

Historic Preservation Commission Minutes

March 15, 2018

The Historic Preservation Commission met on Thursday, March 15, 2018 at the City Council Chambers, 305 Gay Street. The meeting started at 6 p.m.

Commissioners Attendance: George Vojtech, Chairman; Susan Morgan; Herschel Johnson; Ron Berman and Janice Olshesky (alternate) by phone (work session only); Sharon Smith absent.

Liaison: Commissioner Steve Rideout

Other Representatives Attending: Herve Hamon, Planning and Zoning, Planner I and Historic Preservationist and Pat Escher, City Planner

Work Session – Historic District Design Guidelines

Most of the discussion during this work session was about Chapter 5, Guidelines for Landscapes, and determining which were enforceable guidelines, and what could be recommendations to residents.

Overall, the HPC agrees that front yards need to have stricter guidelines than the side or back yards (in the case of corner lots, some homes will have 2 front yards and 2 side yards)

Decisions are made to include the following as Guidelines / Shalls (see footnotes for editing)

- 5.2.A Preserve and maintain historic public and private landscapes (but do not specify nor restrict tree species)
- 5.2.B (applies to the streetscape but not to the mature trees and hedge rows if in the back)
- 5.2.C Preserve and maintain mature trees, and removal or replacement if deemed necessary by certified arborist (remove note about tree species & large canopy / long life)
 - Pat's comment= combine B & C + she will check with the City UDC to confirm if any rules are in place to prevent owners from cutting down "historic trees" (large mature street trees contributing to the streetscape character)

Some of the Guidelines are moved down to become Recommendations / Shoulds

- 5.2.E. becomes a recommendation (with focus on smaller trees)
- 5.2.G. becomes a recommendation / should
- 5.2.H (as a footnote for new construction)
- 5.2.J Edging of landscapes with flower beds, bricks, pavers ..etc. / should

Some of the Guidelines are removed (per collective vote):

- 5.2.F – Planting trees requirement is removed (despite Janice's request to keep)
- 5.2.I – has been removed

Commissioner Rideout, in attendance expresses concerns about the cost to residents of hiring arborists prior to tree cutting; there may be a way to interact with a County Arborist at Extension Services (?)

Comments from Richard Wagner (attending by phone)

- Clarify in the text what the meaning of Guidelines / Shall and Recommendation / Should represents for the applicants and residents.
- Instead of “Best Practices”, RW would prefer to use the term “Introduction”
 - ❖ HPC agrees on using the terms “Methods and Information” for the narrative that follows the Guidelines and Recommendation Sections
- RW recommends expanding the first chapter.
 - ❖ Chapter 1 – talk about intervention, identify, protecting, replacing and substitutes.
- RW: Each chapter should have an introduction with history background, guidelines and then recommendations, and remove the wording for case-to-case basis.
 - ❖ HPC votes to keep Guidelines, then Recommendations, then Methods and Information as the order they would prefer, based on how easier it is to find information
- RW proposes to include a list of contributing and non-contributing buildings in the Historic District. (Need to reference this in the back of the guidebook)
 - ❖ This may have to happen later into the future, with the help of a data base.
- RW recommends that the Commission make a choice on qualifying “historic” or “contributing” either in relation to a specific year of construction (ex: all buildings built prior to 1945, as currently), or have a sliding scale where buildings get incorporated as time advances (ex: 50 years old)
 - ❖ The HPC votes and agrees to keep 1945 as the qualifying date to be considered “contributing”

Motion to close the work session by Comm. Morgan and seconded by Comm. Johnson.
Chairman Vojtech closed the Work Session.

Chairman Vojtech calls the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. He begins the meeting by conducting roll call and issuing a welcome. Commissioner Vojtech then conducts the swearing in of persons planning to testify and explains the order of business.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes for February 15th and 21st: a motion to approve both minutes is made by Comm. Johnson, seconded by Comm. Morgan and is carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda:

HPC 2018-044 (CA) – 305 Willis Street - Side Door Access Restoration

Ms. Hamon explains that this applicant was doing some interior work on their home and noticed that the enclosure of a rear porch was covering a door opening.
The applicant would like to restore the opening and the door accessing the back yard.
The applicant would also like to fix an existing window that was covered as well.

A motion is made from Comm. Morgan to approve the HPC 2018-44 – 305 Willis Street – side door restoration as submitted, and is seconded by Comm. Johnson. All approve unanimously.

New Business

HPC 2018-040 – 116 High Street - Back Entrance Porch Repairs with covered Portico and Stoop

Mr. Hamon explains that this home was built in 1759 and the addition in the rear is about 1840. The rear access stoop is the area being renovated. The applicant expressed their intention to use profiles similar to the rest of the home. The porch will be visible from the County Office Building parking lot. Some before and after pictures are presented to clarify the scope of the work. Mr. Hamon recommends the approval of this application.

Closes for discussion, motion by Comm. Morgan, seconded by Comm. Johnson

The Commission is in favor of all of the ideas presented.
Comm. Johnson makes a motion to approve 2018-040, 116 High St porch repairs as proposed, it is seconded by Comm. Morgan. All approve unanimously.

HPC 2018-041 – 543 Poplar Street – Ava’s Pizzeria & Wine Bar Storefront signs

Mr. Hamon explains that this building is locally called Four Corner building, to become Ava’s Pizzeria from St. Michael’s. The brick building is from the 1900’s, the building owner has already restored the store front. The two new signs will be made of composite wood material and mounted on a metal brackets.

Mr. Hamon states that the bottom of the sign shall not be less than eight feet from the sidewalk, and shows pictures of the signs in a photo-montage from different angles.

Discussion ensues with the applicant of where the signs will be located on the building on each street, High St and Poplar St. There will also be signage on the windows and door of the building.

Closes for discussion, motion by Comm. Berman, seconded by Comm. Morgan.

Motion is made by Comm. Berman to approve, HPC 2018-041, 543 Poplar St signage proposal and is seconded by Comm. Morgan. All approved unanimously.

HPC 2018-042- 310 High Street - Justine’s Ice Cream Storefront Sign.

Mr. Hamon explains that this location is immediately adjacent to Ava’s Pizzeria. Justine’s Ice Cream Shop sign will be located on the façade and mounted on a board will match the color of the building. There will also be a hanging sign near the entrance door and decals on the front window.

Discussion ensues with the applicant from Justine’s Ice Cream, and there are concerns with the location of the sign near the door.

Chairman Vojtech suggests installing a door stop.

Motion to close discussion is made by Comm. Johnson and seconded by Comm. Berman.

Motion to approve signs as presented and provide a door stop is made by Comm. Johnson for HPC 2018-042, 310 High St, Justine’s Ice Cream and is seconded by Comm. Morgan. All approve unanimously.

HPC 2018-043 - 100 Belvedere Avenue - Deck replacement

Mr. Hamon explains that this property is a corner lot and the deck is in the rear of the house. There is a six-foot privacy fence around the yard. The applicant wants to replace the floor boards (currently wood) by wood/vinyl composite TREX. The applicant proposes to remove the ramp off the current deck and extend the new decking to that location. The railings will be 36” high, balusters spaced at no more than 4” clear.

The applicant brought a sample of the TREX, and showed that the color of the railing will match the current vinyl fence color.

Closes for discussion, motion by Comm. Morgan, seconded by Comm. Johnson.

Motion for approval of HPC 2018-043, 100 Belvedere Ave for replacing the decking as presented is made by Chairman Vojtech and seconded by Comm. Johnson. All approve unanimously.

Administratively Approved/Routine Maintenance

AA 2018-021 - 104 Vue de Leau – Porch Floor minor repairs

AA 2018-022 - 305 Willis St - Non-Contributing Shed Demolition

Discussion item:

Chairman Vojtech asked about the outdoor seating area in front of Ava’s and Justine’s.

Mr. Hamon explains that the city has a policy in place applying to all business with sidewalk seating. The policy stipulates that a 48” clear path (from ANY obstruction) must be maintained at all times. Enforcement of this policy is imminent.

Chairman Vojtech expresses that all businesses should follow the City Code requirements for the sidewalks.

Adjournment

Chairman Vojtech asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion by Com. Berman to adjourn the meeting is seconded by Comm. Olshesky and carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Herve Hamon
Planning & Zoning Planner I
Historic Preservationist

Signature:  Date: 17-May-18
HPC Chairman