

Michael Gehr, chair, called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m. on Thursday, April 8, 2021, in the Council Chamber, Second Floor, City Hall. A roster of the members of the commission and the technical posts they fill are on file and available upon request. Also present were commission members L. Allen (via Zoom), D. Carroll, C. George, and R. Powell. S. Bockmiller, Development Planner/Zoning Administrator and D. Calhoun, Secretary, were present on behalf of the Planning and Code Administration Department.

Approval of Minutes:

March 25, 2021:

The minutes were not ready for approval.

CONSENT AGENDA

1020 Oak Hill Avenue – Timothy Harman – Pool, Case No. HDC 2021-18.

Ms. Allen questioned the materials around the pool. Mrs. Harman, property owner, stated the patio deck will be the same material that will be used for the patio.

MOTION: (Carroll/Powell) Mr. Chairman, I have reviewed the materials submitted in Case No. HDC 2021-18 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 evaluation and recommendations in this case as its own and grant a Certificate of Appropriateness to the applicant for Case No. HDC 2021-18.

DISCUSSION: None.

ACTION: APPROVED (Unanimous)

DESIGN REVIEW

Hagerstown Cultural Trail – City of Hagerstown – Site Plan Review, Case No. HDC 2021-19.

Rodney Tissue, City Engineer, was unavailable for this meeting. Mr. Bockmiller represented Mr. Tissue in his absence.

Staff Report: This is a G resource in the Downtown Local Historic District. The City of Hagerstown is finalizing plans to continue the Cultural Trail from West Antietam Street, past the District Court building, across Library Alley, and through the former Updegraff hat store site to West Washington Street, and improve a plaza area behind the Maryland Theater at the intersection of Rochester Place and Library Alley. Those improvements within the alley rights-of-way are beyond the purview of this commission, but those on the Updegraff site and adjacent to the Courthouse are within the commission’s review authority. The street wall along West Washington Street was approved previously by the Commission. This review is for the site plan only, in order to forward the site plan to the Planning Commission for its approval. Material details will follow at a later date. Many materials will be used, however, they have not all been identified at this point. This application is for the overall approval of the general layout of the park.

There will be a brick paver trail that will connect the West Washington Street sidewalk to Library Alley behind the adjacent “Bead Store” building. The rest of this space will be landscaped per the attached landscaping plan. The trail crosses Library Alley and follows the side of the District Court building to West Antietam Street, in an area currently occupied by the eastern edge of a private commercial parking lot. Landscaping and black metal fencing consistent with other fencing on the District Court property will be installed along the trail. A masonry dumpster enclosure will be located in the rear on the east side of the plaza. Behind the County office building, the current parking area will be repaved and used as a plaza as well as a trailer staging area for acts loading and unloading at the rear loading dock of the Maryland Theatre. The two alleys will be repaved with scored concrete. A trash enclosure for the Maryland Theatre will be installed behind the District Court building, made of the same black coated and slatted chain link fencing material adjacent to it that encloses utility equipment for the District Court building. There will be benches, interpretive markers, trash receptacles and other ephemera typically found in small urban pocket parks.

Staff recommended approval of this application. This review is for the site plan for the location, layout and general materials approach to the development of this facility in order to allow the site plan to move to the Planning Commission for their review and approval. Material details of individual elements will be brought to the commission for approval at subsequent meetings. Any improvements within the street or alley rights-of-way are not subject to HDC review, nor are any improvements on the State (District Court) property.

Applicant/Commission Discussion: Commission members had no comments or questions on the proposed site plan.

MOTION: (Carroll/Powell) Mr. Chairman, I have reviewed the amended materials submitted in Case No. HDC 2021-19 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 evaluation and recommendations in this case as amended as its own and grant a Certificate of Appropriateness to the applicant for Case No. HDC 2021-19.

DISCUSSION:

None.

ACTION:

APPROVED (Unanimous)

**14-16 East Antietam Street – 14 16 & 24 East Antietam LLC – Demolition,
Case No. HDC 2021-14.**

Jeff Tedrick, Dan Hockman, and Rob Feree, all with the Bowman Group, were present via Zoom.

Staff Report: This is a continuation from the last meeting. At the invitation of the applicant, commission members participated in a walkthrough of this building and the adjacent building to get a further understanding of the applicant’s plans. Staff had additional nothing to add.

Applicant/Commission Discussion: Mr. Tedrick had nothing to add to the presentation. Mr. Carroll thanked the applicant for taking commission members through the building and providing insight into the larger scope of the project. Mr. Carroll asked if the rehabilitation cost provided by the applicant was for the entire rehab of the building or just a portion of that. The applicant stated that this is just the fire restoration not for a full building restoration.

Mr. Carroll stated that he was interested in the rehabilitation cost for the whole building since that is what is needed to put the building back into use. He asked if the developer has considered the building for any other use. Mr. Tedrick stated that they have not considered other uses for the building because of handicap accessibility concerns for a building that would be open to the public. Besides residential, the only other uses would be offices or retail. The doorways and corridors are narrow. Renovation in its entirety would have to take into account loading conditions for the different floors which are currently residential; sprinkler installation; upgrades to all the systems (mechanicals, electric, etc.).

Ms. Allen asked if it would be possible to modify the building for additional restrooms or storage for the Masonic Temple building. Mr. Tedrick said the economics would not for allow that. The “assembly” areas would have more requirements for egress and also for the loading and code concerns. This building does not figure well into the overall plan for their vision of the Masonic Temple project. Mr. George asked if it would be possible to gut the building and keep the façade of the building in question. Mr. Tedrick stated that would not be possible due to the differences between the requirements for residential structures and assembly uses. Also, gutting the building could compromise the stability of the structure. The best use of this space would be to remove the building.

Mr. George questioned whether they have any plans for using the area as a back patio for the theater which was mentioned as a possibility. Mr. Tedrick stated this is speculative. The developer does not know how the Masonic Temple theater will be used and there will not be any development plans until they have a use in mind for the space.

Mr. Bockmiller noted that there needs to be a discussion about the cost of the project: if the developer puts money into the project, will it be worth it. The figures provided by the developer are based on fire damage. The data that is needed for a decision was not provided. He suggested that the discussion be continued to have figures drawn up on renovation of the building. A continuance or tabling the matter would allow the developer to help themselves by providing the data about the additional extra work besides the fire damage work. That gives them time to supplement their application.

Mr. Carroll said the developer did mention a possible vision for the extension of the Masonic Temple Theater into this space. He felt it would be useful information to have on the record so the commission can make an informed decision. Ms. Allen agreed and added that the streetscape and use is important.

Mr. Bockmiller asked what the developer's intentions are for the site. At this point the "Economic Development" argument for demolition is moot since they have not put forth any plans for the site. Staff stated it was concerned about the open-ended nature of the proposal and how an empty gravel lot will impact the streetscape. There needs to be a plan to finish off the site because it cannot stay gravel indefinitely. At a minimum there should be a time line for getting the empty lot grassed and fenced. The proposed treatment should have a deadline date for finishing off the space.

Mr. Gehr asked if the applicants would be willing to provide that data and a description. Mr. Gehr was concerned about the gaping hole that will be created by the removal of this building with no specific end date. He was in favor of setting a time frame for when the site would be developed. He asked the developer's representatives if they had an idea of when the building would be demolished. Mr. Tedrick stated they could prepare additional information on what the full cost of a total renovation would be. Concerning timing, their plan would be to demolish the building as soon as possible since it is very vulnerable to vandalism at this time. At this point they cannot guarantee any type of development or structure at that location, however, they will discuss that with the owner, Mr. Bowman. It is possible that he could be convinced to put some money into temporary improvements to make the site more aesthetically pleasing.

Mr. Gehr stated that commission members want to see something there that will create a pleasing appearance until the project is able to move forward. Mr. Bockmiller added that if the property will remain undeveloped for more than a year or two there needs to be a plan to stabilize the surface and appearance of the site rather than have it remain a gravel lot for an indefinite period of time.

Mr. Tedrick asked if their case could be continued for a few weeks to a month so they can compile the requested data and information. Mr. Bockmiller said they need to provide an estimated value of the building after it has been completely renovated. Ms. Allen asked if when the applicant brings back financials whether it would be the five-unit building or the original two-family dwelling. Mr. Bockmiller said that should be part of it.

MOTION: (Powell/George) I make a motion to table HDC 2021-19 for 45 days to allow Bowman Development to come back with additional information with a total rehab of the property.

DISCUSSION: None.

ACTION: APPROVED (Unanimous)

WORKSHOP

None.

NEW BUSINESS

2021 Preservation Awards.

Staff and commission members discussed several possible properties for preservation awards:

- Hub City Vinyl on East Baltimore Street – staff to determine if they already received an award.
- Masonic Temple renovation.
- South Prospect Street Duplex – This is a City Project that eliminated two apartments to create a two-family building.
- The Mayor and City Council completed a comprehensive rezoning recently. One of the changes included rezoning two downtown neighborhoods to N-MU (Neighborhood Mixed-Use). One is on the south side of East Baltimore Street and on the other is the area of the triangle where Oak Hill Avenue and Potomac Avenue meet. The N-MU district was created to take into consideration the existing development patterns and uses.

Staff will finalize a list and bring it back to the commission for a decision at the next meeting. Some ideas for next year's awards include: City Park Improvements (Train Hub building and restrooms/removal of hedge and replaced with an ornamental metal fence); Pangborn Park improvements; Hatter's Plaza (Urban Improvement Project, Phase II); and the log cabin restoration on Jonathan Street.

Commission members suggested announcing the awardees on the City’s podcast.

OLD BUSINESS

Board of Zoning Appeals Case for 202 South Prospect Street. The commission recently approved an application for a fence at 202 South Prospect Street (HDC Case No. 2021-07). When the City went to inspect the installed fence it was up to six inches taller than six feet in places. The fence contractor explained that in order to have a straight top, portions of the fence needed to be taller due to the undulating topography at this property. Staff asked if the HDC wanted to provide any comments on this appeal and whether the applicant will need to submit an additional application to cover the discrepancy in height or can staff approve the difference.

In general the commission did not have an issue with the extra height but were concerned about the damage to the adjacent brick sidewalk along West Baltimore Street. Commission members wanted to go on record that they had no objection but as a condition the applicant needs to make sure the sidewalk is fixed.

Mr. Bockmiller suggested that a motion by the commission could state that the HDC is okay with the fence as constructed but if the fence work resulted in the damage to the brick, the brick should be repaired.

MOTION: (Allen/Powell) I so move.
DISCUSSION: None.
ACTION: APPROVED (Unanimous)

102 South Prospect Street. At the last meeting the HDC denied an application and in this particular case the applicant was reading material into the record for possible appeal. Mr. Bockmiller explained that normally staff sends a letter to the applicant stating that the application was either approved or denied. Given the circumstances Mr. Bockmiller asked if the commission wanted him to prepare a formal Decision and Order citing the reasons for the denial. Commission member asked staff to prepare a Decision and Order for this case. Mr. Bockmiller cautioned that the Historic District Commission is the body that ultimately signs the Decision and Order. Staff can prepare it, but the HDC needs to sign off on it.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Bockmiller informed commission members that in the coming weeks, access controls will be placed on the elevators and stairwell. The City has been re-evaluating certain protocols and the building will not be as open as it has been in the past. If commission members or applicants are

**Historic District Commission
MINUTES**

**April 8, 2021
City of Hagerstown, Maryland**

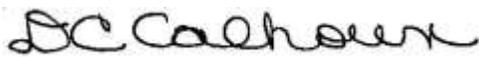
late, there will be a general cell phone number they can call to have someone come down an open the front door for them.

ADJOURN

It was moved and seconded that the meeting adjourn (5:51 p.m.).

5/13/2021

Approved



Debra C. Calhoun – Secretary