



DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

MINUTES (FINAL)

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2022

6:00 P.M.

CITY COUNCIL ROOM

CALL TO ORDER: Tamie Ehinger, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:05 P.M.

PRESENT: Tamie Ehinger, Chair; Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair; Chris Bennett; Leslie DiCarlo; Ellen Sheehan;

Tad Roemer; Jeff Gritsavage

STAFF: Amanda Tucker, Senior Planner, City of Saratoga Springs

A. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair made a motion to approve the August 24, 2022 Minutes of the Design Review Board with very minor corrections. Jeff Gritsavage seconded the motion.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, asked if there was any further discussion.

VOTE:

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, in favor; Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, in favor; Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Chris Bennett, in favor;
Ellen Sheehan, in favor; Jeff Gritsavage, in favor; Tad Roemer, in favor

MOTION PASSES : 7-0

B. POSSIBLE CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:

NOTE: 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.

NONE AT THIS TIME

C. DRC APPLICATIONS UNDER CONSIDERATION:

1. **#20220695 325 WEST AVENUE EXTERIOR MODIFICATIONS AND SIGNAGE,** 325 West Avenue, Architectural Review of exterior modifications and signage within the Transect-4 Urban Neighborhood District.

Applicant: Tracey Brennan, MD; Rick Waldring, Waldring Holdings

Agent: Tonya Yasenchak, Engineering America

Ms. Yasenchak stated Dr. Brennan has been at this location for 7 years. The outside of the building needs an update.

What they are proposing is to have the building painted. It is raw brick now, along with new metal roofing to be placed along the roofline. This gives the building a bit of a more modern looks and fits more within the community. We have provided photographs of what is existing, and sketches of the exterior denotes colors and materials. The main body of the building will be painted with the color Plaster of Paris, which is light cream, Savory Sage will be used for the main door, the roofing is a charcoal gray but appears blacker, and the trim would be Knights Armor in gray. Color samples were provided to the Board. As far as signage we have provided the Board with that information and are proposing an oval sign. The color version only denotes the colors that are raised, and what is recessed and the grain in the background. It is black and white which is depicted in the example provided. Examples of signage proposed for the building was also provided to the Board indicating the doctor and PA who work in this location.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated this is an amazing upgrade and very much needed. She no issues with any materials, and the color palette is appropriate. Signage placement is appropriate as well as materials. The Chair questioned if there is any lighting proposed for the signage.

Mr. Waldring stated a type of up lighting from the ground to the sign.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated she could see a type of gooseneck lighting or a type of ground lighting shining up on the sign. We will need something official when a choice has been made for the file.

Ellen Sheehan questioned if the existing sign would remain or be removed.

Mr. Yasenchak stated the old signage will be removed.

Jeff Gritsavage stated he prefers a gooseneck light.

Chris Bennett stated a type of up lighting to the sign.

Discussion ensued regarding gooseneck lighting versus ground lighting shining up. The gooseneck lighting would require a larger thicker sign pole and arm.

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

Jeff Gritsavage made a motion in the matter of 324 West Avenue Exterior Modifications and Signage, 324 West Avenue, the DRB issues the following decision on September 7, 2022 - Approve with the following conditions - Cut sheets for the freestanding lighting are to be submitted for Administrative Approval. Rob DuBoff seconded the motion.

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

VOTE:

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, in favor; Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, in favor; Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Chris Bennett, in favor;
Ellen Sheehan, in favor; Jeff Gritsavage, in favor; Tad Roemer, in favor

MOTION PASSES : 7-0

2. #20210872 STEWARTS NEW CONSTRUCTION, 402 Lake Avenue, Architectural Review of a new Convenience store, gas canopies, and signage within the Rural Residential District.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated this applicant has been before the DRB on several occasions. We had requested the applicant return before the Board with additional options. Reviewing the dormers as well as the cupola. The applicant's agent has returned this evening with options.

Applicant: Stewart's Shops

Agent: Ryan Rubado, Stewart's

Mr. Rubado stated at the last meeting we discussed the dormers. The Board felt these were not trimmed or sized properly. Mr. Rubado provided a visual of options. The first option is the view with the dormers sized akin to the windows on the lower floor. They appear too narrow for the width of the roof. The second option is the same size window, cornice and molding around the rake and gable but has small cheek walls with the siding. This is the option he prefers. The third option is no dormers at all. The cupola which is shown is small, we can get a larger cupola 72" x 102' for that space. The cut sheet was provided for the larger cupola. Also, photographs were provided of this size cupola on other buildings for the Boards review. He also is attempting to locate a horse weathervane.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, thanked the applicant for the additional views and information. She feels the proportions of the cupola are more in line with the size of the building and are much more appropriate. In terms of the dormer option that has been extremely helpful as well. She agrees with Option #2 but the materials on the wall cheeks is not. You may wish to consider trimming out those windows.

Mr. Rubado stated there is too much white. It did not look right with the large trim boards.

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, stated he likes Option #3. He likes what was done and appears more of the look you are going for. It gives it a horse barn look much like what you would see at the track.

Ellen Sheehan agrees with Rob no dormers.

Jeff Gritsavage stated he agrees Option #3 It does give it a touch of class.

Tad Roemer also likes Option #3. He realizes trying to make the dormers look right would be difficult.

Chris Bennett stated Option #3 does give it a cleaner look.

Leslie DiCarlo stated she agrees Option #3.

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

Leslie DiCarlo made a motion in the matter of the application for Stewarts New Construction, 402 Lake Avenue the DRB issues the following decision on September 7, 2022 - Approve with the following conditions - Option #3. Jeff Gritsavage seconded the motion.

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

VOTE:

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, in favor; Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, in favor; Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Chris Bennett, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor; Jeff Gritsavage, in favor; Tad Roemer, in favor

MOTION PASSES : 7-0

3. #20220639 206 NELSON AVENUE DRIVEWAY, 206 Nelson Avenue, Historical Review of driveway material and size modification within the Urban Residential-3 District.

Applicant: Joan & William McMullin

Ms. McMullin stated following the re-build they put pavers over the crushed stone which was left by the builder.

Originally, they had stamped concrete, but these are concrete pavers. The total greenspace has increased in relation to what was there previously.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated the Board had reviewed and approved this application for the addition to the home and changes two years ago. Since that time, the applicant did not come before the Board regarding the driveway materials or size. The materials itself are appropriate materials. The square footage of this pavement as well as the width of the driveway is not in keeping with historic standards. Reducing the pavement size, creating one driveway, and adding greenspace would look more aesthetically pleasing

Tad Roemer stated he believes there are solutions without taking the entire driveway up. Separate the driveway from the walkway as well as altering the apron.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated our historic guidelines tell us there needs to be more greenspace. There are ways to accomplish that.

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, stated per the UDO we have purview over the first ten feet of the driveway only. We do not have purview over the location of the driveway, or the size of it. We only have purview over the first ten feet and what the materials are.

Amanda Tucker, Senior Planner, stated DPW often has a say in the location of the driveway to determine the curb cut.

This is where the original driveway was located. The applicants have made the curb cut wider than it was previously.

Zoning stated there is a maximum width of the driveway calculated by 25% of the house frontage.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated what we are looking at in this application is a driveway, a walkway and they have morphed.

Discussion ensued among the Board regarding the width of the driveway, a pathway to the home and the sidewalk. A visual was provided to the Board noting what was in this location previously but not when these applicants purchased the home.

Tad Roemer stated a small strip of planting to differentiate between the driveway and the house and the paving stays. So, it is not one big sea of concrete. Make the walkway separate from the driveway.

Jeff Gritsavage stated the paver bricks are a good look, it is just the configuration. It looks too commercial. It needs more greenspace.

Chris Bennett stated what Tad is suggesting is an excellent suggestion. The other aspect is the width of the curb cut is so wide, you have two different colors, and the masonry does not match. It does not finish well. Shrinking the curb cut and adding a green strip would break up the massing and make it look more residential.

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, stated what has been discussed makes sense.

Leslie DiCarlo stated she feels it is important to have a separate walkway to the front door, either from the driveway or the front walkway. The driveway needs to start out looking like driveway. It would be more attractive with greenspace near the house.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated what she is hearing from the Board and what needs to happen to comply with the neighborhood and historic guidelines, is to create a driveway and a walkway rather than one mass. This can be easily done with ripping everything up but installing a strip of greenery as described to give it definition - a driveway, a walkway. Shrinking the curb cut will help as well. The goal is to reduce the amount of pavement giving it a more residential feel.

The Board provided suggestions to the applicant as to how this can be accomplished.

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

Ann Rogan, Ludlow Street. She walks in the area, has seen this house and feels it looks nice.

Patty Morrison, new DRB alternate stated she feels it looks lovely noting this a member of the audience.

She feels what Leslie has noted will work as well as the recommendation of Tad.

Samantha Bosshart, Executive Director, Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation stated the typical residential curb cut is 10 feet. It could be a bit wider. She provided a suggestion regarding providing more greenspace in this sidewalk, walkway area to the home.

Ellen Sheehan suggested the applicant sketch something out. Without a diagram it is difficult to envision. She feels a smaller apron with more greenspace.

Tad Roemer agrees with Ellen regarding providing the Board with a sketch to review.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated what she is hearing from the Board is a smaller apron, a smaller driveway opening, greenspace to distinguish the driveway from the walkway. The walkway will need to be adjusted whether it is to the driveway, or the walkway based on the greenspace. The applicant should provide options for this area and move the application forward.

4. #20220739 73 COURT STREET, EXTERIOR MODIFICATIONS, 73 Court Street,
Historic Review of exterior
modifications including roof replacement, gutter and downspouts, and storm windows
within the Urban
Residential-4 District.

Agent: Derick Gribulis, Architect

Mr. Gribulis stated the applicants are proposing exterior repairs and replacements to the building. We are proposing to replace the existing gutters and downspouts which are aluminum and will be replaced with copper half rounds and copper downspouts. The roof is in disrepair, and we are replacing that with Colonial Slate Owens Corning Architectural Asphalt Shingles. There are existing snowslides on the sides of the building which will be replaced with shingles. There is an existing rubber roof on the top portion of the building which will be replaced in kind. Regarding the repairs we will review all elevations. Any existing brick which is deteriorated will be removed and replaced. Any mortar joints which are deteriorated or weathered will be replaced. **The façade will receive a fresh coat of paint in the same color as presented.** Trim and accents will also receive a fresh coat of paint in the same color. There are existing storm windows on the rectangular windows which will be replaced in kind in a historic bronze color to match the existing windows.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated this is exemplary of good work being done on a historic property. Everything that the applicant is doing is appropriate.

The Board agrees with the Chair.

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

Samantha Bosshart, Executive Director, Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation thanked the applicant for making an investment in his historic property. The copper will be a nice addition. She cautioned the applicants agent regarding using the proper mortar mix for the repair of the brick.

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, questioned how much of the brick is being repointed.

Mr. Gribulis provided a visual of the building and the areas being repointed.

Ellen Sheehan made a motion in the matter of the application of 73 Court Street Exterior Modifications, 73 Court Street, the DRB issues the following decision on September 7, 2022, - Approve as submitted or shown on the attached plans.

Leslie DiCarlo seconded the motion.

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

VOTE:

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, in favor; Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, in favor; Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Chris Bennett, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor; Jeff Gritsavage, in favor; Tad Roemer, in favor

MOTION PASSES : 7-0

5. #20220129 30 CAROLINE STREET 6-STORY MULTI-USE BUILDING, 30 Caroline Street, Architectural

Review of a proposed mixed-use project within the Transect-6 Urban Core District.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated this project has been before the Board. The applicant's agent has provided us with additional information and additional options.

Agent: George Olsen, Olsen Associates Architecture

Mr. Olsen provided a recap of the project's last appearance before the Board. Based on the Boards recommendations we reviewed the project and drew a 6-story historical building and a 5-story historical building. This was submitted on July 14th. We understood there were projects before the Board and the applicant could not come before the Board before this evening. Today, we received correspondence from the Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation noting the six-story version is terrible and surprised it was submitted. We submitted a 5-story version based on the Boards comments. We received an email on September 6th that said do the four-story version and we did provide that this today.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated she believes what happened is Amanda was reminding you what we were expecting and to provide the materials the Board was expecting.

Mr. Olsen questioned why the 5-story version is not available for the Board today. He provided hard copies of what he had submitted. He also provided information on what he has provided for the Board review, and this was not uploaded to the system for the Board to review.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated when the discussion occurred regarding what the Board would like to see is a 4-story building with a 5th floor setback. There is only a hard copy for the Board of information which we have not yet seen nor has the public. The Board has also not seen the information, which was sent in late today, nor has the public. This is a big application with public comments being received. She feels that this project is large enough that the Board needs time to review both the 5 story and the 4 story.

Mr. Olsen spoke about his client who is anxious to start construction.

Amanda Tucker, Senior Planner, suggested the Board recess and she will attempt to upload the information which was provided by the applicant's agent for discussion.

7:30 P.M. The Board recessed.

7:40 P.M. The Board reconvened.

Mr. Olsen provided a visual of the proposed project. He began with the six-story building at a height of 55 ft. to the top of the cornice. There are two schemes shown A and B. The A version is the version with more glass and the B version is the brick building with larger windows. The five-story building is 55 ft. to the entablature. We are not accessing the roof and there is no six-story access but looks virtually the same as the six-story building but five stories in height. A visual of the five-story building next to Hamlet and Ghost was provided for contrast. The five-story building as shown is 14 ft. above the Hamlet and Ghost Building.

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair questioned if this has factored in the elevator and stair tower?

Mr. Olsen stated it is there you just cannot see it from this vantage point. The next visual is the view of dropping the building down to a four-story building. We cut a floor out. We have maintained the same floor heights. What is shown is a four-story building with a fifth story set back 15 ft. A visual of an additional version of the four-story building with the fifth-floor setback with floor heights that are more appropriate to the Hamlet and Ghost. In both versions it does provide the ability to use higher and wider and more proportionate windows. We prefer scheme A in the four-story version since it has more glass and seems lighter with less massing. It does not appear out of character for the neighborhood. It is 3 ft. higher than the building on the other side of Hamlet and Ghost. In the truncated version the height to the top of the cornice is 45 ft. 6 in., and the version with the more appropriate floor height versions the building is 50 ft. height to the top of the cornice.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated our job as the DRB when we are looking at structures and proposals such as this, we are required to do an extensive review. Our job is to assure new construction adheres to the design standards for historic districts. This includes mass and scale, overall height, proportions, and appropriate materials. We look at fenestrations, street orientation, step backs, and setbacks. When the Board began reviewing this project, they indicated that this building was just too tall. This is a narrow one-way street. In terms of keeping with the context of the neighborhood a four-story building would be most appropriate. That is what we have heard from the Board members. The Chair feels strongly after reviewing the renderings which were submitted this afternoon, that just confirms her thoughts about that very thing. This presents well. The fenestration work, the red brick color is more appropriate. There are enough architectural features and details on the building to provide definition. It has the pedestrian friendly storefront. Four stories with a fifth story setback can look squatty. In version #4 this is particularly successful and works. We have received a great deal of public comment on this. The public has not yet had an opportunity to comment on this version or clearly on the five-story version shown earlier.

The comments on what had been previously proposed even on the latest renderings the public had concerns about the height, scale, the context, and incompatibility of 6 stories in the neighborhood.

There are over a dozen public comments including correspondence from Sperry's which is the property next door. All these communications expressed concern regarding the height and context. The Chair agrees with the public comments. She is happy to see this elevation and feels it is a move in the right direction.

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, stated he agrees what has been submitted today the four stories with the fifth-floor setback is something he is gravitating towards. He likes the way the architect has interpreted a historic building with the addition of different window treatments. He is concerned with the height of the elevator stair tower and where it is going to be seen. Perhaps the renderings are not completely accurate, and this may not be an issue. Have you decided on any penetrations on the rear of the building since you cannot place any on the sides of the building.

Mr. Olsen stated you can do the penetrations on the sides of the building, you need to use a deluge sprinkler or a fire shutter. We just never do. In the rear the site plan shows a recess in the building where a window could be placed.

Mr. Olsen stated there is a visual of the rear elevation, a row of five large double hung windows on the left.

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, stated with the four story and the fifth-floor setback. The top of the floor is 60 ft. and you stated The elevator stair tower is 8 ft. higher. That would be 68 ft. and pushing the maximum allowed which is 70 ft. even with reducing the size of the building.

Mr. Olsen stated the mechanicals and stair towers have never counted and still do not count toward height.

Jeff Gritsavage stated he likes Option A. The fourth-floor windows on Option B would look better on this option for both third and fourth floor. It would look more appropriate with the windows lined up with Hamlet and Ghost.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, reminded the Board what we are reviewing this evening is whether the building is appropriate or not appropriate. It is fair to ask the applicant's agent to provide alternative designs.

Tad Roemer stated he was never averse to the taller options of the buildings. He likes the taller windows, even larger. The top floor remains setback he suggests pulling the railings further back to have a reasonable terrace yet minimize them from the cornice.

Chris Bennett stated he feels this is headed in the right direction. The cornice on the top adds to the building.

It is important that the buildings fall within the 1.1 ration of building to street width.

Leslie DiCarlo also feels the applicant is headed in the right direction. The slenderer taller windows make it more interesting and keep to the rhythm of the other buildings in the area.

Ellen Roemer stated the four-floor building with the fifth-floor setback is much more successful. She likes Version C.

This brick work and details make it more interesting. Her preference would be the elevation shown with the larger windows.

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

Samantha Bosshart, Executive Director, Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation, provided a visual presentation of the height of the buildings for visual context to what is being proposed with this application from a city-wide perspective.

Ms. Bosshart stated the taller windows are better. When you add the elevator and stair tower, we have not really addressed the height of the building. It is going in the right direction and how it will look from all views not just from the front of the building. Ms. Bosshart apologized to Mr. Olsen. She obtains her information from the city's website and is the way she comments on applications. Overall reducing the height or the floors is going in the right direction. She is still concerned regarding the overall height of the building.

Chris Bennett questioned the building around Fusion Thai or Salevo those buildings do not appear to have stair towers.

Mr. Olsen stated he designed 54 Phila and has the same proportions. That buildings mechanicals are setback less than those on this building.

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, stated when Samantha Bosshart was going through her slides Phila Fusion and Salevo we are curious as to why we could not see stair towers on those buildings. We viewed those buildings all the way around and could not see the elevator or stair towers on those buildings. Our concern is that the tower is going to stick out 70 ft. in the air. He questions the appropriateness of that.

Tad Roemer stated that is because of the small footprint of this building that these mechanicals are so visible.

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, stated a rendering from Maple Avenue and behind the Hamlet and Ghost.

Mr. Olsen stated he can provide a rendering from the rear of the building for the Boards review.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated we have reviewed Option C and Option D. The Board feels the elongated windows in terms of the fenestration and proportion and stronger and present better. Of the two schemes reviewed the Chair likes Option D, four stories with the fifth-floor setback presented better.

The Chair polled the Board regarding their preference.

Ellen Sheehan stated either but prefers Option C.

Tad Roemer stated either Option C or D.

Jeff Gritsavage stated Option C.

Leslie DiCarlo stated either but prefers Option C.

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, stated either but prefers Option C.

Chris Bennett prefers Option C.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated most of the Board feels that their preference is Option C. This is going in the right direction. The four stories with the fifth story setback most Board members feels this works well. The Chair stated she feels the Board is interested in seeing more details, of the brick and materials. The Vice Chair has requested additional renderings and elevations of the stair tower and elevator tower from other elevations especially the rear of the building.

Chris Bennett stated Samantha Bosshart makes a good point. It is hard to envision what the future holds.

Mr. Olsen stated the UDO is looking at what is intended for this district and why it is zoned that way and part of the Comprehensive plan.

Jeff Gritsavage stated we do have to look at the pedestrian environment and you must have density. This is a shovel ready building lot and is a dense area. This is going in the right direction.

Tad Roemer we are looking at an attractive building. The elevator and stair tower will have a bigger presence due to the small footprint of the building. When the applicant returns with the penthouse design, different materials and different finishes should be explored.

Mr. Olsen questioned the timetable for submissions so the applicant can be placed back on the next agenda.

Amanda Tucker, Senior Planner, stated the new information should be submitted by noon on September 20th for the Board to review prior to the next scheduled meeting on September 28, 2022.

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

Design Review Board Training, Wednesday, September 14, 2022, at 4:00 P.M.
Design Review Board Meeting, Wednesday, September 28, 2022, at 6:00 P.M.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

There being no further business to discuss Tamie Ehinger, Chairman adjourned the meeting at 8:39 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Buzanowski
Recording Secretary

Meeting minutes approved September 28, 2022