



Schenectady Historic District Commission

**Meeting Minutes
October 24, 2019**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Yager called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Patricia Yager, Chair; Ben Wiles, Vice Chair; Dr. Dean Bennett;
Christopher Marney

STAFF: Matt Smith, Planning Staff; Jennifer Mills, Secretary

EXCUSED: Shaun Andriano; Frank Gilmore

III. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

IV. ADOPTION OF MEETING MINUTES

Motion by Commissioner Marney, seconded by Commissioner Wiles, to approve the August 22, 2019 Meeting Minutes as submitted.

Motion carried unanimously.

V. APPLICATIONS

A. Consideration for approval submitted by the Gabrieles to replace existing deteriorated asphalt roof shingles with new architectural asphalt shingles. The premises are located at 1069 Wendell Avenue in the Union Triangle Historic District.

John Gabriele presented the application.

Mr. Gabriele explained that the shingles on the home are failing and he would like to replace them before the winter season so as not to risk any damage to the home. Commissioner Yager asked Mr. Gabriele if he has chosen a color for the drip edge. Mr. Gabriele responded that he hadn't chosen a specific color but that it would be a shade of off-white to blend with the color of the body of the house. The Commissioners indicated that they had no objections to the application.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

RESOLUTION

Motion by Commissioner Marney, seconded by Commissioner Bennett, to approve the application to remove the existing asphalt shingles and replace them with Owens Corning TruDefinition® Duration® Shingles in Estate Gray as submitted with the following modifications and conditions:

1. The project will be completed within one year.
2. The drip edge will be a color that will closely match the siding color so as to blend unobtrusively with the body of the house.

And with the following finding of fact:

1. This is a Type II SEQRA.

Motion carried unanimously.

B. Consideration for approval submitted by James Richter to replace existing deteriorated asphalt roof shingles with new architectural asphalt shingles. The premises are located at 1063 University Place in the Union Triangle Historic District.

James Richter presented the application.

Mr. Richter explained that there has been significant wind damage to the existing shingles, which have reached the end of their lifespan, and he would like to replace them with architectural shingles of a similar color. He stated that the drip edge will be brown to blend unobtrusively with the maroon color of the siding.

Commissioner Marney asked if the entire roof will be replaced. Mr. Richter responded that it will be, as it is all in poor condition.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

RESOLUTION

Motion by Commissioner Marney, seconded by Commissioner Bennett, to approve the application to remove the existing asphalt shingles and replace them with Owens Corning TruDefinition® Duration® Shingles in Driftwood as submitted with the following modifications and conditions:

1. The project will be completed within one year.
2. The drip edge will be a shade of brown that will blend unobtrusively with the body color of the house.

And with the following finding of fact:

1. This is a Type II SEQRA.

Motion carried unanimously.

C. Consideration for approval submitted by Marjorie Hyland to install external vents for two fireplace inserts. The premises are located at 1204 Rugby Road in the GE Realty Plot Historic District.

Marjorie Hyland presented the application.

Ms. Hyland briefly reviewed the application explaining that she currently has an unvented gas stove in her family room that she would like to replace with a new stove for which a vent will be required. She stated that she also plans to replace the cracked firebox in her living room fireplace with a new gas fireplace insert which will be vented through the chimney. She noted that she plans to install a new cap on the chimney.

Commissioner Yager commented that the chimney is barely visible from the street. Ms. Hyland agreed but noted that it is visible from the alley, which is a public right-of-way. Commissioner Bennett asked City Planner Smith what standard in the preservation guidelines would support the installation of a new vent. Mr. Smith suggested standards nine and ten. Commissioner Marney noted that the vent and chimney cap could both be removed without leaving any significant damage on the structure. Commissioner Wiles asked Ms. Hyland what color she is proposing for the vent. Ms. Hyland responded that it will be dark brown to blend with the brown siding.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

RESOLUTION

Motion by Commissioner Bennett, seconded by Commissioner Marney, to approve the application to install two external vents for two fireplace inserts as submitted with the following modifications and conditions:

1. The project will be completed within one year.
2. The vents will be painted brown to match the siding color of the house.

And with the following findings of fact:

1. This is a Type II SEQRA.
2. In allowing the installation of the vents the Commissioners referred to the Secretary of the Interior's Rehabilitation Standards and Guidelines: (9) New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be

differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment; and (10) New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Motion carried unanimously.

D. Consideration for approval submitted by Richard Olson to install a new sign and modify the fenestration and entryways on the west elevation from a previous approval. The premises are located at 607 Union Street in the Union Street Historic District.

Doug Davis, owner of the business, and Rich Olson of Olson Sign Company presented the application.

Mr. Davis explained that he is seeking approval of the sign that will be mounted to the building and also some exterior design changes that have become necessary to the project as construction has progressed. He stated that the bottom sills of the new windows had to be raised several inches because they came in conflict with the construction of the interior bar. He also noted that he would like to add a second window to the second floor to balance the design of the first floor. Commissioner Yager asked why the second-floor doors look out of alignment in the drawings submitted. Mr. Davis responded that on the actual building they line up currently, but the drawing depicts them incorrectly. He stated that the measurements submitted to the Building Department show the door in the proper size and location. Commissioner Wiles asked Mr. Davis how he knows that the drawing is off if the façade has not been built yet. Mr. Davis explained that the window that they are turning into a door is there now and it is in proper alignment with the first-floor design.

Commissioner Wiles commented that part of the initial approval of the design of the building was to have the addition to the building set back at least one inch to make it clear that it is a later addition. He stated that when he drove by the site it did not appear to him that the recess was there. Mr. Davis responded that it definitely has been incorporated in the design and perhaps it just wasn't visible from the angle of Commissioner Wiles' observation.

Commissioner Yager asked the Commissioners if they had any comments about the proposed sign. Commissioner Wiles asked if they had considered a vertical sign, as most of the restaurants in that block have signs with a vertical layout. Mr. Davis stated that they had tried the vertical option, but it didn't look right with such a long name. Mr. Olson reviewed the sign design and explained that the sign will have halo lighting behind the letters which will also slightly light the face of the sign at

night. Commissioner Wiles asked if the halo light will change color. Mr. Olson responded that it will not. Commissioner Yager commented that it would be best if the sign bracket could be mounted in the mortar joints of the façade so as not to disturb the brick. Commissioner Bennett agreed that this is the preferred installation method. Mr. Olson stated that he can adjust the bracket length to line up with the mortar joints. He added that they will be using an epoxy system to attach the bracket as opposed to an expanding anchor bolt system which could damage the brick. Mr. Davis noted that they have been very careful not to damage any of the existing brick during the construction process.

Commissioner Wiles asked Mr. Olson if he has any concerns about potential wind damage when using a projecting sign of this size. Mr. Olson stated that he has performed all of the necessary wind tests and the sign meets all of the criteria to be deemed safe. Commissioner Wiles asked Mr. Davis if he plans to use the existing canopy. Mr. Davis stated that sometime in the future he would like to replace it, but he does not plan to at this time. He indicated that he understands that if he does not replace it in kind he must return to the Commission for approval.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

RESOLUTION

Motion by Commissioner Marney, seconded by Commissioner Wiles, to approve the application to install a new sign and modify the fenestration and entryways as submitted with the following modifications and conditions:

1. The project will be completed within one year.
2. The bracket for the sign will be attached in the mortar joints of the brick and the brick will not be drilled into. As discussed at the meeting the installers will use an epoxy system for attaching the bracket instead of expanding anchor bolts which could damage the surrounding brick.

And with the following findings of fact:

1. This is a Type II SEQRA.
2. In approving the application, the Commissioners referred to the Secretary of the Interior's Rehabilitation Standards and Guidelines: (8) Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken; and (9) New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

Motion carried unanimously.

E. Consideration for approval submitted by James Plowman to paint the exterior stucco, construct a new panel for the exterior of the building, and replace front 6-over-6 windows with 1-over-1 wood windows. The premises are located at 1 Cucumber Alley in the Stockade Historic District.

James Plowman presented the application.

Mr. Plowman explained that the Commission had originally approved a gray exterior color for the building but after a few years the homeowner, Robin White, decided that he was very unhappy with the color. He stated that he had his equipment at the site doing some other work at that time so they painted the building the Montgomery White color that Mr. White had used on many of his historic buildings in the past, which the Commission had approved. He stated that at the time he wanted to get the building painted quickly before the end of the season and prior to removing his equipment from the site, so he made the decision to go ahead with the painting as he did not believe that the color would be objectionable. Commissioner Marney asked if Mr. White had been given a violation and that is what prompted Mr. Plowman's application after the fact. Mr. Plowman stated that a neighbor had reported the color change to the City and thus a violation had been issued. The Commissioners indicated that they had no objection to the color.

Commissioner Wiles asked for further explanation of the square panel that had been added to the second-floor center of the façade. Mr. Plowman explained that a friend of Mr. White's had constructed it for him, and that it is removable. He stated that of the nine small panels the top and bottom middle panels are glass, which line up with the two windows that are on the façade that Mr. White felt did not enhance the design of the building and thus wanted to camouflage.

Mr. Plowman explained that they would like to replace the two front second-story windows that are currently 6-over-6 panes with a 1-over-1 design that they feel is more in keeping with the midcentury modern design of the building. The Commissioners agreed. Commissioner Marney stated that Mr. Plowman will be required to submit a cut sheet of the windows to City Staff for approval prior to installing the windows. Mr. Plowman indicated that he understood.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

RESOLUTION

Motion by Commissioner Marney, seconded by Commissioner Wiles, to approve the application to paint the exterior stucco, construct a new panel for the exterior of

the building, and replace front 6-over-6 windows with 1-over-1 windows as submitted with the following modifications and conditions:

1. The project will be completed within one year.
2. The paint color approved is Benjamin Moore® Montgomery White (HC-33).
3. The applicant will submit a cut sheet of the new windows to City Staff for approval prior to installing the windows.

And with the following finding of fact:

1. This is a Type II SEQRA.

Motion carried unanimously.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS

Commissioner Yager distributed to the other Commissioners copies of her correspondence with City staff regarding the tabled application to replace the second-story porch railing at 1333 Lowell Road. Mr. Smith explained that the applicants had met with City Staff, including members of the Building Department and Corporation Counsel's Office, and it was agreed that the railing could be replaced in kind, at the existing height, as long as the use of the porch has not changed. He stated that he had drafted a memo explaining the decision, and the memo has been sent to the Corporation Counsel's Office for review and final approval. Mr. Smith stated that he will follow up regarding the status of their decision.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Wiles, seconded by Commissioner Marney, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 p.m.