



## DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

### MINUTES (FINAL)

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17, 2020

6:30 P.M.

ZOOM WEBINAR

**PRESENT:** Tamie Ehinger, Chairman; Leslie Mechem; Leslie DiCarlo; Rob DuBoff; Ellen Sheehan

**ABSENT:** Chris Bennett

**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 June 3, 2020 DRC meeting with minor corrections. Ellen Sheehan seconded the motion.

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

#### **VOTE:**

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman, Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Rob DuBoff, in favor; Leslie Mechem, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor

**MOTION PASSES: 5-0**

#### **B. POSSIBLE CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:**

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.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated the consent agenda items will be dealt with individually this evening due to a Commission member recusing from the second application.

1. **20200306 DARLING DONUTS AWNING LETTERING**, 441B Broadway, Historic Review of new lettering on an existing awning face within the Transect-6 Urban Core District.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman asked if anyone on the Commission had any questions or comments on this application. 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 application Darling Donut Awning Lettering, 441 Broadway, Historic Review of new lettering on an existing awning face is approved as submitted. Leslie Mechem seconded the motion.

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

**VOTE:**

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman, in favor; Leslie Mechem, in favor; Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Rob DuBoff, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor

**MOTION PASSES: 5-0**

**RECUSAL:**

Commission member Leslie DiCarlo recused from the following application.

2. **20200334 BROOK TAVERN HANDRAIL**, 139 Union Avenue, Historic Review of replacement handrail within the Urban Residential-4 District.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman asked if anyone on the Commission had any questions or comments on the Brook Tavern Handrail application. 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 application of the Brook Tavern Handrail, 139 Union Avenue Historic Review of a replacement handrail is 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; Leslie Mechem, in favor; Rob DuBoff, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor

**MOTION PASSES: 4-0**

**NOTE:**

Commission member Leslie DiCarlo resumed her position on the Commission.

**C. DRC APPLICATIONS UNDER CONSIDERATION**

1. **20200304 CITIZEN'S BANK SIGNAGE**, 1 Ballston Avenue, Architectural Review of new signage (wall, Freestanding) within the Transect-5 Urban Neighborhood Center District.

Applicant: Citizen's Bank

Agent: Terry Meissner, Saxton Signs; Matt Silva, Architect

Mr. Meissner stated what the applicant is proposing is pylon sign located at the front corner of the property. The sign will be a double sided 12'x12' with a 60" x 50' base illuminated internally with LED lighting. The applicant feels this signage is necessary for safety reasons. Originally a monument sign was proposed, however, the applicant is installing benches and this would interfere with the placement of the benches.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated there are multiple signs on the building. We will review the wall signage first and then the freestanding sign. In reviewing the wall signs it seems straightforward. The lettering size meets code and does not look inappropriate.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman asked if anyone on the Commission had any questions or comments on this application.

Rob DuBoff stated the wall signs seem appropriate, however with the addition of the freestanding sign it appears to be an excess of signage.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated the applicant is allowed one sign on each façade as well as a freestanding sign.

Bradley Birge, Administrator, Planning and Economic Development stated this property is bounded by three streets. They have proposed and are allowed to have three wall signs, one on each of those frontages. The properties are generally allowed to have a freestanding sign as well. It is the Design Review's purview to decide if the freestanding sign is necessary.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated it does not appear that the Commission has any concerns regarding the wall signs. We are also looking at the freestanding sign. Looking at the size of the freestanding sign it appears too dominant for the size and position on the lot. The Chair noted the height should be reduced, sitting on a base it will be more appropriate for the layout of the lot. Bringing the signage down to a pedestrian level is also one of the City's initiatives for this particular stretch of South Broadway.

Discussion ensued among the Board regarding the freestanding sign versus a monument sign. It was the consensus of the Commission that a monument sign would be more appropriate for vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

Mr. Meissner stated the benches proposed would hide the sign.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated the benches would be the secondary issue next to the signage.

Mr. Silva, the architect for the project stated the Planning Board requested the benches due to this being located in the public right of way.

Bradley Birge, Administrator, Planning and Economic Development stated the applicant can propose new locations for the benches and we can work with the Planning Board Chair and identify this as an administrative action. A minor change to better accommodate a more appropriate sign in this area.

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

Leslie Mechem made a motion in the matter of the Citizen's Bank Signage, 1 Ballston Avenue, that the application be approved with the following conditions – the approval is for wall signs only. The applicant will return with details for the monument sign. Leslie DiCarlo seconded the motion.

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

**VOTE:**

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman, in favor; Leslie Mechem, in favor; Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Rob DuBoff, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor

**MOTION PASSES: 5-0**

2. **20200321 THORBURN EXTERIOR MODIFICATIONS**, 130 Regent Street, Unit 101, Historic Review of the re-establishment of windows within the Institutional-Education District.

Applicant: Joanne Thorburn

Ms. Thorburn stated their project is to restore the windows at their condo at 130 Regent Street. Somewhere along the way they were bricked in. We are proposing to use the Pella Architect Series, Aluminum clad windows with simulated divided light that match the original windows on the building.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated the Commission has received correspondence from the Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation noting they are appreciative of the fact that the applicant is restoring the structure back to the original fenestration and back to the original windows.

Ms. Thorburn stated the Foundation did provide her with an example of the original windows which was included in the application.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated it is wonderful to see a homeowner investing not only in their property but the historic aspect as well.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman asked if there was 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.

Samantha Bosshart, Executive Director, Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation stated they are very happy to see the front of this structure have more of a presence. They look forward to seeing it. Thank you for reaching out to the Foundation.

Rob DuBoff made a motion in the matter of the Thorburn Exterior Modification, 130 Regent Street, Unit 101, involving the historic review of the re-establishment of windows application, the Design Review Commission approves as submitted or shown on the 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; Leslie Mechem, in favor; Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Rob DuBoff, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor

**MOTION PASSES: 5-0**

3. **20200078 CARUSO 2-FAMILY DWELLING**, 173 Lake Avenue, Architectural Review of the demolition of an existing structure (formerly Pepper's) and the construction of a new 2-family dwelling within the Urban Residential-3 District.

Applicant: Anthony Caruso

Agent: AJ Alvarez, Plan Architecture

Mr. Caruso stated we are before the Commission this evening to review the updates. Cut sheets and elevations were submitted for the file. Mr. Caruso provided a visual presentation of the updated renderings. The Commission voiced concern on the front façade noting the windows below the arch were too large. We have adjusted those windows to create more space between them and the arch itself. The roof projection on the front façade where the two pieces of the gable in relation to the column below was not quite right. It has been widened and adjusted slightly and very successfully. On the side elevation, the Commission was concerned about the driveway and the location of the sidewalk continuing through. The brick pavers continue all the way through to the rear of the property line. The intention is to match the brick pavers to what currently exists as much as possible. Additional street views were provided to the Commission. The other major concern from our last meeting was the materials. Updated cut sheets were provided to the Commission for trim, entry doors, windows and lighting fixtures. Mr. Alvarez reviewed the choice for trim, and the entry doors. The garage door windows have been changed with arched window to match the front façade and side arches. Fiber cement siding is proposed in Navajo beige with white trim, small portions of the building with the standing seam roof that is proposed in a dark gray color. The rear porches will be masonry and the front porch will have birch plank flooring.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman thanked the applicant and the applicant's agent for taking the comments and feedback of the Commission and incorporating them into your plans. You have been before the Commission several times and the project

as presented to the Commission this evening has come a long way. It is more appropriate for the neighborhood and the quality has increased significantly and it is great.

Rob DuBoff thanked the applicant for listening to the feedback from the Commission. He voiced concerns regarding the trim on the proposed structure.

Mr. Alvarez provided additional information on the Boral product that is proposed for the trim work on the home.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated the Commission spoke about fiber cement trim.

Mr. Caruso stated Boral does make a fiber cement trim product. He does not have any issue to deferring to that type of product versus the PVC.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman asked if there were any further questions or comments from the Commission.

Leslie DiCarlo questioned if the Commission usually prefers the smooth side of the product to be used.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated usually the Commission prefers the smooth side of a siding product to be used and does not believe the Commission has every required it on trim work.

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

Samantha Bosshart, Executive Director, Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation stated typically with new construction the smooth side of the product is preferred.

Mr. Caruso stated he does not have an issue with this.

Ellen Sheehan made a motion in the matter of the Caruso 2-Family Dwelling-Final Details, 173 Lake Avenue the DRC issues the following decision that the application be approved with the following conditions – the applicant will use Boral cement board product in place of the proposed material. Materials shall have a smooth finish. Leslie Mechem seconded the motion.

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

**VOTE:**

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman, in favor; Leslie Mechem, in favor; Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Rob DuBoff, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor

**MOTION PASSES: 5-0**

4. **(PB) 20200155 GUARINO/HANER SUBDIVISION**, 21 Park Place, advisory opinion to the Planning Board on Proposed 2-lot subdivision of a “contributing” State and National Register property, adjacent to local Historic district, within the Urban Residential-4 District.

Applicant: Linda Haner & David Guarino

Agent: Tonya Yasenchak, Engineering America

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated we did have some discussion at our last meeting and the applicant noted he was willing to allow any proposed new structures on the newly developed subdivision to be under Design Review consideration.

Ms. Yasenchak stated the owner/applicant did offer to place a condition in the approval process that would bring any structure that would be built back to the DRC for review. Under what level of review Historic or Architectural? Since this is not in a historic district.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated there is a difference between Architectural Review and Historical Review. Most of the architectural review projects are located within the gateway to Saratoga Springs. That does apply often to residential homes but more often to commercial properties that are being designed. Architectural Review would not be appropriate for this project. It would come under Historic Review.

Discussion ensued among the Commission regarding the guidelines for review both Historic and Architectural Review.

Bradley Birge, Administrator, Planning and Economic Development stated what was consented to and being recommended by the DRC is any future construction, and any new construction based on the newly subdivided parcel would come under Historic Review by the DRC. At that time, they would have the ability to review the entire construction of that. With that condition at this point I don't believe they need any additional information. The concerns of how any future project would be constructed in what manner and what location would come under that future review. What the Commission is discussing this evening is if they are able to provide an Advisory Opinion to the Planning Board with that recommended condition at that level.

Ms. Yasenchak questioned if that review is just for the initial construction of the property or is that something that would be for any future modifications.

Bradley, Birge, Administrator, Planning and Economic Development stated initially they were discussing new construction. So, it would be new construction of the main structure and any accessory structures or any additional structures in the future. It would not be for modifications of those structures once constructed.

Mr. Guarino stated he originally suggested to the Commission that the applicants would come before the Commission for a review. He was not thinking of a Historic Review since this is not in a Historic District. The SEQRA will be completed and approved by the Planning Board for the subdivision. My understanding is a Historic Review is different from an Architectural Review. Can you provide a scope of what is going to be considered?

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated what the Commission would be reviewing as with any project. Historic Review is not very different from an Architectural Review for new construction. Both of those would be considered a normal review. In an Architectural Review there is a bit more flexibility in materials. Historic Review we pay attention to historic qualities which would be appropriate for that particular structure. We would be looking at height, proportion, contextual appropriateness to the adjacent historic district. Basic items such as street orientation, entrances, setbacks, step backs, fenestration and rhythm of windows on the façade. Also, we would be looking at appropriate materials which fall under Historic Review as well.

New construction in a historic district should not mimic a historic home. Due to the location of this property the new owner would be held to a certain quality of materials.

Mr. Guarino spoke regarding his intention to allow a review of the new construction he did not anticipate a full Historic Review.

Bradley Birge, Administrator, Planning and Economic Development stated both Historic and Architectural Review are standard to each of their levels of reviews. Historic Review was designed to retain and promote the historic character of historic buildings. There is a great deal of guidance and standards which directly relate to the preservation of existing materials, original qualities and details on historic structure. The guidelines and standards for new construction are very similar for the Historic District and Architectural Review district. It is mass and scale, height and design, type of materials, and fenestrations. Since there is no existing structure on the lot, the level of detail to preserve is not an issue. It is a new structure and how that interacts with adjacent properties is much like that of any review.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated basically with new construction the DRC would be looking at mass and scale, street orientation, and driveway location. These would be the items which would need the most review. These items come under consideration in both categories.

Leslie Mechem stated that since it is not in the Historic District but opposite the Historic District, it seems Architectural Review would solve some of the issues and concerns the Commission has. Noting an Architectural Review would be fine.

Bradley Birge, Administrator, Planning and Economic Development stated the Planning Board has requested an Advisory Opinion from the DRC in order to complete a SEQRA evaluation, if there are any potential adverse impacts of this subdivision upon the historic character on the adjacent historic properties. The applicant has offered a DRC review. This is not in a historic district, but is adjacent to a historic district. It is the DRC's determination whether it is an architectural or historic review.

Mr. Guarino stated he agrees to the full Architectural Review.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman discussed the comfort level of the Commission with an Architectural Review

Discussion ensued among the Commission regarding the type of review the DRC might require. It was the consensus of the Commission that Architectural Review would be appropriate.

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**Samantha Bosshart**, Executive Director, Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation, stated Architectural Review will meet the needs to assure the context of the neighborhood can be preserved.

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

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated in the matter of the requested Advisory Opinion to the Planning Board on the Guarino/Haner Subdivision, 21 Park Place involving a proposed 2-lot subdivision adjacent to a local historic district within the Urban Residential-4 District. Following a discussion on this matter on June 17, 2020, the Commission issues the following opinion:

- A Favorable Opinion – conditioned on future review of new construction by the DRC

**Considerations:**

The Design Review Commission recognizes and greatly values the historic character of the existing Gothic Revival structure located at 21 Park Place and the adjacent Canfield Casino-Congress Park-Circular Street Historic District. In 1987, it was recommended that this property be listed as a "contributing" property, but, ultimately, it failed to be added to either the National or State Registers of Historic Places or the local Historic District.

Admittedly, it is very difficult to fully anticipate and evaluate the potential of any adverse impact upon this property and the adjacent historic district brought about by the proposed 2-lot subdivision and subsequent development. The applicant has indicated that the intent is to sell the property following subdivision approval and, as such, has declined to provide any details as to future construction, mass and/or scale of the structures, materials or architectural approach.

Fortunately, the applicant has offered and consents to require that any future new construction on the newly subdivided parcel will come under architectural review of the Design Review Commission. As this property is located substantially contiguous to the City's Historic District, this requirement shall ensure that any future construction will be sensitive to the historic qualities of the existing structure, adjacent properties and the neighborhood.

With respect to the proposed driveway location, without a specific construction proposal, it is difficult to evaluate the most appropriate location. The DRC would recommend that the final driveway location be reviewed by the DRC in conjunction with the future construction proposal and then made final via administrative action by the Planning Board Chair at that time.

It is recommended that this be a requirement for subdivision approval and that this requirement for DRC review shall be Recorded on any final approved subdivision plat and filed with the City Building Department and as a deed covenant with the Saratoga County Clerk's Office.

It is with and dependent on, this requirement that new construction is under the review of the DRC that the Commission is able to provide a favorable recommendation on the proposed subdivision to the Planning Board. Leslie Mechem seconded the motion.

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

**VOTE:**

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman, in favor; Leslie Mechem, in favor; Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Rob DuBoff, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor

**MOTION PASSES: 5-0**

**UPCOMING WORKSHOPS/MEETINGS:**

Design Review Commission Caravan, Wednesday, June 23, 2020 at 5:00 P.M.  
Design Review Meeting, Wednesday, July 1, 2020 at 6:30 P.M.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:**

There being no further business to discuss Tamie Ehinger, Chairman adjourned the meeting at 8:07 P.M.

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Respectfully submitted,

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Diane M. Buzanowski  
Recording Secretary

APPROVED 7-1-20

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