



HISTORIC REVIEW COMMISSION OF PITTSBURGH

Minutes of the Meeting of April 2, 2008
Beginning at 12:00 PM
200 Ross Street
First Floor Hearing Room
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

In Attendance:

Table with 3 columns: Members, Staff, Others. Lists names of attendees under each category.

Old Business

Enforcement: Ms. Molnar presented the enforcement issues – There were no new issues to report.

Nominations Report: Ms. Molnar presented the Nominations Report. There are four buildings in the nomination process: Workingmen’s Savings Bank building, The National Negro Opera House, Malta Temple, and Garden Theater.

New Business

Approval of Minutes: Ms. Molnar asked for approval on March and February minutes. Ms. Drescher reported that she passed on some grammatical corrections to Ms. Molnar.

Certificates of Appropriateness: Molnar directed the commissioners to the Certificates of Appropriateness. In regards to the March Certificates of Appropriateness, Mr. Onque moved to approve, Ms. Joyce seconded the motion, all voted in favor.

Applications for Economic Hardship: There were no Applications for Economic Hardship.

Consideration of Rev. Burgess' bill to extend Council decision time from 90 days to 120 days: Ms. Molnar presented the HRC with the proposed language and asked for discussion and comments – to relay to Council. Stern said that this legislation would be an answer to the questions we had earlier about the timeline. What does the timeline refer to exactly? The HRC requested a clarification of the actual process including the Mayor's approval. Drescher said that this would be an ideal time to make changes for clarification. Ms. Ismail said that Council must be held accountable to its new legislation, and that we should be clear about the time. Ismail said that any concerns we have could be referred to the legal department. The HRC agreed that the wording doesn't make sense, and that it should be re-written. The HRC agreed that if Ms. Molnar makes any revisions, then she should email the draft to the HRC members for their comments.

Market Square: Ms. Molnar said that Preservation Pittsburgh wrote a letter asking the HRC to form a Market Square local review committee. Ms. Molnar indicated that they would like to address the commission. Steven Paul from Preservation Pittsburgh said that due to recent and future development in Market Square, they would like to recommend the creation of a local review committee. PP would also like to convene a dialog with everyone in the Square to figure out how to avoid the problems that are happening down there. Rob Pfaffmann said that the preservation community is often reacting to mistakes, but that we have the opportunity to be proactive by getting stakeholders together. This includes Downtown Partnership. Mr. Stern said that he thought the HRC would all agree about those statements. Stern said he is concerned about process. The LRC process itself is a bit fraught, and the HRC should step back to examine how the LRCs function and what their purpose is, etc. Stern said that he would be inclined to hold back on the formation of the LRC, but not necessarily hold back on the discussions they propose. Pfaffmann said he would add that perhaps the guidelines for Market Square could be improved. Stern said that he thought the planning of Market Square was as important, or more so, than the architecture there. How do we make those elements part of those guidelines? Paul said that the HRC and the LRC were intended to protect the interests of all the players involved. Stern wondered what the next step should be. Ms. Drescher asked if it would be possible for an organization like Preservation Pittsburgh to call together a meeting of all the parties. Paul said that he thought that could be a good step, and he would coordinate with Ms. Ismail about it. Ms. Ismail said that Market Square already has quite a few layers of review, and she doesn't want to impede the process by bogging it down. Representation of local committees is important for districts. Who makes them up? Ms. Ismail said we needed to consult the legal department about formalizing the process in Market Square with regards to a local review committee. Pfaffmann asked if, in the case of Buon Giorno, where something is built in the public right of way, does that go to Art Commission. Ms. Ismail said, technically yes. Ms. Ismail told the HRC that the new deck in Market Square at Buon Giorno was problematic because the neighboring property was not aware of the encroachment. Mr. Pfaffmann asked if Paris to Pittsburgh program could be involved in the HRC process. Mr. Stern said that he sits on that committee.

Adjourn: Mr. _____ moved to adjourn the meeting, Ms. _____ seconded the motion, all voted in favor.

Discussion on hearing items follows on the attached pages.

Attachment

1512 Sedgwick Street

OWNER: Ruth Haskins, <i>deceased</i> 1512 Sedgwick Street Pittsburgh, PA 15212	WARD: 21st LOT & BLOCK:22-L-229 INSPECTOR:R. Freyermuth COUNCIL DISTRICT: 6 th ZONING CLASSIFICATION: .. R1A-H ARCH. RATING:Typical	APPLICATION RECEIVED: 11/05/2007 SITE VISITS: 03/31/2008 CERTIFICATES OF APP.: 00-000
APPLICANT: Russell Blaich Bureau of Building Inspection		

Proposed Changes:

Raze to Ground

Discussion of Proposals:

1. Ms. Molnar introduced the application saying there were so many demolitions on the agenda for the day. She has been giving a lot of thought to the demolitions in Manchester, but so far has not come up with any promising leads. The first two addresses are properties that the HRC has discussed in the past and tabled. Ms. Molnar indicated that she had new maps made. Ms. Molnar said this was a difficult property to look at because it has lost a lot of integrity. The building is surrounded by vacant lands, it is alone on the street. It is not a contiguous part of a streetscape.
2. Mr. Stern asked if we should go through the properties – a briefing – and then go back to vote.
3. Ms. Molnar said **1117 N Franklin** was also somewhat isolated. It has a bit more integrity than the last property. Russ Blaich said that the rear of the property had collapsed and that’s why it was condemned. It is open, there’s water damage, holes in the roof, etc. Joyce asked if all owners are deceased? Mr. Blaich said that the owners are not deceased.
4. **1116 Warlo Street** – they are deceased according to Blaich. Molnar indicated that it was also a secondary street.
5. **1023 Manhattan** – More difficult to look at because it is part of a row. In 2004 the property owner indicated a willingness to fix the building, but did nothing. It’s been for sale for a long time, but no one wants to buy it.
6. **1416 Page Street** – Is a fire damaged structure. The property owner across the street contacted Ms. Molnar imploring the City to tear it down.
7. **1414 Rush Street** – The property owner is present today.
8. **426 N Taylor** – Mexican War Streets – also a fire damaged structure.
9. Those are the demolitions. Mr. Stern asked for Tom Hardy’s comments. Hardy said that it had to be a larger conversation with more people. Hardy said that he was concerned to lose too much fabric, too much context. He thought significant losses were those in rows, or contiguous with other houses. Hardy said MCC was trying to address these problems. If there are 2-3 demolitions on every agenda for Manchester, then the district will be lost. During his planning process, MCC tried to focus on properties that are part of rows, or are on corners. Those are the most important. At 1023, the damage to the structure is impacting the two neighboring houses. He doesn’t want to see two more vacant houses in the future due to the problems at one. Ideally, MCC tried to prioritize houses on major streets and on corners.

10. Mr. Stern said that the challenge is that some of the properties are “beyond hope.” Do people really put money into houses like these? Hardy said that these are not the top draws in the district for real estate. Hardy said that MCC does not try to be a land-owner, but occasionally MCC tries to take possession or direction of the sale of individual properties. Mr. Stern asked if any of these were houses that MCC would be interested in. Hardy said perhaps the one on N Franklin would be more important to save.

 11. Mr. Stern said that 1416 looks like one of the lesser-damaged structures. It was fire damaged. Stern asked Hardy if he was correct in thinking that Mr. Hardy would not object strongly to the demolition of any of the buildings except that on N Franklin. Hardy said that was correct. Mr. Stern said that would be a good starting point for approval. Ms. Molnar said that she was concerned about the loss of too much historic fabric on North Franklin. Hardy asked if only a portion of the building could be demolished. Blaich said it was possible, but they don’t do that.
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MOTION: Mr. Onquemoved to approve the demolition of the building at 1512 Sedgwick Street

SECOND: Ms. Drescherseconded the motion.

IN FAVOR: *All*

OPPOSED:

VOTE:*PASSED*

1512 Sedgwick Street

*Pittsburgh HRC – 2 April, 2008
Manchester Historic District*

OWNER:
Henry William & Sadye Beda
Alston (Both Deceased)
1117 N. Franklin St.
Pittsburgh, PA 15233

WARD: 21st
LOT & BLOCK:22-L-155
INSPECTOR:R. Freyermuth
COUNCIL DISTRICT: 6th

APPLICATION RECEIVED:
11/15/2007
SITE VISITS:
03/31/2008
CERTIFICATES OF APP.:
00-000

APPLICANT:
Russell Blaich
Bureau of Building Inspection

ZONING CLASSIFICATION: R1A-VH
ARCH. RATING:Typical

Proposed Changes:
Raze to Ground

Discussion of Proposal:

- 1. Ms. Molnar

MOTION: Mr. Onquemoved to delay the vote on 1117 N Franklin for one year (April 2, 2009)

SECOND: Ms. Drescherseconded the motion.

IN FAVOR: *All*

OPPOSED:

VOTE:**PASSED**

1116 Warlo Street

*Pittsburgh HRC – 2 April 2008
Manchester Historic District*

OWNER:
Drucilla Jones, Owner

WARD: 21st

APPLICATION RECEIVED:

LOT & BLOCK:

SITE VISITS:

APPLICANT:
Russell Blaich
Bureau of Building Inspection

INSPECTOR:R. Freyermuth

COUNCIL DISTRICT: 6th

CERTIFICATES OF APP.:

00-000

ZONING CLASSIFICATION: R1A-VH

ARCH. RATING:Typical

Proposed Changes:

Raze to Ground

Discussion of Proposal: (see above)

MOTION: Mr. Onquemoved to approve the demolition of the building at 1116 Warlo Street

SECOND: Ms. Joyceseconded the motion.

IN FAVOR: *All*

OPPOSED:

VOTE:**PASSED**

1023 Manhattan Street

Pittsburgh HRC – 2 April 2008
Manchester Historic District

OWNER:
Samuel R. Corbin & Alice T.
Davis
1023 Manhattan Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15233

WARD: 21st
LOT & BLOCK:7-B-276
INSPECTOR:R. Freyermuth
COUNCIL DISTRICT: 6th

APPLICATION RECEIVED:
SITE VISITS: 03/31/2008
CERTIFICATES OF APP.: 00-000

APPLICANT:
Russell Blaich
Bureau of Building Inspection

ZONING CLASSIFICATION: Res.
ARCH. RATING:Typical

Proposed Changes:
Raze to Ground

Discussion of Proposal:

1. Ms. Molnar

MOTION: Mr. Onquemoved to approve the demolition of the building at 1023 Manhattan St.

SECOND: Mr. Ciprianiseconded the motion.

IN FAVOR: *Stern, Drescher, Ismail*

OPPOSED: *Ms. Joyce*

VOTE:**PASSED**

OWNER:
Beverly C & Ralph Stoker
1247 Dickson Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15212

WARD: 21st

APPLICATION RECEIVED:

LOT & BLOCK:7-B-225

SITE VISITS:

INSPECTOR:R. Freyermuth

03/31/2008

APPLICANT:
Russell Blaich
Bureau of Building Inspection

COUNCIL DISTRICT: 6th

CERTIFICATES OF APP.:

00-000

ZONING CLASSIFICATION: Res.

ARCH. RATING:Typical

Proposed Changes:

Raze to Ground

Discussion of Proposal:

- Ms. Molnar

MOTION: Mr. Onquemoved to approve the demolition of 1416 Page Street

SECOND: Ms. Drescherseconded the motion.

IN FAVOR: *All*

OPPOSED:

VOTE:**PASSED**

OWNER: Ronald M. Lee PO Box 202 Dublin, Ohio 43017	WARD: 21st LOT & BLOCK: 22-K-139 INSPECTOR:R. Freyermuth COUNCIL DISTRICT: 6 th ZONING CLASSIFICATION: Res. ARCH. RATING:Typical	APPLICATION RECEIVED: SITE VISITS: CERTIFICATES OF APP.: 03/31/2008 00-000
APPLICANT: Ronald M. Lee PO Box 202 Dublin, Ohio 43017		

Proposed Changes:
Raze to Ground

Discussion of Proposal:

1. Mr. Stern asked the owners if they had a comment. Mr. Ronald Lee stated his name and asked the building be demolished. He said he would like to keep the vandals out of the building. Drescher and Stern said that it looked like the applicant had started work. Rather, vandals stole the siding off the building.

MOTION: Mr. Onque.....moved to approve the demolition of 1414 Rush Street

SECOND: Ms. Drescher.....seconded the motion.

IN FAVOR: *All*

OPPOSED:

VOTE:*PASSED*

426 North Taylor Street

Mexican War Streets Historic District

OWNER: Earl Simmons 6105 Jackson Street Pittsburgh, PA 15206	WARD:22 nd LOT & BLOCK:23-J-223 INSPECTOR:R. Freyermuth COUNCIL DISTRICT: 6 th ZONING CLASSIFICATION: Res. ARCH. RATING:Typical	APPLICATION RECEIVED: SITE VISITS: CERTIFICATES OF APP.: 03/31/2008 00-000
APPLICANT: Russell Blaich Bureau of Building Inspection		

Proposed Changes:
Raze to Ground

Discussion of Proposal:

1. Mr. Blaich introduced the proposal and indicated that the building suffered a fire in September 5, 2007. Mr. Blaich said that the owners cannot be located. Mr. Onque asked if there was a tax lien against the property, and the answer is no.
2. Mr. Greg Mucha introduced himself and presented a no-demo petition of 54 people of owners on N Taylor and Resaca. He indicated a desire to take control of the property. He thinks the property could easily be redone. He thinks there would be a lot of investment, but it is just a matter of taking control of the building. Property owners on both sides are opposed to the demolition.
3. Mr. Blaich asked if the HRC could approve the demolition with a timeline so that BBI wouldn't have to come back before the board in a year or two to get it approved again. Mr. Cipriani said that the biggest problem BBI faces is absentee owners. IF you can't serve the owners, you can't get them to go to court, etc. They're dead-end cases.
4. Mr. Mucha said he was interested in trying to figure out how to take control of the building. Ms. Ismail said that the City would consult the Real Estate department, and that Mr. Mucha should contact staff via email.

MOTION: Ms. Dreschermoved to deny the request for demolition for one year. (Mr. Stern amended the motion to say that it was not an automatic approval in one year, but rather, the HRC would have to examine the case again).

SECOND: Ms. Joyceseconded the motion.

IN FAVOR: *All*

OPPOSED:

VOTE:*PASSED*

28 Market Square**Market Square**

OWNER: Heartland Coffee, Inc.	WARD: 1 st	APPLICATION RECEIVED: 11/15/2007
	LOT & BLOCK:..... 1-D-132	SITE VISITS: 03/31/2008
APPLICANT: Design 3 Architecture	INSPECTOR:..... Ed McAllester	CERTIFICATES OF APP.: 00-000
	COUNCIL DISTRICT:..... 6 th	
	ZONING CLASSIFICATION:.....	
	ARCH. RATING: Late 20 th C	

Proposed Changes:

Exterior renovations, including fenestration alteration, change in materials, change in color, new signage, addition of awnings, and modification of primary entrance location.

Discussion of Proposal:

1. Ms. Molnar introduced the application as a Dunkin’Donuts/Heartland Coffee, one of many planned for Pittsburgh. The building was massively rehabbed in the 1980s. Molnar said that in response to a meeting with the applicant, she wrote a letter describing her concerns (included in HRC packets). She listed those concerns to the HRC.
2. Mr. Stern and Molnar invited Bill Snyder to the table (Design 3 Architecture) and Mike Orié (Dunkin’Donuts) to the table. The applicants said that they were trying to maintain a corporate identity. They new aluminum window frames would be dark anodized, to maintain DD colors, and because they are historically dark. Mike Orié said that the infill window would be consistent with the windows already installed. The two attempted to justify the closure of the southwestern window because the interior of the window would be a kitchen/utilitarian space. It would look into the back of house facilities. Dunkin’Donuts wanted to put their logo on the infill panel.
3. Mr. Stern asked if we could go through all of the design before the HRC would vote. Bill and Mike described the window display area with a logo inside the glass.
4. They would like aluminum awnings because of the maintenance ease of aluminum and because of brand identity. The fixed awning would never be pulled back. They want it to look nice and clean as long as possible.
5. DD proposes gooseneck lighting.
6. DD described the internally –illuminated signage. They said that the signs would look like individual letters. Ms. Drescher asked about height of lettering. Bill said the answer is ten inches.
7. Bill and Mike would replace the window glazing and move the entrance doors. They will try to respect and maintain character of the building, but they are interested in pursuing some energy efficient measures.
8. Bill said that the awnings would be extended 24-7. Mike said that the aluminum was a higher quality product. If they had to, they would go toward canvas.
9. Ms. Molnar said that she didn’t think that the Market Square guidelines were overly specific regarding signage. Bill asked what a “backlit” sign was vs. an internally-illuminated sign.

10. Ms. Joyce said that the HRC should be careful about what decisions it makes in Market Square because the HRC will set a precedent with its decision.
11. Ms. Drescher asked if we could outline the issues. Molnar said that there were eight items outlined in the letter she sent the applicant and HRC.
12. Mr. Stern said that he understood the rationale for all of the items the applicant proposed.
13. Ms. Molnar said she was concerned because the applicant is proposing to fill in one window, put opaque glass on another, and create a false-backing to the third window. If Paris to Pittsburgh is trying to promote the inside-to-outside, then the applicant has just covered up three major fenestrations. Molnar said that if the applicant etches its logo into the building, that would be a permanent change to the structure that we would be living with for the next fifty years.
14. Mike wanted to know if there was a difference between historic structure and historic district. Mr. Stern said that the guidelines apply to the entire district.
15. Ms. Drescher said that it was the HRC's responsibility to be concerned about the history of the building, not its future. Ms. Joyce said that yes, the HRC could look to the future.
16. Stern said that we now regard certain building modifications, like the Heinz Ketchup sign, as "historic". He didn't think the DD logo could become an historic artifact, but it would be possible. He wanted consistency within the design guidelines for the district.
17. The HRC realized that the applicant was proposing the hanging blade sign as well.
18. Bill said that separating the sign into individual letters would not be a corporate standard. He said that he could buy a sign custom-made.
19. Mike wanted to know why neon signs are approved?
20. Molnar said that she feels strongly that the signs are not appropriate for the district. She said that the guidelines may not back her up on that, but she feels strongly that the sign isn't good enough for the district.
21. Ms. Molnar asked if the hanging blade sign could be a wooden hanging sign with lights shining on it? Both Bill and Mike said that yes, they could do that.
22. Mr. Stern said that there must be some way to make it appropriate to the district without making the sign wood. Mr. Stern asked if the applicant could do the sign as individual letters? There was another discussion of "backlit" letters – the difference between an individual internally-illuminated letter, vs. a backlit "halo" sign.
23. Mr. Stern said that he was inclined to approve the signs; he couldn't think of another solution.
24. Ms. Molnar reminded Bill and Mike that the "rules" are not standards, they're just guidelines. She also said that the guidelines were based on the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Rehabilitation*, which would not support the proposed signs.

MOTION: Mr. Sternmoved to approve the following:

- Infill the southwest window with masonry and brick
- Take the logo proposed for the infill and use it as a window film instead to clear glass.
- It's okay to replace the glass storefront with aluminum though the wooden existing areas will remain
- The awnings should be canvas, sunbrella material instead of aluminum awnings, sloped not rounded.
- Colors to be approved by Staff
- Approval of internally-illuminated box signs as per drawings.

SECOND: Mr. Onqueseconded the motion.

IN FAVOR: *All*

OPPOSED:

VOTE: ***PASSED***