

City of Excelsior
Heritage Preservation Commission
Minutes
Tuesday, September 18, 2012

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Chair Sanders called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Bolles, Finch, Macpherson, Mueller, Roden, Sanders

Absent: Meyer

Also Present: City Planner Braaten, Advisor Caron

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Heritage Preservation Commission Meeting of August 21, 2012

It was moved by Finch, seconded by Macpherson, to approve the minutes as written. Approved unanimously.

3. CITIZEN REPORTS or COMMENTS

None.

4. MISCELLANEOUS/COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

a. Recent City Council Actions

It was moved by Mueller, seconded by Finch, to table discussion of item 4a to communications and reports. Approved unanimously.

5. NEW BUSINESS

a. Site Alteration Permit for Exterior Alterations at 30 Water Street -- Roger Burks

Mr. Burks attended the meeting and stated that he has been in the restaurant business for 35 years, both in the Twin Cities area and in Chicago. He lives near Excelsior and decided that it was time to do something on his own. He thought that Mexican food would be a good fit for Excelsior. The former Yumi's space was too small for his concept, but when combined with the former Androli Salon space next door, it was large enough to accommodate a restaurant with a full bar. His focus will be on catering, as well as operating an upscale Mexican restaurant. He intends to serve breakfast on weekends, as well as lunch and dinner 7 days a week.

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Sanders explained that the scope of the HPC's review is confined to changes to the exterior of the building. Mr. Burks stated that no structural changes are planned. He intends to use awning frames that are the same size as the current frames with new awning fabric in a Sunbrella acrylic walnut brown tweed. He proposes to install cut metal letters on a wood blade sign, with aluminum backing. The sign will be illuminated from both sides with gooseneck lights. The currently painted masonry wall will be repainted. Bolles expressed a concern with the proposed paint color presented in the packet materials for repainting the storefront masonry. Macpherson stated that he hated to see that the masonry had been painted, but since the paint is already existing, he believes that some color variety on Water Street is appropriate. The applicant stated that he is open to using different colors, such as a more beige tone to meet the HPC ordinance standards, which generally require painted masonry to be in earth tones in the downtown district for compatibility. Finch confirmed that no currently unpainted masonry will be painted. The Commission indicated that it would also be acceptable to repaint the rear of the building (which is currently white) in the same color as the front. The Commission reviewed the actual color chips and determined that the color depicted has richer earth tones than the submitted color depiction.

It was moved by Finch, seconded by Macpherson, to approve the Site Alteration Permit as submitted. Bolles voted nay due to his stated concern about the color. Approved 5-1.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Exploring Grant Funds for Oak Hill Cemetery

Sanders reported that there was no update on this item. It was moved by Macpherson, seconded by Mueller, to continue discussion to the next meeting. Approved unanimously.

b. Excelsior Downtown Historic District Boundaries

Caron presented a table showing each of the properties identified in the professional historical survey that had been identified as candidates for addition to or removal from the downtown district and the rationale from the survey sheets or report. The Commission reviewed the survey information for each site and discussed whether the recommendation was justified. It was determined that the district map that had been circulated was an interim version and not the final district map from the survey report. It was moved by Finch, seconded by

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Macpherson, to continue discussion of the district boundaries to the next meeting. Approved unanimously.

The Commission asked that a new map with numbered sites to correspond with the table be created to guide a final review and recommendation.

c. Possibility of Historically Designating Portions of Excelsior Elementary School

It was moved by Finch, seconded by Mueller, to continue this item to the next meeting. Approved unanimously.

7. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

a. Recent City Council Actions

Macpherson reported on his attendance at the recent Planning Commission meeting. The new owner of the former ABC property on Third Street is proposing to convert the building to retail. The location is outside the downtown district so will not be reviewed by the HPC. It is proposed that the existing office space will be remodeled, the loading bay will be removed, an event center will be built in the quonset hut, and the adjoining space will become apartments and retail spaces, with the exact uses to be determined by the eventual tenants. Braaten stated that a CUP for having two principal structures on the site had been approved by the Council the previous evening. The Planning Commission also discussed design review for the Dunn Brothers building, options for dealing with parking fees, an ordinance on non-conforming uses, the design for the new steak house at Second and Water Street, which was approved but the installation of an awning over the entrance is still uncertain, and whether further regulation of franchise or formula design is needed.

The Council also approved with conditions a variance for an attached two car garage behind the 3rd street house adjacent to the rear of the School Administration Building. Braaten reported that the Council also discussed an increase in number of liquor licenses to a total of 12.

b. Designate Liaison for Planning Commission Meeting - October 2, 2012

Commissioner Mueller agreed to attend.

c. Site Alteration Permits Administratively Approved

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Braaten stated that staff had approved new signage to replace the sign face on the Carriage House Realty property for an existing freestanding backlit sign at 332 Second Street. He stated that the City Attorney has opined that the sign was a non-conforming use and therefore replacement of the panel was allowed even though backlit signs are not currently permitted by the City's sign ordinance.

Bolles recused himself from the discussion on the status of the unapproved Capers awning. The Commission asked staff for an update. Braaten stated that he had received no response from the applicant despite attempts to reach him. He stated that further City enforcement actions may be appropriate if no corrective action is taken to remove the awning. The Commission requested copies of the minutes from the prior meeting discussion.

Braaten also reported that he had been contacted regarding the possibility of installing Remax surface signage fitting within the existing brick border at 216 Water Street. He stated that he had not received any further information after the initial inquiry.

d. Next Meeting - Tuesday, October 16, 2012

8. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Macpherson, seconded by Mueller, to adjourn. Approved unanimously.

Adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Tim Caron
Recording Secretary