



HOWARD COUNTY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
ELlicott City HISTORIC DISTRICT ■ LAWYERS HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT
3430 Courthouse Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

Administered by the Department of Planning and Zoning

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September Minutes

The ninth regular meeting for the year 2009 of the Historic District Commission was held on Thursday, September 3, 2009 in the Ellicott Room II located at 8930 Stanford Boulevard in Columbia, Maryland.

Members present: Joseph Hauser, Chairman; Samuel Crozier, Vice Chairman; Eileen Tennor, Secretary and Lisa Badart

Staff present: Samantha Stoney, Mina Hilsenrath, Dan Bennett, Jim Vannoy and Virginia Vargo

Chairman Joseph Hauser opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. and asked the Commission members if there were any changes to the August 6, 2009 minutes. Joseph Hauser made a motion to approve the minutes as written; Samuel Crozier seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Before calling the first case, Samantha Stoney introduced Karen Theimer Brown from the Maryland Association of Historic District Commissions. Ms. Brown will observe the meeting and consult with Ms. Stoney within a month to give the Howard County HDC suggestions.

PLANS FOR APPROVAL

- 1) #09-26 – 3574 Church Road, Ellicott City
- 2) #09-27 – 8090 Main Street, Ellicott City
- 3) #09-28 – 8360 Court Avenue, Ellicott City, HO-51

#09-26 – 3574 Church Road, Ellicott City

Exterior repairs, alterations and painting to windows, doors, trim, dormers, shutters, porch, and stairs.
Tax credit pre-approval.

Applicant: Elizabeth Walsh

Background & Scope of Work: According to MDAT, the house dates to 1911. The Applicant proposes to repair, re-glaze and paint all exterior doors, windows, trim, dormers, shutters, porch (including ceiling) and stairs. The front door will have new hardware installed, which will be consistent with the current antique brass color. The door will be painted Cherokee Rose, the porch ceiling painted Blue Heron, and all other features will be painted the existing gray. The Applicant also proposes to replace the metal full length screen doors on the front and side of the house with wooden full length screen doors.

The Applicant seeks tax credit pre-approval for all work.

Staff Comments: The proposed painting is consistent with Chapter 6 recommendations for routine maintenance. Staff has no objection to the new proposed colors. The full length wooden screen doors are consistent with Chapter 6.G (page 37) recommendations, “on historic buildings, use narrow-framed wooden screen or storm doors.”

Staff Recommendations: Staff recommends Approval of all work and tax credit pre-approval.

Testimony: Mr. Hauser swore in the Applicant, Elizabeth Walsh. Ms. Walsh stated that she purchased the home in the spring of 2009, and was told by a home inspector that the detail work on the exterior needed immediate repair. She plans work on the trim in the fall and work on the shingles in the spring so that within a year the exterior will be sealed and protected.

Eileen Tennor confirmed that the Applicant will be scraping and painting, but asked if any rot is present. Ms. Walsh replied that third floor dormer will probably need to be repaired but will not know for sure until someone climbs up to the area to begin painting. Mr. Hauser asked if any of the cedar shingles are damaged and Ms. Walsh said some are missing especially underneath the windows.

Motion: Lisa Badart made a motion to approve, and Eileen Tennor seconded. The vote was unanimous to approve the application.

#09-27 – 8090-8092 Main Street, Ellicott City

Build rear deck, install door w/ sidelights.

Applicant: Preston A. Pairo, Jr.

Background & Scope of Work: According to MDAT, the structure dates to 1890. The Applicant proposes to build a 19 foot wide by 16 foot long deck in the rear of 8092 Main Street. The decking will be grey composite with white vinyl railings. The Applicant proposes to install a 36 inch wide by 84 inch high French door with 18 inch wide side lites at the entrance of the deck. This will provide emergency egress from the building and general access to the deck. The French door will be white steel and the windows will be white vinyl. The current windows appear to be 1:1 single hung black wooden windows. The plans depict a 15-lite French door and sidelights with divided lites, but the contractor has indicated they are willing install a single lite door and 1:1 windows if the Commission would prefer. The new door and windows will be white.

Staff Comments: The proposed changes affect the rear of the property, which does not appear to be visible from any public right-of-way. The Application complies with Chapter 6.H (page 40) recommendations, such as “replace original windows, frames and related details with features that fit the original openings.” However, Chapter 6.H (page 41) of the Guidelines recommend against “replacing wood windows with metal or vinyl.” The location is not visible and the window opening will not be disturbed. Staff has no objection to the proposal.

The proposal to add a rear deck complies with Chapter 7.B (page 54) of the Guidelines, “decks should not be added to a historic building’s primary façade or a façade highly visible from a public way.”

Staff Recommendations: Staff recommends Approval of the Application and recommends 1:1 windows and a single lite door, which would be closer in appearance to what is currently on the building.

Testimony: Mr. Hauser swore in the contractor, Matt Shanley. Mr. Shanley stated that he is required to install the deck out on the back of the property to provide an exit from the building in case of fire or other emergency.

Ms. Badart asked if the three windows are original to the building, and Mr. Shanley said they are. Ms. Badart commented on the beauty of the building and suggested the windows could be recycled through a salvage dealer.

Ms. Tennor asked if the trim on the back windows is currently black and Mr. Shanley confirmed that it is. Mr. Shanley explained that the trim on the new windows will be white in order to carry the aesthetic look from the interior to the exterior. The back of the building is not visible. Mr. Shanley explained that the deck will stop at the end of the structure and a platform will extend out from the deck, with stairs that will lead down to the ground. Mr. Crozier confirmed that the decking material will be Trex®.

Motion: Ms. Tennor made a motion to approve the proposed improvements as submitted and Mr. Hauser seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

#09-28 – 8360 Court Avenue, Ellicott City, HO-51

Construct five parking spaces next to the Courthouse; remove and replace trees.

Applicant: Howard County Department of Public Works

Background & Scope of Work: The Applicant proposes to construct five additional parking spaces on the northeast side of the Courthouse. The proposed parking spaces will consist of three diagonal spaces and two parallel spaces. The ground will be excavated and graded, and a reinforced concrete retaining wall will be built and faced with 4 inch granite. The retaining walls will be 3 feet at the highest. The existing granite curb will be relocated and any additional curb that is needed will match the existing. The wheel stops for the new parking spaces will be granite, to match what is currently used in front of the Courthouse.

A landscape plan has been provided for the treatment of the site after the parking spaces are created. Three Honey Locust trees will be removed to create room for the parking spaces, but two of the same variety will be planted on the site. The third Honey Locust cannot be replaced due to limited space. Various other plants, such as hydrangeas, false indigo and butterfly weed, will be planted around the new retaining walls and parking spaces. The landscaping should help minimize the impact of the construction.

The Applicants have provided a letter justifying the need for the additional parking spaces, which will be used as secure parking for judicial officers. Throughout the country, courthouses are adapting to growing security concerns. The options for parking are very limited due to historic nature of the building. Judicial officers currently have to park in the main parking lot, and due to certain incidences in the past, find secure parking to be necessary.

Staff Comments: The Application complies with Chapter 9.D (page 68) recommendations for walls, “Granite features, especially those visible from public ways, should be preserved with the same attention given to historic buildings.” All new walls will be faced with granite to blend in with the existing walls. The Guidelines also recommend “new parking lots should be designed to minimize changes to historic streetscapes or to the setting of historic buildings.” While the proposed parking

spaces replace some existing lawn and plantings, new landscaping will enhance the area being disturbed. Given the security concerns, Staff recognizes the desire for more secure parking.

Staff Recommendations: Staff recommends Approval.

Testimony: No one from the Howard County Department of Public Works was present to testify, however Mr. Bennett was familiar with the project and answered questions from the Commission.

Mr. Crozier expressed regret at the request to disturb the setting around the historic building and said paving so close to the Courthouse building diminishes the historic character. He also cited his concern that this case would be a precedent that could lead to further reduction in green space in the area. Mr. Bennett acknowledged that this area is the only free space around the Courthouse, but it is a judicial security issue. He said that the extra spaces have been requested for the judges and that if there is a future need for another space, one space will be taken from the handicap parking area near the front of the building. Mr. Bennett described how the judges would park on the side of the Courthouse and enter the building.

Commission members discussed the proposed design for the parking spaces. Mr. Hauser mentioned the sight line to the Courthouse should remain the same because the parking spaces will be built at a grade that will not block the view of the building. Mr. Bennett explained there is a slight slope on the drive to comply with ADA requirements.

Design and position of the wall, pilasters, planters, and cap were discussed between Mr. Bennett and the Commission. Mr. Crozier requested the cap on the proposed wall be enlarged and designed to match the one on the existing wall at the top of the slope. Ms. Tennor asked if the proposed wall could have piers similar to those on the existing wall. Mr. Bennett agreed that the cap and pilasters could match those on the back wall.

Motion: Ms. Badart made a motion to approve the application with the stipulation that the proposed wall replicate the existing wall, as requested by the Commission and as Mr. Bennett described. Ms. Tennor seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Other business:

Mina Hilsenrath spoke to Commission members about three pieces of legislation:

1. Reappointment of Lisa Badart to the HDC.
2. Nomination of Robert Tennenbaum to the HDC.
3. Code changes discussed since November 2008 will be discussed at the County Council meeting on September 22, 2009. Council will vote on the changes on October 5, 2009. Resolutions for appointments to the Commission will become effective immediately. The Code change legislation becomes effective 61 days after being voted on.

Ms. Stoney mentioned new applications have been created.

Ms. Theimer Brown spoke briefly about her role with the Maryland Association of Historic District Commissions (MAHDC).

The meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

*Chapter and page references are from the Ellicott City or Lawyers Hill Historic District Design Guidelines.

Elmina J. Hilsenrath, ASLA
Executive Secretary

Joseph Hauser, Chairperson

Virginia L. Vargo, Recording Secretary

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