

City of Excelsior  
Heritage Preservation Commission  
Minutes  
Tuesday, December 20, 2011

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Chair Sanders called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Bolles, Macpherson, Meyer, Mueller, Roden, and Chair Sanders

Commissioners Absent: Finch

Also Present: City Planner Richards and Advisor Caron

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Heritage Preservation Commission Meeting of November 30, 2011

Commissioners submitted several corrections to the minutes. On page 3, item 7.c, "widow" should be "window" restoration. On page 2, item 7.b, it should read "19" total stalls, not "18".

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

3. CITIZEN REPORTS or COMMENTS

None

4. MISCELLANEOUS/COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

a. Recent City Council Actions

Richards stated that the proposed change in use for 344 Water Street had been approved by the Council for a Conditional Use Permit to allow for additional parking under the Parking Impact Fee process, and that the applicant had stated that it was unlikely that any alterations would be made to the rear facade, but that any proposed changes would come forward for further HPC review.

5. NEW BUSINESS

None

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Site Alteration Permit for Exterior Alterations at 31 Water Street - Loren Lessard

Loren Lessard informed the Commission that he intends to repair the existing front windows to make them secure and weatherproof, rather than replacing the windows, following a meeting with Sanders, Caron and a window restoration expert. He also stated that the building inspector had indicated that the proposed larger window on the side elevation would not be permitted if it was within 5 feet of another building, which was possible given the property line location. The addition of a rear egress window on the upper level could be accomplished with the existing window by making a mechanical change. The existing windows will be reputted and repainted black.

Macpherson asked whether the City should consider adopting a Certificate of No Change process for such situations in the future, and whether such certificates confirming that no alteration will be made might be handled administratively, as is the practice in some other cities. The Commission indicated this might be worthy of further exploration in the future.

Mr. Lessard indicated that he intends to withdraw his application, since no window replacement or other alterations will occur, and expressed his appreciation for the information that had been provided by the Commission regarding window repair options.

Richards stated that staff would follow up to document the Site Alteration Permit withdrawal.

b. Site Alteration Permit for Exterior Alterations and Annual Parking Impact Fee Review at 217 Water Street -- Yumi's Restaurant, Yumi Kim

Since the applicant was not present, it was moved by Commissioner Mueller, seconded by Commissioner Macpherson, to table this item until the remainder of Unfinished Business had been discussed. Approved unanimously.

c. Liaison to Planning Commission

Sanders discussed assigning HPC members to attend future Planning Commission meetings for the Commissioners to gain more familiarity with each other and to become better coordinated. The Commission agreed to assign a member at each HPC meeting to attend the following Planning Commission meeting as a standing item. Mueller agreed to attend the next Planning Commission meeting scheduled for January 4, 2012. The attending Commissioner's responsibility would include informing the Planning

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

c. Liaison to Planning Commission – (Continued)

Commission of any HPC discussions regarding an item on their agenda, and informing the HPC of any Planning Commission discussion that might be of relevance to the HPC's consideration of future topics as part of Commissioner Comments.

d. Excelsior Downtown Historic District Boundaries

The Commission discussed the history of the adoption of the revised Downtown Historic District boundaries. Richards agreed to contact SHPO to assess the current status of its review of the downtown district and the revised boundaries.

e. Possibility of Historically Designating Portions of Excelsior Elementary School

The Commission discussed several possible approaches to potential designation of the old Excelsior High School building, including obtaining information on available grant funding for designated structures, looking for potential linkages and areas of common interest, approaching school board members to gauge support levels, meeting with school district officials to explain the designation process and try to address any concerns, inviting SHPO or Preservation Alliance representatives to attend a meeting and discuss options and opportunities, and pursuing grass roots support through a petition or letter to the editor to build a case for designation and explain why the school district should be supportive. It was also suggested that further research should be considered to confirm the basis and articulate the rationale for pursuing designation of the historic landmark.

f. Demolition by Neglect Ordinance

The Commission discussed the status of the draft demolition by neglect ordinance, which has not been moved forward while the Commission develops more educational information around the need for such an ordinance, using real-life examples from both within Excelsior and throughout Minnesota and other states. Chair Sanders agreed to work with Caron to start pulling materials together.

g. Goals and Objectives for 2011

The Commission discussed their continuing goals and objectives into the upcoming year, which include pursuing a potential Excelsior High School building designation, continuing work on a demolition by neglect ordinance, sponsoring a window preservation seminar for historic property owners, and establishing a process for holding advance discussions prior to formal consideration of an application to explore and educate applicants about preservation alternatives and options.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- b. Site Alteration Permit for Exterior Alterations and Annual Parking Impact Fee Review at 217 Water Street -- Yumi's Restaurant, Yumi Kim – (Continued)

It was moved by Commissioner Macpherson, seconded by Commissioner Roden, to return consideration of the Yumi's application to the table. Approved unanimously.

In the absence of a representative for the applicant, Richards presented the changes to the elevations. The plans show a simple soldier course at the top of the parapet and above the upper story window, projecting one inch, with a metal cap on the top of the cornice. The new brick front will be applied to a metal lath anchored to the existing facade, which will not be removed. The brick is a standard modular size and a more traditional color than what was originally presented. The applicant had intended to present two brick samples to be commented on by the HPC. The masonry wall facing Second Street will be patched with a cementitious top coating, rather than being painted.

The storefront will feature four windows, rather than five, a changed transom style, and a fixed awning that matches the storefront window size. The single upper level window remains, and the light fixtures have been changed to a gooseneck style at the top of the front elevation for better illumination.

Commissioners discussed whether the proposed signage is in character with other signage in the district, and also had questions regarding the size and type of sign material. The Commission emphasized that the signage must be mounted through the mortar joints and not through the bricks, and must meet applicable zoning standards for size. The sign material should not appear to be plastic, and could be mounted to a board backing to minimize damage to the masonry from installation.

It was agreed that several Commissioners would review the proposed signage on site and report back to the full Commission, but would not consider or approve options that had not been presented or discussed at the meeting.

The rear entrance design was deemed compatible with the building and district character, but there was no clear indication on the elevation of the nature of the materials shown as a crosshatch on the drawing, but the Commission assumed that the crosshatch was intended to show areas whether the existing stucco surface would be matched. The Commission also suggested that the applicant should consider making the rear decorative panel vertical to match the design on the front elevation.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- b. Site Alteration Permit for Exterior Alterations and Annual Parking Impact Fee Review at 217 Water Street -- Yumi's Restaurant, Yumi Kim – (Continued)

It was moved by Commissioner Macpherson, seconded by Commissioner Roden, to approve the Site Alteration Permit, contingent on review by two HPC members to confirm the materials and manner of mounting the proposed signage, to ensure that the color of the brick samples met City standards, and to confirm the use of matching stucco on the rear, with a request that the applicant consider using a vertical screen panel on the rear to match the front. Approved unanimously.

Commissioners Macpherson and Meyer agreed to conduct the on-site review and report back to the Commission at the next meeting with their findings.

7. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

- a. Site Alteration Permits Administratively Approved

None

- b. 2012 Meeting Dates – Information only.  
c. Next Meeting - Tuesday, January 24, 2012 – Information only.

8. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Commissioner Mueller, seconded by Commissioner Macpherson, to adjourn. Approved unanimously. Adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Caron  
Recording Secretary