



Minutes of Hammond Historic District Commission

May 17, 2017 11:00A.M.

Hammond City Council Chamber- 312 East Charles

- Meeting called to order by Mr. Ryan Faulk at 11:00 am. Verification of meeting notice given by Administrative Officer, Ms. Leah Solomon.
- Roll call taken:
 1. Present: Jessica Shirey, Shauna Seals, Howard Nichols, Jen White, and Ryan Faulk.
 2. Absent: Susan Owens and Marguerite Walter
- Motion to approve the minutes for April 19th, 2017 by Mr. Nichols. Second by Mrs. Shirey. Vote taken with unanimous approval.
- New Business:
 - 310 W. Charles – Painting & Repair
 - *Application presented by project contractor, Vance Gamso, 16606 Hwy 40 East*
 - *The core of this project is a “clean up” on the front of the house. Kitty Leche (the homeowner) would like to pressure wash and re-paint the front porch, decking, and handrails as well some trim for an upcoming wedding. Mr. Gamso points out that some scrollwork will need repair and a couple pieces will need to be replaced. All paint colors will match original. In fact, the porch deck had been painted over with grey, but a pink color that was there before was revealed under a stapled-down mat. The deck will be returned to that pink color. Mr. Gamso brought in all paint color samples with painted portions of building materials (on file). The identical match is confirmed for this in-kind paint replacement. Mr. Gamso also presents pictures of the scrollwork most in need of repair and replacement.*
 - *Mr. Nichols is very familiar with the house. Mrs. Shirey asks about Mr. Gamso’s exact plan of action for the scrollwork on the porch. For the two pieces that need replacing (about 6’ or 7’ of the stock), Mr. Gamso has a choice between using Spanish cedar or old growth cypress (cut from a salvaged beam). He leaves the choice up to the Commission. Mr. Faulk states that both options are acceptable. Mr. Nichols reminds the Commission that none of that porch material is original to the house. When the Leche’s bought the property, they changed the posts. Regardless though, this is a completely in-kind replacement for what’s there currently. Mr. Gamso continues to explain that for all other millwork repairs on the porch his intentions are to dig out portions of rotted wood and fill those and other existing holes and cracks with Bondo, unless an alternative product is recommended by the Commission. Mr. Faulk confirms that Bondo is acceptable to use in this case as long as the wood rot is thoroughly cleaned out. Mr. Gamso affirms this. Mrs. Shirey asks if Bondo performs well with seasonal climate shifts. Mr. Gamso states that he has used the product in different climates and it’s all he uses still. Therefore, he claims, it performs adequately. Mrs. Shirey wants to ensure that the paint color is properly*

- inventoried and Mr. Gamso offers the product inventory numbers as well as the photographs of the sample areas. It is determined that will be adequate record.*
- *Mr. Faulk asks for public input. No takers.*
 - Motion to approve application by Mr. Nichols. Second by Mrs. Shirey. Vote taken with unanimous approval
 - *Mr. Nichols adds for public record that this house was built by Hammond Mayor Charles C. Carter, who also built the first Hammond City Hall. The City Hall building was demolished in order to put up the Ford Justice Center Building, Mr. Nichols continues. The columns on the front of the house were not the original ones though. If a future owner would like to go back, they would need to find an earlier photograph of the house. The current columns were on the cover of Southern Living magazine approximately thirty years ago and the Leches liked the look. Therefore when they bought the house, they changed the columns to match.*
 - 209 E. Charles – Signage
 - *Kim Dixon from Sign DeSigns & More representing the applicant.*
 - *The application is for applied vinyl signs to the storefront of 209 E. Charles. The building is technically two stores with two doors and two windows, but the new business-owner is combining it into one, adding vinyl signage to both windows and both glass doors on the façade.*
 - *Mr. Faulk inquires about the background of the main logo – is it solid white or clear? Mr. Dixon answers that it is a solid, opaque circle behind the logo. Mr. Faulk states that it is covering too much of the glass with the solid background for the graphic. He asks for the opinion of the Commission, stating that a clear background for both proposed logos, considering their size, would be more appropriate window cover. He also notes that it appears that all lettering abides the guidelines' 12" limit except for perhaps the scripted lettering on either end of one of the signs. Mrs. Shirey asks if the lettering portion is opaque as well. Mr. Dixon confirms that it is and agrees that it would be alright to change the background on the circled logo to clear. Mrs. Seals asks about the size of the circular logo. Mr. Dixon says that he did not do the mock up, but considering that the size of the window is noted at 57", it appears that the circular logo is planned for around 36" with about 10" of window left on each side. Mrs. Seals comments that is a lot of window taken up by the sign. Mr. Faulk agrees and reasserts that the clear background would open up the window more. Mr. Nichols thinks that would be appropriate. Mr. Dixon agrees and says he can also do a clear background on the door logo to match. Mrs. Shirey asks if it's two separate addresses. Mr. Dixon confirms it is, but that the business owner will only use the one – 209 E. Charles. No wall separates the buildings on the interior any longer. Mrs. Shirey explains that the Commission is deliberating over this because they are trying to ensure consistency because applied vinyl has been more frequent in the district, but the guidelines don't cover it adequately at present. Mr. Faulk wants to ensure the lettering is all 12" or under. Mr. Nichols clarifies that this means 12" per line of text. Mrs. Seals reads that the guidelines state "one decorative vinyl store name on the door and windows," so she inquires whether would this application be considered two. Mr. Faulk says that the guidelines are ambiguous enough for this application to be appropriate at the proposed scale.*
 - *Mr. Faulk opens the floor up for public input while the Commission deliberates over the guidelines.*

- Motion to approve application with no background on the logo and 12" lettering all around by Mrs. Shirey. Second by Mr. Faulk. Vote taken with unanimous approval.
- 205 E. Thomas – Exterior Renovations
 - *Tom Pistorius and Meredith Singley from Pistorius architects presenting.*
 - *This is a follow up application from last month's in which the removal of aggregate stucco from the façade of the building in question was approved. For the storefront, the applicants are going with 3/8" tempered glass with a butt glaze and a silicone joint instead of a framed one. The aluminum frame will be on top, bottom, and the sills. It will be a custom connection. Plywood will be structural support, neoprene and painted black. The aluminum in front is a stop and sealed into place. All outside corners on the proposal are butt glazed. The storefront currently sits on cantilevered steel for the sill. That will go back in place and the glass will go on the other side of that. There will probably be a steel corbel to brace it on the exterior, which will be hidden by the design. The awning structure will stay in place, but will be re-wrapped in aluminum. Decorative brackets will be added above the existing first story awning while supportive brackets will be installed above the new second story to assist with keeping it in place. The awning on the second story is a little lower than in the previous proposal, Mr. Pistorius notes. The deck of the new canopy is going to be light gauge aluminum. The framing members will bolt into the building. The railing on the balcony will be tube steel, filled in with horizontal flat bar every four inches. The currently bricked-in second story windows will be re-opened. Also on the second story, two storefront doors that match the first story doors will flank one large center window that will be comprised of four butt glazed panes. The clients are looking into making the center window operable.*
 - *Mrs. White inquires about the brick that cases the windows now. Mrs. Shirey specifies that a goal of the Commission is to encourage these projects to take materials that are planned to be eliminated and salvaging them. Especially if it is historic brick. Mr. Faulk appreciates the storefront doors on the second floor and the butt glazing of the center window, but is concerned about making the center portion operable, thereby having all doors on the top, in essence. Mr. Pistorius clarifies that the center opening cannot be a door because there's a sill about 18" above the floor. It is truly a window that the clients would like to be able to slide/bi-fold open. Regardless, Mr. Faulk expresses hesitation about if such a large operable window is appropriate for this scenario. Mr. Pistorius references the Iron Horse restaurant, which has a similar situation. Mr. Faulk states that decision was perhaps not the best in hindsight. Ms. Solomon inquires about making the window operable in another way – like a casement window. Mr. Pistorius responds that they considered a garage door-type system, but all of the above would require more framing than the clients would like. The bi-fold window would be four 24" panels so it would also not intrude too much on the space, Mr. Pistorius details. There will be a table immediately in front of it to allow people to look out. It would match the first floor with the same glass and minimal framing. Ms. Solomon jumps back to discuss the first floor canopy bracket addition. She asks if the first floor canopy is original, which is confirmed. She explains that the two matching canopies – one new and one historic – might be confused as both being installed at the same time and therefore both mistaken for historic. Mr. Pistorius explains that the first floor awning is probably not the true original. The building was originally an old National Bank and the whole storefront looked completely different with a second story porch. In the 1950s the front became the way it appears now in form. Ms. Solomon reminds that it is then technically historic as it is older than 50 years, regardless of whether it is original to the building. Mr. Nichols refers to the plans with the exposed brick of the*

building and asks what was beneath the aggregate stucco. Mr. Pistorius responds that they haven't pulled the stucco yet, but they are intending on pulling it off, salvaging and infilling on existing brick – perhaps using what the second story windows were bricked-in with. Mr. Pistorius also brings up that they have found infilled windows on the first story (from the interior work). They would like to take out the plywood that fills them now and replace that with brick to make it flush with the building and also to weather proof it. There may be a little discoloration in the style of the brick, but they are going to try and match it as best as possible. Mr. Faulk appreciates what has been presented, but the brackets on the first floor are not necessary and the bi-fold window approach may not be appropriate. A fixed window, he explains, would better serve because of the limited use that the clients will get out of operable windows. There are other already operable openings available. Trent Messina (applicant) asks from the audience if there is a conceivable option that the Commission recommends. Ms. Solomon asks about the possibility of an awning window, but the applicants did already consider that and decided against it. The glass would be very heavy so the bi-fold was easier. The window is large - 8' by 9'. Mrs. Shirey expresses that it wouldn't be too cumbersome of an opening because of the four panels in the bi-fold mechanism. It would be subtle when open. Mr. Messina again asks what the Commission would prefer if not the bi-fold option. Mrs. Shirey reinforces that the bi-fold might actually be the least intrusive option to the structure because if it lifted up there would have to be more bracing material and if it was a garage-style opening that would have more framing to mount. The bi-fold would require the least intrusion on the historic materials of the building. Mrs. Seals asks what the potential issues of the bi-fold are. Mr. Faulk responds that issues might arise with the exposure considering the small amount of actual use over time with any kind of operable window. However, if the consensus is that there's no issue as per the guidelines, it will be okay, he states. Mr. Faulk continues that the applicants will be held to the storefront profile most of all that they've outlined on both floors as well as the sight lines detailed. Mr. Nichols asks how much use the applicants will end up getting out of the second floor window if it's operable. Mr. Faulk and Mrs. Shirey agree that the atmospheric control of the interior is going to get in the way of the applicants operating that second floor window. Mr. Messina responds that their primary directive with this window is to get as much open air seating as possible since the options are limited with the current floor plan. Ms. Solomon suggests that the second floor opening might actually help in the summer to ventilate the building. Particularly if the applicants are only using the first floor on a given day, such a large opening on the second floor would encourage hot air to cycle out of the building as the cold air of the air conditioning falls. While that contradicts why the applicants would like the window to be operable, it provides a future scenario where the window could prove a positive option for the health of the building in general. Mr. Pistorius agrees that it could help with outside air intake. After much discussion, Mrs. Shirey requests that it be clarified what the Commission will approve in this application. Mr. Pistorius responds that this application deals with the storefront system, the awning and railing material, and then the windows/doors on the second story. The previous meeting's approval was simply aggregate stucco removal and the determination of the storefront profile. The overall design was also technically approved, but the Commission was looking for the clarification of details that has been provided in this current application. Mrs. White asks if the application then needs to be amended to remove the first story awning brackets. Some Commissioners express apathy about that detail of the

application, Ms. Solomon reminds everyone that it is a part of the HHDC guidelines to distinguish historic from new wherever possible. Mr. Pistorius states that it won't be a problem to remove them or even lower them so they're not as visible. They're not needed structurally on the first floor, so Mr. Pistorius agrees that the first floor brackets will be eliminated and the second floor brackets will remain as planned.

- *Mr. Faulk opens up the floor for public input. No takers.*
- Motion to approve application as amended without the planned first story awning brackets by Mrs. Shirey. Second by Mr. Faulk. Vote taken with unanimous approval
- A motion to amend the agenda to discuss changing the monthly meeting time by Mr. Faulk. Second by Mr. Nichols. Vote taken with unanimous approval.
- Time Change for Monthly Meetings
 - *The option of moving the HHDC monthly meeting time from 11:00 am to 5:30 pm has come up a few times in general discussion because of potential difficulties for applicants to make it to the current time (at 11:00 am). There have been some past criticism and it was brought up as a concern for those in the recently proposed district expansion. Council Chambers are confirmed as available for a 5:30 pm time slot on the third Wednesday of every month.*
 - *Mrs. Shirey expresses that she doesn't have a preference and therefore she will vote with the majority. Mrs. Seals' preference is to remain at 11:00 am in general, but be flexible to adjust time for any applicants that can't make it. Mr. Nichols doesn't have a preference. Mrs. White is available at either time as well, but if the expansion ends up coming before City Council again, it might be appropriate to change the time to the evening. Mrs. Shirey suggests that perhaps this then be put on hold to see if the expansion is approved and they can observe how well the 11:00 am slot suits applicants. Mrs. White concurs because at the moment it doesn't necessarily make sense to change the time. If it happens that a future meeting has five resident applicants and only one business, then the meeting time will be a problem. Mrs. Shirey asks if the meeting time in that case over email and Ms. Solomon confirms that it can be changed with seven days' notice. Mr. Faulk thinks we should talk about it more if this case occurs, but doesn't think changing on a case-by-case basis is appropriate. The meeting time should be changed overall if it ends up suiting more of the applicants. Mrs. Shirey considers the business owners in the district who don't live in Hammond too that might not be able to attend a 5:30 pm meeting. Therefore meeting time change should be further considered based on which applicant pool has more weight/quantity – residents or business owners. Mr. Faulk agrees and asks why the meeting time was changed to 11:00 am in the first place as it used to be in the evening. Mrs. Seals states once more that her preference is for the earlier time, but agrees that the meeting time should reflect the needs of the district's constituents. Mr. Nichols suggests that this discussion be tabled until potentially a decision comes down on a residential additions to the historic district. It may be that this does not end up being an issue at all. Mrs. Seals asks if the HHDC should solicit input on this topic. Mrs. Shirey and Mrs. White do not think that a good idea. Any new addition to the district will not necessarily be specifically catered to unless it presents an issue that is echoed in the majority of constituents. Mr. Faulk confirms that this issue will then be considered if a greater need for it is presented.*
 - Motion to approve tabling the option until the June HHDC meeting by Mr. Faulk. Second by Mrs. Shirey. Vote taken with unanimous approval.

- Updates from Director

1. CLG Grant Proposal

1. *Ms. Solomon announces the approval of matching funds from the Hammond Downtown Development District to make the CLG grant possible. The grant was sent in on Monday with a new map than was presented at last month's HHDC meeting. Southeastern has been taken out of the survey area to not confuse the project as partnering with the institution, as recommended by local preservation consultant Laura Blokker. However, after taking out Southeastern, a swath of the Iowa neighborhood was added for even more documentation value.*

1. *Mr. Nichols asks if this map represents what will be proposed for the future update to the National Register District. Ms. Solomon clarifies that it is not. It is only the boundaries of a historic structures survey that will then inform what an update to the National Register District will look like depending on historic inventory found.*

2. Work Session Scheduling

1. *Because of new issues with window signs that aren't currently covered in the guidelines, the HHDC would like to work through amendments to get the window signs further defined as soon as possible. Ms. Solomon will get it scheduled to be approved next month.*

3. Compliance and Non-Compliance Letters

1. *The Toggery building has been notified of the antenna issue. The property at 111 N. Magnolia has outstanding HHDC fines, but since the passing of the owner, the status of the building and thus the status of the fines is a curiosity of the Commission.*

1. *Mr. Nichols states that he noticed a few minor improvements to the property, but isn't sure what's been determined for the future. There was a "For Sale" sign for a short time. Mrs. White saw that as well and wonders what came of that. Mrs. Shirey states that she's heard that it was to be bequeathed to the owner's sons, but wants the Commission to keep in mind what can be done to further discourage a pattern of neglect on the property. Is the fine still accruing? Who owns the property? Can it be sold because of liens? Is it in probate? Mr. Nichols suggests that the Clerk of Courts be consulted. He requests that a full update be presented for the Commission with, at the very least, information on whether and portion of the fine has been paid and who the current owner is. Mrs. Shirey adds that any planned work on the house should also be outlined – if it exists.*

- Announcement of Special Meeting - Residential Appendix Discussion: June 8th, 2017 from 5:30 – 7:00 pm.
- Next meeting: June 21st, 2017
- Motion to adjourn by Mr. Nichols. Second by Mrs. Shirey. Vote was taken with unanimous approval.