



HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Quality Services for a Quality Community

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Marcella Fox-Brown
Carrie Sampson
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Ruth Beier

Staff Liaison

Jake Parcell

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PLANNING BUILDING
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MINUTES

February 14, 2019 – 7:00 p.m.

54-B District Court, Courtroom #2

101 Linden Street

Present: Cooley, Fox Brown, Sampson, Sousa, and Wing

Absent: Flores

Staff Present: Parcell

1) CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

A) Roll Call

At the calling of the roll, Chairperson Flores was absent.

B) Approval of Agenda

Motion: Sousa moved to amend the agenda with two additional items under New Business:

- 1) Review of by-law change
- 2) Review of administrative approvals of Certificates of Appropriateness

Motion was seconded by Cooley. **Vote to amend agenda:** All yeas. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion: Sousa moved to approve the agenda, as amended. Motion was seconded by Sampson. **Vote:** All yeas. Motion carried unanimously.

C) Approval of Minutes – January 10, 2019

Motion: Sousa moved to approve January 10, 2019 minutes as presented. Motion was seconded by Fox Brown. **Vote:** All yeas. Motion carried unanimously.

2) **COMMUNICATIONS** – None

3) **COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT** – None

4) **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

A) A public hearing will be held for the purpose of considering a request from Jim Woodend, for the property at 208 and 210 Orchard Street, to demolish and remove a two-car garage in the back of the property.

Parcell highlighted request for 208 and 210 Orchard Street to demolish and remove a two-car garage as outlined in February 8, 2019 staff report. He said this request was first brought before Historic District Commission September 2017 and has more deterioration after going through one and one-half additional winters. Parcell said he believes the garage has been added on and is not original to the home.

Jim Woodend, 208 and 210 Orchard Street property owner/applicant, spoke in support of request to demolish and remove a two-car garage in the back of the property. He commented regarding difficulty in entering garage which results in cars hitting the side and center support. He also commented regarding safety concerns of open to the alley and concealed from the house, a homeless person living in the garage, and accumulation of trash and debris. He said garage is not visible from the street and is only visible when traveling down the alley. He said parking would be more beneficial to tenants if it were open parking. He said the structure does not warrant the value of repairing as opposed to removing it.

Commission discussed/asked questions regarding:

- Bids to demolish/repair structure
- Property ownership since May 2004
- Maintenance to replace cement board siding, painting, entrance and center post repair
- Operational garage doors when track is aligned
- Danger/safety/sight block from house/water leaking through roof

Wing opened the public hearing.

Seeing no one come forward, Wing closed the public hearing.

Wing asked if the City of East Lansing building inspector has examined the structure and given an opinion. Parcell said it is not condemnable, but it is significantly deteriorating over time.

Sampson asked if the garage was built as the same time as the house. Parcell said the house was built in 1939 and he believes the garage is not original. He said the siding and roofing materials

do not match the house, stylistically the house and garage are different, but he has no photographic evidence to support when the garage was built.

Sousa asked if alley counts as public right-of-way for viewing a structure. Parcell said yes. He said garage is not visible from public street and referenced photographs in agenda packet.

Sousa asked what is different from request in September 2017. Parcell said there is increased deterioration. He said if the garage is demolished it would be replaced with open parking to meet the parking requirements for the rental property.

Motion: Sousa moved to deny application. Motion was seconded by Cooley.

Sousa said it is not visible from the street and a dilapidated garage is a problem; however, there should not be a system where a dilapidated structure can just go away. He said by the rigorous criteria of the Secretary of Interior it counts and is supposed to stay. He said Commission should not approve its demolition.

Fox Brown asked if this is a precedent setting case. Sousa said there is no precedent setting and Historic District Commission makes decisions on individual cases.

Wing said the overriding issue is there is no particular safety issue of this structure. She said personal safety might be addressed with motion lights or garage door opener, and she highlighted maintenance. Wing said definition of the standards is the structure is “a resource within the district.”

Woodend asked regarding historical purpose of the garage. Wing said the combination of all homes/buildings are resources within that district which makes the district historic. She said Secretary of Interior standards regarding resources within historic district guide Commission decisions.

Sousa said because garage is visible from public alleyway right-of-way, it counts as a resource and Secretary of Interior standards need to be applied which are “dangerous” or “in the public good.”

Vote: *Yeas* – Cooley, Sousa, Wing. *Nays* – Fox Brown, Sampson. Motion to deny application passed by a vote of 3 to 2.

Parcell said he will be in touch with applicant regarding potential updates and fixes to the garage.

5) OLD BUSINESS

A) Continued discussion of the Park Place Development

Paul Vlahakis, Dublin Square, Park Place developer, spoke regarding latest components of project:

- Original Dublin Square/Post Office door frame, flag pole, and building cornerstone to be placed in City plaza on corner of Abbot and Albert

- Windows have been changed
- Entire site plan is on City of East Lansing website (www.cityofeastlansing.com)

Commission discussed/asked questions regarding:

- Per developer, remnants of building to create a memorial rather than saving façade
- Procuring estimated cost to move building
- Structural materials of current building
- Saving original brick/other original pieces while building is being demolished
- Reinforcement of façade
- Setbacks, current/future entrance to building configuration
- Hope for structure reminiscent of original building
- Original façade important/useful to historical look of downtown
- Current consideration of Oakwood historic district boundary
- Interior of building previously gutted and rebuilt with prior redevelopment
- Examples of repurposing/saving shape and substance of building
- Elevations showing new storefronts/entrances
- Original post office boxes to be incorporated inside new building
- Potentially placing other original remnants inside lobby of new structure

Commission thanked Paul Vlahakis for sharing plans and listening to ideas.

6) NEW BUSINESS

A) Discuss amendment to by-laws

Wing asked regarding by-law changes which were made at January 11, 2018 Historic District Commission meeting. Parcell said those changes went before City Council and were approved. Wing commented City website contains 2014 by-laws. Parcell said he will contact Mikell Frey, Communications Coordinator, with 2018 by-law updates to be published on City website.

Wing commented by-laws are to be reviewed every January and proposed that item be on next Historic District Commission agenda. She requested 2018 by-law changes be distributed to HDC members prior to next meeting.

B) Review of administrative approvals of Certificates of Appropriateness

Wing said the last time this review was held was March 2018. She said this review is supposed to be held quarterly and suggested a routine quarterly review be put on the agenda schedule. Parcell said he will provide this information in the same format he has used in the past.

7) COMMISSIONER REPORTS – None

8) STAFF REPORTS

Parcell asked Commissioners to refer any persons interested in serving on Historic District Commission to contact him. He said he will also post position on social media.

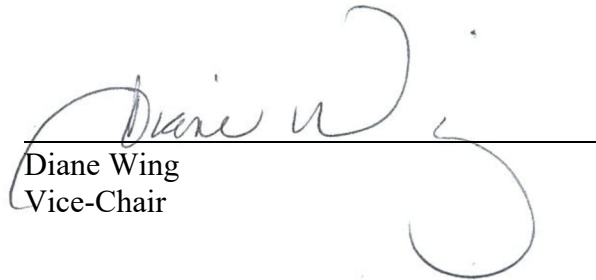
Parcell said Wing, Cooley, and Fox Brown have expressed interest in attending the free SHPO trainings in Ypsilanti and Kalamazoo. He said he will send out a reminder as the dates become closer.

9) ASSIGNMENTS

Wing asked Parcell to send entire by-laws document to Commissioners for review prior to next meeting. Parcell also commented regarding information packet provided to new Commission members.

10) ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Sousa moved to adjourn. Motion as seconded by Cooley. **Vote:** All yeas. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:49 p.m.



Diane Wing
Vice-Chair



Jake Parcell
Secretary