

Michael Gehr, chair, called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 26, 2017, in the Conference Room, Fourth 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, C. Davis, S. Kreiger, S. Silas, and M. Wertman. S. Bockmiller and D. Calhoun, Secretary, were present on behalf of the Planning and Code Administration Department.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – December 8, 2016:

MOTION: (Davis/Allen) So moved.
DISCUSSION: None.
ACTION: APPROVED (Unanimous)

CONSENT AGENDA

None.

DESIGN REVIEW

None.

WORKSHOP

66 West Washington Street – Delta Building – Ash Azadi.

This property has been before the commission for workshops on July 23, 2015; August 27, 2015; and April 14, 2016 (minutes in the meeting file). Mr. Bockmiller reported that the rear of this building is of serious concern to the City due to its condition. The front portion of the building is an A resource, but is not in imminent danger of collapsing. The Economic Development Demolition provision would not apply to this building because it is an A resource. During previous discussions, most commission members did not have major concerns about demolition of this building in order to construct a more modern building given its current condition.

Adam Carballo, of Carballo Architecture, was present along with the owner, Ash Azadi, to discuss the project since he was recently hired to replace the original architect. A structural engineering report from January 2015 was submitted. Since this report was written, the building has continued to deteriorate.

The front façade consists of two-and-a-half stories. The first floor was most recently altered approximately 20 years ago. The second floor is older brick, which from the outside appears sound, however, the interior is showing significant deterioration (sanding). The brick is not in any immediate danger of collapsing but is not strong enough to hold anything up.

The rear façade is in very bad condition including complete collapse situations. There is not much left of architectural value left to restore.

Mr. Carballo and his client are looking for ideas of what their options are for this site. They believe the best way forward is to take this building down and replace it with something that will better serve West Washington Street. In reviewing the previous meeting minutes, Mr. Bockmiller noted that the Historic District Commission (HDC) had no concerns previously about demolishing the rear portion of the building. Ms. Wertman asked if there any historic materials inside that could be saved, such as metal ceiling tiles, door and/or window frames, railings, etc. Mr. Carballo said he did not recall anything like that, but if they find architectural elements worth saving, they could be saved. They have discussed with the owner repurposing some of the older building elements as decorative elements in a new building; or salvaged brick could be used as pavers. There could be other items, but the parts of the building are unsafe to walk through so Mr. Carballo may not have seen some elements that could be saved.

Mr. Bockmiller recalled at a previous meeting Dan Matonak of Regan-Matonak & Associates, structural engineers, stated that if the building was fixed up it would not be worth as much as the cost of renovations. He asked if the HDC felt this building is moving forward as a demolition. Ms. Allen recalled that the commission's architectural historian, Dr. Paula Reed, pointed out the dormers and the chimney on the existing front portion of the structure, and how they would be treated if the building was renovated. Mr. Bockmiller stated that the elements identified by Dr. Reed would not fit in with a modern building. Mr. Carballo noted that many of the surrounding buildings are much taller than the building under discussion. The shorter building does not blend with the taller buildings in this block.

Ms. Wertman recalled that the commission saw several designs at previous meetings for a replacement building. Mr. Azadi stated that they are talking with the University of Maryland about student housing and might be proposing a building as tall as seven stories. Ms. Kreiger raised a concern about an historic painted sign on the Manny's building immediately to the west, not to mention blocking the windows on the adjacent building with a seven-story structure. Mr. Carballo indicated they could work around that with a lower building in front and a taller section along the alley. Mr. Bockmiller pointed out that regarding building height, the design guidelines recommend a transition between the buildings on either side.

Ms. Allen asked Mr. Azadi if the roof has been stabilized to help with preserving the interior of the building. The condition of the roof was discussed in 2015 and it was in bad condition then. Mr. Azadi stated that they have done nothing to protect the roof since 2015. Mr. Azadi indicated that their goal is to secure a demolition permit for the rear addition at the very least. With regard

to a time frame for the project, Mr. Carballo stated they are two to four months away from putting a permit package together. The earliest they would be applying for a building permit would be sometime in the spring or summer of 2017. Construction will take at least 12-18 months. Mr. Bockmiller indicated that the City's Code Administration Division would like the deteriorated western ell dealt with as soon as possible.

Mr. Bockmiller asked if the developer had an idea of what the footprint would be for the replacement building. Mr. Carballo stated they do not have that information yet since they are working toward compliance with parking requirements. They are considering a parking garage under the building since there is an advantageous change in grade that would make indoor parking available off the alley without affecting the front facade. Mr. Bockmiller noted that a site plan will be required; however, since there are no parking design or landscaping requirements it should be a simple site plan.

The HDC recommended that the applicant submit an application for demolition of the rear addition, but maintain the front portion of the building until there is an approved plan for the front. Shoring and fencing will be necessary for safety and to prevent people from getting in the building. The commission previously agreed that the applicant should file a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition of the rear ell and for shoring up the front of the building.

Mr. Carballo indicated that the applicant may be coming in for workshops for the replacement building in the next six weeks. Staff indicated that to complete the application for demolition they will need to provide a summary of the overall condition of the building, including formal figures on the rehabilitation costs as well.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Bockmiller is hoping to make progress on the Design Guidelines in the next few weeks.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

**Historic District Commission
MINUTES**

**January 26, 2017
City of Hagerstown, Maryland**

ADJOURN

It was moved and seconded that the meeting adjourn (5:05 p.m.).

2/9/2017
Approved


Debra C. Calhoun – Secretary