CITY OF DOVER
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
January 15, 2015

The Regular Meeting of the City of Dover Historic District Commission was held on Thursday, January 15, 2015 at 3:00 PM with Chairman Scrafford presiding. Members present were Chairman Salkin, Mr. McDaniel, Ms. Horsey, and Mr. Salkin. Mr. Jackson was absent.

Planning Office Staff members present were Mrs. Melson-Williams, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Townshend and Mrs. Purnell. Also present were Mr. Edward McWilliams, Mr. Mark Clark, Ms. Tina Lucarelli, Ms. Lynn Riley, Mr. James Phinney, Mr. Glenn Mandalas, and Mr. William Austin.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. McDaniel moved for approval of the agenda, seconded by Ms. Horsey and the motion was unanimously carried 4-0. Mr. Jackson was absent.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MEETING OF NOVEMBER 20, 2014

Mr. McDaniel moved to adopt the minutes of the regular Historic District Commission meeting of November 20, 2014, seconded by Ms. Horsey and the motion was unanimously carried 4-0. Mr. Jackson was absent.

COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS

Summary of 2014 Activity

Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that there has not been much change in the permit status. A number of them have been completed. The only thing different from last month's meeting is the Historic Property Tax Credit Application that was heard in November.

Mrs. Melson-Williams asked if there were any other questions regarding the applications.

Responding to Mr. Scrafford's question whether a request for a Building Permit had been received from Kirby and Holloway, Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that the Building Permit for Kirby and Holloway has been submitted and is being reviewed by building code (division).

Responding to Chairman Salkin's question whether Planning Staff would receive from Kirby and Holloway as part of their application for development a reference of the sign and assurance that it will be maintained or modified per code, Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that the Administrative Site Plan for the site dealt with the building and parking. It continues to show the sign location. There may be changes to the curbing at the sign space related to a parking lot adjustment. If they choose to make any changes to the sign it will be a separate Sign Permit application. They have not offered anything different.

Summary of Architectural Review Certifications for 2014
Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that there have been sixty-eight (68) permits within the Historic District; it does not include plumbing and mechanical permits. Nineteen (19) of the permits since they are interior renovations they are not subject to the Architectural Review Certification. There were forty-nine (49) permits that involved some type of Architectural Review Certification that could receive approval by Staff. There were five (5) permits associated with applications that came before the Historic District Commission and/or Planning Commission.

Mrs. Melson-Williams asked if there were any other questions regarding the permits.

Report of 2014 Historic District Commission Activity
Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that most of the permits in the Historic District are Building Permits for renovations of existing buildings and Sign Permits; not so much new construction for new buildings. The First State National Monument (The Green in Dover) in late 2014 became part of the First State National Historical Park.

Department of Planning & Inspections Update
Draft Bicycle Plan & Pedestrian Plan for Dover
Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that there is a Public Workshop about the plans scheduled for January 20, 2015 from 4:00 – 7:00pm. It will be held at the Pitts Recreation Center in Schutte Park.

Responding to Mr. Scrafford's question whether there had been any changes to the proposal, Mrs. Melson-Williams stated nothing other than minor editing. The Plan may also be available on the MPO website.

Restoring Central Dover Community Plan
Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that the Plan is now finalized.

Mrs. Townshend stated that a grant application was submitted to the Wells Fargo Regional Foundation for an implementation grant. As part of Phase I, Wells Fargo met with some members of the Steering Committee. The applicants were then invited back as part of Phase II of the application which is due today and is being submitted by NCALL. It was also used as the basis for the Strong Neighborhood Housing Fund Grant application that was put together with Habitat for Humanity as the lead, but included NCALL, Interfaith, Milford Housing Development Corporation and the City. It really moved into the implementation.

Responding to Chairman Salkin's question whether the implementation focused in Dover on a particular section within the broader plan area, Mrs. Townshend yes, for the strong neighborhood.

Responding to Chairman Salkin's question whether Historic Preservation is a part of the program in any way, Mrs. Townshend stated no, the Strong Neighborhood Program is more about taking vacant lots and building on them. It also consists of taking vacant or condemned buildings and rehabbing them which could involve demolition, but it depends on the condition of the building.

Responding to Chairman Salkin's question regarding the source of funds, Mrs. Townshend stated

that the source of funds used for the grant is the GP Mortgage Chase settlement with the State of Delaware. As there are settlements with other banks there could be more money deposited into the fund.

Citywide Recreational Needs Assessment
Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that Mrs. Townshend presented some of the survey findings recently to the Council Committee.

Mrs. Townshend stated that some rough review of the survey data of the parks system indicates needs for, indoor restrooms at the Dover Park and Silver Lake Park and benches and trails). The idea of a recreational center building at the Dover Park was the lowest of the 25% items, but it was more than 25% of the people who responded to the survey. A plan for the Dover Park will be done addressing a number of issues that were identified in the survey and making sure that in the future there is a location for a recreation center.

Delaware Downtown Development District Program
Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that Dover was the selected community in Kent County. The other communities in the State are Seaford and Wilmington. The boundaries of the Downtown Development District include areas within the Historic District and areas that are within the National Register of Historical Places districts. Attached to the map is a Frequently Asked Questions document that the Delaware State Housing Authority has prepared. Delaware State Housing Authority is the entity in administering the grant. Anticipated are a lot of other helpful brochures and ways to get the information out regarding opportunity and the incentives available. One of the incentives includes the Historic Property Tax Credit Program. A series of Public Workshops will be held on February 26, 2015 to introduce everyone to the program and incentives.

Mr. McDaniel commented that the program is really important to the City of Dover. He extended kudos to the Planning Staff for the report application that was well done.

NEW BUSINESS

HI-15-02 Sign Permit #14-1609: Signage for Woodburn at 151 Kings Highway, SW – Referral by the City Planner to the Historic District Commission for Review of Architectural Review Certification for Sign Permit application #14-1609 for a post and panel sign. The property is zoned R-10 (One Family Residence Zone) and is subject to the H (Historic District Zone). The property is located on the east side of Kings Highway and south of Division Street. The owner of record is the State of Delaware. Address: 151 Kings Highway SW. Tax Parcel: ED-05-077.05-04-49.00-000.

Mrs. Melson-Williams gave a brief overview of the graphic/photographs of the sign. It is somewhat like a public sign, but it is private residence. Staff is referring the Permit for review under the provisions of *Zoning Ordinance*, Article 10 Section 3.22(A) and (B). The proposed signage is for the Governor's Mansion property known as Woodburn.

Chairman Salkin asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Ms. Horsey asked to be recused from the application as her employer is the applicant.

Representative: Lynn Riley, Division of Historical & Cultural Affairs and Edward McWilliams, Division of Historical & Cultural Affairs.

Ms. Riley stated that over the past two (2) years the Division has been implementing improvements at Woodburn and the Hall House principally relating to accessibility and also including improvements to drainage, utilities, lighting, landscaping, fencing, plant materials, and infrastructure. It is an even better asset than it already was to residents and future visitors. The previous sign was wooden that required a great deal of maintenance. The sign had rotted and needed to be replaced. The proposed sign is a more durable material and one that is used at most of the historical properties. It is an appealing design that is fitting not only with the historical character of the building and property, but also respecting the larger context of the property.

Brief Overview of the Design

Mr. McWilliams stated that the sign was designed by their Historical & Cultural Affairs graphics department advisory group to look at the architectural of Woodburn and the new garden layout to make sure to ensure that the sign design goes well with and compliments of the garden area and the newly installed fence that surrounds the campus of the site. The colors chosen for the sign compliment the brick color in the house. The sign material chosen is very durable and has been used before in the Historic District and Downtown area. A sample of the material was shown and the sign sample is over eight years old. The Woodburn sign verbiage would be on the front and the back would be similar to the sample (a plain color). The administration asked that the garden "open" sign that hangs on the bottom of the sign have slide feature. There is a light fixture at the ground level directly in front of the sign. There are matching posts that matches the fencing.

Chairman Salkin asked if there were any questions regarding the application.

Responding to Chairman Salkin's question on whether the wayside exhibit was being moved to the interior of the property, Ms. Riley stated no. It is actually hanging from the other side of the driveway. The wayside is to the left of the driveway and the property sign is to the right.

Chairman Salkin questioned whether the material used was standard and if it was used elsewhere in Dover. Is the design itself standard or unique? Mr. McWilliams stated that the design itself is similar to a sign designed for a campus and all the signs are similar in design and material, although the other signs are a little bit different material than this one.

Mr. McDaniel commented that even though the material is plastic and looks like pressed wood and the sign was not offensive.

Responding to Chairman Salkin's question whether the sliding of the 'open and close' sign makes the panel wider, Mr. McWilliams stated yes.

Mr. McDaniel moved to accept the Sign Permit as submitted and proposed even though Staff would say the material should be wood, seconded by Mr. Scrafford and the motion was unanimously carried 3-0. Ms. Horsey recused and Mr. Jackson was absent.

HI-15-03 Sign Permit #15-15: Signage at 6 South State Street– Referral by the City Planner to the Historic District Commission for Review of Architectural Review Certification for Sign Permit application #15-15 for freestanding sign and fence. The property is zoned RGO (General Residence and Office Zone) and is subject to the H (Historic District Zone). The property is located on the southwest corner of the intersection of South State Street and West Division Street. The owner of record is Six South State, LLC. Address: 6 South State Street. Tax Parcel: ED-05-077.05-04-27.00-000.

Representative: Mr. Glenn Mandalas, Baird Mandalas & Brockstedt LLC & Mr. William Austin, Austin Signs.

Mrs. Melson-Williams gave a brief overview of the application.

Chairman Salkin asked if there were any questions regarding the application.

Mr. Mandalas presented a drawing. He stated that the sign started out at 8 feet 2 inches and they are now proposing 5 feet 6 inches. The sign matches the fence that was currently there. It climbs to 5 ½ feet, but notice that it does not come much above the 3ft. The lighting that is currently there will remain.

Mr. Austin stated that it is a beautiful sign and asked for the Board acceptance. He presented an exhibit of the seal at 19.6 inches across. The letters would be gold leaf over metal or aluminum. With the letters at 5 ½ inches, you are pushing the envelope any way, making it hard for a person to find the law firm because of the tricky intersection and the sign being on an angle. One thing that goes in the favor of the sign that is see-through. The sign could be seen much better if it was 7ft. especially for new customers. The smaller sign has virtues (stronger, wings could be different). Austin Signs have done a lot of nice signs in Dover including the Street & Ellis sign.

Responding to Mr. McDaniel's question whether Austin Signs did the Prickett & Jones sign and whether the sign was the same height of the sign that is being proposed today, Mr. Austin stated yes.

Ms. Horsey commented that she was happy that the applicant decided to scale down the signage. It is a beautiful sign. Before scaling the sign down, it overtook the house from the street level. When you look at other signs on the corner, the signs can be seen even if it is smaller.

Mr. Scrafford wanted to make sure that nothing was ever added to the sign structure.

Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that Staff is pleased with the sign proposed today and finds that the sign is much more in compliance with the *Design Standards and Guidelines*.

Responding to Mr. Scrafford's question if there was no fence how high the sign could be, Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that the maximum sign height is 7ft.

Mr. Scrafford stated that the fence is the problem.

Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that the sign height regulations are 7 feet, but because it is in the Historic District the subject does not fit the character of the site, district, or elements. In some cases, the sizes that are dictated in the regular sign regulations can become more flexible one way or the other.

Mr. McDaniel stated that the building was one of the taller buildings for sure in the neighborhood if not in the entire Downtown.

Mr. Scrafford moved that application HI-15-03 Sign Permit be approved in the format of 5 feet 6 inches tall with the material as identified in the proposal and indicated on the plan. The motion was seconded by Ms. Horsey and unanimously carried 4-0. Mr. Jackson was absent.

HI-15-04 Building Permit #15-19: Drive-thru ATM at PNC Bank – Referral by the City Planner to the Historic District Commission for Review of Architectural Review Certification for Building Permit application #15-19 for a freestanding drive-thru ATM on the property of PNC Bank. The property is zoned I-O (Institutional and Office Zone) and is subject to the H (Historic District Zone). The property is located at the northeast corner of the intersection of South State Street, Kings Highway, and Loockerman Plaza. The owner of record is PNC Bank. Address: 3 Loockerman Plaza. Tax Parcel: ED-05-077.05-04-57.00-000.

Mrs. Melson-Williams gave a brief overview of the application. It is a Building Permit for a free-standing drive-thru ATM. The applicant was advised by Staff that due to the unique nature of the freestanding drive-thru ATM that once the permit was filed the permit would be referred to the Historic District Commission.

Chairman Salkin asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Representative: Mr. Mark Clark, CDG Architects, Ms. Tina Lucarelli, CDG Architects

Mr. Clark stated that PNC Bank would like to accommodate and meet the requirements and be sensitive. A gentleman came from Delaware Brick to identify the existing bricks and we will be using the same type of bricks. Precast will be used to give it some trim that would be anticipated in the structure, synthetic slate shingles, and fiberglass trim because it is better maintained than wood.

Presentation

Mr. Clark stated that overall PNC Bank is pleased with the freestanding drive-thru.

Responding to Mr. Scrafford's question regarding relocating the dumpster operation to a new location, Ms. Lucarelli stated that the City's waste management company was contacted.

Responding to Mr. Scrafford's question regarding the fencing, Ms. Lucarelli stated that at the current time there was a chain-link fence and slats. Mr. Clark stated that they will be putting up a white vinyl fence.

Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that it was identified that there may be something about service with the dumpster as it was currently located and how trash pickup occurs for that site. Applicant was encouraged to reach out to Public Works. Other commercial entities are required to have an enclosure around their dumpster. In certain instances, it is required to have a gate if it faces a public street, but in this case it does not.

Mr. Scrafford commented that the opening is in the opposite direction facing the parking lot with an opening and he found that to be much more acceptable.

Mr. Clark stated that the trash is not picked up by a machine or truck; it is picked up by a person similar to some residential trash pickups.

Ms. Horsey stated that she had always had a concern regarding the use white vinyl anywhere. She questioned if the fence would be shiny white vinyl or painted wood. Mr. Clark stated that as it sits right now it probably would have been the shiny white vinyl, but upon visiting Home Depot they now offer vinyl fences with some painted finishes. They could go with a matte gray, but if they could find a redwood or brick looking wooden fencing, it would be ideal.

Mr. Scrafford agreed. You don't want to make the trash collection to be the most prominent issue on site. You have to work with the color and be more consistent.

Mr. Clark stated that they could promise to get a non-gloss white or a complimentary color without a lot of maintenance.

Mr. Salkin suggested looking at non-plastic products. There are other products that might make it look like it is painted wood.

Mr. Clark stated that Trex is the common name that everyone picks up that are basically used for deck boards, but can be used on the vertical without a lot of trouble. He knows that there is a reddish-brown color that is readily available. With a condition of approval the applicant would be happy to do a low maintenance custom fence. He stated that he would not use picket fence as you can see through it, but use something that is pretty solid. He will design a nice looking garbage enclosure.

Ms. Horsey thanked the applicant for agreeing to changes.

Responding to Ms. Horsey's question regarding the two way drive from Loockerman Plaza which is one way and narrow and how this would work in the future, Ms. LLucarelli stated that at the current time there is some additional ground stripping that creates a one way path of travel.

Mr. Clark stated that the space was measured and there is ample space for what they are planning. There is some linework that directs it to one lane.

Mr. McDaniel stated their concern would be cars coming onto Loockerman Plaza.

Ms. Lucarelli stated that there will be a stop marking.

Responding to Mr. McDaniel's question if a person would be using the ATM from their car, Ms. Lucarelli stated yes.

Responding to Mr. McDaniel's question on whether another car would be able to pass while a person is at the ATM machine, Ms. Lucarelli stated no.

Mr. Scrafford moved to approve HI-15-04 and that the applicant re-designs the trash container Dumpster enclosure). The motion was seconded by Mr. McDaniel and unanimously carried 4-0. Mr. Jackson was absent.

Chairman Salkin asked if there were any discussion regarding the motion. There was none.

Review of DRAFT Certified Local Government (CLG) Program Application (HI-15-01):
Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that the DRAFT application was scheduled for the Legislative Finance Administration Committee of City Council on Monday evening; however, other agenda items doubled up the time, and therefore it was deferred until the next meeting of January 26, 2015. After it is reviewed by that Committee it will go to City Council. Also, a copy of the Ordinances that establish the District and how the Historic District Commission is appointed will need to be submitted with the application. The By-laws along with resumes will also have to be provided with the application. Once the application moves through the City Council Committee and Council there will be a letter that needs to be written by the Mayor. The Mayor will submit the application to the State Historic Preservation Office for review. The review process could take up to 60-days. If approved there will be a second step of creating a certification agreement and then ultimately it will go to the National Park Service for the official designation as a Certified Local Government. This is one of the items that were identified as an implementation item coming back to the *2008 Comprehensive Plan* and it is mentioned in the Historic Preservation Chapter. There is a grant program that is open to Certified Local Governments. She will keep the Historic District Commission members updated.

Responding to Chairman Salkin's for clarification that the application goes to State Historic Preservation Office for review and then on to National Park Service, Mrs. Melson-Williams stated yes.

Discussion

Responding to Mr. Scrafford's question regarding approving the sign for Woodburn and if the Historic District Commission needs to adjust the criteria in the *Design Standards and Guidelines* because of all the things that has just been accepted, Mrs. Townshend stated that there are a lot of items that need to be adjusted.

Mr. Scrafford stated that as a Historic District Commission they need to accept that as a standard for the people not only Woodburn to be able to submit a sign of that quality.

Chairman Salkin stated that when the *Design Standards and Guidelines* were established the term "plastic" meant something very specific. It was tacky, ugly, not substantial, and inappropriate. Now with the change in finishes Woodburn could have come to the Historic District Commission with the same sign made out of wood, with the same finishing and lettering. Therefore, the *Design Standards and Guidelines* need to be addressed soon so that Staff can give clear guidance to applicants and in some cases encourage them to do even more appropriate signage because it is plastic. They have flexibility to create a higher quality sign with plastic than they would on wood.

Ms. Horsey agreed with Chairman Salkin. Also when you look around the Capital Complex all signs that are put up by the State are now deteriorating.

Mr. Cook stated that when they saw the Woodburn sign, if it was a routed urethane sign, Staff would not have been as cautious about the plastic. Staff did not have a sample and was not aware what it was. Staff thought it was a digital printed vinyl panel.

Mrs. Townshend stated that Staff did not want to approve something without it coming before the Historic District Commission and it would look bad.

Mr. Scrafford stated that a different standard has been set for other applicants that come before the Historic District Commission because you cannot let Woodburn put up a special sign and everyone else be disapproved.

Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that the *Design Standards and Guidelines* are what they are at the moment and if there are any questions about the sign material we have a process where a permit can be referred to the Historic District Commission.

Mrs. Townshend stated that the permit was not denied; it was referred to the Historic District Commission.

Mr. Scrafford did not like the idea of a waiver. Mrs. Townshend stated that it was not a waiver.

Mr. Scrafford stated that the existing standard was waivered to allow the (plastic) sign to be put up.

Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that "plastic" is not recommended, but the *Design Standards and Guidelines* do not state that "plastic" is prohibited.

Mr. McDaniel stated that Mrs. Melson-Williams has always mentioned the *Design Standards and Guidelines.*

Mrs. Townshend stated that she discussed with Mrs. Melson-Williams once they receive the Certified Local Government project submitted, that money be put in an RFP to hire someone to come in and pick up where they left off with the *Guidelines.* The City has the expertise in-house, but not the Staff capacity.

Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that the *Design Standards and Guidelines* are twenty (20) years old.

Mr. Scrafford stated that it was a good idea because you would have a company focusing on that issue. Although the City has the expertise in-house, but if you take the expertise, then something else do not get done.

Mrs. Townshend stated that this could be tied to the Downtown Development District because if you have dated *Guidelines* that create more of a process because most people do not like the report coming in the door. If they are given something that is easier to comply with based on the improvements that they have had in construction materials in the last 22 years, then that is better.

Ms. Horsey questioned the "National Guidelines" and if *Design Standards and Guidelines* are updated based on the "National Guidelines; Mrs. Townshend again suggested hiring someone and other grant ideas to address.

Mr. Scrafford moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Mr. McDaniel and unanimously carried 4-0. Mr. Jackson was absent.

Meeting adjourned at 4:23 PM

Sincerely,

Maretta Savage-Purnell
Secretary