

City of Excelsior
Heritage Preservation Commission
Minutes
Tuesday, November 19, 2013

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

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

Present: Bipes, Bolles, Finch, Macpherson, Schmidt

Absent: Brabec, Nelson (joined at 7:55)

Also Present: City Planning Consultant Richards, City Planner Braaten, Advisor Caron

2. AGENDA APPROVAL

It was moved by Bipes, seconded by Bolles, to approve the agenda. Approved unanimously.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Heritage Preservation Commission Meeting of October 16, 2013

It was moved by Bolles, seconded by Macpherson, to approve the minutes as written.

Approved unanimously.

4. CITIZEN REPORTS or COMMENTS

None.

5. MISCELLANEOUS/COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

It was moved by Macpherson, seconded by Bipes, to table this item until after discussion of items 6 a and b. Approved unanimously.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. Site Alteration Permit for Exterior Alterations at 205 Water Street--Matthew Kreilich, Victor's on Water

Richards introduced the application for exterior alterations. A prior applicant had received approval for a Site Alteration Permit, but a new application for exterior alterations to the building has been presented now that the original exterior block has been exposed. The current application is for alterations for a new restaurant use along Water Street with a small retail space at the rear of the building off Second Street. Among the most significant changes proposed are a relocation of the existing front door opening, with the existing

6. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Site Alteration Permit for Exterior Alterations at 205 Water Street--Matthew Kreilich, Victor's on Water – (continued)

opening repaired with salvaged block to match the appearance of the existing block, installation of a revolving door, and changes to signage that would feature a blade sign at the corner and a wall sign and long canopy-style awning on the Water Street elevation. The proposal would also allow installing a new door in the rear for a retail entrance. Lighting would consist of simple can wall light fixtures and wall lights to illuminate the building.

Finch asked about the small openings shown at the top of the Second Street façade. The applicants clarified that one opening will be glass block and two may be used for interior kitchen ventilation. Richards noted that screening may be required of rooftop mechanicals if they are visible from the street.

Richards stated that the existing CUP for parking for this property requires that the rear parking area must be open during business hours and that a request for additional parking by paying an impact fee will be considered by the Planning Commission and City Council in the future.

Bipes expressed concern about the ability for the applicant to repair any existing tiles that might be damaged. Macpherson clarified that the exterior material is actually glazed face block rather than tiles, and such blocks are generally available, and repairs to mortar joints would be relatively easy to address by a qualified mason.

The Pauv Thouk from Julie Snow Architects stated that she is working with the restaurant owners, Janelle and Eric Paulson, and with Tim Brandow, the building owner, on a plan to repair the blocks. No inventory has yet been done to assess the degree of repair of blocks that will be required by the project, but she believes there will be enough excess block salvaged due to creation of new window and door openings to complete the project, and if not, they will try to match the block color as closely as possible with new replacement block.

Finch asked about the plan for relocating the electrical box in front of the new corner window, as shown in the plans. The applicants stated they were not yet sure what could be done to relocate the box. Bolles suggested an option for constructing a window seat that served as a junction box and would allow for moving the chase further down the wall. Macpherson noted that the Commission can't speculate about possible options for relocating the box, but that any permit approval would include the current plan with the window behind the existing electrical box, and if that changed, the plan would need to come back to the Commission for possible amendment.

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- a. Site Alteration Permit for Exterior Alterations at 205 Water Street--Matthew Kreilich, Victor's on Water – (continued)

Tim Brandow stated the he believes that the electrical box really doesn't belong along the side of the building where it is located today, and he would like to explore with the City moving it to a location in front of the electrical pole and away from the building.

Regarding the existing foundation, the architect proposed painting the concrete foundation in a dark bronze color. Macpherson suggested that a better option might be to use a concrete sealant rather than paint and either retain the concrete color or go to a darker color, such as matching the color of the existing Tuscan red stripe.

The new side door, retail window and awning on the Second Street side are to accommodate a future basement tenant and possibly a rooftop tenant. Macpherson noted that any signage for a basement tenant and any alterations for a future rooftop tenant are not part of the permit application.

The applicants presented historical photos of the Red Owl building that showed storefront windows wrapping around to the front door, which are now replaced with wood framing, so the Water Street storefront windows are likely not the building's original windows. The proposed new entrance door, windows and canopy frame would be made of dark anodized material. Richards noted that the proposal exceeds the City's three sign limit if the canopy signage is included. Brandow requested City consideration of four business signs. The rear of the building would be faced in brick of the type on the neighboring M&M Auto Body building. The proposed blade sign would be illuminated with two lights.

The architect presented drawings to illustrate that the proposed rooftop mechanicals should not be visible from across either adjacent street.

Macpherson asked about the genesis of the restaurant name. Janelle Paulson said that the name was a historical nod to Vic Bacon of Bacon Drug.

Macpherson pointed out that the floor plan showed a different entrance layout. The applicants explained that due to an accessibility issue from the front sidewalk, the entrance design had been changed. Macpherson stated that it would be important to the building's character to retain the existing shape of the entrance in the final plan.

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- a. Site Alteration Permit for Exterior Alterations at 205 Water Street--Matthew Kreilich, Victor's on Water – (continued)

Bolles expressed concern about the elongated canopy not occurring historically within the City, and that as proposed it would be semi-permanent and proliferation of such features would create sidewalk obstacles for pedestrians and snow removal.

Schmidt asked whether the canopy is an awning that would need to comply with the City's awning standards. Richards stated that the issue of sidewalk supports was never fully resolved as part of the prior application under the City's Design Standards. The architect stated that the supports were intended to reach the signpost area along the curb and not obstruct the pedestrian area of the sidewalk. Macpherson noted that the issue for the HPC is whether the canopy design is compatible with this building, and other issues related to the canopy are for consideration by other City officials; in his view, this canopy doesn't drastically alter the appearance of this building, whereas it might impact others. Finch and Bolles stated that they believe it does alter the appearance of the building, but Bolles stated he might support a smaller projecting awning without sidewalk posts.

The Commission clarified that the block restoration plan must be in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation of Historic Structures, and any replacement tile should be reviewed for a match and should be located in an area that deemphasizes any apparent difference. Commissioners expressed concern that there may not be enough bullnose block for the new window and door openings and not enough of the Tuscan red block for the striping. Richards suggested the Commission appoint a subcommittee to review the proposed block colors and styles for compatibility. Macpherson and Finch agreed to serve on the subcommittee and review the plan and resulting work. The Commission emphasized that the applicant should use bullnose block for any new openings on Second Street, and the principal entrance opening should be sloped and not built at a 90 degree angle to respect the architectural character of the building.

The Commission discussed the requirement under the HPC ordinance that original door locations not be changed on principal elevations. The applicants stated that relocation of the entrance is better for interior circulation and allows a corridor from front to back with a view of the courtyard/parking area in the rear. Original interior metal doors and the old hotel foundation wall in the back would also be showcased on the interior. Bipes stated that he did not see a problem with moving the entrance. Finch cautioned that the

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Commission should not be making subjective decisions where the ordinance language is plain and that any precedents should be carefully considered.

Richards stated that the December HPC meeting would still be within the 45 day review period under the Commission's ordinance if the Commission wished to continue its review. Brandow stated that this is a flush modern building so it should be okay to move the entrance. Commissioners expressed concern about justifying the move in light of the language of the ordinance. Bolles expressed concern about matching the block color if the entrance were to move. Macpherson stated that he needs more time to consider this issue.

The proposed narrow vertical window panes with fixed screens are operable and designed to slide open. Visually, they do not appear to be consistent with the original Red Owl windows, and a concern was expressed that such offset windows are not on a flat plane like other storefront windows and with the screen located on the outside of the storefront windows the visual appearance would be not in keeping with the style of the building. The applicants agreed to reconsider the windows and screens. Macpherson commented that the revolving door might be in keeping with the general period of this building though not found in the downtown. The Commission was generally comfortable with the compatibility of a revolving door.

The masonry foundation should be covered with a concrete sealant and not painted and the finish should be in the same color family as the color of the bottom red stripe on the block wall. The retail blade sign should be removed from the plan until a retail tenant is determined and any alterations should be submitted at that time.

The Commission requested more information on the screening of roof mechanicals and noted to staff that the proposed finding regarding parking should be removed. The canopy remains an issue and more design detail is needed as to what the City code will allow and what type of awning could be supported from the building so that the Commission can discuss the issue further. New window and door openings on Second Street should be part of the overall discussion of the character of door and window openings and more design detail is necessary from the applicants. The ordinance allows more flexibility for door and window openings on non-principal elevations, but Finch noted that the display window cannot extend to the sidewalk under the Design Standards, which require a minimum 12 inch sill. The openings shown in the plan for glass block or ventilation for makeup air should be clarified to be glass

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block. The plan also needs to clarify whether there will be a red band on the Second Street side.

It was moved by Finch, seconded by Macpherson, to continue the discussion to the next meeting with the recommendations to the applicant summarized above for changes to the plans. Approved unanimously.

- b. Site Alteration Permit for Exterior Alterations at 221 Water Street--Debra Antone, Scusi

Braaten presented the sign application for two signs, one on the front and one on the rear of the building. The proposal is for 18 square feet of combined signage, which meets the City's size requirements. The proposal for the front sign is similar to the Remax signage from a few months ago, which was altered in size to not obscure brick detail on the Water Street facade. Debra Antone, the applicant, and Lorraine Scott, the building owner, appeared in support of the signage Site Alteration Permit application.

It was moved by Bolles, seconded by Finch, to approve the signage as presented, with the conditions that the signage be mounted only into mortar joints and not the brick face, and that the signage would not cover any brick detail on the building. Approved unanimously.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. None

8. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

- a. Exploring Grant Funds for Oak Hill Cemetery

No report.

- b. Possibility of Historically Designating Portions of Excelsior Elementary School

Macpherson presented a letter for discussion at the next meeting that he had drafted to the School District regarding its recent project, thanking them for making the new addition fit with the architectural character of the building.

c. Scenic Byway

Schmidt was appointed as HPC liaison to scenic byway group, with Finch as alternate.

d. Designate Liaison for Planning Commission Meeting - December 3, 2013

None

e. Site Alteration Permits Administratively Approved

Addressed in staff report included in the meeting packet.

f. Next Meeting - Tuesday, December 17, 2013

g. Recent City Council Actions

The Council discussed the Chamber of Commerce's request for decorative Port lighting year-round, conducted a walk-through of the Commons with the Park and Recreation Commission to prioritize actions, approved a feasibility study of an Oak Street sidewalk, decided to continue the Farmer's Market on Water Street for 2014, and completed the budget and decided to eliminate matching funds for an HPC designation study. The City Manager is meeting with Bart Baker to discuss the non-compliant awning at Capers.

9. ADJOURNMENT

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

Adjourned at 9:39 p.m.

Tim Caron
Recording Secretary