



DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

MINUTES (FINAL)

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2020

6:30 P.M.

RECREATION CENTER

PRESENT: Tamie Ehinger, Chairman; Karen Cavotta, Vice Chairman; Chris Bennett; Leslie Mechem; Rob DuBoff

LATE ARRIVAL: Leslie DiCarlo arrived at 6:42 P.M.

ABSENT: Ellen Sheehan

STAFF: Bradley Birge, Administrator, Planning and Economic Development, City of Saratoga Springs

CALL TO ORDER: Tamie Ehinger, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman, stated the proceedings of this meeting are being recorded for the benefit of the secretary. Because the minutes are not a verbatim record of the proceedings, the minutes are not a word-for-word transcript of the recording.

A. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Leslie Mechem made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 15, 2020 DRC meeting with minor corrections. Chris Bennett seconded the motion.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman asked if there was any further discussion. None heard.

VOTE:

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman, in favor; Karen Cavotta, Vice Chairman, Rob DuBoff, in favor; Chris Bennett, in favor; Leslie Mechem, in favor

MOTION PASSES: 5-0

B. POSSIBLE CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated the intent of a consent agenda is to identify any application that appears to be "approvable" without need for further evaluation or discussion. If anyone wishes to further discuss any proposed consent agenda item, then that item would be pulled from the "consent agenda" and dealt with individually.

1. **20200045 TREK WALL SIGNAGE**, 71 Church Street, Architectural Review of a new wall sign within the Transect-5 Neighborhood Center District.
2. **20200049 9 MILES EAST WALL SIGNAGE**, 64 Excelsior Avenue, Architectural Review of a new wall sign within the Transect-5 Neighborhood Center District.
3. **20191199 SAVING FACE BARBERSHOP WALL POLE**, 68 West Avenue, Architectural Review of a wall mounted baberpole within the Transect-5 Neighborhood Center District.
4. **20200052 GABLE ROOFTOP CONDENSING UNITS**, 60 West Avenue, Suite B, Architectural Review of roof-mounted condensing units with the Transect-5 Neighborhood Center District.

5. **20200053 28 CLINTON STREET SIGNAGE**, 28 Clinton Avenue, Architectural Review of wall and freestanding sign within the Transect-6 Urban Core District.
6. **20200070 RAYMOND WATKIN CARPORT GUARDS**, 57 Ballston Avenue, Architectural Review of rain/snow guard installation to exiting carports within the Urban Residential-5 District.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman asked if anyone on the Commission had any questions or comments on Consent Agenda Items #1, #2, #3, #4, #5, and #6. None heard.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman asked if anyone in the audience wished to comment on these applications. None heard.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman made a motion in the matter of the Trek Wall Signage, 71 Church Street; 9 Miles East Wall Signage, 64 Excelsior Avenue; Saving Face Barbershop Wall Pole, 68 West Avenue; Gable Rooftop Condensing Units, 60 West Avenue; Clinton Street Signage, 28 Clinton Street, and Raymond Watkin Carport Guards, 57 Ballston Avenue, that these applications be approved as submitted. Rob DuBoff seconded the motion.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman asked if there was any further discussion. None heard.

VOTE:

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman, in favor; Karen Cavotta, Vice Chairman, in favor; Chris Bennett, in favor; Leslie Mechem, in favor; Rob DuBoff, in favor

MOTION PASSES: 5-0

C. DRC APPLICATIONS UNDER CONSIDERATION

1. **20191046 77 VAN DAM EXTERIOR MODIFICATIONS**, 77 Van Dam Street, Architectural Review of exterior modifications within the Urban Residential-3 District.

Applicant: Bonacio Construction

Agent: Libby Coreno, Attorney; Jim Chandler, Project Manager, Bonacio Construction

Ms. Coreno stated this is a review of an exterior modification. The applicant has appeared before the Commission previously and received several suggestions for screening mitigation as well as roof penetration mitigation. A visual of the site with the proposed options for both the screening mitigation and roof penetrations was provided. The applicants researched proposed recommended materials for roof penetration mitigation and were unsuccessful or they did not meet the heat index required. The Commission also recommended painting the penetrations to match the coloration on the roof. A rendering was provided. The second issue was the screening of the condensing units. A visual of the proposed options was provided for chain link screening as well as wrought iron fencing.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated the Board appreciates the effort made by the applicant. The roof penetrations painted the grey color a closer match to the roofing does its best to disguise the penetrations and are less distracting. Regarding the screening the original proposal of wrought iron fencing is the better choice. It presents better.

Leslie Mechem stated painting the roof penetrations works to disguise them as much as possible. She does not like the chain link fencing; she prefers the wrought iron fencing originally proposed.

Karen Cavotta, Vice Chairman stated she wished the applicant had approached the Board prior to the renovation of this regarding the roof penetration placement. She does not like the wrought iron or chain link fencing for the condenser mitigation.

Chris Bennett stated he agrees with Karen. There are other options out there.

Rob DuBoff stated the wrought iron fencing is a far better solution than the chain link fencing.

Discussion ensued among the Commission regarding options available to the applicant.

Ms. Coreno stated Bonacio has a metal shop and a different option could be manufactured to suit the Commission. One item of note is that the fencing should be strong enough to withhold a car backing into them.

Jim Chandler, Bonacio Construction stated the fencing will be wrought iron and constructed at Bonacio's metal shop. Perhaps the wrought iron balustrades could be fashioned closer together for better mitigation and screening.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman asked if anyone in the audience wished to comment on this application.

Samantha Bosshart, Executive Director, Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation agrees with the Commission. She does not like either option for the condenser screening. She is happy with the Commission's recommendation of moving the balustrades closer together on the wrought iron fencing.

Leslie Mechem made a motion in the matter of 77 Van Dam Exterior Modifications – rooftop vents and ground condenser fencing, 77 Van Dam Street that the application be approved with the following conditions – that the wrought iron fencing will have closely spaced slats. Administrative approval to be issued on the fencing sketch. The painting of rooftop mechanicals to match the existing roof color.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman asked if there was any further discussion. None heard.

VOTE:

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman, in favor; Karen Cavotta, Vice Chairman, Leslie DiCarlo, abstained; Chris Bennett, in favor; Leslie Mechem, in favor; Rob DuBoff, in favor;

MOTION PASSES: 5-0-1

RECUSAL:

Leslie DiCarlo recused from the following application.

- 2. 20180575 HAMILTON RESIDENCE MODIFICATIONS**, 155 Union Avenue, Historic Review of a proposed modification to an original historic review approval (rear door/façade) within the Urban Residential-4 District.

Applicant: James Hamilton

Mr. Hamilton stated he is before the Commission this evening to propose a rear elevation change previously approved by this Commission for the previous owners. A visual of the proposed rear elevation was provided to the Commission. This elevation faces Morton Place, which is a small access road for residents which run parallel to Union Avenue. A site plan was approved previously for a carriage house and detached garage which is in the rear of the home. Due to the height of these structures the rear of the home is basically not visible from Morton Place. The only place it is visible is from the driveway. I am proposing this change to add more natural light to the living area and provide a better flow from the interior to the exterior with a larger egress. The previous sliding door that was approved is a 3 foot opening. I would like to install a door with a larger opening.

Leslie Mechem stated the proposed changes do not read as well as the original proposal. The various windows give the rear façade a much more compelling look. She does not feel this is an improvement to the rear façade.

Karen Cavotta, Vice Chairman stated she is struggling with all the other windows and fenestrations in the home have some type of divided light to them. Are there options to do this within the door system proposed? Perhaps a French door versus a slider which gives more of a window type looks versus a slider. She does not have an issue with a larger opening she has an issue with how it reads differently with the other windows.

Mr. Hamilton stated he will be using the Marvin Integrity Line windows which were previously approved by the Commission. A cut sheet was provided to the Commission noting the presence of the dividers which would be an option to look more like the other windows.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman agrees with the other Commission members. She does not feel the changes work and adversely impact the fenestrations and the rhythm of the rear. She does not feel it is appropriate for this very historic home in this very revered neighborhood. It is more of a suburban look.

Rob DuBoff explained to the applicant that this was a very contentious project. It took several months to receive final approval to minimize the suburban feel of the house in that neighborhood. He agrees with his fellow Commission members. What was previously approved is what should be built.

Chris Bennett stated he agrees with Rob and other Commission members. He does not see this as an improvement, but is working in the other way. It does not read like the original plans and I don't know if window grills will save it.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman asked if there were any further questions or comments from the Commission. None heard.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman asked if anyone in the audience wished to comment on this application. None heard.

Samantha Bosshart, Executive Director Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation noted as we stated in the letter which was submitted late today. The Foundation does not feel that this was in keeping with the fenestration of the district and it does have a more suburban feel. Paired French doors with grills and some spacing between them could be an option.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman provided the applicant with several options concerning his application. The Commission could vote on the application as presented which as it appears will not be approved. Or based on suggestions by the Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation and other suggestions you can return at a future date with other options.

Mr. Hamilton stated he would like to table the application for this evening.

NO REPRESENTATIVE PRESENT FOR AGENDA ITEM #3 – APPLICATION TABLED.

3. **20191044 WEXLER EXTERIOR MODIFICATIONS**, 179 Nelson Avenue, Historic Review of change in exterior materials (slate roof to asphalt shingles) within the Urban Residential-3 District. – **TABLED -**
4. **20191079 ALVARO SKETCH DISCUSSION**, 206 Nelson Avenue, sketch discussion (Historic Review) of partial demo/reconstruction options of an existing state/national register property within the Urban Residential-3 District.

DISCLOSURE:

Commission member Rob DuBoff disclosed that he has enlisted the services of Sue Davis, Architect for his home project. He does not feel the need for recusal, disclosure only.

Leslie DiCarlo resumed her position on the Commission.

Agent: Sue Davis, SD Atelier Architecture

Ms. Davis provided a study model of what the applicant is proposing for the Commission's review. The owner originally wanted to build a new home which was much larger than the current home. He did not realize this home was a contributing building in the Historic District. We then did some research on the history of the home. He has done some internal work but there are some limitations. We are looking at a building with gable returns; the ceiling height is less than 7 ft and does not meet code on the first floor. There is an old concrete foundation in the rear and is tight to the property line. Can we save the house, are we headed in the right direction. Ms. Davis reviewed the study model with the Commission regarding what is being proposed. They are proposing changing the front fenestration and front entry, try to pull the roof out and provide a front entry feel. Keep the driveway in the same location. The building in and of itself has no architectural features. The applicant is proposing removal of the siding to see what is underneath. Ms. Davis reviewed the initial design prior to discovering this is a contributing structure in a Historic District. A review of all elevations for the proposed project was provided. The interior of the home will be gutted and raising the ceiling will be attempted without altering the rooflines. A visual of the site was provided for the Commission, review of the stone foundation and basement area. The low ceilings were viewed and the rear seems less compelling to preserve and was possibly built at a later date. Sketches were reviewed of all alternatives. The latest revision sketches were also provided to the Commission noting the constraints the applicant is working with as well as some window changes which will be proposed in a two over two configurations.

Karen Cavotta, Vice Chairman stated she applauds the process. This is a complicated site. This version feels like you have made a good effort to create something in the front of the building that steps up to something larger. You are bringing back some of the features and character of the original building and bringing it back to what it should look like.

Rob DuBoff questioned the possibility of subdividing the property. The project is respectful to the neighborhood and what currently exists. He also suggested the possibility of adding a front wrap-around porch.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated she is so grateful to the applicant for saving this historical property. Elimination of the bay window is a good idea. I do not feel the front necessitates a wrap-around porch. My only concern is the weight and heft of the large addition in the rear. I like the way you are proposing to link them.

Chris Bennett stated he does like the idea of a front porch and it would give the front a little more weight and more significance.

Leslie Mechem stated the simplicity of the front works. A wrap-around porch maybe too large for this little home. Mass and scale also works.

Leslie DiCarlo stated the façade of the house is small. She is very happy the applicant is saving and keeping the feature of the side yard which is a nice feature of the home. She is happy the home is not being demolished or removed.

Karen Cavotta, Vice Chairman offered the suggestion of shed dormers as a possibility to help with the roof lines and add weight.

Rob DuBoff suggested the applicant considered taking the front structure and move it to rear of the site as if it were a carriage house and then build something in its place that fits the program.

Discussion ensued among the Commission regarding this suggestion. It was the consensus of the Commission that the suggestion to move the current historic home is not something they are in favor of.

Chris Bennett stated he feels you are heading in the right direction.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman asked if there were any further questions or comments from the Commission. None heard.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman asked if anyone in the audience wished to comment on this application. None heard.

Samantha Bosshart, Executive Director, Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation stated this home was built before prior to 1850. Two over two windows are reasonable. Six over six could have existed. Her concern is that she did not focus on

changing the fenestration of the south side windows to be paired windows. The Foundation and the guidelines state to retain original window fenestration. Once a building is moved from its original location it loses its historic status. Therefore, they would be against the recommendation Rob DuBoff made.

Discussion ensued regarding window placement on the existing structure, if an analysis on doors and windows was completed, are original, historic or have they been replaced.

Mr. Alvaro stated the windows have been changed but maybe in their original locations.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated where we left off and the information we have provided the applicant with any opportunity to reduce the back roofline as well as window configuration. Otherwise the applicant is moving in the right direction. This is a great project and is wonderful to see the applicant work to save this house.

5. **20190767 STATION LANE (ASKEW) APARTMENTS**, Station Lane, Architectural Review of a new 3-building, 39-unit apartment complex within the Transect-5 Neighborhood Center District.

Applicant: Richard Askew

Agent: Derek Gribulis, Cotler Architecture

Mr. Gribulis stated the applicant has appeared before the Commission on several occasions. He reviewed the evolution of the project for the Commission. A visual presentation of the site was provided. Three apartment buildings are proposed. Building A – 12 units; Building B – 11 units and Building C – 6 units totaling 29 units. The buildings are three stories in height. At the previous appearance before the Commission we have reviewed Building A which is located on the west side of the site. We have re-designed and updated the plans following our last appearance before the Commission taking into consideration the comments and feedback we received. We are reviewing the changes to only Building A for this meeting. One of the comments we received was the entrance blended into the façade. We have added transoms and sidelight windows on the door at the main entrance to open it up more and emphasize its importance as the main entrance. We also spoke about the corner porch roofs which had a design eyebrow with metal standing seam roofs. We reviewed this and we are now proposing a reverse gable roof. We also reviewed the off center gable with smaller windows. We broke this area up with horizontal trim as well changing the corner trim work to be white to give this more of a frame. We have also added wood ceilings on the corner porches, along with the overhangs on the major gables facing the street. We also heard the suggestion of the Commission to raise the building out of the ground to be more compliant with the zoning in this area. We have submitted a revision showing the building one foot above grade enabling us to minimize the ramp for access. We have added a 12 foot ramp to the side of the building and steps to the main entrance as well as the porch entries. We are extending the front concrete pads out to receive the ramp and added some stone pillars to better define the front entry. We have added stairs to the corner porches as well.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated every time the applicant returns before the Commission the project gets better and better and more and more appropriate for the vision the City has for this new and up and coming neighborhood. The entrance way is definitely more prominent. Perhaps more wood or natural products could be added for more heft. Raising up the building is great to see.

Chris Bennett agrees with the Chair. The use of natural materials set that aside from every other door. He spoke regarding the ramp and raising the building. Wished the windows could have more elevation.

Rob DuBoff agrees with Chris regarding the windows. In reference to the ramp its great the building has been raised up, he wishes it could be raised the full two feet. There are creative solutions for ramping; perhaps there is an opportunity to use more natural elements.

Karen Cavotta, Vice Chairman stated she appreciates all the changes the applicant made. Roof gables look great.

She likes the simplicity of the details and makes the entranceway more prominent. She does like the applicant raising the building and makes it look more like a home than an apartment building. She also agrees with Rob, additional landscaping around the ramps will improve this area as well.

Leslie Mechem she spoke about the wooden roofs over the standing seam porches. Nice feature. The gable ends over the porch roofs is a nice touch. Perhaps the ramps could be made to look more interesting.

Leslie DiCarlo stated the transoms and sidelight look generic and almost commercial. Perhaps pick up the color of the timber and frame them out to give them more weight. Raising the building was great. Also the handicap ramps can have some additional architectural details. Additionally the roofs should be all standing seam or all asphalt.

Mr. Gribulis stated he will return with some further details on the ramp.

Rob DuBoff questioned if the wood gables over the porches could have the wood timber look incorporated to tie the building together.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated as a group they appreciate elevating the building, and with the soon to be approved UDO it will become mandatory. The next step for the applicant would be to provide a more creative solution for the ramp which works with the building. Also, perhaps the addition of wood in the entryway and gables would tie the entire building together. The roofing should be all standing seam or all asphalt shingles except for the lower roofs. Based on what we have seen here we are ready to move to Buildings B and C for the next meeting. Also, in the future the Commission would like to see roof penetrations, roof venting, mechanicals and electrical panels. We look forward to seeing the additional buildings.

D. DISCUSSION WITH SARATOGA SPRINGS PRESERVATION FOUNDATION CONCERNING UPCOMING GRANTS

Discussion ensued between the Commission and the Samantha Bosshart, Executive Director, Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation concerning the upcoming CLG Grants. The deadline for submission is mid-March. Discussion continued as to what the areas is the Commission interested in exploring. Discussion also included reissuing the Historic Guideline Brochure for new homeowners who purchase historic homes.

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS/MEETINGS:

Design Review Commission Caravan, Wednesday, February 12, 2020 at 4:00 P.M.

Design Review Meeting, Wednesday, February 19, 2020 at 6:30 P.M.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

There being no further business to discuss Tamie Ehinger, Chairman adjourned the meeting at 9:05 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Buzanowski
Recording Secretary

APPROVED 2-19-20