

City of Excelsior

Heritage Preservation Commission

Minutes

Tuesday, February 28, 2012

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Sanders called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Bolles, Finch, Macpherson, Meyer, Mueller, Roden,
and Chair Sanders

Commissioners Absent: None

Also Present: City Planner Richards and Advisor Caron

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Heritage Preservation Commission Meeting of January 24, 2012

It was moved by Commissioner Mueller, seconded by Commissioner Meyer, to
approve the minutes as written. Approved unanimously.

4. CITIZEN REPORTS or COMMENTS

None.

5. MISCELLANEOUS/COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

a. Recent City Council Actions

Richards reported that the CUP for the Excelsior Brewery project will go to the
Council following this meeting. He stated that the Council is also working on
changes to the parking impact fee.

It was moved by Commissioner Finch, seconded by Commissioner Bolles, to
move Item 7(a) followed by Item 8(c) on the agenda to precede item 6(a).
Approved unanimously.

7. NEW BUSINESS

a. Site Alteration Permit for Exterior Alterations for 421 Third Street -- Excelsior
Brewing Company

Richards stated that, after consideration of the Commission comments from the
previous meeting, the applicants have decided that they are not going to replace

7. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Site Alteration Permit for Exterior Alterations for 421 Third Street -- Excelsior Brewing Company – (Continued)

the metal windows on the building. Applicants John Klick and Patrick Foss stated that they had considered the comments from the prior meeting and consulted with window preservation experts, and they now intend to retain the large windows on the north and south side of the building. Based on their discussions with window preservation contractors, they will instead add high efficiency argon-filled storm windows on the inside of the existing large windows.

On the north (alley) side, which currently has boarded up windows, they propose to add glass block to match the style on the rear of 261 Water Street, directly across the alley, in a traditional pattern of 7" x 7" glass block. On the south side, for the existing small vinyl windows, they would propose to replace the windows with functional awning windows to fit the original opening, which will be painted to match the color of the steel windows.

The applicants also plan to install a rooftop air conditioning unit and will put cedar fencing around the unit for screening. An exhaust fan and compressor unit will also be placed on the roof as part of the project, and these elements will be screened as well.

Commissioners considered the visibility of the units from public ways, but since the roof is flat, any rooftop equipment will be seen, even if set back from the parapet edge on the roof surface. The applicants stated that they may also add rooftop HVAC equipment in the future. The exterior of the building will be repainted using paint colors from the Benjamin Moore historical color chart, but the applicants had not yet determined the exact colors. The applicants stated that they would present their proposed paint colors, along with the proposed rooftop screening materials and proposed signage in a new Site Alteration Permit.

It was moved by Commissioner Finch, seconded by Commissioner Macpherson, to approve the Site Alteration Permit for alteration of windows as presented. Approved unanimously.

8. COMMUNICATIONS and REPORT

- c. Discuss Window Replacement Request for Excelsior Congregational Church 471 Third Street

Chair Sanders reported that the Excelsior Congregational Church would like to replace all of its existing small wood windows with new replacement windows in a similar style. She noted that Chris Johnson of JCJ Construction, the contractor for the project, has requested that Commission representatives meet him on site

8. COMMUNICATIONS and REPORT

- c. Discuss Window Replacement Request for Excelsior Congregational Church 471 Third Street – (Continued)

to review the condition of the windows. Macpherson and Caron agreed to meet with the contractor and report back to the Commission.

6. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Site Alteration Permit for Demolition of 368 and 374 Water Street and New Construction of 400 Water Street -- KTJ 207 LLC – (Continued)

City Planner Richards introduced the proposed plan for the redevelopment of the Mason Motors block. Caron clarified that the Mason Motors building itself is not within the historic district and therefore not technically under review by the Commission, but only the proposal to demolish the two designated historic structures on George Street and the new building that would replace them.

Paul Tucci and Jon Monson, appeared on behalf of the applicants and stated that they intend to purchase the Mason site and the two designated house properties on George Street to integrate their lots into one shopping area. The proposal would feature a 10,000 square foot building replacing the historic houses. The tenants for the project are not yet known. The new building would be a predominantly brick building with EFIS elements. The building would have no main entrances on George Street, so primary access to the building would be from the parking lot side. Any rooftop mechanical units will be screened. The applicants have not finalized their color palette, but presented their currently preferred colors in the plans.

Richards stated that reuse reports on the historic structures from an independent appraiser are included in the Commission packet similar to the type of report that was provided for consideration in connection with the proposed demolition of the recent Galpin Lake Road structure (Newman-Sickler-Seifert House). He also noted that there is an existing business in one of the structures today (368 George).

Caron reported on his discussion with City architectural historian consultant Hess Roise regarding their assessment of the current significance of the structures and the basis for their recommendation to remove the structures from the Downtown Historic District. The structure at 368 George Street, the Gould Greenhouse structure, has lost much of its original integrity due to unsympathetic changes made in recent years and is also not the type of structure that appears to relate visually to the commercial district, so their recommendation is that it would be appropriate for removal from the district and possible removal of historic designation due to integrity issues. The structure at 374 George Street, the Gould Harness Shop and Library structure, still maintains good historic integrity according to Hess Roise, but its appearance does not fit in with the commercial

6. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Site Alteration Permit for Demolition of 368 and 374 Water Street and New Construction of 400 Water Street -- KTJ 207 LLC – (Continued)

historic district, so it is recommended for removal from the district boundaries, but is still appropriate for retaining its individual historic designation as the City's first library.

Bolles requested more information regarding the details of the George Street elevation railings and door materials. Sanders asked the applicants whether the structure at 374 George Street might be incorporated into the project in an innovative way. Monson stated that incorporation of the structure presents two issues: he believes that there is no significant historic detail worth preserving and he does not perceive that a 600 square foot footprint can provide a viable commercial component to a project of this type.

Finch stated that, at first glance, the plan proposes to add a strip mall on George Street and build a parking lot on Water Street. Monson explained that his intent was to provide a low scale building in a suburban context, and that the plan is intended to complement the existing scale of this section of Water Street while trying to create a gateway from Highway 19. Monson compared the proposed George Street building to the Second Street side of 200 Water Street in providing a commercial transition zone and noted that the orientation of the building is necessary to attract a potential grocery store tenant, who will demand Water Street visibility.

Commissioners questioned why the building could not be reoriented or reconfigured to front on Water Street, whether such a large project would have an economic impact on existing businesses on Water Street, and the compatibility of the proposed building with the remainder of the historic district.

Monson stated that he believes that the project will add vitality to the downtown. His perspective is that the historic buildings are being repurposed in the project and that the scale of the block is being retained. The proposed materials, such as the modular brick and bronze window frames, are generally compatible with other downtown buildings.

Commissioners expressed concern that surrounding properties on George Street will look at the back service entrances on a strip mall-type building, which is very different than the character of the street today. The applicants stated that a modern grocery store tenant requires a great deal of convenient parking, and the plan is trying to balance a number of factors, including potential traffic issues on Water Street. The project will require rezoning of one residential lot and a variance from the 50 foot setback requirement from Water Street for parking areas.

6. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Site Alteration Permit for Demolition of 368 and 374 Water Street and New Construction of 400 Water Street -- KTJ 207 LLC – (Continued)

Caron summarized the ordinance standards for demolition and described the findings-of-fact that would be required for demolition. The applicant requested some kind of vote on demolition if an acceptable plan could be worked out. The Commission declined to take a preliminary vote due to the quasi-judicial nature of the proceeding, but some Commissioners stated preliminary views that the current proposal presents issues, including that it lacks a significant presence on Water Street, that the design of the new building appears too much like a

suburban strip mall for compatibility with the downtown district, that the applicants should explore ways to add more character change to the long facade of the building such as using brick colors and door and window arrangements to further differentiate the bays to mimic separate buildings, and that the applicant should look for ways to incorporate the 374 George Street structure into the plan, while recognizing that the size of the structure presents some limitations.

It was moved by Commissioner Finch, seconded by Commissioner Bolles, to continue this item to a special meeting of the Commission to be held on Wednesday, March 7, 2012 at 5:30 p.m. Approved unanimously.

It was moved by Commissioner Finch, seconded by Commissioner Macpherson, to continue the remainder of the agenda to the next regular meeting. Approved unanimously.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- b. Excelsior Downtown Historic District Boundaries

This item was continued to the March 20, 2012 meeting.

- c. Possibility of Historically Designating Portions of Excelsior Elementary School

This item was continued to the March 20, 2012 meeting.

- d. Demolition by Neglect Ordinance Provision

This item was continued to the March 20, 2012 meeting.

8. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

- a. Designate Liaison for Planning Commission Meeting - March 6, 2012

A liaison was not appointed.

8. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

b. Site Alteration Permits Administratively Approved

There were no Site Alteration Permits administratively approved.

c. Discussion of Congregational Church Windows – 471 Third Street

This item was moved on the agenda.

d. Next Meeting

A special meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, March 7, 2012 at 5:30 p.m. and the next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 20, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.

8. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Commissioner Roden, seconded by Commissioner Macpherson, to adjourn. Approved unanimously. Adjourned at 9:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Caron
Recording Secretary