

Michael Gehr, chair, called the special meeting to order at 4:38 p.m. on Thursday, December 13, 2012, in the Fourth Floor Conference Room, City Hall. A roster of the members of the commission and the technical slots they fill are on file and available upon request. Also present were commission members S. Dozier, V. Hrabal, P. Reed, and S. Silas. S. Bockmiller, Development Planner/Zoning Administrator; K. Maher, Planning Director; and D. Calhoun, Secretary, were present on behalf of the Planning and Code Administration Division.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: November 15, 2012

MOTION: (Hrabal/Silas) Mr. Chairman, I move that we accept the minutes of November 15, 2012, as presented.

DISCUSSION: None.

ACTION: APPROVED (Unanimous)

CONSENT AGENDA

**111 West Washington Street - Chelatow & Lobley, LLC - Sign and Grant,
Case No. HDC 2012-49.**

The applicant noted that the sign will be black with white. A new drawing was submitted showing the correct color scheme. There were no comments by the commission. The plastic directory board will be replaced.

MOTION: (Hrabal/Dozier) Mr. Chairman, I have reviewed the materials submitted in Case HDC 2012-49 and the grant application for Case 2012-49, and their associated staff reports and recommendations. I have viewed the properties in question. The Staff reports recommend approval of these applications 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 these applications. Therefore, I move that this commission adopt the staff evaluations and recommendations in these cases as its own and grant a Certificate of Appropriateness to the applicant for Case 2012-49, and a grant application for Case 2012-49.

DISCUSSION: None.

ACTION: APPROVED (Unanimous)

DESIGN REVIEW

Mr. Gehr recused himself from the first case. Ms. Hrabal assumed the chair for this case.

473 North Potomac Street - Bushey Feight Morin Architects - Replace Side Porch Columns, Porch Decking; and Sunroom Windows, Case No. HDC 2012-50.

Norman Morin, Bushey Feight Morin Architects, 473 North Potomac Street, was present.

Staff Report: This building is a B resource in the Potomac-Broadway Local Historic District. Mr. Morin seeks approval to replace deteriorated wood porch columns on the south side of the building with new smooth fiber cement "Tapered Classic-Wound" columns which will match the existing columns; replace the wood porch deck on the south side with "AZEK Porch" tongue-and-groove composite decking material in a color to match the existing decking; replace five wood windows on the north side enclosed porch with Anderson 400 Series wood windows/vinyl clad; and replace wood siding with painted fiber cement siding. Concerning the windows on the north side of the building, the existing window configuration is a sixteen-light "bay" window with a five-light transom and two sidelights (main window of the sidelight is eight lights with a four-light "transom"). There are two proposals for these windows. Concept 1 is a 20-light bay window (no transom) and two double-hung Woodright cottage-sash windows (top sash has four lights, bottom sash has six lights) by Anderson. Concept 2 is the same as the first, except that the sidelights have six lights in the top and bottom sashes. Whichever concept is chosen, the mullions will be 3/4 of an inch.

Staff recommended approval of the application, noting that substitute materials are acceptable due to the building's distance from a public way. The enclosure of the porch is a later alteration, and the style changes are minimal, given the distance from North Potomac Street.

Applicant/Commission Discussion: Mr. Morin stated the side porch on the north side of the building was probably enclosed in the 1960s; the building was built in the 1920s. Mr. Morin explained the two options for replacement windows. They will be maintaining the arch features of the cornice line and dentils. The area below would be removed. The applicant's preference is Concept 1. The windows on the porch enclosure are not of the same quality of the windows on the main building. While they are removing the windows, they would like to replace the siding with smooth grain fiber cement siding or wood depending on the price of the fiber cement. Mr. Bockmiller noted that if they replace the wood siding in-kind (clapboard), the HDC would not need to review it. Concerning the columns on the open porch on the south side of the building, they will be replaced with a composite fiberglass column and will match almost exactly the existing wood columns.

Dr. Reed noted that the proposal is consistent with work approved on other properties in the past. Between Concepts 1 and 2, she prefers Concept 2 because it more closely resembles the original windows. The columns seem fine to her. Ms. Dozier agreed with Dr. Reed that Concept 2 is the more appropriate choice. Mr. Morin withdrew Concept 1 from consideration.

MOTION: (Silas/Dozier) Mr. Chairman, I have inspected the project plans and the property in question and if constructed in accordance with these plans, the project is compatible with the character of the district for the reasons that the setback, materials, architectural detailing, windows, general form and proportion are generally in harmony with the Architectural Design Guidelines for the Residential Preservation Design Districts and the character of the adjoining properties. Therefore, I move that the HDC grant a Certificate of Appropriateness to the applicant for Case No. HDC 2012-50.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Hrabal asked that the motion also reflect why the alternative materials are being allowed on the side porch. Mr. Silas amended his motion to note that the approval is granted on the basis of the distance and lack of visibility from North Potomac Street for the deck material.

ACTION: APPROVED (Unanimous)

Mr. Gehr resumed the chair.

**43 South Prospect Street, Unit 5 - Thomas Driscoll - Roof Alteration,
Case No. HDC 2012-51.**

Douglass C. Reed, 9604 Anderson Road, Mercersburg, Pennsylvania, was present on behalf of the owner, Thomas Driscoll.

Staff Report: This building is a contributing resource in the Prospect Street Local Historic District. The application was added to the agenda as an emergency for replacement of the front slope of roof and a portion of the rear slope. Mr. Bockmiller noted that this roof could be the original pre-Civil War roof. Given the expense of replacing a standing seam roof, the proposal is to replace the original roof material with either a gray or black arch shingle. The roof is barely visible from the street due to its height and the shallowness of the pitch. Staff had no objection and recommended approval, subject to review of the material.

Applicant/Commission Discussion: Mr. Reed said the applicants have been trying to put a new roof on the building for several months. The old roof is leaking and damaging the ceilings in the upper floor units. All of the condominium owners are not willing to participate in the roof

replacement project, so part of the problem is economics. One person is bearing the cost of the replacement. A standing seam replacement roof would cost about \$59,000 vs. an asphalt/fiberglass roof that would cost about \$35,000. The original roof has become corroded and complicating the project are the dormers and parapet walls. Mr. Driscoll's intention is to replicate any piece of wood that needs to be replaced. The slate on the cheek walls is also beyond its life span. The Pennsylvania Border Slate used to be gray but is changing color due to the atmosphere. Mr. Reed noted that the proposed shingle was used on the Women's Club several doors south and most of the historic roofs have been replaced. There are not many historic slate roofs remaining on South Prospect Street. Mr. Reed submitted several pages of photographs detailing the condition of the roof and the cheek walls.

Staff noted that typically the HDC reviews a specific product. If the applicant would choose another product, staff would need to see it to make sure it is compatible with what was approved. Mr. Gehr asked if the side walls are also leaking through the coping. Mr. Reed stated that all rooms in Unit 5 have been damaged by leaking water. Mr. Gehr suggested that they might need to cap out the coping and repair the parapets.

Commission members felt the architectural shingles would be more appropriate because they have more texture. Mr. Reed said the dormers will also receive the architectural shingles. Mr. Gehr suggested using a different color shingle on the cheek walls to differentiate them from the rest of the roof—the style of the shingles can be the same, just the color should change. Mr. Reed stated that no work will be done on the front porch roof, just the upper roof. The commission would like to see a color differentiation between the roof and the cheek walls.

MOTION: (Dozier/Hrabal) Mr. Chairman, I have inspected the project plans and the property in question and if constructed in accordance with these plans, the project is compatible with the character of the district for the reasons that the height, setback, materials, architectural detailing, roof (that being used) the architectural shingles, windows, general form and proportion are generally in harmony with the Architectural Design Guidelines for the Residential Preservation Districts and the character of the adjoining properties. Therefore, I move that the HDC grant a Certificate of Appropriateness to the applicant for Case No. 2012-51, and that being with the shingles used on the cheek walls will be of a different color than the shingles used on the roof, be it a gray or green or a color of their choice.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Reed questioned whether this was for just the roof. Ms. Dozier said her intention was that it will be for both the roof and cheek walls on the dormers.

ACTION: APPROVED (Unanimous)

WORKSHOP:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

2013 Meeting Schedule.

No changes were made to the proposed 2013 meeting schedule.

Election of Officers.

MOTION: (Hrabal/Silas) I move we keep the same officers in place.

DISCUSSION: None.

ACTION: APPROVED (Unanimous)

OLD BUSINESS:

Update of Re-Evaluation of Levels of Significance in the Downtown Historic District.

Ms. Maher presented the project that was undertaken by Dr. Reed which involved reassessing the rankings that were given to properties in the Downtown district in 1982 (report in meeting file). One of the objectives of the project was to determine if the rankings that were given in 1982 are still valid. Dr. Reed's report identified more A-rated structures (A-rated resources are buildings that are potentially eligible for individual listing on the National Register). Also, the number of C-rated structures has not increased, but the D-rated resources have all been demolished. There remain a wide number of Es and Gs (parking lots).

Mr. Gehr noted that the rankings come into play with the subcommittee project to make some determination about what may be an economic development opportunity development for the City. If a potential economic development project would involve a property of historic significance, this ranking system helps alleviate concerns that the HDC is impeding progress within the City.

Ms. Maher had questions about 10 or 12 resources on Dr. Reed's original list. It was suggested that the commission go on a walking tour of the downtown or have staff prepare a slide show of the buildings on the list.

Dr. Reed stated that when the original survey was done in 1982, there was no clearly stated period of significance. Dr. Reed proposed making the period of significance that time where you see a major change in downtown (the Valley Mall was built in 1970 and the two interstates were built about 1970 which lead to the exodus of retail from the downtown). Her suggestion was to make the date approximately 1970 because that was the end of construction of monumental buildings in the downtown. The Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) uses the 50-year rule. The only problem with the 50-year rule is that it is a moving target. Mr. Gehr noted that no exceptional buildings have been built, although more recently there was the University System of Maryland project, the new building that houses Bulls & Bears, the Barbara Ingram School for the Arts, and the new Washington County Free Library. Ms. Hrabal suggested having the period of significance end at 1955 because nothing significant has been built after 1955. The justifiable reason for 1955 is that it is the year of the last building boom in Hagerstown.

Dr. Reed explained in more detail how she determined which buildings would become A resources. The buildings that were re-evaluated to As happened because they retained an incredible amount of integrity and have relatively few changes. All fire companies were moved into As because of their monumental character. This also includes all of the fraternal organization buildings which are also monumental (Woodmen of the World, Masonic Lodge, International Order of Fire Fighters, and Knights of Pytheas). Mr. Gehr questioned how the fire station on Summit Avenue could be protected since it is just outside of both the Downtown and the Prospect Street Local Historic Districts. Staff suggested that the historic district boundaries could be extended to include the three commercial buildings on the west side of Summit Avenue (old Post Office, the fire station and the Maidstone building). It was noted that many of the A resources would probably not be vulnerable to demolition anyway due to their intrinsic nature as government, religious, or institutional uses.

Ms. Maher indicated that staff could come back at the next meeting with photographs of the buildings. Mr. Gehr particularly wanted to see the buildings that are jumping to an A resource.

Proposed Zoning ordinance Amendment Language for Demolition Associated with Economic Development Opportunities.

At the last subcommittee meeting another draft was developed. Currently staff is awaiting approval of the newest version by the upper management of department. Once it is approved, staff will send it out to the commission in advance. The plan is to discuss it at the January meeting. It would be helpful if someone from the HDC could attend the Planning Commission meeting to help pitch it. The Planning Commission will probably review it at its second meeting in January.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Historic District Commission
MINUTES**

**December 13, 2012
City of Hagerstown, Maryland**

- Ms. Hrabal asked if newly elected Councilmember Penny Nigh would come back as a liaison to the Historic District Commission. During her tenure as a council member several years ago, it was beneficial to have someone who could explain to the Council what is going on with the HDC. It would be advantageous to have that connection again.
- On December 19, at 5:30 p.m., the Planning staff will be hosting a Holiday Cookie Party in Room 407.
- Staff received an appeal to the BZA of a zoning violation notice issued to a property owner who did work in an historic district without a Certificate of Appropriateness. Staff is not sure what angle they will take and believes the commission may need to weigh in and send someone as a friend of the court. The BZA is not accustomed to considering preservation-type cases. The property in question is at 57 West Franklin Street. The owner replaced all windows with vinyl replacement windows with interior mullions and wrapped the entire bay window in vinyl. They also submitted a case for the HDC. Mr. Bockmiller believes the BZA case should be considered first before the HDC but he will contact the City Attorney to make sure proper protocol is being followed.

ADJOURN: It was moved and seconded that the meeting adjourn (6:05 p.m.).

1/10/2013
Date

DC Calhoun
Debra C. Calhoun - Secretary