

City of Excelsior
Heritage Preservation Commission
Minutes
Tuesday, February 23, 2010

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Chair Barnard called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Howell, Meyer, Roden, Sanders, and Chair Barnard

Commissioners Absent: Mueller, Reid

Also Present: City Planner Fuchs, Advisor Caron

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Heritage Preservation Commission Meeting of January 26, 2010

It was moved by Commissioner Sanders, seconded by Commissioner Meyer, to approve the minutes as written. Approved unanimously.

3. CITIZEN REPORTS or COMMENTS

None.

4. MISCELLANEOUS/COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

a. Recent City Council Actions

None reported.

5. NEW BUSINESS

a. Concept Plan for New Construction at 287 Water Street – Brian Burdick

Brian Burdick presented concept drawings for a new office and retail building in the existing parking lot adjacent to 287 Water Street. He stated that the materials had been selected to keep with the character and flavor of the downtown area. The design concept is intended to be complementary, but not identical, to the recently renovated 287 Water Street building exterior. The concept is intended to continue the existing fabric of retail space along Water Street to the corner of Third Street. The primary exterior material will be brick and stone, with accent features like planters, awnings and a decorative cornice.

Burdick stated that he is proposing an appropriately sized building of two stories so as not to be too massive and to complement the overall scale of the downtown. The brick color is intended to be similar to the color of the Excelsior High School building and the base of the new entrance signs, and would be

5. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Concept Plan for New Construction at 287 Water Street – Brian Burdick -
(Continued)

standard modular brick. The building would be designed to be energy efficient, though Burdick has not yet determined whether to pursue LEED certification. The cornice detail at the top of the building would be painted wood. The building would feature an underground parking area.

Barnard clarified that the existing alleyway would be the entrance to the underground parking area, in trying to get a sense of the scale of the streetscape along Third Street.

The Commission confirmed with Mr. Burdick that any brick to be used in the historic district would need to be the standard modular sized brick, as required by design standards. The Commission was willing to consider the proposed raised roofline at the corner as reflecting the predominant height and roofline of adjacent historic structures. It was noted that the corner cut and entrance was generally compatible with certain other corner buildings in the downtown, but that the large radius above the entrance seemed out of character for the downtown. The decorative balcony at the corner was a faux or French balcony, and not functional. The parapet above the doors and below the French balcony was curved, giving the building a suburban look and feel.

It was also noted that the awnings depicted in the drawing appeared to be located above the windows covering the brick surface, but should instead cover the tops of the display windows. The building should strive to be attractive even without awnings, which may be removed in the future. Any decorative elements included as part of the exterior design should serve a function as well. Burdick stated that he had not yet determined the exact color of the exterior brick.

Mr. Burdick confirmed that the roof would not be used for anything except utilities. Overall, the Commission indicated that the concept seemed compatible in scale and materials, but was a bit too highly decorated, and that less decoration would make it more compatible with the simpler, more utilitarian brick buildings on Water Street. The consensus was that straight lines at the corner rather than a large radius would be preferred. Also, the pilasters between building bays could be slightly more accentuated. The Commission was generally comfortable that a corner entrance was compatible with other structures in the district.

5. NEW BUSINESS

b. City Council, Advisory Commission, and Staff Potluck

It was reported that the next potluck will be held on April 26. Commission members were asked to e-mail Cheri Johnson if they planned to attend the event.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Administrative Approval of Signage

The Commission discussed the proposed language of the Administrative Sign Review Policy. The second and third sentences of the first paragraph should be amended to read as follows: "Administrative approval may be granted for awnings which are substantially similar in size, color, style, material, wording, and typography to the awnings to be replaced, and which meet the requirements of the City Code. Administrative approval may be granted for removable stencils on windows that meet the requirements of the City Code."

The first sentence of the second paragraph of the policy should begin as follows: "City staff, through the administrative review process, shall refer signs or awnings that do not meet the requirements specified above, or signs or awnings that meet the technical requirements specified above but staff nonetheless determines may be non-compatible in the downtown historic district, to the Heritage Preservation Commission . . ."

The last paragraph should add "or awnings" following "any signage".

It was moved by Commissioner Howell, seconded by Commissioner Sanders, to adopt Administrative Policy Number HPC-02 (Sign Review), as amended. Approved unanimously.

7. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

a. Update on Designation of 441 Oak Street, Excelsior Elementary School

Sanders stated that the Excelsior Lake Minnetonka Historical Society presentation by Don Draayer on the history of the Minnetonka School District will be held in April. Barnard reported that there had been no further contact with the District regarding designation.

It was moved by Commissioner Roden, seconded by Commissioner Meyer, to continue this matter to the next meeting. Approved unanimously.

7. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

b. 2009 Commission Goals and Objectives

Commissioners were reminded that new goals and objectives would be established at the next meeting, and were encouraged to bring their ideas and proposals for discussion.

8. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Commissioner Roden, seconded by Commissioner Sanders, to adjourn. Approved unanimously. Adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Becca Sanders
Secretary