7. The plan is to transition all boards to in-person meetings beginning the first week of July. Until further notice, all board meetings will be held in the Council Chamber to allow for social distancing by attendees. Employees are not wearing masks in City Hall but social distancing is being observed; barriers have been erected.

Mr. Gehr added that the current meeting schedule shows HDC meetings in July and August beginning at 4:00 p.m. However, at this time those conflicts may no longer exist on his schedule. Mr. Gehr will keep staff and commission members up to date, but it is possible that the regular meeting times can be maintained.

Ms. Wertman asked whether commission members could still dial in if they are not comfortable attending in-person meetings. Mr. Bockmiller will study the rules of procedure. Several years ago the Planning Commission amended its bylaws to allow for members to call in on a case-by-case basis (usually if there was going to be an issue with a quorum). Mr. Gehr asked staff to generate language to permit this in the HDC's bylaws.

Mr. Gehr indicated if anyone chooses to wear a mask it is their prerogative. Ms. Wertman suggested that for the first few meetings everyone should wear a mask. Her preference would be to dial in for meetings.

OLD BUSINESS

Preservation Awards.

Staff needs to get these on the Mayor and Council's schedule for when meetings are open again to the public.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The Mayor and Council is looking at potential applicants to fill the vacancy created by Chad Crumrine's resignation.

ADJOURN

It was moved and seconded that the meeting adjourn (5:10 p.m.).

6/25/2020

Approved



Debra C. Calhoun – Secretary