

City of Excelsior
Hennepin County, Minnesota

Minutes
Heritage Preservation Commission

Tuesday, February 25, 2020

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Chair Macpherson called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Macpherson, Brabec, Bolles, Caron, Finch, Reece, Salita

Commissioners Absent: None

Also Present: City Planner Becker

2. AGENDA APPROVAL

Motion by Caron, seconded by Salita to approve the agenda. Motion carried 6/0 (Bolles not yet present).

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) January 28, 2020

Commissioner Reece moved, Commissioner Salita seconded, to approve the minutes for the January 28, 2020 meeting as amended. Motion carried 5/0 (Bolles not present and Finch abstaining).

4. CITIZEN COMMENTS OR REPORTS

None.

5. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a) 6 Third Street Sketch Plan (HPC No. 20-2)

Caron said that he would like to know the materials proposed for the addition and would like to know which part of the house is being demolished and which is being preserved. He is also concerned with how the applicant was proposing to raise the house without compromising the chimney that was previously requested to be saved. Macpherson believes that the upper part of the chimney needs to be rebuilt and that the whole chimney is vulnerable. Brabec would like to know more about the window style, and Caron would like to know if the deck is still proposed to be circular. Salita believes that the drawings look generally consistent with what was discussed, but more information is needed. The Commission needs to know if less than 30% of the home is being demolished. Bolles would like to see the full floor plans with the application. Caron would also like to see a copy of the application that had previously been submitted and for the City Planner to distribute that, and perhaps the Commission could have a special meeting to sit down with him and go through the materials if the application was urgent. Bolles was concerned with the term lifting and felt that the structure should be supported in its current location while the new foundation was being poured underneath. Macpherson wanted to ensure that the structure was remaining in place and in its original orientation.

b) 340 Water Street Signage (HPC No. 20-3)

Caron wanted to know which door the applicant is trying to direct persons into with their proposed signage. Salita believes that the only problem with the signage is directing people where to go. Brabec suggested a freestanding sign instead of a sign affixed to the building. While the design manual says that freestanding signs are not appropriate for the downtown area, Caron felt that that was meant for buildings which had no open spaces, and because this is a converted property with open space, this is an appropriate type of sign for this

property. Finch suggested that there be wayfinding arrows to point visitors to the correct entrances.

The lighting was discussed, and Bolles was concerned with the lighting and that there would be a significant amount of glare coming from the proposed lights. Macpherson asked if the intention was to point the lights at the sign or to direct it downwards. Laura Hotvet, applicant, asked for any suggestions on lighting. Finch felt a good example of lighting was the Excelsior Brewery with the goosenecks on either side of the sign pointing down on to the building. Reece suggested a hanging directory sign and plaques on the doors to indicate which business was located where.

Caron motioned, seconded by Salita, to continue the item to a future meeting. Motion carried 7/0. Bolles wanted to mention the sandwich boards located outside of the building and would like to see them removed with approval of the application.

c) Draft Residential Review Board Ordinance and Good Neighbor Guidelines

Bolles asked how effective a review board would be in determining mass and scale. Brabec wanted to know how each member of the board's opinions would be prevented from being biased. She had concern about allowing residents to be on the board and feels that it could be self-serving. Macpherson clarified that the Residential Review Board Research Committee (RRBRC) suggested that the review board provide findings both when approving and denying an application in order to prevent dispute over why one application was approved but another was not. Salita was concerned that the review board concept would deter potential buyers of homes within the City. Caron pointed out that those who were interviewed by the RRBRC that had been part of a similar residential review process (i.e. Stillwater's City Planner, an architect that sits on Stillwater's Heritage Preservation Commission, Dale Mulfinger (an architect that spoke with the RRBRC)) said that they have not had any major issues with a review board, as architects are used to abiding by guidelines. Brabec was concerned that the review of every house would become a public design forum. Salita felt that perhaps instead of three members there should be five members. Reece suggested real estate mediators. Finch wanted to ensure that it is clear that

the review board is not a design review. Caron felt that the application materials requirements of materials, patios, outdoor lighting, and windows should be removed, as they seem to indicate that the review board is to review design. There was also comment that perhaps the name of the review board should be changed to avoid intimidation.

d) Blue Line Ticket Booth

The Commission asked that staff contact all members outlined within the policy to meet annually regarding the Blue Line Ticket Booth posters to set up a meeting date.

e) Dock Signage Update

Becker provided an update on the dock signage that was proposed at the previous meeting.

f) Downtown National Register Eligibility Study Update

The Commission wanted staff to determine if the not-to-exceed funding was available from the City. If it was, the Commission wanted Hess Roise to evaluate the State Historic Preservation Office's comments and recommend adjustments to district boundaries. They did not feel that they should proceed forth with the three individual eligibility studies.

g) 234 Water Street Window Replacement Update (HPC No. 20-1)

Becker explained that the report from the second window restoration specialist has not been received by the applicant nor have the revised renderings been received. The application deadline has been extended to May 12, 2020.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Caron, seconded by Salita, to adjourn at 9:20 p.m. Motion carried 7/0.

Respectfully submitted,

Minutes

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2/25/20

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Emily Becker

City Planner