**Historic District Commission**

**Minutes**

**Landuse Meeting Room**

**August 7, 2018**

**Members present:** Chair Ken Fowler, (KF); Patricia Jaouen, (PJ); Jason Berger, (JB)

**Members absent without notification:** Kameron Spaulding, (KS)

*Note: Mark Smith, who had been a regular member of the HDC, did not wish to be reappointed in June. He did, however, say that he would like to continue in the continuing discussions on the Guidelines.*

**Staff present:** Peggy Ammendola, (PA) Land Use Clerk

The minutes were recorded.

**Melissa Carhart, at 68 Main St., Map 43 Parcel 196,** Certificate of Appropriateness for a new sign.

Presenting the application was Ms. Carhart from PVI. She said that the sign will be black lettering on a white background. Gold is the third color on the application, but gold will not be used.

JB asked about the sign height. Ms. Carhart did not know, but said that the sign company measured the existing height and width and that the new sign would be the same. JB said that his concern is that the height and size of sign proposed per the application is larger than is allowed in zoning. An older sign application shows the sign to be 27 square feet and what is proposed is 40 square feet. He added that if it was pre-existing non-conforming it is possible that it could be allowed. When the existing sign was put in, the raised flower bed, the depth of which he estimated to be 1.5 feet, did not exist.

In the interest of bringing this to a conclusion, JB made a motion to adjourn for 10 minutes to go to the site to measure the existing sign. KF seconded the motion and the Commission voted to agree 3-0.

At 5:49 JB returned. KF made a motion to reconvene. JB seconded the motion and the Commission voted to agree 3-0.

JB said that the existing sign height is 7.5 feet from the original grade. (The flower box is 1 foot deep.) He suggested permitting the replacement sign to be at that same height. The sign has mostly straight edges and some is circular and is calculated to be just under 36 square feet.

Ms. Carhart was advised of her options if she preferred to request the larger sign proposed in the application. She chose to amend the request to be the size of the existing sign.

JB made a motion to approve the application as presented with the understanding that the sign will be no larger than 36 square feet total and the height to the top of the post would not be any more than 7.5 feet, measured from the grade adjacent to the sidewalk. Ms. Carhart thought that the grade from the sidewalk to the plant box was elevated and the Commission agreed. Discussion ensued and it was clarified that the measurement would be from the grade of the lawn at the outer edges of the flower box. PJ made the motion to approve the application as presented as amended with the understanding that the sign will be no larger than 36 square feet total and the height to the top of the post would not be any more than 7.5 feet which would be measured from lawn. JB seconded the motion and the Commission voted to agree 3-0.

**Approve Minutes:** *July 17, 2018*-PJ made a motion to approve the minutes with one minor edit. JB seconded the motion and the Commission voted to approve.

**Guidelines Continuing Discussion** **in the District**-Work on the concept of making guidelines for signs. Previously discussed at the meetings of December 5th and 19th. Continued to January 16th, but canceled on that date and rescheduled to February 6, 2018. Continued to March 6, 2018, but canceled on that date and rescheduled to March 20th. At the June 19th meeting this was tabled. At April 3rd meeting, the Commission agreed that this will be a running agenda item for future meetings.

JB updated the Commission on his project and stated that he has photographed all of the existing signs in the Historic District and has them organized by streets.

JB provided a document he has created from past discussions with the Commissioners. There was a brief review of the document which listed signs by right, categories of signs the HDC approves, dimensions, locations and materials. When this is finalized and approved it will be provided to the Building Department as guidance. Business owners can see what they are allowed to do without having to go to the HDC.

JB said that he has more work to do on this project, ultimately a file or a book, so that users will find it an easy reference. He said that he welcomes any suggestions from the others. The next meeting, August 21st is canceled as there are no applications. The following meeting date would be September 4th, but it is an election day, so a meeting cannot convene. It was agreed that on September 18th, JB will present the final draft. He will talk to Gwen Miller, Land Use Director, about a public hearing. He is hopeful that the process can be completed this fall. Update agenda.

**Other Business:** JB updated the Commissioners on potential sign violations (internally lit signs) by Gateways and Brava. This is in the hands of the Building Department. Gwen Miller has been in touch with Town Counsel Joel Bard. Up to this point there have been no decisions.

PJ made a motion to adjourn the meeting. JB seconded the motion. The Commissioners voted to agree 3-0. The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Ammendola