



DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

MINUTES (FINAL)

WEDNESDAY, JULY 17, 2019

7:00 P.M.

RECREATION CENTER

PRESENT: Tamie Ehinger, Chairman; Karen Cavotta, Vice Chairman; Chris Bennett; Leslie DiCarlo; Leslie Mechem; Rob DuBoff; 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 7:02 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 June 5, 2019 DRC meeting with minor corrections. Karen Cavotta, Vice Chairman 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 DiCarlo, in favor; Leslie Mechem, in favor; Rob DuBoff, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, abstained

MOTION PASSES: 6-0-1

Leslie Mechem made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 19, 2019 DRC meeting as submitted. Karen Cavotta, Vice Chairman 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 DiCarlo, in favor; Leslie Mechem, abstained; Rob DuBoff, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, abstained

MOTION PASSES: 5-0-2

Leslie Mechem made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 3, 2019 DRC meeting with minor corrections. Karen Cavotta, Vice Chairman 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, abstained; Chris Bennett, in favor; Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Leslie Mechem, abstained; Rob DuBoff, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor

MOTION PASSES: 5-0-2

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. **20190666 THE COMPANY HAIR & SKIN SALON SIGNAGE**, 170 South Broadway, Architectural Review of a new wall sign within the Transect-5 Neighborhood Center District.
2. **20190711 YMCA SIGNAGE**, 290 West Avenue, Architectural Review of new wall sign within the YMCA Planned Unit Development District.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman asked if anyone on the Commission had any questions or comments on Items #1 and #2. None heard.

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

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman made a motion in the matter of the Company Hair & Skin Salon Signage, 170 South Broadway, and YMCA Signage, 290 West Avenue, that the applications be approved as submitted. Leslie DiCarlo 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 DiCarlo, in favor; Leslie Mechem, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor;

MOTION PASSES: 7-0

C. DRC APPLICATIONS UNDER CONSIDERATION

1. **20190657 SASS MULTI-FAMILY ADDITION**, 32 & 34 Allen Drive, consideration of SEQRA Lead Agency Architectural Review) construct an addition that will connect 2 existing buildings and add apartments within the Transect-4 Urban Neighborhood District.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated this is a procedural item. This type of developmental project we typically defer to the Planning Board.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman made a motion in the matter of the Sass Multi-Family Addition, 32 & 24 Allen Drive that the DRC defers Lead Agency Status for SEQRA to the Planning Board should they choose to seek it. Leslie Mechem 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 DiCarlo, in favor; Leslie Mechem, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor;

MOTION PASSES: 7-0

2. **20190677 RASMUSSEN EXTERIOR MODIFICATION**, 125 Circular Street, Unit 5, Historic Review of exterior modifications including introduction of new dormer, roof, window, trim, etc., in an existing structure within the Urban Residential-3 District.

Agent: Tonya Yasenchak, Engineering America

Ms. Yasenchak stated the Rasmussen's are owners of two condos in Stone Abbey, 32 and 34 Circular Street. These are the two west condos on the second floor. They would like to add a small dormer addition to their unit on the northwest corner of this building. It will mimic the dormer on the other side. It is not a major addition, it is 14 feet in length. The wall height is 5½ to 6 feet and allow us to match the fascias on the north side of the building. On the south side of the building they are proposing the same type of addition. It is not obtrusive. Visual presentation of the site was provided to the Commission. Marvin Wood Casement windows are proposed, stacked above the windows below it.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman spoke regarding the design guidelines which are very clear in terms of a historic property like this. Facades are not to be changed, windows openings are not to be changed, and roof lines are not to be penetrated or changed. I will open it up to the Commission for comments.

Chris Bennett stated matching the stone is the biggest issue. Modifications can be done to a historic building; however he has issues regarding the skylights in a historic building.

Ms. Yasenchak stated the applicant is willing to remove the skylights. The roof pitch will continue with a new roof. This is a slate roof and the applicants are interested in replacing in kind.

Rob Duboff stated he echoes that the stone is an issue. He also stated that perhaps the addition should not be stone and appears as though it was always there. He is skeptical about materials.

Leslie DiCarlo stated she agrees with Rob the new addition should not read as part of the original. Also she has a problem with the skylights. They detract from the building.

Ms. Yasenchak stated the skylights can be removed. The addition should be a product of its time as part of the guidelines stated but this is a minor addition and may detract from the major part of the structure.

Karen Cavotta, Vice Chairman stated because the addition is so small she leans toward matching the stone. She would like to see what could be done if it were another material. She agrees the skylights should be removed. Perhaps using some heavy trim or other materials keeping with the architecture of the building may help. Also she is hesitant about the upper window proportions. Perhaps different windows in this area or have it appear as a double hung.

Leslie Mechem stated she agrees with her colleagues. The skylights are not appropriate. If stone is to be used it should be matched and that mitigates many of the issues she has. She agrees concerning the windows that they should look like double hung.

Ellen Sheehan stated she agrees with Leslie and it would be better not to introduce any new materials.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated she disagrees about the symmetry in the sense of the dormer window. The Chair stated she is getting a sense from the Commission that they would like to have some stone samples provided to get a better idea of the color and match. Perhaps the applicant can return with samples of other materials for the Commission's review and perhaps something can be done to re-work the windows.

Leslie DiCarlo suggested the Commission make a site visit to view materials and stone.

It was the consensus of the Commission to schedule a site visit.

RECUSAL:

Chris Bennett recused from the following application.

3. **20190684 CARUTH RESIDENCE PORCH DECKING**, 104 Union Avenue, Historical Review of a change in exterior modifications within the Urban Residential-3 District.

Agent: Steven Hitchcock, ACW Builders

Mr. Hitchcock provided a visual of the site to the Commission. This is a large wraparound porch on two levels which is in disrepair. The two stone pillars which support the porch are sinking. The first plan is to jack the deck, remove those stone pillars, install a pier and replace the stone pillars in place. The curved portions of decking are falling off. Inside the lattice we would like to install a pier and place a beam to support the decking properly. Five bases will be added. They have attempted to repair the deck on many occasions but it was never done properly. The basis are rotted and we are looking to jack up the columns remove them and replace with identical columns. The same holds true for the spindles. Several are in disrepair we will remove and replace identically. The remainder of the spindles will be repaired and repainted. There are two areas; which the applicant is proposing material changes. The frieze board the applicant would like to change to PVC and paint. The decking we are proposing in a composite material. We are in receipt of a letter from the Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation stating they are not in favor of the composite materials.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated she applauds the owner and the agent. This is a beautiful, fine home one of the City's historic homes it is most proud of. The Chair stated the decking on this home is a character defining feature of the home and is just as important as the other damage you are repairing. I will not approve any materials which are not natural for this renovation.

Ellen Sheehan spoke regarding the materials.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman spoke regarding historic homes and we as owners are stewards of these homes.

Leslie Mechem stated this is a historic home, in a historic district. The guidelines are clear. Replace in kind.

Karen Cavotta, Vice Chair agrees with her Commission members.

Leslie DiCarlo stated Azak is not appropriate for a historic building. The edging will not look the same.

Rob DuBoff stated the issue is the edging on the porch. Azak does not edge like wood.

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

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated the Commission is going to request natural materials throughout the project.

Leslie DiCarlo made a motion in the matter of the Caruth Residence Porch Decking, 104 Union Avenue, that the application be approved with the following condition – all materials will be replaced in kind including the decking and the frieze boards. 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; Rob DuBoff, in favor; Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Leslie Mechem, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor;

MOTION PASSES: 6-0

Chris Bennett resumed his position on the Commission.

4. **20190592 STAY SARATOGA EXTERIOR MODIFICATIONS**, 198 South Broadway, Architectural Review of a change in exterior colors for 2 structures within the Transect-5 Neighborhood Center District.

Applicant: Maria Harrison; Stephen Chindamo

Mr. Chindamo is here representing his mother the owner. A visual of the site was provided to the Commission.

Paint samples were provided. It was chosen with the president of Benjamin Moore and we attempted to choose a color closest to the color on the building. The trim is white with gold. These are historic colors.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated it is great that the property is being maintained. The Chair stated that the colors are not inappropriate. I do suggest as you move along with the maintenance of your property perhaps a little more coordination at some point with the sign. The blue seems to jar a bit with the color scheme you presented before us this evening.

Leslie DiCarlo stated she doesn't have an issue with the color. My suggestion regarding historic placement of the colors is the color of white which should be receding and could have been done differently. The color is not inappropriate.

Rob DuBoff stated the color is not inappropriate.

Chris Bennett stated he is fine with the color.

Leslie Mechem stated she is fine with the color.

Ellen Sheehan stated she has no objection to the color.

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

Rob DuBoff made a motion in the matter of the Stay Saratoga Exterior Modifications, 198 South Broadway that the application be approved as submitted or shown on attached plans. Leslie Mechem 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; Rob DuBoff, in favor; Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Chris Bennett, in favor; Leslie Mechem, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor;

MOTION PASSES: 7-0

5. **20190683 SENECA RESTAURANT SIGNAGE & ROOFTOP UNITS**, 17 Division Street, Architectural Review of new rooftop units and signage within the Transect-6 Urban Core District.

Applicant: Chris Martell; Mike Spain

Mr. Martell provided a visual of the site. They have spent many months on the interior of the building. Our designer sent over a stenciled sign for our review. It is a simple black and white painted sign, partially distressed. These are all lower case letters on the building. This is an odd building configuration for signage. Also, restaurant air handling units on the rooftop. We have been looking at it. Artificial screening does not look right. This is the shortest equipment we could find. Photographs were provided of buildings in the area with rooftop mechanicals.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated in terms of sign placement it is appropriate and it is a good location. Black and white distressed sign is a good look. The font size maybe a bit large. The venting is what it is. Artificial screening is not always done well.

Chris Bennett agrees with the sign and the lettering is a bit large. Loves the idea of the distressed sign. Utilities on top. It is what it is.

Rob DuBoff stated perhaps decreasing the font of the sign.

Leslie DiCarlo agrees with the Commission members.

Karen Cavotta, Vice Chairman agrees with the Commission – smaller font on the signage.

Leslie Mechem visually will not have too much of an issue. Smaller font will probably work.

Ellen Sheehan loves the sign.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated in terms of reducing the font and size of the signage could be an issue, perhaps a site visit. Maybe approve administratively.

Leslie Mechem made a motion in the matter of the Seneca Restaurant Signage and Rooftop Units, 17 Division Street that we approve as submitted with the following conditions – Approve the rooftop units as submitted. Approve the signage with the following conditions – smaller font size 12" and sign dimensions to be approved administratively. Ellen Sheehan 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; Rob DuBoff, in favor; Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Chris Bennett, in favor; Leslie Mechem, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor;

MOTION PASSES: 7-0

6. **2019.044 116 WEST AVENUE MIXED-USE BUILDING MODIFICATIONS**, 116 West Avenue, review of requested changes to an original Architectural Review approval within the Transect-5 Neighborhood Center District.

Applicant: John DiCipio

Agent: Steve Matzen, Project Manager

Mr. Matzen provided a visual of the project site. Mr. Matzen stated he will review each of the item changes they have requested. The original design was a horizontal railing system. We have gone through much iteration with the Attorney General and they had an objection to the ladder effect railing system. So, for safety reasons we are proposing a vertical railing system with an open top. Concerning the privacy screening. All the decks are in an alcove and extend only 12 to 18 inches to the outside of the wall and are private themselves. The privacy screening proposed is quite expensive and will be a maintenance issue. The Hardie siding we proposed at 12 inches 11¼ exposure is not available in the northeast. We are now proposing Hardie siding at 8¼ inches with a 7" exposure. On the underside of the balconies, what we proposed is Trex on the top and Trex on the bottom which has a lot of issues. Installing it in this manner is not guaranteed. There are potential problems since the upper deck is open. We are proposing a type of square lattice solid PVC for ease in maintenance. The green wall planting area extends 40 feet in the air in the patio area and there is no easy way to keep this maintained. Moving on to the windows. Our original submittal was a 400 series Anderson. We are proposing instead to use a 100 series Anderson window in black and the same size. The 100 series is more suited to this type of project. Lastly, the storefront glazing. We have changed some of the windows to vertical glazing to bring it back in line financially.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated when this initially came in front of the Commission it was presented as a package. While these changes individually may seem insignificant, it changes the look and feel of this modern building as it was approved. It really had a unique modern horizontality about it. It was very appropriate as a gateway to the City. It would be very unusual and I can't recall when we have gone back and allowed changes which were previously approved. When we review and approve an application it is done with specific designs and specific products. To come back and ask for a series of changes is not how the process works. If there is a necessary change such as an attorney general recommendation or lack of ability by a supplier that is one thing but I feel comfortable with the application as it was initially presented and approved.

Mr. Matzen provided a copy of the Attorney General's correspondence. This is a condominium project and does rely on their approval.

Bradley Birge, Administrator, Planning and Economic Development, City of Saratoga Springs stated the Attorney General is seeking information from the applicant concerning the balconies and terraces. The Attorney General is seeking information on the railing material and if it is a ladder type style and if so protections to be in place from the applicant and architect. It does not seem to be a direction simply requesting additional information on the style and type.

Mr. Matzen stated the applicant has had to respond to the Attorney General's questions. Mr. Olsen responded to the Attorney General that the applicant will use a vertical railing system.

Discussion ensued among the Commission concerning the rail system proposed changes.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman questioned if the Building Inspector is aware of any these recommendations/edicts.

Bradley Birge, Administrator, Planning and Economic Development stated the Building Inspector is unaware of any edicts from the Attorney General's Office.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman questioned if the Commission feels that the letter is enough justification to change the rail system? Are these mandatory changes or simply a request from the applicant?

It was the consensus of the Commission that this is justification to change the rail system.

Bradley Birge, Administrator, Planning and Economic Development questioned if the Commission would like to see a sample of the proposed rail system.

It was the consensus of the Commission that the applicant provides a sample for the review.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated moving on to the Hardie Board change and the rationale for the inability to obtain this in the northeast.

Mr. Matzen stated he is not sure if it is a regional issue. The Hardie Company issued this information to the applicant.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated concerning the Hardie board siding, these are the type of items which should have been researched prior to coming before the Board. When the design appears before the Commission we assume the materials are available. For the record this is very frustrating. The other item was the underside of the balconies and why the manufacturer does not recommend the use of this product in this manner.

Mr. Matzen stated he does not have any written communication in this regard. You do not want to trap water and ice on the underside.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated this should have been considered in advance.

Chris Bennett spoke regarding decks and the undersides. This is a major building and this is an issue and there has to be a better solution. A plastic lattice is not going to work. I see some problems with the design. I thought these decks were cantilevered out. There should be some clarification in the design. There are no posts. This is such a visual part of this building we will have to look at this and come up with a better solution.

Mr. DiCipio spoke regarding the decks and how to make it look good and what the applicant was proposing.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated what was originally approved for the underside of these decks the applicant indicates the manufacturer does not recommend using. Does the Commission feel that the manufacturer's recommendation is legitimate

and is comfortable with allowing the applicant to pursue something else or does the Commission feel that we approved it originally and the manufacturer's recommendation does not apply to something previously approved?

Discussion ensued among the Commission regarding what the applicant is proposing. The Commission's consensus was the applicant provides an additional solution or backup options to present to the Commission at a future meeting.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated we have reviewed the steel cables, the Hardie board siding and the underside of the balconies. I see no reason to go back and change the remainder of the original decision with regard to the green wall, privacy screens, windows and storefront system.

Mr. Matzen provided information concerning the window change.

Chris Bennett stated these windows will be no different on the outside, only on the inside. It is a functionality of the window in the construction aspect of the process. Aesthetically it will be the same.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated moving onto to the storefront system. Again, changing the storefronts changes the overall look and feel of the building. I feel strongly we should not go back on a detail that was previously approved and alters the uniqueness of the building.

Chris Bennett stated he agrees with the Chair.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated we look at this in terms of what we would allow the applicant to change. We are looking due to safety reasons, changing the steel cable system to normal vertical standard rail system. That the Hardie Board siding, due to lack of availability in our area, we allow to change to a new profile and lastly in terms of the underside of the balconies that we would want several options and solutions to the existing concerns to the underside of the balconies. Also the group is comfortable with the applicant making the small change from the 400 series Anderson window to the 100 series Anderson window to accommodate interior design work.

Discussion ensued regarding the privacy screening.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated it is not a question if the privacy screening makes sense or not. It goes back to the fact that your builder and architect presented this project including the privacy screening. We make assumptions that what you are presenting to us and what is approved is what you intend to build. This is more of a principal issue. We all want the building to look good.

Chris Bennett stated he echoes the feeling of the Chair with regard to building what is presented and approved.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated again based on the fact that there is a safety issue with the steel cables and the Hardie Board siding is not available. The underside of the balconies this is an opportunity to look at some different options and return before the Commission. Also, the windows to be changed from the Anderson 400 series to the Anderson 100 series. Unless I misread the team, these are the items to be changed. The remainder of the items is to be retained as previously approved. Keep the privacy screen as presented. Everything else is to remain as previously approved. The applicant will return before the Commission for final approval. Samples and cut sheets on the railings to be submitted. We look forward to assisting the applicant through this process.

Mr. Matzen requested if the Commission could provide an approval on the items that were discussed and approved.

Rob DuBoff made a motion in the matter of the application of the 116 West Avenue Mixed-Use Building Modifications, 116 West Avenue be approved with the following conditions: A change in the size of the Hardie Board from 12" to 8". A change to the Anderson 100 series windows from the 400 series. 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, in favor; Rob DuBoff, in favor; Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Chris Bennett, in favor; Leslie Mechem, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor;

MOTION PASSES: 7-0

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS/MEETINGS:

Design Review Commission Caravan, Tuesday, July 30, 2019 at 5:00 P.M.
Design Review Meeting, Wednesday, August 7, 2019 at 7:00 P.M.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

There being no further business to discuss Tamie Ehinger, Chairman adjourned the meeting at 9:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Buzanowski
Recording Secretary

Approved 8-7-19