



**Landmark Preservation Board
Thursday, May 5, 2011**

Meeting Minutes

8:30 am Common Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Don Radke called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Louise Birkhead, Tim Bonaparte, Bob Haley, Dan Leary, Julia Marshall, Don Radke, Jeff Romano

Excused: Fouad Dietz

Staff: Kate Auwaerter

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

L. Birkhead made a motion to accept the minutes of April 21, 2011, which was seconded by J. Marshall.

B. Haley noted the following corrections:

DISCUSSION

South Presbyterian Church Windows. K. Auwaerter reported that Tony Serviente of Serviente Glass in Ithaca had contacted her about South Presbyterian Church. He is working with the former owner of the church to resolve the replacement window issue and had provided a *sample color drawing* of the type of window replacement that he and the former owner were proposing. The board agreed that the *drawings replicated a simplified version of the original design* seemed to be within the spirit of what the board had requested. K. Auwaerter will be working with T. Serviente to set up a site visit to the church shortly and will contact the board with a proposed date and time.

The minutes were approved as corrected.

OLD BUSINESS

Special Permit: 645-657 N. Salina Street (Dunkin' Donuts). D. Radke reported that although the LPB's formal review was complete, the architect for the project asked to meet with board members to discuss the new design. B. Haley and D. Radke met with B. Abbott about the project and discussed the new design. K. Auwaerter said she had received revised drawings and would share them with B. Haley. D. Radke noted that B. Abbott had requested a letter from the LPB in support of the project.

NEW BUSINESS

CA-11-06: 118 Circle Road. The applicant was not present. The application is to repaint the house in colors that the board agreed appeared to be appropriate to the character of the house and district. T. Bonaparte made a motion to approve the application as submitted. The motion was approved by J. Romano and approved unanimously.

CA-11-07: 308 Farmer Street. Martin McDermott introduced his application to rebuild the front porch of his house and to construct a small addition on the rear of the house. He explained that the wooden front porch, which is north facing, has been rebuilt once already but continues to suffer from water damage. He proposed to rebuild the porch in brick to match the brick of the foundation walls of the house. The porch deck and steps will be limestone. The porch steps will be built slightly wider than the current steps to provide a better match with the proportions of the porch. The columns on the porch will remain. T. Bonaparte recommended that footings at the appropriate depth below the frost line be installed as part of the rebuild. In addition, it was recommended that the wooden plinths under the columns be replaced with metal to protect the columns from moisture from the deck.

The board discussed the proposed addition at the rear of the house. Currently, the rear door opens directly into the house off a raised brick deck. The application calls for the construction of a small, one-story entry vestibule with a sloped roof with siding to match the rest of the house. The board made a recommendation that the vestibule be pulled out to meet the existing six inch step of the brick deck. J. Marshall was concerned that the vestibule as designed might crowd the large window on the side of the house. The board agreed that it was a good concept, but it needed more detailed drawings which M. McDermott agreed to supply. L. Birkhead made a motion to approve the front porch repair only, which was seconded by B. Haley. The motion was approved unanimously.

Project Site Review: 622 James Street (Kasson Apartments). Randy Crawford presented the plans for the redevelopment of the apartment building. Starting with the site development, it was noted that the sidewalk from James Street was off center, which R. Crawford explained was necessary to avoid a major tree. The board recommended that the new sidewalk have 45 degree cuts as it meets the main sidewalk so that it is given a bigger presence to the entrance. The board also discussed the two new seat walls proposed at the rear of the building. It was noted that the proposed material, Versa Lok, was not an acceptable material choice. The board also discussed the parking lot and noted that it appeared to have some code issues, specifically with access and dumpster location. These issues are outside of the board's purview, but nonetheless were of concern. Finally, it was noted that the application did not include a plant materials list and the board would need to see one to complete its review.

In regard to the building plans, R. Crawford explained that the windows would be repaired. If replacement is necessary, he would come back with the replacement options. He noted that the project will be using federal money and so has a substantial lead abatement issue; he has recommended that the owners do a cost comparison between repair and replacement. All masonry will be cleaned and repaired as necessary according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. B. Haley requested information regarding any removal of details. R. Crawford noted that unless noted on the plans, all the features would remain. D. Radke suggested that the board comment include a statement in strong support of retaining the windows over replacement and also for retaining all character defining features and materials.

Project Site Review: 615 James Street (Leavenworth Apartments). Starting with the site work, R. Crawford pointed out the large retaining wall along the east side of the property that was proposed to be rebuilt using Versa Lok masonry units. The board stated that this would not be an acceptable material choice. The board also recommended that the concrete lawn curb at the front of the property should be retained rather than removed. It was also noted that a planting list should be provided to the board for its review.

In regard to the building, R. Crawford noted that the windows will be repaired rather than replaced. A new stair tower will be constructed on the west façade of the property, set back in the southern most bay. The masonry wall of the tower will have blank incised panels to help provide a shadowline. J. Marshall recommended that the panels reflect the dimensions of the windows in the other recessed bay. Along those lines, R. Crawford recommended and the board agreed that the panels could be given a "Palladian" motif that would provide more relief to the panel and match more closely the pattern of the windows in the other bay. As with the Kasson Apartments, the board strongly recommended that original materials and features be preserved to the maximum extent possible.

Special Permit (modification): 229-37 W. Fayette Street. The board reviewed the application and noted that the proposed modification to the signage was an improvement to the existing sign. It also commented that it was important that the bracket be attached to the building in a way that does not damage historic materials and it recommended the sign be attached to a pier rather than over the entrance.

DISCUSSION

315 Berkeley Drive. Mike Stanton presented a preliminary plan to replace the shutters on his house. The existing pine shutters are not original and are now deteriorating. The majority of the original shutter hardware is missing; the current shutters are screwed into the wall. He proposes to replicate the shutters in cedar. The board recommended that the new shutters be reduced in height so that they would appear to fit the void and would meet in the middle of the window. M. Stanton also asked the board's advice on repair of his porch columns. Two of the three have rotting bases. The board recommended a wooden base (Cypress) and that the base of the columns be raised to reduce the possibility of water damage. J. Marshall also recommended the use of wood epoxy (Abatron) to fix the base of the column. Finally, M. Stanton noted that the paving stones on the porch were coming loose and that he intended to hire a contractor to reset them in the same pattern. The board recommended that he photograph and number them to help with the accurate relaying of the stones.

City Hall Forecourt design (50%). Mat Marco (CH2MHill), Sara Endriss (Viridian Landscape Studio), Amy Youskowski (Viridian Landscape Studio) and Andy Maxwell (Bureau of Planning & Sustainability) presented revised concepts for the redesign of the plaza in front of City Hall. M. Marco provided the board with a brief overview and context of the project, noting the iconic nature of the location. S. Endriss presented the details of the revised plan, the primary features of which include an open forecourt that features colored permeable paving in an asymmetrical square pattern reflecting both the planting beds that were originally located on the forecourt and the asymmetry of the façade. Two large sycamore trees would frame the forecourt on the west side and a grove of five elm trees would be placed on the west side. Car access for ceremonial purposes would be maintained to the front steps. The existing patterned pavers would remain at the curb line at E. Washington Street and would be extended along both sides of the plaza.

B. Haley suggested that a fence could be added 6' in from the curb line at the north edge of the brick along E. Washington Street to provide a linear element that would set the forecourt off as a garden. He noted that there was a similar fence in front of the original city hall and recommended that the fence could be 42" high, black metal with a Victorian aesthetic to match the era current city hall.

After extensive discussion regarding the number and placement of the trees, the patterning of the paving and the location of the fence, the general (though not unanimous) consensus of the board was that the two inner trees should be eliminated from the plan. The board discussed the concept and the majority felt that it would cause issues with snow removal and might be seen as a visual barrier; members of the board suggested that metal bollards (without chains) might provide a linear element without the logistical issues of a solid fence. In general, the asymmetry of the patterning of the block in the courtyard was acceptable, although some on the board felt it was too "busy". M. Marco noted that they were preparing a perspective view of the plaza that would give a better idea of the pedestrian's experience of the patterning and trees. Finally, B. Haley recommended that the curbs along the side of the forecourt be eliminated completely, giving the forecourt more of the feel of a piazza and "people place". A. Maxwell said that he would take all these comments and the most recent design to the mayor for her comment.

South Presbyterian Church Windows (update): K. Auwaerter noted that she and B. Haley had met with Tony Serviente of Serviente Glass and the new owner of the church to discuss the window replacement project. The board will receive an official submission shortly.

213 Scottholm Terrace. D. Radke reported that he had met with the owners of 213 Scottholm Terrace. They have asked for the board's advice regarding the siding, which originally had an oiled finish. The siding has not been maintained and so has suffered sun and other weather-related damage. They have been advised to stain the exterior with a semi-solid stain. D. Leary and B. Haley both expressed their serious concern with this proposal. D. Radke said he would get the owners in touch with them to discuss. He also noted that they hoped to replace a vanity in the downstairs bathroom. The consensus was that they should be allowed to do so.

ADJOURN

L. Birkhead made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by J. Romano. The meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.