

**NORTHVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

**July 18, 2012**

**Wednesday 7:00 P.M. – Northville City Hall - Council Chambers**

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Johnson called the Historic District Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2. ROLL CALL:**

**Present:** Argenta, Field, Hoffman, Johnson, Luikart and Vernacchia

**Absent:** Bayly (excused)

**Also Present:** Sally Elmiger, Staff Liaison

**3. CITIZEN COMMENTS:** Limited to brief comments for items not on the agenda.  
None

**4. MINUTES:** June 20, 2012

**Motion by Argenta, supported by Vernacchia,** to approve the June 20, 2012 minutes as published.

**Voice Vote: Ayes: All. Nays: None. Motion Unanimously Carried.**

**5. REPORTS**

**A. CITY ADMINISTRATION: None**

**B. CITY COUNCIL: None**

**C. PLANNING COMMISSIONER: None**

**D. OTHER COMMUNITY/GOVERNMENTAL LIAISONS: None**

**6. PUBLIC HEARING**

**PARTIAL DEMOLITION 125-127 E. MAIN –  
DOWNTOWN WALK-THRU**

Lori Ward was present representing the Northville DDA, along with Gary Cooper.

Ms. Ward provided an update regarding the front façade of the building at 125-127 E. Main Street; i.e. one beam slipped and dropped four inches causing damage to the front. She said not only was it structurally unstable but it was determined to be not repairable. She noted that a structural engineer was hired, as well as masonry specialist, Rochelle Jaffe. Ms. Ward said it was determined that the safest method was to dismantle the front façade, rebuild it and install a new steel beam.

Ms. Ward explained that there was enough salvaged brick on site to face the front of the façade, as well as the inside. She said not all of the exterior brick was able to be salvaged. She said survey work was done, and photographs were taken; and the building next door could serve as a template because of many similarities between the buildings.

Ms. Ward recalled that following the June Historic District Commission meeting, the Building Official issued a letter stating that the building was unsafe and needed to come down. It took four days to dismantle this area of the building, which began on July second.

William Richardson asked how much structural integrity was compromised out of the corner of the Spagnoli building next door.

Ms. Ward responded that it was possible to see where the beam rests on the column; limited demolition will be done before they get any closer to the Spagnoli building. She said a four foot wide portion remained attached in place at the western end, which will be removed brick by brick. She said there is currently no joint; and they want to salvage the brick.

Mr. Richardson expressed concern regarding potential failure of the Spagnoli building, and his fear of a domino effect.

Chair Johnson said the prevention of any further damage was why the City moved forward with the demolition, prior to the Public Hearing.

Janine Beauchamp inquired about the part to be configured to support the two buildings on the other side.

Ms. Ward said concern was expressed regarding the removal of the middle (second) floor and its effect on the eastern wall. She spoke to the weight load in that area, and said there was about two tons of glass up there. She said a band will be installed by the floor joist, around the entire perimeter of the entire second floor, before the second floor is removed. She mentioned that cross beams will continue to provide a bracing from east to west, and span the width of the building. Ms. Ward noted that the structural engineers think this method will provide the necessary support for the building.

Commissioner Luikart asked if a change in the project had been considered relative to not removing the second floor; but doing a single-story walk through instead.

Ms. Ward said that was not considered or discussed, but it is believed they can go forward with the rest of the project as planned.

Chair Johnson closed the Public Hearing as there were no further comments from the public.

**Motion by Vernacchia, supported by Hoffman, to accept the application as complete.**

Commissioner Luikart inquired if this matter was being revisited as Case #4.

Chair Johnson said this matter would be revisited in part.

Commissioner Luikart inquired about salvaged brick. She noted that she observed that some bricks were being placed in dumpsters.

Ms. Ward said brick was being salvaged. She explained that often face brick is different, but all three layers of this brick were the same; and the outside brick can be reversed, back to front. Ms. Ward said the masons have counted the bricks; they believe there is enough brick to do the front façade, and the exposed interior. She said some of the brick was determined to be too damaged to be salvaged.

Chair Johnson called the question.

***Voice Vote: Ayes: All. Nays: None. Motion Unanimously Carried.***

7. CASES

**CASE #1**  
**GRAPHIC VISIONS/MASSAGE GREEN**                      **SIGN**  
**130 MAINCENTRE**

Sue Dillon with Graphic Visions was present. She said the proposal was for a new sign for Massage Green, a new franchise in Northville; and the lease has been signed with Main Centre. She said she may need to return with any modifications to what was being presented at this meeting.

Ms. Dillon said the Remax flat sign was being moved as the tenant at 130 Main Centre was moving closer to Tiramisu. The space of Massage Green will be taking the same footprint that is currently there. She described signfoam sign as the same style with suspended brackets, with franchise colors of brown-green and outrageous green, softened with white.

**Motion by Vernacchia, supported by Field,** to accept the application as complete.  
***Voice Vote: Ayes: All. Nays: None. Motion Unanimously Carried.***

**Motion by Argenta, supported by Vernacchia,** to grant a Notice to Proceed referencing Secretary of Interior Standards #10; and the Northville Historic District Design Standards 4.24 for signs, and 5.18 for color.  
***Voice Vote: Ayes: All. Nays: None. Motion Unanimously Carried.***

**CASE #2**  
**CONCEPTUAL REVIEW**    **FAÇADE RENOVATION**  
**141 E. CADY**

Ron Cieslack, architect representing building owner Don Bingham, said they appreciated the opportunity to discuss the proposal with the Historic District Commission prior to making their submission. He said they look to improve the overall building appearance. He reviewed their submittal, noting that the building faces south, and gets significant heat through the two large windows and door. He spoke to the exposed gas meter lines and down spouts and their desire to mask or enclose those using constructed and landscaping elements.

Mr. Cieslack said the existing face brick, storefront and awnings are proposed to remain unchanged. The awnings are proposed to be raised slightly and the upper concrete masonry portion of the building accented with an exterior insulation and finish system.

Mr. Cieslack explained that the cornices are not windows, but details in the EFIS that will complement the building. He spoke to the material proposed to be used, and the new cornice will use similar material to conceal the gutters, and be consolidated together in the center. He said he did not have color samples at this time, but requested input of the Historic District Commission, and said they will provide color samples upon their formal submission. He noted that the existing lattice in the photograph would not remain.

Mr. Cieslack discussed the exterior finished system in terms of durability, and noted several buildings in the area that use this material. He noted that while it will require some maintenance, it requires less than block material, and it helps to provide added insulation.

Commissioner Argenta said he thought the proposal was a good attempt to improve this area. He said there was nothing historical about it, but it was a great solution for an area that is not on Main Street. He suggested the inclusion of more color.

Mr. Cieslack concurred and said they wanted something to complement the brick.

Discussion took place regarding EFIS and building materials, and how it has improved over time.

Commissioner Luikart requested more product information be provided with the application, since the application would be upon half of the building.

Discussion took place regarding the installation of actual windows. Mr. Bingham explained why that would not be practical due to the 12" block of the building.

Commissioner Field was in favor of covering the utilities. He said the green would improve the aesthetics; however, he was not in favor of blank windows.

Mr. Cieslack spoke to a similar use at the library in Pinckney, and the appearance of a filled in window. He said it was simply the addition of a decoration.

Commissioner Argenta said he thought it would blend in, carry the detail of the arches, and there was no need for real windows.

Discussion took place regarding combining the downspouts, and not interfering with the utilities.

Commissioner Vernacchia said he has no concerns, and was interested to see final proposal.

The Historic District Commission reached general agreement with the conceptual plan; and that more information would be provided at the next meeting.

**Motion by Hoffman, supported by Vernacchia, to accept the conceptual plan as presented; and that more details will be provided in the application.**

***Voice Vote: Ayes: All. Nays: None. Motion Unanimously Carried.***

**CASE #3  
MILES BRADLEY BUILDING  
368 N. ROGERS**

**DECK**

Andy Hodge was present regarding the addition of a deck to 368 N. Rogers. He explained that the rear of the home has a walk-out basement, with an upper level doorwall with no deck. He said they were proposing to construct two new decks; one off the south side of the home, and one off the rear, at the second level. He said there is a 4 x 4 landing that has rotted at the primary entrance to the home; and they were looking to replace this with a 4 x 8 platform. He described the use of the composite building material (Trex) for both the deck and side porch; with a hybrid deck for the railing; with a black aluminum baluster on the rear deck. He said this would open up the visibility to the north, and reduce maintenance. The color chosen is woodland brown; with cedar components in a natural color with a clear finish (with vertical surfaces, no flat wood surfaces.)

Discussion took place regarding the age of the building, i.e. an older home with no historic significance; with a brick façade; and similar materials to be used on the deck and porches, to other homes in the area.

Commissioner Argenta pointed out that the photograph indicated that the lower level is exposed concrete block with a doorwall; and that the home was not historic, based on that.

Commissioner Luikart said since the age of the house is not known, that it be accepted as significant enough; and that a motion be made in light of that; and similar materials have been used in the area; and that this was for a side façade.

**Motion by Vernacchia, supported by Argenta, to accept the application as complete.**

***Voice Vote: Ayes: All. Nays: None. Motion Unanimously Carried.***

**Motion by Luikart, supported by Vernacchia, to grant a Notice to Proceed referencing Secretary of Interior Standards #10; and the Northville Historic District Design Standards 3.23 for decks, 3.21 for materials, and 5.18 color.**

***Voice Vote: Ayes: All. Nays: None. Motion Unanimously Carried.***

Commissioner Hoffman noted that the color for the proposal was woodland brown.

**CASE # 4  
DDA WALK THRU  
125-127 E. MAIN**

**DEMOLITION**

~~Discussion took place regarding the DDA Walk Thru.~~

~~Chair Johnson said the Notice to Proceed was already granted on the partial demolition. He said the change would be the reconstruction of the front façade and the materials being used. He said there would be no additional submittal.~~

~~Gary Cooper described the plan to building a new wall to replace the front façade of the building, and to make it look as it previously looked. He said it will be a traditional wall, with three wythes; the brick removed from the buildings was salvaged, and there should be enough brick to face the front façade of the building. He described the masonry concrete back up, reinforced in both directions; and placed upon on a steel tube. He said it will be a stronger structure than what it replaced.~~

~~Mr. Cooper said prior to demolition, he documented the original existing construction; the finished plans will reflect that construction. He said the lower storefront will be a recreation of the appropriate storefront.~~

~~Commissioner Luikart said she thought the Historic District Commission would have documentation regarding what this new wall would look like for the records.~~

~~Commissioner Hoffman suggested that new drawings be included in the file.~~

~~Ms. Ward said the new drawings would be completed this week and forwarded to contractor for pricing.~~

~~Discussion took place regarding standard procedure.~~

~~Ms. Elmiger said the application that was submitted was for the demolition. She said she did not know if the Applicant was prepared for the discussion regarding the reconstruction.~~

~~Commissioner Field said what was presented is what the proposal will look like and what can be salvaged. He said he was fine with moving forward with it, as their explanation was satisfactory.~~

~~Chair Johnson said to make sure the file is complete with construction drawings.~~

~~Mr. Cooper agreed and said drawing will also be submitted to the Building Official.~~

~~Discussion took place regarding what was said in the previous meeting, and the purpose of the Applicant at this meeting.~~

~~Commissioner Luikart said she did not think the Historic District Commission would be considering the approval of the new wall at this meeting.~~

~~Commissioner Vernacchia said he thought the wall would look like what was indicated in all the plans that have been submitted. He said the Applicant will do what is needed to satisfy the Building Official; the demolition has been handled; and more background was provided by Mr. Cooper.~~

~~Chair Johnson said the Historic District Commission needs to grant the Notice to Proceed for the rebuilding of the new wall, with copies submitted to the Building Official before reconstruction starts, and then they can go forward without waiting until the next meeting.~~

Discussion took place regarding the DDA Walk Thru.

Chair Johnson said the Notice to Proceed was already granted on the partial demolition. He said the change would be the reconstruction of the front façade and the materials being used. He said there would be no additional submittal.

Gary Cooper described the plan to building a new wall to replace the front façade of the building, and to make it look as it previously looked. He said it will be a traditional wall, ~~with three wythes; not building a 3 wythe wall, instead, building a modern structural wall with a brick veneer.~~ the brick removed from the buildings was salvaged, and there should be enough brick to face the front façade of the building. He described the masonry concrete back-up, reinforced in both directions; and placed upon on a steel tube *in place of an I beam. He said they will build a brick veneer on top of the concrete. He will repeat the window openings and the brick detail of the building.* He said it will be a stronger structure than what it replaced.

Mr. Cooper said prior to demolition, he documented the original existing construction; the finished plans will reflect that construction. *The storefront that is below the upper façade will be as was designed.* He said the lower storefront will be a recreation of ~~the~~ *an* inappropriate storefront. *Mr. Cooper said they haven't made any real changes at all. It remains as it was originally composed as part of the walk thru.*

Commissioner Luikart said she thought the Historic District Commission would have documentation regarding what this new wall would look like for the records. *Commissioner Luikart said that all the information we've (the HDC) received is info received back when the applicant originally came to us. (the HDC) She thought it was pretty standard procedure that we would have drawings of what this new wall would be. . Mr. Cooper told the HDC what the wall would look like but we have no construction documents to keep with the file. Commissioner Luikart stated that it is our standard procedure, even though this is a city job, we've talked*

*about treating everyone the same and we would not normally approve something without seeing the design.*

Commissioner Hoffman suggested that new drawings be included in the file.

Ms. Ward said the new drawings would be completed this week and forwarded to contractor for pricing.

Discussion took place regarding standard procedure.

Ms. Elmiger said the application that was submitted was for the demolition. She said she did not know if the Applicant was prepared for the discussion regarding the reconstruction.

Commissioner Field said what was presented is what the proposal will look like and what can be salvaged. He said he was fine with moving forward with it, as their explanation was satisfactory.

Chair Johnson said to make sure the file is complete with construction drawings.

Mr. Cooper agreed and said drawing will also be submitted to the Building Official.

Discussion took place regarding what was said in the previous meeting, and the purpose of the Applicant at this meeting.

Commissioner Luikart said she did not think the Historic District Commission would be considering the approval of the new wall at this meeting. *She expressed confusion since, according to the HDC agenda, case #4 says DEMOLITION. There is nothing for case #4 about reconstruction of the wall.*

Commissioner Vernacchia said he thought the wall would look like what was indicated in all the plans that have been submitted. He said the Applicant will do what is needed to satisfy the Building Official; the demolition has been handled; and more background was provided by Mr. Cooper.

Chair Johnson said the Historic District Commission needs to grant the Notice to Proceed for the rebuilding of the new wall, with copies submitted to the Building Official before reconstruction starts, and then they can go forward without waiting until the next meeting.

**Motion by Field, supported by Vernacchia**, that the Applicant must submit to the Building Official the drawings of the reconstruction of the new wall, and then they can proceed with construction.

***Voice Vote: Motion Carried, 6-1, with Luikart opposed.***

## **DISCUSSION**

Commissioner Vernacchia said he and Commissioner Argenta met as a subcommittee regarding 227 N. Rogers. He said they met with the homeowners, reviewed the plans in detail, provided copies for the Building Official and the Historic District Commission file, and they felt the Applicant had met the requirements.

## **ADJOURN**

Chair Johnson adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Gray  
Recording Secretary