



DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

MINUTES (FINAL)

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2019

7:00 P.M.

RECREATION CENTER

RECEIVED

NOV 23 2019

ACCOUNTS DEPT

PRESENT: Tamie Ehinger, Chairman; Karen Cavotta, Vice Chairman; Leslie DiCarlo; Leslie Mechem; Ellen Sheehan

LATE ARRIVAL: Chris Bennett arrived at 7:03 P.M.

ABSENT: Rob DuBoff

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

CALL TO ORDER: Tamie Ehinger, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:01 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 October 16, 2019 DRC meeting with a very minor correction. 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, Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Leslie Mechem, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, 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. **20190991 MATHIESEN SIGNAGE**, 154 West Avenue, Architectural Review of a new freestanding sign within the Transect-4 Urban Neighborhood District.
2. **20191074 MILTON RESIDENCE EXTERIOR MODIFICATIONS**, 9 Marion Place, Historic Review of a change in window configuration in a rear addition within the Urban Residential-3 District.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman asked if anyone on the Commission had any questions or comments on Consent Agenda Items #1 & #2. 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 Mathiesen Signage, 154 West Avenue and Milton Residence Exterior Modifications, 9 Marion Place, that these applications be approved as submitted. Leslie Mechem seconded the motion.

NOTE:

Chris Bennett took his position on the Commission at 7:03 P.M.

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

VOTE:

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman, in favor; Karen Cavotta, Vice Chairman, Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Chris Bennett, in favor; Leslie Mechem, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor

MOTION PASSES: 6-0

C. DRC APPLICATIONS UNDER CONSIDERATION

1. **20190713 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.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated this application is procedural for the 116 West Avenue mixed-use building modification. We have met with the applicant on several occasions as well as a site visit.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman made a motion in the matter of the 116 West Avenue Mixed-Use Building Modifications, that the application be approved with the following conditions – we approve the newly presented under deck coverings as well as the newly presented privacy screens. There will be no change in the original approvals for the horizontal porch railings. 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, Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Chris Bennett, in favor; Leslie Mechem, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor

MOTION PASSES: 6-0

2. **20190942 GROSSMAN EXTERIOR MODIFICATIONS**, 169 Union Avenue, Historic Review of exterior modifications (new shingles window replacements) within the Urban Residential-4 District.

Agent: Rory O'Connor

Mr. O'Connor stated he has managed Mr. Grossmans properties for the last ten years. Ms. Yasenachak presented the original submission to the Commission on October 29, 2019, which amends previous submissions to this Board regarding the changes the applicant is requesting. We are proposing a new roof on the main home with copper valleys. It will be an architectural shingle in black and matches those used on the porch addition previously approved by the Commission one year ago. In addition, we are proposing a standing seam copper roof on the front porch. The window modifications have been adjusted. They are in line with discussions Ms. Yasenachak has had with the Commission. On the south elevation, the third-floor dormer window is proposed to be replaced with a Marvin wood casement window, the same size, shape and grid pattern as the existing. The east elevation, the new window previously proposed for under the porch roof is no longer being proposed, it has been removed. The triple window with the transoms in the dining area is not original to the house. These were installed in the 70's. These do not fit with the remainder of the home. We are proposing Marvin wood double hung full height windows more consistent with the main house. The size of the openings will not change, and the trim will be modified to match the existing home. The in-swing casement windows on the third-floor gable are proposed to be replaced with

Marvin wood out-swing casement windows. The new windows will be the same size and grid pattern as the existing but would provide the required egress for the third-floor bedroom. On the rear north elevation, the existing rear door will be replaced with a Marvin in-swing wood atrium door. The rear kitchen window is proposed to be removed, framed in and sided to match the existing home. A new 30 x 40 kitchen window is proposed to be installed along the back wall over the kitchen sink. The existing window in the second-floor bedroom is proposed to be replaced with a Marvin wood casement window to match the same size opening as the existing window. In order to meet the egress requirements a faux meeting rail is proposed so the window will have the appearance of a double hung window. The existing window in the second-floor hallway is to be repaired. The third-floor gable window is proposed to be replaced with a Marvin wood casement in the same size and opening as the existing window in order to meet egress requirements. A faux meeting rail is also proposed for this window to appear as a double hung. On the left west elevation, the existing stained-glass windows on the first floor which are not original to the building will be retained. The brick chimney having no purpose will be removed. The existing west window in the second-floor rear bedroom has a modified lower sash that swings in. Marvin wood replacement sashes are proposed to be installed in the new opening.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated in reviewing this application at its last appearance before the Commission, we were interested in viewing more elevations. Thank you for providing that. In terms of the quality of window replacements, thank you for providing those details. Those are the quality we are looking for in a home of this nature.

Discussion ensued among the Commission regarding the changes made to the application addressing the concerns of the Commission.

It was the consensus of the Commission all the changes are appropriate and address the concerns of the Commission.

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

Leslie DiCarlo made a motion in the matter of the Grossman Exterior Modifications, 169 Union Avenue that application be approved as newly revised and presented this evening 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; Karen Cavotta, Vice Chairman, Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Chris Bennett, in favor; Leslie Mechem, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor

MOTION PASSES: 6-0

NOTE:

The agenda was heard out of order due to lack of representation for Agenda Item #3. It was deferred at this time to the end of the meeting.

3. **20191023 254 WASHINGTON STREET EXTERIOR**, 254 Washington Street, Architectural review of exterior modifications to an existing structure within the Transect-5 Neighborhood Center District.

Applicant: William DiCenzo

Mr. DiCenzo stated they have submitted paperwork with renderings of the project along with color choices and materials. We are not changing anything on the building. We are repairing some areas on the front façade. The current roof will be replaced with a grey metal roof to improve the aesthetics. The front façade will have the same color as the roofing material. Two feet of stone will be added to the base of the structure then the vinyl siding. The parking area will be repaired. We are also adding some additional landscaping as well. Structurally nothing is being changed.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated this is a straightforward application.

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

It was the consensus of the Commission this will be a great improvement to the property.

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 254 Washington Street Exterior Modifications, 254 Washington Street that the application be approved as submitted. 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, Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Chris Bennett, in favor; Leslie Mechem, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor

MOTION PASSES: 6-0

4. **20170676 (2017.119) DEVALL NEW CONSTRUCTION**, 59 Franklin Street, Advisory Opinion (Historic Review) to the Planning Board on a proposed subdivision and new single-family residence within the Urban Residential-4 District.

Applicant: David DeVall; Richard DeVall

Mr. David DeVall stated we are here for an Advisory Opinion to the Planning Board. This project has had a very long procedural history, this is year two. A visual of the site plan was provided to the Commission. While before the ZBA requesting dimensional relief, it was discovered that SEQRA had not been completed. We appeared before the Planning Board for SEQRA review. During that review, the Planning Board requested an Advisory Opinion from the DRC due to historic concerns. Mr. DeVall referred to a letter from the Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation dated June 17th. This site plan has complied with what the Foundation had discovered. They requested we not mimic the existing building, which it does not. They requested the two-car garage be detached and face the alley, which is what we have done. The Foundation further states they do not object to the subdivision of the lot since it appears historically the lot was a separate parcel according to the Sanbourn maps. We are happy the Foundation is pleased, and we are hoping the Commission is also in favor of the site plan so we may return before the Planning Board.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman provided information to the Commission regarding what the Planning Board is requesting of the DRC. The Planning Board is questioning if the proposed action results in the alteration of the properties setting or integrity or results in the introduction of visual elements which are out of character with the site or property or may alter its setting. Secondly, will the proposed new home properly respect the integrity of the existing contributing structure in terms of mass and scale and historic context and setting.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated she believes on the renovated plans the detached garage is the appropriate choice. The home fronting on Cherry Street, while the garage fronting on the alley is historically appropriate. This version is much more appropriate for the district this property is in.

Discussion ensued among the Commission regarding the historic design and integrity, as well as mass and scale, location of the home on the site, driveway placement and green space.

Karen Cavotta, Vice Chairman voiced concerns regarding the setting of the home noting that the sidewalk appears too close to the house.

Discussion continued regarding several suggestions to the applicant and the Commission noted that the applicant will return before the DRC for review.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated the second concern the Planning Board requested the DRC to review and provide opinion on is whether subdividing certain parcels into substandard lots within the City's Historic District will have long term negative impact on the historic character of these neighborhoods.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated as a Commission we do share the same concerns. In this particular case, because of the historical documentation and due to the fact that this was a subdivided lot this does not appear to be an issue in this instance.

Ellen Sheehan stated she does not see that as an issue on this particular lot.

Leslie Mechem stated it is dependent on the lot. In this case it is not an issue.

Karen Cavotta, Vice Chairman stated in this instance it is not an issue.

Leslie DiCarlo agrees with the Commission members.

Chris Bennett agrees with fellow Commission members.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated in terms of the Planning Boards request whether the DRC feels this residential home properly respects the integrity of the existing contributing structure in terms of mass, scale, historical context and setting. We feel in terms of mass and scale the garage is an appropriate scale compared to the primary residence. There is some concern regarding the location of the structure and its proximity to the sidewalk. The applicant is willing to move the structure to allow for more space to the sidewalk. In terms of subdividing parcels into substandard lots the Commission agrees that it is in general a concern, however, in this particular case due to historic documentation this is not an issue.

Bradley Birge, Administrator, Planning and Economic Development stated he will summarize what the Commission has noted. If it is the Commissions choice you may move forward with a motion and present that to the Planning Board. In summary what the Commission has noted - regarding the mass and scale and setting of the property and the structures, that structure both the garage and the new principal structure are of an appropriate scale with relationship to the original historic structure on the property. The Commission does suggest moving the principal structure to the east several feet to accommodate some buffering between it and the sidewalk. Noting also that the garage apron should accommodate a full-size car without impeding the sidewalk. The entrance off Cherry Street for the primary structure and the driveway off the alley is also acceptable in this case. Secondly, regarding the potential impact of the subdivision, and creating substandard lots in a historic district, in general, there may be some concern for the creation of substandard parcels but those need to be reviewed in a case by case basis. Due to the historic precedence of additional structures on this property, there is no significant concern for the subdivision of this parcel.

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

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman made a motion for a Positive Advisory Opinion for the Devall New Construction, 59 Franklin Street, that we move forward with the Advisory Opinion as the Commission discussed this evening. 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, Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Chris Bennett, in favor; Leslie Mechem, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor

MOTION PASSES: 6-0

5. 20190767 STATION LANE APARTMENTS, Station Lane, Architectural Review of a new 3-building, 29-unit apartment complex within the Transect-5 Neighborhood Center District.

Agent: Derek Gribulis-Cottler Architecture

Mr. Gribulis stated they are before the Commission to present the modifications to the design based on the Commission's previous comments. Mr. Gribulis reviewed the project for the Commission and its location with a visual presentation. The project features 3 story apartment buildings. We have modified the roofs of the three buildings and tried to make the project more symmetrical. We have changed the center building adding bump-ups. Building A changes made were vinyl siding was changed to fiber cement; the brick has been changed to a cultured stone looking for more natural materials in this surrounding. Previously it had gable ends at the bump-ups which we have removed and flattened this area. We have extended the roofs out to have more of a visual impact on the façade of the building. We looked at the grills in the windows and changed them from a four over four to a two by two upper with a clear lower sash. All elevations were reviewed for the Commission. The color palette is that of earth tones and beiges. A sample of the under-deck vinyl material was provided to the Commission. The themes for the remaining two buildings are the same throughout. The B Building gables on the front of the building bump out features were moved to the center of the building. We have also made the same changes to the materials and the entrance. All three buildings have a similar style. Building C has been revised, the shed dormers have been changed to match Building A on the other side. This is a smaller building so the entrance canopy was wrapped around the edge of the center bump out to give it a more pronounced look.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman thanked the applicant's agent for the modifications and the presentation. The Chair reviewed the summary and input which was provided to the applicant at the previous meeting. The DRC notes that this site is the beginning of a new residential neighborhood, adjacent to the train station and natural areas. On site looking at the land itself we had some questions and concerns regarding the context of the site. The train station is the gateway to the Adirondacks. We suggested the applicant consider other area projects to help provide an idea of what is being built in the surrounding area. Also, we requested additional information on the streetscape, noting a much more enhanced streetscape is preferred. More of a prominent pedestrian level experience. A suggestion was made to view the new apartment complex being built at the entrance to Station Lane and West Avenue and how they relate to one another as well. The stone and fiber cement siding are more appropriate for the natural area.

Karen Cavotta, Vice Chairman stated she appreciates the addition of the natural stone and colors and the fiber cement. One of the things the Commission is entrusted with is to assure that the buildings that the Commission approves or give feedback on are buildings which will have long lasting impact on the City itself in both design and materials. That is one of our biggest concerns. We need to study each of those buildings individually. I think we have struggled because as a building it is fine but when we put that in context of where it is and the size of the project and the fact that this is setting a precedent for will happen in the future. She is still struggling with what is not quite sitting right in terms of the design elements. There has been a movement to emphasize the entries more but in terms of the size of the buildings it is still not quite enough. The massive hip roof looks like it should be on a huge home, but this is not a home it is an apartment. The proportion of the roof to the size of the building is not quite there. Something is missing in terms of how to break down this building. Are there other things that can be done to add more character to the buildings, to make more of a statement.

Leslie DiCarlo stated this building is very generic building. It does not read apartments to me. It read like a long term stay hotel. There is nothing that speaks to the setting. It is located in the wetlands and the woodlands and also the importance of being the foundation for a new neighborhood. That is what I am struggling with.

Chris Bennett stated this does not read urban core, it does not read neighborhood, and it does not read Saratoga. It is more generic.

Leslie Mechem stated we are looking for a distinctive building which emphasizes this setting, a wooded wetland near the train station and the gateway to the Adirondacks.

Ellen Sheehan stated she agrees with fellow Commission members comments. At the last meeting the Chair spoke about these buildings to have more of a foundation to be built up higher off the ground. In the ordinance for this district it states the first floors of buildings for residential use shall be raised off sidewalk grade a minimum of two feet. I think this would be helpful for this project. A sense of place is missing.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated the Commission has provided a great deal of feedback. One item which was suggested, and it may be helpful is to focus on one building at a time. This might save time until we feel the building is appropriate to the setting and the area and then move onto the other buildings.

Discussion ensued regarding the project, feedback and suggestions provided to the applicant and applicant's agent.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated the next DRC meeting is scheduled for November 20, 2019.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman asked if the remaining audience member wished to speak regarding an application.

Ms. Cioni audience member requested her application be heard and placed on the agenda. This application is on file for 138 Washington Street, filed August 14, 2019. She is formally requesting to be placed on the November 20, 2019 meeting agenda.

Bradley Birge, Administrator, Planning and Economic Development stated this is Ms. Cioni. When the application is ready, and the required steps are completed it will be placed on the agenda when appropriate. Mr. Cioni has an apartment building which she owns; an automobile in the early summer hit the side of her building; and moved what was a small addition off of its foundation. It was requested it be stabilized, and for some time now we have been in great conversations. Many of our staff members are trying to find a way to expedite her application. A complication to this is the addition was not built with any city approvals. So, in order to move forward, variances will be required if Ms. Cioni wishes to put the addition back to where it is. The Assistant City Attorney and Planning staff has contacted Ms. Cioni about the process.

Ms. Cioni was told an appearance before the DRC would help to expedite the process. This has blocked the sidewalk.

Tamie Ehinger, Chairman stated the Commission cannot review the application until the prior steps especially the variances are obtained.

ADJOURNED AGENDA ITEM:

20191060 PERONTO EXTERIOR MODIFICATIONS, 64 Van Dam Street, Architectural Review of change in roofing materials within the Urban Residential-3 District.

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS/MEETINGS:

Design Review Commission Caravan, Tuesday, November 12, 2019 at 4:00 P.M.
Design Review Meeting; Wednesday, November 20, 2019 at 7:00 P.M.

COMMENTS FROM STAFF:

Bradley Birge, Administrator Planning and Economic Development spoke to the Commission with regard to the Land Use Board calendar for next year. Discussion ensued concerning a change in the day of the caravan to a Wednesday keeping all DRC business on Wednesdays. Also discussed was the possibility of beginning the DRC meeting earlier to keep in line with the time changes instituted by the ZBA and Planning Board. A suggestion of the meeting beginning at 6:30 PM versus 7:00 PM. It was the consensus of the Commission that 6:30 PM was acceptable.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

There being no further business to discuss Tamie Ehinger, Chairman adjourned the meeting at 8:35 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Buzanowski
Recording Secretary

APPROVED 11-20-19