

City of Excelsior
Hennepin County, Minnesota

Minutes
Heritage Preservation Commission Meeting

Tuesday, November 16, 2021

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Interim Chair Salita called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Salita, Bolles, Caron, Hartwich, Brabec, Tyler (arrived late)

Commissioners Absent: none

Also Present: Community Development Director Mullin

2. AGENDA APPROVAL

Items were added to the agenda: Caron moved to approve Agenda. Hartwich seconded.
Motion carried 5/0.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) October 19, 2021

Caron corrected – p. 3, bullet # 4, add city staff will verify “to the satisfaction of the subcommittee”.

Bolles corrected – p. 3, bullet # 2, approved by the HPC (remove “or subcommittee”)

Caron made motion to approve the minutes as corrected; Bolles seconded. Motion carried 5/0.

b) November 3, 2021 Special Meeting

Caron: requested the minutes be continued to the next meeting; has a number of

corrections and minutes need more information in them. Motion to continue by Caron; Bolles seconded. Approved 6/0. (Commissioner Tyler arrived at the meeting.)

Salita clarified that he is recusing himself from 173 2nd St. SAP discussion; he was absent on November 3.

4. CITIZEN REPORTS OR COMMENTS

5. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a) **470 Site Alteration Permit for new signs (HPC No. 21-33)**

Mullin presented the report. The Applicant was not present at the meeting.

Brabec asked about Comprehensive Design Plan for building. Mullin has not located it. Applicant provided existing signage.

Salita reviewed records and said HPC approved the four signs together on the side of the building. Caron agreed this proposal conforms based on his recollection of the approved comprehensive sign plan for the building.

Caron made motion made to approve SAP with condition that new signage be mounted in mortar joints. Bolles seconded. Motion approved 6/0.

Comprehensive sign plan: set of illustrations to show where signs will go when the building is fully built out. Mullin will work with HPC to find the comprehensive sign plans; they may be in meeting minutes.

b) **170 Lake Street Site Alteration Permit for exterior siding (HPC. No. 21-34)**

Mullin presented the staff report. The Applicant presented information and answered questions.

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Brabec – is original siding, board and batten, under the siding on the part of home existing pre-addition? Applicant will check.

Applicant will check with homeowner about putting board and batten siding on the home; Hardie makes a board and batten siding. Homeowner prefers Hardie over LP siding.

Brabec and Caron – require smooth version of Hardie board; looks more historic, like real wood siding; textured siding looks artificial

HPC does not permit 7" reveal on horizontal lap siding; do 4" or 5" reveal on the addition and the siding should match that on the garage

Board and batten on the original cottage structure; on the front elevation at least – that would be acceptable – though HPC would prefer the whole original house get board and batten.

Trim to be added should be smooth, not textured.

Adding trim to the windows; only a j-channel around the windows now. Replacing sash of the windows. (Note: these are not the original windows.)

Applicant will bring HPC comments to homeowner and come back to HPC.

Caron made motion to continue the Application. Brabec seconded. Motion approved 6/0.

c) 366 Water Street Site Alteration Permit (HPC No. 21-31) -update

Mullin reported that a resolution for SAP approval will be on the next meeting's agenda for review and approval by the HPC. Mullin said that the Applicant stated he'll submit building permit application and updated survey next week. Presented Building Inspector's inspection of footings at rear of property.

Caron: work is happening on the interior; wants to verify that no work is happening on exterior

Bolles: wants to meet on site to inspect footings removal; Salita understood this as well; Subcommittee (Bolles, Caron, Tyler) needs to meet Building Inspector on site to look at footings to meet condition of SAP.

No SAP has been issued yet. We are waiting on plans and updated survey from the Applicant.

Plans that will be submitted must be approved by the HPC and the subcommittee before SAP is issued.

Bolles: footings that have been installed were not approved; HPC should see the plans that these footings were on

d) 31 Water Street Site Alteration Permit for signage (HPC No. 21-22) – update from Subcommittee

Tyler: subcommittee met with property owner on site; told applicant to bring a plan forward including comprehensive sign plan

Bolles: Alerus bank building owner, Chris Dennis, attended the meeting; he wants to put mural on that building

Application continued to next meeting and will be extended if necessary

e) 173 2nd Street Site Alteration Permit for windows (HPC No. 21-32) – continued

Salita recused himself. Mullin presented staff report. Applicant submitted plans on Monday which were sent to members. Today, applicant sent updated application form. Applicant presented information and answered questions.

Hartwich questioned if HPC was clear enough about importance of windows at last meeting; this was significant issue requiring adjustment from applicants

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Caron: had a permit been applied for, HPC would have stated that wholesale window replacement is not allowed on historic structures; there is a narrow exception for individual windows but an evaluation by a qualified expert is required; if a particular window needs to be replaced, the replacement window must be identical to the one replaced; these new options presented by applicant don't address this requirement

Applicant: appreciates opportunity to keep working with HPC on this; their understanding was that they'd bring a plan for all renovations they'd like to make; did not understand that they would not be permitted to use the new windows they have bought; brought expert guests tonight to answer questions, provide further comment:

Jim Macaulay, resident on 3rd St., father of applicant, and CFO/chief strategy officer of Marvin Windows; What is process for letting homeowner know the home is historic? They knew the process was starting, but they didn't know it had happened; city website not clear that windows require a permit; applicants called city and did not get return phone call; lead time on windows is 20+ weeks, so had to order them; talked to the Mayor who said move ahead; this was a mistake; they tried to do the right thing. Windows cannot be returned. Want to use the new windows and maintain the rest of the historic features of the house – that's what the options present. And they want to add something to the front of the house. If they can't use new windows, the house will just sit.

Ashley Macaulay, designer at HGA, sister-in-law of applicant: house is in disrepair; applicants excited about the potential; not realistic to replicate what it originally looked like; under vinyl siding is white lap siding; want to repair existing wood if not totally deteriorated, white lap siding; white siding with new windows and original entry is not attractive; rafters are rotting need replacement; column needs work; she went through options presented to HPC; preserve craftsman details and enhance the look of the house

Salita: two issues to focus the conversation: 1) the windows, 2) the rest of the project

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Brabec: ignorance about historical significance of home and failure to check with city about your project; you have removed historic significance from the home; we have to hold people accountable; we can't treat you differently from others; we're in a conundrum; we will see this through with you; together we need to do this properly; no work can be done on the exterior of home without review by HPC; historic exterior makes Excelsior what it is

Caron: these windows are not appropriate for a Craftsman home; and only, if necessary, can an individual window be replaced with an identical window; the three over one double hung wood sash windows were identified by the state as critical characteristics of this historic home; these windows are deemed worthy of preservation by the city and the state; it's a positive that some of the original windows are still in the home

Guidelines do not permit HPC to allow replacement of all the windows

You did not offer an option that keeps the windows on the street-facing elevation of the house. The updated Application did not include all elevations of the home; the Applicant submitted renderings of the front elevation only. The HPC has no indication of what is proposed for the other sides of the house.

It would be helpful if you would propose an option to meet us in the middle; don't remove more windows; put the front of the house back together with the original style of windows; HPC has more latitude to allow exceptions on the rear of a property not visible from the street; HPC must protect sides of home visible from the street; it may be possible to move windows from back of house to the front; hope you will think about this so that we can come to a resolution to this situation that the HPC could support

Applicant: left last meeting thinking HPC had offered to accept new windows if they made other improvements, like removing vinyl, to the home

Caron: not accurate account of last meeting; HPC said you cannot do wholesale replacement of all windows on the home; historic windows must be retained; other work you may have planned for the house impacts windows, so it would be useful to flesh out other work you have planned so it could all be considered together

Bolles: you need to get building permits

If you want to think about saving some of the original windows and re-orienting them on street-facing sides of home, and bring those plans forward, we could continue the application to December. Or if you do not want to consider saving windows, then we can vote on the application as is.

Applicant: can we re-apply if we need to? HPC: yes.

Tyler: there are some possible options: move original windows to front and use new windows on back; change the sash on the new windows so that they match original windows

Applicant: city website is misleading regarding requirement for permit for window replacement; if HPC needs to deny, then deny; honest attempt to do this correctly

Staff: If vote is to deny, applicant may appeal the decision to the City Council.

Caron made motion to deny Site Alteration Permit application as inconsistent with city's window guidelines. Resolution will be brought to Commission for approval. Brabec seconded. Hartwich votes to deny permit, with comment that applicant's access to information was problematic. Motion to deny permit is approved by 5 Commissioners; Salita abstained.

Bolles: there are some options to move forward: street-facing facades are most important; could use some of the new windows on non-street facing facades.

f) City of Excelsior Remote Meeting Policy – feedback to City Council

Mullin presented background information from the City Attorney.

Feedback from HPC:

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- Remote participant must be in public place, and if that means not from home or from vacation - that is too limiting. If we could do it from home, once a year or so, could be a great thing.
- Participating from a coffee shop, for example, won't work.
- Meetings need complete attention of commissioners; should be in person.
- If a commissioner is sick, can't go to public place to participate.
- Virtual is here to stay.
- A member was quarantining and had to miss a meeting; if he could have dialed in to the meeting and participated he would have done that.
- Could be useful, if on vacation or sick, to have a policy; perhaps set a limit on the number of times per year a Commissioner may participate remotely
- Want some limits; to avoid abuse
- Body language is important during meetings; need to be in person
- How would we manage having too many people attending remotely at one particular meeting?
- Would be very helpful to have an ability to attend remotely
- Don't want commissioner attending every meeting remotely; want a cap for how many times each commissioner may attend remotely
- Useful if very limited; for example, each commissioner may attend remotely one time per year, and one commissioner per meeting could be remote
- If a member is attending remotely for 6 months, for example, they are really no longer a functioning member of the commission
- Need to work out the "public location"; constraining location to coffee shop, public library makes no sense
- This provides options for people; and it's not always easy to find people to participate on commissions; improves accessibility

g) HPC Goals Prioritization Exercise

Mullin presented results of prioritization activity. Four goals were selected by three of the

Commissioners and two goals were selected by two of the commissioners; these goals rose to the top.

- a. Review thoughts about the Port of Excelsior future that may be anticipated by C4C in their plan sometime in the future.
- b. Discuss enforcement and ways to bring non-compliant properties in line with the preservation design Manual standards
- c. Identify and seek designation for historic city buildings, sites and objects. Suggest an annual review of city buildings similar to Blue Line Ticket Booth Office.
- d. Review status of HPC Recognition Awards. If necessary, formalize process to set yearly date to review potential awards.
- e. Request the Council set aside \$10,000 for improvement grants for Landmark properties.
- f. Send out Preservation Design Manual to all owners/tenants of historically designated buildings. (Send physical copy or provide link to on-line version?)

Commissioners will let staff know which goal they want to work on.

h) Code Enforcement Information from State Preservation Conference – Commissioner Caron - continued

Caron distributed code enforcement information

i) Resolution #21-24 for 6 3rd Street Site Alteration Permit Amendment – continued

Commissioners not ready to approve because new draft was distributed at meeting. Send to applicant for review. Caron moved to continue to next meeting. Tyler seconded. 6/0.

6. COMMUNICATIONS and REPORTS

- a) City Council Meeting – Monday, December 6, 2021

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b) Next HPC Meeting – Tuesday, December 21, 2021

Staff will schedule a Special HPC meeting for review of Concessions Building plans.

c) Administrative Site Alteration Approvals

1. 634 3rd Street gutter replacement

d) Recent City Council Actions

e) Community for the Commons Updates

f) Other Updates

1. Manual requires a number of updates and corrections. Do all at once.
2. Request assistance from HPC to write RFP for project to review city-owned properties; Hartwich will do it.
3. Downtown Historic District and Minnehaha listed on National Register of Historic Places.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m. Motion carried 6/0.

Respectfully submitted,

Julia Mullin

Community Development Director