



HISTORIC REVIEW COMMISSION OF PITTSBURGH

Minutes of the Meeting of September 3, 2008
 Beginning at 12:00 PM
 200 Ross Street
 First Floor Hearing Room
 Pittsburgh, PA 15219

In Attendance:

<u>Members</u>	<u>Staff</u>	<u>Others</u>
Michael Stern, Chair	Katherine Molnar	Seth Ganley
	Russ Blaich	Chris Voltz
Ruth Drescher		Thomas Earhart
Earle Onque		Bob Russ
Jill Joyce		Henry Hanson
Daniel Cipriani		Jerry Morosco
Noor Ismail		Ken Wolfe
		Bruce Kraus
		John Martine

Old Business

Nominations Report: There are three buildings in the nomination process. Ms. Molnar reported that the Workingmen’s Savings Bank building is on hold at City Council. Molnar indicated that an agreement had been reached between all parties to extend the public comment period for 90 days. Saint Mary’s Academy building in Lawrenceville is waiting for Planning Commission hearings.

New Business

Approval of Minutes: Ms. Molnar did not have any minutes for approval.

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

Applications for Economic Hardship: 2312 E Carson Street – an application that might become pertinent after the first briefing item.

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

Discussion on hearing items follows on the attached pages.

ATTACHMENTS.

OWNER: Richard and Stephanie Cupka 57 S. 28 th Street Murrysville, PA 15203	WARD: 16 th LOT & BLOCK: 012-L-229 INSPECTOR: Bob Molyneaux COUNCIL DISTRICT:	APPLICATION RECEIVED: June 2008 SITE VISITS: June 25, 2008 CERTIFICATES OF APP.: 06-090
APPLICANT: Richard and Stephanie Cupka 57 S. 28 th Street Murrysville, PA 15203	ZONING CLASSIFICATION: LNC ARCH. RATING:	
NATIONAL REGISTER:	LISTED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ELIGIBLE <input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion:

1. Ms. Molnar introduced the project
2. Henry Hansen introduced himself, at 2331 E Carson Street, and so did Rich Chupka. Hansen distributed sets of the original proposal drawings, showing what was approved in 2006. He wanted to ask the HRC what the critical issues are, how to provide a quality addition to the district, all the while accomplishing an outdoor seating area that is more modest from a cost perspective. He wanted design review to resolve the questions at the address in a more mutually acceptable manner. Hansen said that the last meeting didn't really address design issues, and that they wanted to see what the HRC's feedback would be for something that could work.
3. Bob Russ, from the audience, asked the Chairman whether he would be permitted to comment. Stern said that he would take public comment, but after the HRC had the opportunity to comment. Stern said that if you compare the patio and the approved building, the issue was that of continuity of scale, and the fact that the addition would continue the street façade of Carson Street. If you're comparing the two, the biggest thing that is missing in the patio. Stern said that one alternative could be a false front, though he didn't know if that would be a great idea. Hansen asked if the screen wall could look like anything, or only like the façade that was approved. Stern said that it could be something different, but he qualified by saying that he wasn't sure it was a great idea.
4. Hansen showed the building that was destroyed.
5. Joyce said that her reaction was similar to Michael's... that the scale of the proposed construction patio was "off." She said that instead of a false-façade, perhaps the design elements of the patio could be exaggerated - perhaps the piers and the front design elements could get "beefier." She said that the vacant lot next to Cupkas did not help their case because it makes the patio look so much smaller.
6. Hansen said that from a design perspective, he had some serious concerns about how the patio could turn-the-corner, so that it would not look like a sign board. With a false front, how can the return corner make sense?
7. Ms. Ismail asked if we could hear the public comment?
8. Rob Russ, Local Review Committee, made the point that a couple of statements were made. First, the design that was approved was a product of the owner's claim that the existing building did not fit his use. The argument was made that the building was destroyed so that the new building could give him the qualities he needed to run his business. LRC and SSLDC were against the idea of demolition in the first place. He said that when you tear down a building, you ought to get a building back, not a patio, and not a parking lot. He said

that other businesses have patios that predate the district. In terms of context, he thinks that if you lose a building, you ought to get a building back.

- 9. John Martine, SS LRC, said that there were examples of where you can have both a building and a patio in the rear of a building. He said that there were examples of having a minimal building in the front, and an extensive patio in the rear.
- 10. Jerry Morosco, SS LRC, is troubled by the circumstance that has brought him here. He didn't know why the HRC was even entertaining the idea of a patio when a previous commission approved the demolition only because the owner promised to build a new structure. He presented a poster that represented the beginnings of the district - He said that the street is poorer for the vacancy of that Dutch Colonial - and that it is the HRC's responsibility to uphold the character and massing of that district. We have a responsibility to uphold the historic preservation ordinance.
- 11. Councilman Kraus from district 3, is an observer, and not advocating any position on the subject. He didn't have much say before, and now doesn't know if his voice has much weight now. After speaking with Cupka, he explained his displeasure with how the situation has come forth - he did not think what happened was appropriate. But what he has now is the situation as it now stands - he feels a judiciary responsibility to the City to not let this become a litigation issue. Is there way to reach some kind of consensus that all parties are happy with. Is it possible to find a design for the patio that meets the standards, that would fill that hole appropriately? Kraus offers his services as the Councilman in the district - anything he can do to help, he is happy to do.
- ~~12. Jerry Morosco wanted to give a footnote—he regressed another year in the past—discussion about another demolition and lawsuit in the past—he didn't think that those items should really be a specter to the HRC when considering this application.—(The HRC asked that this be stricken from the record, because it makes no sense. 11.5.08).~~
- 13. Ms. Drescher wondered if what Stern and Joyce presented would be acceptable to the HRC. Stern said he did not think that it was his responsibility to design the patio - or to give the applicant knowledge that a faux façade would be approvable - but that the applicant should come back with a more suitable design.
- 14. Molnar presented the information on the public hearing and the applicant's request for a Certificate of Economic Hardship hearing. She said that the applicant would like to continue the hearing until next month. She said that there was a deadline for the Certificate of Economic Hardship, and right now the deadline is September 30th, but the next meeting is on October 1st. The applicant wanted another month to put together subpoena information and new designs for the patio.

MOTION:

Ms. Drescher moved that the public hearing for this property be continued until October 1st, 2008.

Mr. Onque seconded the motion

ALL..... voted in favor..... *Motion Passes*

1339 West North Avenue

OWNER: Dean Osterritter and Joseph Rock 1128 Southside Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15212 Also: 8 Beckfield Street	WARD: 21st LOT & BLOCK:007-B-271 INSPECTOR: Ron Freyermuth COUNCIL DISTRICT: ZONING CLASSIFICATION: ARCH. RATING:	APPLICATION RECEIVED: 06/23/2008 SITE VISITS: CERTIFICATES OF APP.:
APPLICANT: Russell Blaich 200 Ross Street Pittsburgh, PA 15219		

Discussion:

1. Ms. Molnar introduced the demolition, saying that the HRC had tabled the approval of this application at a previous hearing because a woman spoke at the last hearing who indicated an interest in the adjacent building, 1337 West North Avenue. The woman indicated that she might be interested in purchasing 1337 West North if she knew what would become of 1339 West North. Also, Mr. Stanley Lowe had appeared at the last HRC meeting and said that he would do something about the demolition.
2. Mr. Stern said that the demolition was unfortunate; did Katie have time to contact Mr. Lowe? Ms. Molnar said that she talked to Mr. Lowe, but he did not have anything to say about this address. She had not heard from the building owner or anyone else about the address.
3. Ms. Drescher asked what was wrong with the building
4. Mr. Blaich replied that the building has a hole in it. He said that the downspouts are missing, the roof has a hole in it, the bricks are shifting, there is debris coming off, the box gutter is falling on the sidewalk. Stern asked when the demolition would occur. Because this is a partywall demolition, the demo would not be until next spring.
5. Mr. Stern asked what happens to the building between now and when the demolition would occur, in the interim? Mr. Blaich said that they would try to shore up the building as much as possible. Mr. Stern asked if that was a liability? Mr. Cipriani said that there was a concern because the building is near a school and pieces are falling down to the sidewalk. Stern said that one option would be to approve the demolition and notify Mr. Lowe and the other woman of the fact that demolition was imminent, and they could come up with an alternative if they wanted to.
6. Ms. Molnar indicated that CofAs expire within 6 months, and after that time the Certificate of Appropriateness would have to be renewed anyway. Mr. Stern said that there could be a qualification on the Certificate of Appropriateness that after 6 months the BBI would have to come back to HRC to approve the demolition.
7. Mr. Onque said that he was concerned about the health and safety around the building - he doesn't want to be negligent regarding City's liability.
8. There was some discussion about the potential adjacent property owner.
9. Mr. Stern proposes to approve the demolition - and send everyone a notification of that fact - saying that it would be likely that the demolition could not happen until spring - and that we wish them luck in reclaiming the buildings.
10. Ms. Drescher asked if the current owner knows that he would be billed for the demolition. Mr. Blaich said that he does, but he is not concerned about the money.

MOTION:

Mr. Stern..... moved to approve the demolition of 1339 W North Avenue with the condition that we notify Mr. Stanley Lowe, and all other concerned players about the outcome.

Mr. Cipriani..... seconded the motion

ALL..... voted in favor..... ***Motion Passes***

OWNER:
Cynthia Powell
1902 Chateau Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15233

WARD: 21st
LOT & BLOCK:..... 22-E-274
INSPECTOR: R. Freyermuth
COUNCIL DISTRICT:..... 6th
ZONING CLASSIFICATION:
ARCH. RATING:..... Typical

APPLICATION RECEIVED:
01/30/2008
SITE VISITS:
NONE
CERTIFICATES OF APP.:
NONE

APPLICANT:
Russell Blaich
Bureau of Building Inspection
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Discussion:

1. Ms. Molnar introduced the demolition by indicating that the HRC had seen the application previously in March (? She wasn't sure). Molnar said that the property had been getting worse. Mr. Stern joked the the building was self-demolishing.
2. Russ Blaich showed the images of the demolition and passed around photographs showing the two properties. Commission members commented on how the building has changed in the last months, based on photographs. Ms. Powell is no longer living in the building. Ms. Powell had wanted a little bit of time to save her building, and she does not want to pay for the demolition of her own home. The legal issues surrounding the property have not been vetted.

MOTION:

Ms. Joyce..... moved to approve the demolition of 1902 Chateau Street.

Ms. Drescher seconded the motion.

ALL..... voted in favor..... Motion Passes

1409 Rush Street

OWNER: Milford McCoy 1413 Beldale Street. Pittsburgh, PA 15233	WARD: 21 st LOT & BLOCK:22-K-275-A INSPECTOR:R. Freyermuth COUNCIL DISTRICT: 6 th ZONING CLASSIFICATION: ...RM-M ARCH. RATING:Typical	APPLICATION RECEIVED: 08/19/08 SITE VISITS: 00/00/00 CERTIFICATES OF APP.: 00-000
APPLICANT: Bureau of Building Inspection		
NATIONAL REGISTER:	LISTED <input type="checkbox"/>	ELIGIBLE <input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion:

1. Ms. Molnar introduced the application by indicating that the building was a rear, secondary building in Manchester. She also indicated that there was someone from Manchester who wanted to comment on the demolition.
2. Mr. Seth Ganley, 1408 N Franklin Street, introduced himself as an owner of the lot adjacent to this property. He said that he would like to see the building demolished so that he could purchase the property from the City's side yard program. Stern asked for discussion?

MOTION:

Mr. Onque moved to approve the demolition of 1409 Rush Street.

Mr. Cipriani..... seconded the motion.

ALL..... voted in favor..... **Motion Passes**