CITY OF DOVER
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
September 19, 2013

The Regular Meeting of the City of Dover Historic District Commission was held on Thursday, September 19, 2013 at 3:00 PM with Chairman Scrafford presiding. Members present were Chairman Scrafford, Mr. Jackson (arrived 3:12pm), Mr. McDaniel, and Mr. Fisher. Mr. Salkin was absent.

Staff members present were Mrs. Melson-Williams and Mrs. Purnell.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Fisher moved for approval of the agenda as submitted, seconded by Mr. McDaniel and the motion was unanimously carried 3-0. Mr. Salkin and Mr. Jackson were absent.

Responding to Chairman Scrafford's question regarding that the agenda is subject to change, Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that you could amend, take away, rearrange, or add something to it at the meeting.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MEETING OF JULY 18, 2013

Mr. McDaniel moved to adopt the minutes of the regular Historic District Commission meeting of July 18, 2013, seconded by Mr. Fisher and the motion was unanimously carried 3-0. Mr. Salkin and Mr. Jackson were absent.

COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS

Summary of 2013 and 2012 Activity

Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that included in the packet was a summary of applications 2013 and 2012. To date in 2013 the Historic District Commission has considered five (5) applications. Some of them had to go before the Planning Commission for review which has occurred. They are currently in the process to finalize the plans. The Capital City Trail is the bike and pedestrian improvements that leads from the Legislative Hall area to Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. and Route 13. Construction is progressing on the Route 13 segment at the current time. The North Street Pocket Park application went before the Planning Commission for review and conditional approval. The Planning Office recently received a Check Print of the Site Plan which is the next part of the process to ensure that it meets all of the conditions of approval in order to obtain the Final Plan approval. There were a total of seven (7) applications in 2012 and most of them have been completed. Mrs. Melson-Williams met with a representative of Christ Church regarding the demolition of the building at 509 South State Street and received copies of their documentation of the building with additional information on floor plans, size of rooms, and the photograph series. They will move forward to submit for a Demolition Permit.

Mrs. Melson-Williams asked if there were any questions regarding the applications and their status.

Responding to Mr. McDaniel's question regarding the status of the Family Dollar, Mrs. Melson-Willams stated that the office has seen one Check Print and comments have gone back to the applicant. The resubmission is not ready to be finalized at the current time.

Responding to Mr. Fisher's question if asbestos was found in the building, Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that in order to apply for a Demolition Permit proof is required that the property is free from asbestos.

Summary of Architectural Review Certifications for 2013

Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that the Architectural Review Certifications for 2013 consisted of any permit applications within the Historic District that required Architectural Review Certification. There are a total of 56 permits through August that had activity in the Historic District. Majority of them were related to signs and temporary signs. Forty-eight of the fifty-six permits were eligible for Staff Review. If there are concerns when reviewing the permits the Planning Office has the ability to refer it to the Historic District Commission for consultation if needed. Only three (3) of them involved action by the Historic District Commission. There were some minor renovations and Building Permits that also included the interior.

Chairman Scrafford questioned the height of the fence at the Golden Fleece Tavern and if it was originally 7 feet and if it was replaced with an existing fence and if it was grandfathered. Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that it went through a review process as a wooden fence that was over 4 feet. Afterwards it was replaced by the property owner with a black metal 7 foot fence which was taller than what was originally there. It is located within the Historic District. It was related to the previous action regarding the fence and grandfathered.

Responding to Mr. Fisher's question regarding the space for a fence behind or around the Golden Fleece Tavern, Chairman Scrafford stated that there is a brick wall behind the building and there is no space around it.

Mr. Jackson arrived at the meeting.

Responding to Chairman Scrafford's question regarding the work at the Governor's Mansion, Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that there is continual work at the Governor's Mansion. It went through Staff Review. There are three (3) permits related to the Governor's Mansion. One consisted of handicap accessibility in a ramp entry on the north side of the building with limited visibility from Kings Highway done using appropriate materials. The site improvements are related to some of the ADA accessibility issues that were being dealt with on site. There has been regrading of the driveway and improvements to the sidewalk network between the Woodburn and Hall House buildings. Some of the construction is still underway. Associated with the project is a fence permit that will be 3 feet in height which is less than the Historic District maximum height.

Responding to Chairman Scrafford's question regarding the location of the three foot fence, Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that portion of the fence will be installed along Kings Highway and other fencing improvements are tucked back behind the Hall House where the garage building is located near the alley.

Chairman Scrafford stated that the Historic District Commission need to be made aware on a regular basis of the status instead of reading about it in the paper or feel blind-sided when asked questions. Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that there is a lot of permitting activities that happen in the Historic District and not all of them rises to the level that it needs to come before the Historic District Commission.

Chairman Scrafford stated that they would like to receive the needed information regarding approvals on a more frequent basis so that they are aware and are able to respond to public questions.

Mrs. Melson-Williams asked if there were any additional questions regarding the permits. There were none.

Update on Discussion-Role and Scope of the Historic District Commission and Historic District
Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that there was nothing to report. Staff time has been devoted to other elements at the current time.

Responding to Chairman Scrafford's question if this was the discussion of the life of the Historic District Commission, Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that this was Role and Scope looked at by the City Council and Legislation Finance and Administration Committee that resulted in the public workshop that was held in February 2013 to engage the public for input on Historic District and Commission activities.

Responding to Chairman Scrafford's question if the Historic District Commission does not exist as a Commission could you still be a Certified Local Government, Mrs. Melson-Williams stated no. There are requirements to be a Certified Local Government that will be discussed.

Responding to Mr. Fisher's question if the role of the Historic District Commission had anything to do with the Planning Commission setting up an Architectural Committee, Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that in the Planning Commission responsibilities the *Zoning Ordinance* has an architectural component to it for all projects that come before them, not just in the Historic District area. The code establishes the ability to appoint the Architectural Review Oversight Subcommittee. The committee membership is five (5) members that consist of two (2) Planning Commission members, the mayor or designee, and two (2) design professionals. On Monday, September 16, 2013 two (2) design professionals were appointed to the body. In ten years with the City, they have only met once and there was another incident prior to that. The *Zoning Ordinance* allows for the Planning Commission to sort out architectural issues regarding a project by referring it to the body for specialized technical assistance.

Responding to Mr. Fisher's question of who the two (2) design professionals were, Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that they were Sarah Keifer, Planner Director for Kent County and a Professor from Delaware Technical Community College who heads the architectural career program.

Responding to Mr. Fisher's question if Mr. Dean Holden was the Chairman or Co-Chairman, Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that Mr. Dean Holden, an engineer by trade, and Kathy Still involved in the architectural side are the members from the Planning Commission.

Responding to Mr. Fisher's question of who is the mayor's designee, Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that it is typically the mayor or he can designate someone to attend.
Responding to Mr. McDaniel's question if there were any more noise from City Council regarding the Historic District Commission, Mrs. Melson-Williams stated no, not that she was aware of.

NEW BUSINESS

Certified Local Government (CLG) Program

Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that the Certified Local Government Program has been discussed for a number of years. The Historic District Commission discussed the program as an intro reminder at the July 18, 2013 meeting. A motion was made to recommend to City Council approval of participation in such programs and to encourage the City's action to explore the program. It was with full knowledge that the concept of a Certified Local Government was a forthcoming agenda item on the Legislative Finance and Administration Committee of City Council. The Legislative Finance and Administration Committee met on July 22, 2013. They heard information about the Certified Local Government program and there was a presentation by Jesse Savannah-Vick who is a Staff member of the State Historic Preservation Office that enlightened them about what a Certified Local Government meant. The Committee then recommended that Staff move forward with a Certified Local Government application process. Afterwards, their recommendations then move on to City Council for final action. At the City Council meeting of August 12, 2013, a consent item on the agenda approved the Committee's recommendation that Staff move forward with making the Certified Local Government application.

Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that a copy of the program guidelines was provided in the Historic District Commission packet. The guidelines outline the requirements to become a Certified Local Government. There is also a process for applying for a Certified Local Government Certification. The request must come from the Mayor as the chief elected official for the City. There is a review process at the State Historic Preservation Office and the National Park Service before designation as a Certified Local Government program occurs. The entire program is voluntarily. Ultimately, there is an agreement that is established for the Certified Local Government.

Mrs. Melson-Williams asked if there were any questions regarding the Certified Local Government Program.

Responding to Chairman Scrafford's question if this was discussed a number of years ago, Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that it was discussed a number of years ago and there was some interest at that point. However, we were not a fully appointed commission at the time and it fell by the wayside. The Certified Local Government program was also identified in some of the goals and implementation strategies in the City's Comprehensive Plan as related to Historic Preservation. It is an appropriate step for a community that has an established Historic District Commission. There a number of jurisdictions that are Certified Local Governments.

Responding to Mr. McDaniel's question if this would be a benefit to the City to become a member, Mrs. Melson-Williams stated yes. It clearly makes the link for the ability of receiving technical assistance much clearer from the State Historical Preservation Office to the Historic District

Commission. Currently, there is a grant program that is specific to those communities that are Certified Local Governments. The activities would need to be specifically identified for the use of the money.

Responding to Mr. Fisher's question if there was a formula for the grant, Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that she believed there was a formula. It is federal money that comes from and through the Historic Preservation for each state. A certain percentage of the funding has to be sub-granted to the Certified Local Governments.

Mr. McDaniel stated that a lot of things that should be done by the City are being done by the Historic District Commission. We do not have to worry about enabling legislation.

Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that a lot of it is already in place. This is a task of the Planning Office and is a low priority at the current time due to staffing issues. Ms. Janelle Cornwell accepted a Planner's position with Kent County Planning Office; therefore, we are down one Planner. We are currently advertising for the position and plan to conduct interviews within the next two (2) weeks.

Responding to Mr. McDaniel's question if it had been endorsed, Mrs. Melson-Williams stated yes, it was done casually not as a request.

Chairman Scrafford stated that it may keep the Historic District Commission in business because a lot of changes would have to be made if another commission had to do the Certified Local Government program activities.

Responding to Mr. McDaniel's question if the Certified Local Government application will be done by the next meeting, Mrs. Melson-Williams stated not by the next meeting.

Preparation of Application

Mrs. Melson-Williams supplied the Historic District Commission members a copy of their resumes for review and editing.

Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that she needed to know if any of the Historic District Commission members met the Secretary of Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards that was included in the Guidelines package on page 9, Appendix A (included in all members packet). Listed is a list of qualifications that include History, Archeology, Archeology History, Architecture, and Historic Architecture.

Responding to Chairman Scrafford's question regarding the committee membership, Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that they encourage and hope that members have some of the professional qualifications.

Responding to Chairman Scrafford's question regarding how many of the five (5) members have to meet some of the qualifications, Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that she was unsure, but if there are questions they can seek additional guidance.

Responding to Chairman Scrafford's question if Mr. Jackson had any historic training as part of the architectural background or historical architecture, Mr. Jackson stated yes. Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that you can qualify under more than one. Chairman Scrafford stated that Mr. Jackson would qualify for both. Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that looking in the program requirements it states "to the extent available in the community, appointees to the Commission must possess professional expertise in the disciplines of Architecture History, Planning, Archeology, or Historical Preservation-related fields. At a minimum, all members of the Commission must possess a demonstrated interest, competence, or knowledge in historic preservation". She stated that the Historic District Commission members meet the minimum. There is no specific mention that it has to be half of the commission. She stated that she was not sure if the Historic District Commission has ever had an Archeologist serve on the Commission.

Responding to Chairman Scrafford's question of James McNair's background, Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that his background was more in Parks Planning, but he worked for the State Historic Preservation Office, but he had more of a history background.

Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that the resumes needed to be edited and they will be collected at the next Historic District Commission meeting. She does not have a set deadline that has been handed down.

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 3:42 PM

Sincerely,

Maretta Savage-Purnell
Secretary