

NORTHVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
June 15, 2016
Wednesday 7:00 P.M. – Northville City Hall – Council Chambers

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL:

Chair Allen called the Historic District Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Allen, Argenta, Gudritz, Hoffman, Murdock, Tartaglia
Absent: Field (excused)
Also Present: Planning Consultant Elmiger

2. PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

MOTION Hoffman, support by Murdock, to approve the agenda as published. **Motion carried unanimously.**

4. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES: May 18, 2016.

MOTION Gudritz, support by Tartaglia, to approve the minutes of May 18, 2016 as published. **Motion carried unanimously.**

5. REPORTS:

- A. CITY ADMINISTRATION:** None
- B. CITY COUNCIL:** None
- C. PLANNING COMMISSIONER:** None
- D. OTHER COMMUNITY/GOVERNMENTAL LIAISONS:** None

6. PUBLIC HEARING: None.

7. CASES TO BE HEARD – BY CASE:

CASE #1
ALICE RACINE
501 W. CADY

ROOFING, SIDING, WINDOWS

Alicia Racine was present on behalf of this application, which was to replace the roof on the house and garage at 501 W. Cady, as well as siding and windows. The garage siding and windows would not be changed, but the garage would be painted to match the color of the new siding on the house. Building Contractor Ross Carey, McGlinch & Sons Co., 29565 Grand River Avenue, Farmington MI was also present.

Ms. Racine said they were planning on redoing the entire exterior of the home, including new roof, soffits, gutters, siding and windows and a little bit of porch work as well. Currently the home was aluminum-sided. They would be replacing the siding with James Hardie siding, and the windows with Beachworth in Tudor Bronze Finish. Roof materials would be GAF Timberline Pewter Gray. There would be a 4” Hardie trim board at the corners, with the trim matching the house color.

Color samples for the roof and Hardie siding were included in the HDC materials.

In response to questions from Commissioners, Ms. Racine and Mr. Carey gave the following information:

- There was some type of shake siding beneath the aluminum. This was not original to the house. They were not sure what they would find under that layer, but they were sure it was not asbestos shake. Everything would come off before the new siding was added.
- The exterior of the windows would be fiberglass and the interior solid wood.
- Currently the second floor windows were a neutral gray color and the downstairs windows were white. The windows were being replaced instead of being preserved because while the windows on the first floor for the most part were original, they were also unopenable and inefficient. The Racines had lived for 7 years without being able to open their windows. Rehabbing the windows was cost prohibitive. The first and second floor windows did not match. A couple of the downstairs windows had already been changed from the originals; they were also mismatched.
- The corner trim on the house would be 4”; the window trim would be 6”.
- The garage would remain aluminum for the time being. It would be painted to match the new siding on the house.

Commissioner Hoffman confirmed with Planning Consultant Elmiger that the requirements listed in her June 6, 2016 review letter were met.

MOTION Hoffman, support by Gudritz, to accept the application as complete. Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Allen opened the meeting for public comment. Seeing that no one came forward to speak, Chair Allen returned the item to the Commission.

MOTION Argenta, support by Hoffman, to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work as presented, referencing the Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation, in particular Standards 9 and 10, and Northville Historic District Design Standards 3-21 materials, 5-9 asphalt shingles, 5-10 metal roofing, 5-14 windows, 5-17 siding, and 5-18 paint and colors. Motion carried unanimously.

CASE #2

**ROSS WORLEY
115 LINDEN**

GARAGE DOORS

Ross Worley, 115 Linden Street, Northville, MI was present on behalf of this application, which was to replace existing garage doors at 115 Linden Street. Mr. Worley said the existing doors had deteriorated and needed to be replaced. The new doors would be Pella replacement doors, and would be a three layer steel construction with a faux wood finish and texture. The color scheme would match what was already there. No change would be made to the outer trim.

Commissioner Argenta noted that the new doors were a very close fit to what was there now.

MOTION Hoffman, support by Murdock, to accept the application as complete. Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Allen opened the meeting for public comment. Seeing that no one came forward to speak, Chair Allen returned the item to the Commission.

MOTION Hoffman, support by Gudritz, to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work as presented, referencing Northville Historic District Design Standards 3-24 Garages and carports, 3-21 Materials and 5-18 paint and color. **Motion carried unanimously.**

8. DISCUSSION

Overview of Concept Plan for Main Street School Site

The following were present on behalf of this discussion item:

Mary Kay Gallagher, Superintendent, Northville Public Schools

Michael Zopf, Asst. Superintendent, Northville Public Schools

William Bowman, Great Northern Land CO, Ann Arbor MI

Dave Mielock, David L. Mielock Associates, Inc., Northville MI

Jeffrey D. Hamilton, P.E. Vice President/Project Director, George W. Auch Company, Pontiac MI

Superintendent Gallagher said that Old Village School (OVS) had been empty since 2012. The District and the Board were considering options for the best use of the Old Village School and the facility at 501 W. Main Street. Their goal was to move forward in a fiscally responsible way, and they wanted to share some of their thinking with the Commission this evening, as the District considered going forward with requests for proposals. They wanted to share some concept plans and get feedback from the Commission.

Utilizing a power point presentation, Mr. Zopf provided some context to tonight's discussion. Old Village School had been vacant since 2012. At that time the Special Education and Act 18 programs had been consolidated at Cooke School. When the special programs had moved out of Old Village School, they were told by the Office of Civil Rights that that if the Old Village School ever was utilized for other school programs, the OVS would have to be brought to district facility standards. While the exterior of the school was in exceptional shape for its age, the inside would need a lot of work.

The District was therefore seeking an alternative use of Old Village School. They had studied the possible co-location of city and school administrative functions at OVS. However, this would require a \$9.5 million investment, an amount that was impractical.

They had also looked at the cost of renovating 501 W. Main Street. Those costs came in at \$8 – \$10.4 million. 501 W. Main Street had several site, infrastructure and architectural deficiencies.

They had concluded that a possible best use would be to market the Old Village and 501 W. Main Street properties. Central Office and Early Childhood programs would need to find another location. Operations would move to Hillside School.

As the School District moved forward with these ideas and plans, they had been working collaboratively with the City.

They were planning to issue an RFP, with an emphasis on 1) preserving the exterior of the Old Village School, and 2) getting the higher value of marketing both properties together. 501 W. Main Street would be available for alternative housing that would be aligned with the City's Master Plan recommendations and Historic District guidelines.

Asst. Superintendent Zopf asked Mr. Bowman to continue the presentation. Mr. Bowman explained that his company would be handling the RFP process for the School District – they had broad experience in doing this for school districts generally. They had completed a survey and topographic survey of the property. Concept plans would be included as part of the RFP. A number of developers had toured both

buildings and given feedback. Those developers felt the Old Village School was a great building and deserved to be preserved in some form. 501 W. Main Street was another story. At \$250.00 per square foot, it was impractical to get any kind of usability out of that property. However, a redevelopment site in connection with Old Village School could be a really nice project.

The document *Northville Concept Plan A* was the simplest concept plan: 7 single family platted lots to the west of Old Village School, with 4 lots facing W. Main Street and 3 lots facing W. Cady Street, with reconfigured parking to the south of the School.

Northville Concept Plan B showed a higher density development with 15 townhome units and 2 single-family transitional lots. All parking was off the street. A park area would be included.

Mr. Bowman acknowledged that the HDC would need to approve the demolition of 501 W. Main Street.

Round table discussion included:

- Several developers had expressed interest in redeveloping Old Village School as condominiums or apartments.
- The lots in *Concept Plan A* would probably be platted as site condos.
- The biggest challenge with urban infill development was parking. It might make sense to integrate parking from the Old Village School and the 501 W. Main Street sites.
- Commissioner Argenta thought that *Concept Plan A* was superior for this location, which was right in the middle of an almost totally single family residential district. New construction under the Northville Design Standards referred to architectural compatibility with the Historic District, including setback, spacing, mass, height, scale, proportion, rhythm, materials and details. *Concept Plan A* would be an easier concept to accomplish this type of compatibility.
- Mr. Bowman said the highest and best use might very well be the 7 single-family lots.
- Commissioner Hoffman suggested a blend of the 2 concepts, with lower density along Main Street, and higher density along Cady Street.

Chair Allen reminded the Commission that the two concept plans were just that – concepts. Perhaps more important for the HDC was the idea of tearing down 501 W. Main Street.

Commissioner Gudritz said that the HDC's responsibility was for maintaining buildings in the Historic District. The School District would have to justify the demolition by showing that demolition would be in the best interest of the community, based on demolition guidelines. Demolition was an extensive process that included public hearings.

Planning Consultant Elmiger pointed out that the Planning Commission would have jurisdiction over use and density.

Further round table discussion included:

- 501 W. Main Street was built in 1936. The HDC would need to know what the building was used for – what was its history in the community?
- The Old Village School would probably have a higher quality development if 501 W. Main Street – which was not necessarily an attractive building and had many structural problems – could be demolished.
- 501 W. Main Street had – over time – gone through multiple renovations. The façade might not even resemble the original structure.
- The maintenance building would also be demolished.

- Parking issues involving the Library were discussed. These could be addressed in the planning process.

In response to a question from Chair Allen, Asst. Superintendent Zopf said they hoped to have the RFP in draft form by the end of July, so that it could be issued in early August. The RFP would give 60 days for responses.

Commissioner Hoffman summarized the feedback and conversation so far: 1) The consensus of the Commission was that *Concept Plan A* was the better way to go. *Concept Plan B* would be out of place at this location. 2) The case for demolition would need to be made.

Commissioner Gudritz cautioned that the demolition approval process would take 2-3 months, minimum.

Planning Consultant Elmiger reviewed process for demolition approval. The applicant would submit an application to demolish. The HDC would decide whether the building had historic significance or not. If it did not have historic significance, the HDC could decide the application without a public hearing. If it did have historic significance, a public hearing would be held. A final decision could be made at the public hearing, or the request could be tabled until the next meeting. A demolition had to be substantially complete within 6 months of *approval without reservation*.

In response to a question from Mr. Mielock, Planning Consultant Elmiger said *approvals with reservation* gave the applicant opportunity to discover more information about the property. *Approvals with reservation* could not go forward until 6 months had passed.

Discussion followed regarding the advantages and disadvantages of receiving an application for demolition before a developer had a plan in place. By the time of the public hearing, a plan should be ready for discussion, or at least a commitment to have single family homes, for instance, rather than higher-density housing.

Commissioner Argenta referred to the four criteria in the Demolition of Structures: *Grounds upon which an application may be based*.

Commissioner Hoffman suggested that the HDC walk through the 501 W. Main Street building as part of the meeting when the application for demolition was heard.

Superintendent Gallagher concluded that the demolition application process should take place post-RFP.

Several Commissioners spoke of the interest of residents in the Historic District – residents would most likely attend and speak at public hearings.

Other Discussion

Planning Consultant Elmiger said that the City had not received the grant From the State Historic Preservation Office (SHIPPO) for the Intensive Level Survey of the Historic District. However, staff at SHIPPO had made suggestions regarding ways to improve the grant application and had encouraged the City to apply again. A reapplication would need to be made by October 1; Planning Consultant Elmiger was planning on resubmitting.

9. ADJOURNMENT:

Seeing that there was no further comment, Chair Allen adjourned the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Cheryl McGuire
Recording Secretary

Approved as published 7/20/16