

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
Minutes
November 16, 2004

Members Present: Bill Snyder, Chair; Lisa Poole-Woldring; Vice-Chair; Rob Chamberlin; Linda DeYoung; Nelson Nave; Bob Oudsema;

Members Absent: James Tribu

City Staff: Sharon Ferraro, Historic Preservation Coordinator; Amy Thomas, Recording Secretary

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Snyder called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF ABSENCES

The Commission decided to table the approval of absences until later in the meeting to allow time for Mr. Tribu to arrive.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

There were no changes to the November 16, 2004 Historic District Commission Agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

DISCLAIMER

Ms. Ferraro read the disclaimer into the record.

MINUTES (October 17, 2004)

There were no changes to the minutes.

Mr. Oudsema, supported by Ms. Poole-Woldring, moved approval of the October 17, 2004 Minutes. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

530 W. South Street (IHA 04-0359)

Larry Fuller and Christine Skandis appeared to discuss the application. The application is a proposal for further work on the wall.

Ms. Skandis stated that there has been an issue with the wall being constructed at this address. The masonry work was done last fall and the ironwork in the spring. In the meantime, 516 W. South Street changed hands and is now a commercial business with 30 people Monday through Sunday. The new owners at 516 W. South installed a hot tub on the northwest corner of their property that is one foot or so above the wall at 530 W. South St. Ms. Ferraro confirmed that hot tubs are allowed in the historic district. Ms. Skandis expressed concern with regard to the privacy issues created by having the hot tub in this location. Ms. Skandis spoke with her neighbor, Marty Spaulding, and he said he would help pay for the wall. Ms. Skandis stated that Ms. Ferraro informed her that the wall could be built up to eight feet tall. She added that, after the wall was complete, Ms. Ferraro visited 530 W. South St. and spoke with the Contractor, Larry Koning. She informed him that the project, the new wall height, would need to appear in front of the HDC to get approval. Ms. Skandis then referenced the June 15, 2004 Historic District Commission meeting and the events that occurred at that point in time. Ms. Skandis referred to the Standards and Guidelines that state that a fence can be 8 feet tall from a point 50% back on the property line and running toward the back of the property. She also mentioned that other houses in the neighborhood have 8-foot tall fences and that she thought it was unfair for the Historic District Commission to not allow her to have the eight-foot tall fence.

Ms. Ferraro stated that she could not locate her notes with regard to the phone conversation that took place about the wall. Ms. Skandis mentioned that Marty (her next door neighbor) had put up a metal fence. Ms. Ferraro stated that the fence next door had been administratively approved. Ms. Skandis requested clarification. Mr. Snyder stated that Ms. Ferraro has the ability to grant administrative approval for specific types of work in the historic district. Administrative approval is not Historic District Commission approval, which is required for the current work at 530 W. South Street.

Mr. Oudsema commented that when the original design was approved, the masonry was to end at about 36" and wrought iron was to be added above that height. Everything would be open to visual sight. What was actually constructed is quite different. Discussion followed with regard to the columns. Ms. Ferraro read the following from the Certificate of Appropriateness for what was approved on April 17, 2003: "On the east boundary, a low brick wall, capped with stone or concrete caps with an antique wrought iron fence on top for a total height of six feet. Pillars spaced evenly along the length and placed at the owners discretion." Ms. Ferraro stated that she spoke with the masons about her concerns for the greater height and they complied without a stop work order being posted. Mr. Oudsema stated that he measured the fences across the street. The fence around 523 W. South Street is eight feet tall. Discussion followed as to whether the fence might predate the historic district designation. The other fence measures 6' 6" total height. Mr. Oudsema stated that he would not support the wall as it currently is. Ms. Ferraro commented that the Historic District Commission's original decision didn't specify the height on the side. It was specified that the height of the existing front wall be maintained and that the maximum height for the new brick wall on the south would be

5'4" including the new iron that would go on top. The owners were encouraged to lower the overall height of the wall to approximately 4'6".

Mr. Snyder inquired if the applicant was willing to compromise. Ms. Skandis commented that the 8-foot tall fence provided some privacy. If the fence were any lower, the neighbors could look in. If you walk down the sidewalk, you see that the wall doesn't infringe on the view of either of the buildings. Mr. Snyder inquired if the applicant could address the problems by using landscaping instead of a fence. Mr. Fuller commented that landscaping would not keep people off the property. He further added that he was concerned about the safety of his pets.

Mr. Nave stated that he had not been provided with a copy of the drawings that were mentioned. He inquired about the south, west and east walls and requested specifications. Ms. Skandis provided the commissioners with pictures of the proposed wall. Discussion followed with regard to the height of the wall and the columns. Mr. Nave advised leaving the north (back) section as is and dropping the next section down to the level of the rest of the wall. Mr. Nave requested a complete, scaled drawing of the #3 option before rendering an opinion.

Mr. Snyder requested clarification. Mr. Nave stated that the north wall could remain at eight feet and the adjoining section of the wall could be 55" rather than 41". The height of the columns should step up/down with the height of the fence and be shorter than they are now. Mr. Snyder expressed concern regarding the wrought iron with high columns. He requested that the applicant provide an elevation drawing of the proposed work. Mr. Fuller agreed to provide the drawing. Ms. Skandis inquired if the members of the Historic District Commission could visit the property and provide input on the situation. Ms. Ferraro suggested arranging a site visit for the first week of December.

Mr. Oudsema, supported by Ms. Poole-Woldring, moved to postpone the decision regarding the application for 530 W. South Street until the December meeting, pending more details regarding the proposed work. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Chamberlin stressed the need for better communications all around. He also expressed an interest in attending the site visit.

Fred Royce spoke in favor of the applicant's project and commented that the fence/wall is commensurate with the style of the house and would enhance the property. Mr. Oudsema mentioned that the state historic preservation office put an easement in the title of 530 W. South Street when the Red Cross occupied the building. The easement says that no fences are to be put up between the two properties under discussion.

Mike Shubeck, 1500 Long Road, spoke on behalf of the applicants. Mr. Shubeck stated that Mr. Fuller restored houses on either side of Mr. Schubeck's residence and he commended Mr. Fuller for the work that he did.

Kevin Plimins, 1111 Short Road, spoke on behalf of the applicants and commended them for their work on the property at 530 W. South Street. He urged everyone to work together to find a resolution to the situation.

Mr. Snyder acknowledged the willingness of those who were present to work toward the same goal and he thanked everyone for their comments.

820 W. Main (Case #IHA 04-0359)

Brian Spaulding appeared to discuss the application. The application requests removal of two basement windows on the east side with in-fill siding to match existing. The applicant wants to expand the remaining two windows to match each other and the wooden slider egress window (see 816 W. Main west side for HDC approved replacement – May 14, 2002).

After a brief discussion regarding the dimensions of the window and other details of the project, Mr. Spaulding decided to withdraw his application and submit a new proposal to Ms. Ferraro.

110 Woodward (Case #IHA 04-0360)

Brian Spaulding was present to discuss the application. The application requests reinstallation of the removed gable detail, similar to 206 Woodward.

Discussion followed with regard to the details of the work to be done.

Mr. Nave, supported by Ms. Poole-Woldring, moved approval of the application as presented. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

701 W. Walnut

Ms. Ferraro stated that Mr. Miller now owns the property at 701 W. Walnut. He has pulled a roofing permit and he may have a new proposal on the next HDC agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Poole-Woldring, supported by Ms. DeYoung, moved to adjourn the November 16, 2004 Historic District Commission meeting. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:26 p.m.

Submitted by: _____

Date: _____

Reviewed by: _____

Date: _____

Approved by: _____

Date: _____