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CITY OF STAMFORD
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
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(FINAL) Minutes of the Historic Preservation Advisory Commission (HPAC)

Date: Regular Meeting held: September 6, 2014
Location: Stamford City Hall, 888 Washington Blvd. Stamford CT 06901
6th fl. Training Room
Present: Lynn Drobbin, Anne Goslin, David Woods, Barry Hersh, Elena Kalman
(missing), Rebecca. Shannonhouse, Lynn Villency Cohen

REGULAR MEETING

I. Call to order (Meeting called to order 7:06)

A motion was made to have Elena Kalman sit in as a voting member for the meeting in place of Jill Smyth who has stepped down from the commission

(The motion was moved by D. Woods and seconded by Anne Goslin and carried unanimously)

II Approval of Minutes

The Commission voted to approve the minutes of the July meeting: (Moved by B. Hersh, seconded by L. Drobbin, and carried unanimously.

III. New Business

There was no new business to report at this meeting.

A. 245 Atlantic Street New construction adjacent to St. John's church.

Participants: William Hennessey, attorney CTSH; Steven Wise, owner, Roeco; Owner Monsignor Stephen DiGiovanni, St. Johns Church; James Childress, Centerbrook Architects.

1. The project was introduced by W. Hennessey, (Bill). He relayed that the residential project is 3 acres in size. Roeco is the developer. The property consists of the rectory and St. John's church; to the rear of those buildings is an existing surface parking lot. The lot extends to the St. John's Urban Development Corp. property - a separate entity. The area inside the dashed line on the board display is the ground lease of 1.67 acres. The church and the rectory will be the beneficiary. Lynn asked what is behind the rectory. Bill said it is vacant land right now.



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2. The residential project will be a six-story building with 212 units, approximately. There will be about 315 parking spots- one space per unit. There will be 100 extra spaces for church use. The group is seeking a variance from the zoning board to allow the parking count. All other development features are as of right.

3. Monsignor DiGiovanni said that the area to be built upon is an empty parking lot. The church needs to have income and wants to sell the site to endow the parish. They have previously restored areas of the church; this project will help to restore the rectory that was built originally in 1850 as a residence with several additions over time. They want to restore the ground floor rooms, ballroom and other gathering spaces and have hired John Canning to complete the restoration. They also plan to modernize the upper stories.

4. J. Childress presented the rectory work. He said they want to make the courtyard behind the rectory an "oasis" with a planted garden and landscaped plaza. They will save the facade using more durable materials and restore the sides of the building. And they will add a one story section in back following the existing facade. There will be a mansard roof facing outside and a rooftop garden on the inner courtyard side. The 1885 windows will be reused at a fountain in the courtyard. They will use a steel frame for support of the windows. There is a trellis with details and form to match the gothic arch openings at the church. There will be gates at the public access points.

5. Lynn asked if the restoration is a phased plan. Monsignor said that they would like the work to be done by 2018. A schedule is still being developed. The ground floor restoration may occur after fundraising and after 2018. She asked if the work will be done with historic photographs. The answer was yes. Monsignor noted that the rectory and the church is not on the National Register. Lynn asked if there are any historic interior photographs of the rectory building. It was noted there is limited historical record.

6. A. Goslin asked if the housing density will be allowed. Bill said yes. The variance is for the parking. The housing will be rentals at market rate. The architect for the housing is Beinfield Architecture. There was a question about the review of the apartment building with the rectory. Lynn said that it is contributing to the overall site and located in the Downtown Historic District and therefore comes under review by the commission.

7. Bill proceeded to explain that the plan is a U shape extending from Tresser Blvd over to Bell St. There is a parking plinth and then housing above that. There is a plaza level above the plinth. The pool and plaza is above the parking. Bill showed a rendered view along Tresser Blvd.. It is a brick building with a stone base similar to the apartment building on Washington Blvd.. The vehicular entry and the main entrance will be on Tresser. There is an auto court and drop off inside the building. He further said the side that faces the rectory courtyard is a one story brick façade in the middle and part of the apartment tower on the ends.

8. Lynn said that she is concerned with the design as it looks like a factory building and does not relate to the church. The factory look is not consistent with the surrounding architecture of the Downtown which is primarily comprised of office buildings and townhouse style structures. Bill



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said that they want to build small units of office space, flex space, or artist space along the ground floor of Bell Street. The rendering suggests awnings over the windows.

9. Lynn thinks there should be some element that relates to the historic church structure. D. Woods disagreed and said that the Tresser Blvd. side is not near the church, and the Bell Street facade is along a narrow street with a parking structure, and is separated from the church by some distance. In addition, the existing streets do not have significant buildings that will make a context for the new building. He believes that the architect is free to make his own context. He added that there should be some attention to the design or features at the parking garage elevation that faces the church's courtyard. He also said that the commission is "advisory" only. The commission can make recommendations for the new architecture but it really does not fall under the commission's responsibility. He did say that it is important for the alley facade of the apartment building to relate to the planned courtyard and the historic rectory. Maybe the team can extend the "upper plaza deck" over to that facade. Bill said that the team is exploring a ground floor use along the front row of parking. He said it might be a church related use. The group encouraged that, as well as development of the design and the facade.

10. A motion was discussed that the architect should explore some design features for the wall as it relates to the rectory courtyard with the upper plaza deck. A. Goslin noted that the application before the commission is for the apartment building. The rectory was not included. All agreed that the commission should still comment on the rectory plans and request that the design team return when the plans for the rectory are further developed. It was generally agreed that the commission should support the rectory restoration and the design for the courtyard. David requested that the motion include a request that the team return to the commission at the point where the materials and details for the restoration are developed.

The motion was further stated: the commission supports the application for the residential portion of the project. The commission requests that the design team revise the courtyard "alley side" facade and add uses that will allow it to relate to the landscape / courtyard design plans. In addition, the commission further supports the concepts presented for the rectory restoration: the west side one-story addition and the landscaped courtyard. The commission requested that the design team return with final selected materials and developed details at the "Design Development" stage.

(The motion was made by Lynn Drobbin and seconded by Elena Kalman and carried unanimously)

B. Dairy Queen alterations

Participants: Christian Frye, Architect PCDF; Frank Lutrieri.(sp?) owner.

1. The project was introduced by C. Frye. The owner is looking to making improvements to the Dairy Queen building. DQ Corporate has been upgrading facilities to conform a new design throughout the country. The original building, that dates to 1947 was a flat-topped Dairy Queen. In the 1950's the design was changed to incorporate the barn style gambrel roof.



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2, Mr. Frye presented the design. The new design has a flat roof with a large blue panel area and a DQ logo in the corner. The design generally changes every 10 years. This is the newest version. The facade will be EIFS and the blue portion will be "Alpolic". They can use a cement board in place of the Alpolic. The building sits within the set back right now and is non-conforming. The roof line also overhangs the setback. The new design will pull back the facade to the existing building face. It will still be nonconforming.

3. A DQ representative said that the new design is required and will make more money for owners. In 80 percent of the stores revenues go up. Mr. Lucherini is taking ownership from his father and the DQ rep said that this triggers a requirement in his lease to adhere to the new corporate design. If the owner does not change the building to the modern design then corporate DQ may not allow the owner to continue his franchise. Mr. Frye also said that they plan to provide a railing to be along Summer St. including the corner with North Street, in the area of the seating, to allow for more safety.

4. There were a couple of people in attendance that expressed a sadness to losing the original DQ "barn" building design. Lynn asked if the commission can write to DQ corporate to request the retention of the existing structure without the owner losing it's franchise? The DQ representative said that it can be done and provided the name of the corporate architect. D. Woods noted that he does not like the current building design and wonders if there is a higher and better use of the property. The owners can probably make more money if they sell the property. The design is out of date with the changes that have occurred along Summer St. and looks very odd now. But he also said that he understands the community's interest in the building as a historic structure and believes that the new design is much worse than the original. This site may not be ideal for a DQ. It is a more corporate office neighborhood now.

5. Barry also noted that there should be trees and landscaping. Some planting will soften the look and use of the building. David agreed that the landscaping can help the corner at North Street appearance.

6. A motion was discussed that the commission should write a letter to corporate Dairy Queen saying that the community requests that the existing structure and design be retained on this site because it is an important historic building in the community. It also was noted that the application to the zoning board will have a public presentation on the 14th. The commission will provide a letter to the zoning board that requests that the city support HPAC wishes that the current building design stay in place. Lynn also noted that if there is a change there should be a plaque to memorialize the historic building.

A motion was made that the commission does not favor of the new corporate design for the DQ at Summer and North streets. The commission will further appeal to the corporate headquarters to request retention of the existing structure and request that they amend owner's franchise contract to enable the structure to remain intact.



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(The motion was made by L. Drobbin and seconded by E. Kalman and carried unanimously)

IV. Old Business

A. September 17th Party at the old Post office

1. L. Drobbin, E. Kalman and A. Goslin have completed a flier and it has been sent to the press. There is also a program ready for release and Lynn also modified that old press release for distribution.
2. Anne asked if everyone can post the flier to three locations. Anne will be sure to send to HNP and to neighborhood associations. She will ask Rebecca Shannonhouse to distribute it to Hubbard Heights. David Agreed to take it to DSSD for their posting.
3. Elena reported that they have insurance, firemen, and policemen. Elena will review that the money for payment will go through DSSD. Elena also noted the following. Capelli will clean up the plaza and the lobby. She asked if there will be food. All agreed that there will be limited food but will have water available.
4. A person asked if there will be a "Facebook Event" listed. He volunteered to do that.

(The item was tabled without further decision. Review of status will be on going)

B. Demolition committee

1. The group briefly reviewed 76 Sea Beach Drive demo requests for the both the main house and the garage structure. There were limited comments as this is a private property and may not fall under HPAC review. Anne agreed to do some research into the property.
2. There are no others that were reviewed. David will continue to send them out as he receives them in the mail

(The item was tabled without further decision. Review of status will be on going)

C. National Register Nominations (Sandy grant update)

1. Lynn Drobbin noted there has been some discussion that the grant should be used for the Shippan neighborhoods. She noted that there is some indication that neighbors have objected to doing a survey. Wes Haynes has been in touch with Lynn to relay the Shippan owner's prior objections.



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2. Renee sent an email that said she believes that a survey is important for the Shippan neighborhoods as they are full of good pre -1930 residential architecture. She further said that a good survey has never been done.

A motion was discussed that HPAC should support surveys of important areas of the city and Shippan is one of those areas. Lynn agreed to contact Jenny Scofield at the state Historic Preservation office to move it forward with discussions about using the available grant money for this location.

(A motion was made by Lynn Drobbin and seconded by Anne Goslin and passed unanimously)

D. Zoning Board applications

Anne Goslin reported there is one application that HPAC may want to consider. It is for 191 Summer St. It is a building that the owners want to convert to residential use and they want to use zoning section 7.3 for the conversion. This will trigger a more thorough review by HPAC. Renee has been to the site and reported that there is no historic fabric. She has no objection to using section 7.3 and will be available during the construction phase to assist the contractor as is required under section 7.3 . The building is listed as contributing in the downtown district.

Anne will notify the city that HPAC will review the project at the October 4th meeting.

(The item was tabled without further discussion. Review of status will be on going.)

E. Other items of note

Non were brought up

Ms. L. Drobbin adjourned the meeting at 9:50 p.m.

Drafted by: David W. Woods AIA secretary – September 24, 2016
Stamford, Historic Preservation Advisory Commission

Meetings are normally on the second Tuesday of the month starting at 7:00 pm in the 6th floor training room. The next meeting will be Tuesday October 4th