

**CITY OF ALBERT LEA
HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

*8/23/2016, 6:00 p.m.
City Council Chambers*

AGENDA

A. CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

HPC Minutes from July 12th, 2016

C. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- 314 South Broadway – Application from Senior Resources and Blue Zone Project for Wall signs for front and rear of the building,
- 143 West Clark Street – Application from Home Federal Bank for wall signs to be located on either side of the door facing Clark Street,
- 125/127 Clarke Street – Application from Harold Kamrath to modify the storefront cornice by either repairing the existing plaster stucco above the storefront or removing this and repointing of brick.

D. NEW BUSINESS

E. OLD BUSINESS

- Updating the Historic District
- 2016 State Preservation Conference – Hastings, September 8&9
- 2017 State Preservation Conference – Albert Lea
- Brown Signs

F. COMMISSIONER COMMUNICATIONS

G. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

H. ADJOURNMENT

MINUTES of July 12, 2016
Heritage Preservation Commission
City of Albert Lea

Call to order 5:30 p.m. by Chairman Brad Kirchner

MEMBERS PRESENT

Brad Kirchner (Chair)
Tom Larson (Vice Chair)
Tami Staker
Charles Newell
Larry Baker (Ex Officio)

MEMBERS ABSENT

Robert Hoffman
Larry Fisher
Lester Anderson

STAFF PRESENT:

Molly Patterson-Lundgren, WSB City Planner
Jennifer Nelson, Office Specialist

OTHERS PRESENT:

Lanier Pratt, Complete Investments, LLC, 117 South Newton Ave, Albert Lea
Matt Benda, Complete Investments, LLC, 117 South Newton Ave, Albert Lea
Ellen Kehr, Blue Zones Project, Tenant 314 South Broadway Ave, Albert Lea
Annette Petersen, Senior Resources, Tenant 314 South Broadway Ave, Albert Lea

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Sign proposal for 314 Broadway Avenue South was added to the agenda under new business. The revised agenda was approved unanimously on a voice vote.

A motion was made by Tami Staker to approve the minutes from June 13, 2016 and seconded by Charles Newell. The minutes were approved unanimously on a voice vote.

PUBLIC HEARING: None

NEW BUSINESS: HP2016-007 Application for Certificate of Appropriateness for 113 Newton Ave S (The Knutson Building) Façade design review.

Staff report prepared by Molly Patterson-Lundgren, Planner WSB & Associates, Inc. become part of these minutes by reference.

Molly Patterson-Lundgren reviewed the applicant's proposal. The applicant's proposal includes some changes to the southwest corner of the building, transom and main floor windows and a concept for signage.

A big part of what this proposal includes is removing the visually heavy black glass panel system covering the transom window area which was historically present. Also reestablishing the main floor windows will be a significant change to the appearance of the southwest part of the building.

Molly Patterson-Lundgren advised the group they can decide to approve the signage concept. Also a reminder what the sign says is not under approval, only the design of the sign. The board can decide the parameters and leave up to city staff to assure the sign meets city code and the applicant would not have to go before the board once again for final approval of the sign. This is a suggestion for the board to consider.

This design proposal will bring back the form of this building in terms of opening spaces. Openings will be reflective not dark and solid. Pattern to opening to wall will be brought back by removing the brick façade and replacing with windows will really open up this corner.

Brad Kirchner commented on the protruding beam concept on the south west corner of the building. He is not comfortable with this as a canopy is considered modern for this era of building. Molly agreed the building is very symmetrical and the use of a canopy may throw off the balance of the building. Molly Patterson-Lundgren also pointed out this design would still be an improvement of this building.

Matt Benda commented the architect was excited to find a way to activate the space on the southwest side of the building. The group had some discussion on options to help activate and shade this side of the building without the use of a canopy. This could be an arbor with the goal of using this space with the mobile library with seating concept. This space has lots of foot traffic especially do to the post office being their next door neighbor. The challenge is this is a tiny tight space. The property line extends approximately four feet out from the building.

Lanier Pratt advised the I-beam is existing and would expand on this somehow. Tom Larson asked if an architect could send over a drawing the HPC could review without the applicant having to come back to the group.

Lanier Pratt advised when he removed some of the black panels he discovered brick, stud framing and existing insulation behind this area.

Brad Kirchner made a motion to recommend approval whereas the proposed storefront rehabilitation for 113-115/117 south Newton as detailed in the application packet received by the City June 2nd 2016 substantially meets local adopted design guidelines and Secretary of Interior Standards and does not adversely affect the historic nature of the site or downtown historic district, The Heritage Preservation Commission approves a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed work including: removal of opaque glass covering transom and brick storefront in fill along with replacement transom windows and storefront windows and addition of the corner structural entrance to the alley. Further the proposed lighting is approved as illustrated in the application. The proposed concept for signage and outdoor "pocket park area" is also approved by the following conditions apply:

1. Any work taking place on the site will occur on the applicant's property or with permission of the neighboring property owner. Approvals by the HPC do not constitute an approval by the City of work that is located outside of the applicant's property.

2. Proposed signage is approved with the condition that all signs receive an issued City sign permit prior to their installation and that final signs shall meet all sign area, location and size and other requirements of the City zoning code.
3. The applicant shall submit a final detailed plan for the alley entrance to be approved by the HPC.

The above recommendations were seconded by Tom Larson. Motion was approved unanimously on a 4-0 roll call vote.

The issuance of the COA will allow the applicant to submit and process the Broadway Ridge Renewal Grant and start work on the project.

Sign proposal for 314 South Broadway Ave introduced by Ellen Kehr and Annette Petersen. Kehr and Peterson would like to come up with a sign plan for this building to accommodate all the occupants including; Vitality Center, Senior Resources and the United Way and sounds like a few more tenants will be joining in the future. Petersen would like to relocate the blue awning from the previous Senior Resources location to the back door of the 314 Broadway building. Especially since more people are parking in the back parking lot and need to know where to enter. Petersen advised this door is recessed approximately 26" and the canopy may not be a good fit and would not meet city code requirements. Petersen advised cost is a factor as they are a small nonprofit organization.

Molly Patterson-Lundgren will form a subcommittee to come up with a budget and sign proposal for the building and the tenants of the building. Kehr also stated they would like to do a little painting to fit in with appearance that would complement the Historic Downtown district. She would like to see a large wall sign on the front of the building and some type of interchangeable sign to identify all the tenants occupying the building and something easy to change if necessary as organizations come and go. The committee will come up with a sign plan and bring it before the HPC for review at the next meeting. Kehr advised it is important for this block and really wants the building to look attractive and inviting and be what we want it to be for the historic district.

Currently banners have been made and are on the front of the building and a smaller banner over the back door in the alleyway. This is temporary until they are able to get a permanent sign. Discussion regarding signage for this building will be continued at the next meeting. Molly Patterson-Lundgren will also check with Steve Jahnke regarding the height requirements of awnings in the alley.

OLD BUSINESS: HP2016 Continuation of discussion regarding 146 West William Street outdoor bar & patio, Nasty Habit (was recessed at the last meeting).

A motion was made by Tami Staker and seconded by Charles Newell to reopen the meeting for the continuation of the discussion regarding the Nasty Habit outdoor bar and patio. Motion approved unanimously on a voice vote.

Larry Baker is working with Brad Hegwood on the outdoor bar and advised during conversations with Hegwood his plan is to put on a steel roof. Not corrugated metal will be a roofing material. It will look like a garage. Historically the building was a liquor store and a shipping store. At the last meeting there was discussion regarding what is historically appropriate in alley ways. Molly Patterson-Lundgren

advised crates, barrels, sheds and vehicles were historically found in alleys. Fencing may not have been found although we need to look at new uses also and what is a good fit and brings up the whole district as well. Also discussed at the last meeting some low maintenance materials with not a lot of added cost that would still look nice.

Brad Kirchner also brought up a concern this area is a side view of the property not just a back alleyway.

Tami Staker is concerned Hegwood will maintain the outdoor bar area like he has the smoking shack which currently appears worn and not well maintained.

Ellen Kehr also stated this could be a really neat opportunity for this area. Kehr advised some greenery would dress up this area and suggested some planters.

Brad Kirchner reached out to Brad Hegwood and had some conversation regarding some design plans and passed on a few suggestions from the HPC from the last meeting. One of the suggestions would be to tone down the white rental building by painting it a darker color.

The approved solid wood fence may be more challenging to maintain and not very inviting. Brad Hegwood has put up a black metal fence with a more open and inviting appearance to the patio.

Molly Patterson-Lundgren suggested the group make an amended motion for approval after more discussion regarding this design.

Larry Baker brought up the idea of requiring some green space to soften the look of this area and gave the example of the Cycle Shop on Main St W.

Brad Kirchner advised there are many low cost low maintenance ways to soften this space by adding some greenery such as low maintenance bushes and plants.

Molly Patterson-Lundgren also mentioned this space was not historically a garden area.

This group agrees this project is headed in the right direction.

Brad Kirchner advised it would be hard for him to not have a garage door without becoming very expensive. Kirchner suggested to Hegwood to use a dark colored garage door and stay away from a white door if possible. This will help so it doesn't stick out like a sore thumb.

Tom Larson advised this type of design review is out of the HPC usual parameters. Molly Patterson-Lundgren reminds the group to look at the context of the building and this is not the front façade of this building. This is a re-use, re-purpose of this space and allows for leeway. This type of decision requires balance. Molly advised the group to read over the secretary of interior standards included in the agenda.

Brad Kirchner made a motion amending requirements based on further discussion. Charles Newell seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously on a voice vote.

Including the following amendments;

- The HPC is in agreement the metal fence is approved and allows for a low maintenance and inviting space.
- The garage door is required to be dark in color and not white.
- Use of a permanent fence will not be required which will allow for removal in the winter months and this space and be used for parking for the rental property during this time.

COMMISSIONER COMMUNICATIONS: None

STAFF COMMUNICATIONS: District updates. Molly Patterson-Lundgren asked HPC members if they are willing to assist in documenting the current conditions of buildings located within the historic district and updating the information on the national register descriptions. An Intern is in the process of starting a photo log of the properties. More discussion and direction will be given at the next meeting. Staff is asking if anyone on the board is willing volunteer with this project.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Tom Larson and seconded by Charles Newell to recess the meeting at 7:14 p.m. Motion approved unanimously on a voice vote.

Next meeting is scheduled for August 9, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

Respectfully submitted,

Molly Patterson-Lundgren, City Planner

Approved:

Heritage Preservation Vice Chair
Brad Kirchner

Memorandum

To: *Heritage Preservation Commission
Chad Adams, City Manager*

From: *Molly Patterson-Lundgren, Planner
WSB & Associates, Inc.*

Date: *August 23rd 2016*

Re: *Request for certification of appropriateness for 314 South Broadway*

Background & Proposal

At the last HPC meeting, in July, Ellen Kehr and Annette Petersen explained to the HPC that they would like to install new signage at 314 South Broadway for several new tenants that will be located there. The City is the current owner of the property. As discussed at the last meeting, City staff met with representatives of the tenants and with those from Tic Toc Sign Company to look at potential options.

The general concept agreed to was a larger wall sign that would be placed in the area above the storefront underneath the existing lighting on the front (Broadway Ave) façade. Additional smaller signs indicating each of the tenants in the building will be located on the front façade, potential to the right of the doorway (there may be a conflict with the door opening at this location and it therefore being reconsidered).



The proposed color pallet for the new signs is proposed as silver writing on a black background. The large sign on the front of the building would have individually raised letters with a flat boarder. The address would be at the top of the sign on a raised panel. The boarder would be flat.

An initial concept plan, name of building likely to change

Analysis

Signage requirements from Article IV of the Zoning Code provide that “wall signs” are a permitted use in the B-3 Downtown Zoning District. Wall signs are defined as a sign attached flat against or represented on the wall or face of a building. Wall signs shall not project more than 18 inches from the wall or face of the building. The maximum aggregate wall sign area, including projecting signs, for each building face shall not exceed 20 percent of the building face on which the signs are installed. It would appear that the proposed signage can fit within the maximum 20% allotted per each façade.

The Architectural Guidelines for Preservation of the Albert Lea Historic Commercial District utilize different terminology than then the Zoning Code. “Storefront” signs, which are permitted, are described as those which are located in the horizontal band dividing the windows from the façade of the building. The only types of wall signs mentioned in the guidelines are painted wall signs and it indicates that “new wall signs on historic buildings are prohibited”.

Sign materials are addressed in the Guidelines (on page 24) and painted wood and metal are identified as the most appropriate for the buildings within the period of significance of the historic district (1874-1928). Plastic is identified as a more modern material and is acceptable provided the designs of such signs are consistent with the historic character of the district. The proposed sign, while made of a plastic type material, would have a similar appearance to a painted wood or enameled metal sign which were prolific during the period of significance of the district.

The Secretary of Interior Standards do not specifically address new signs as a design feature on their own. As a new future on the building, the same guidance pertaining to the rehabilitation of the site apply in that they should be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing of the building to protect the integrity of the property and its environment. The principal sign would be located in the area typically used for signage. The additional smaller signs are also consistent with the existing scale, proportion and massing of the building features.

Staff Recommendation:

It is anticipated that some final designs will be brought to the meeting for additional discussion but staff believes it is likely that an agreement may be reached during the meeting. The concepts discussed and provided to date will meet the requirements of the zoning code and guidelines for the HPC. The following motion is provided as a starting point for the commission to consider approval as determined appropriate at the meeting.

Requested Motion:

Whereas the signs proposed for 314 South Broadway Avenue meet the requirement of the zoning code, are consistent with Local Historic District Guidelines and Secretary of Interior Standards, and do not adversely affect the historic nature or downtown historic district, The Heritage Preservation Commission approves the Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed wall signs with a large sign on both the front (Broadway Avenue) side of the building as well as a similar sign for the rear (facing the alley). Additionally, smaller wall signs indicating tenants of the building are hereby approved. They are approved with the understanding such “placards” may be changed in the future to allow for new or different tenants without additional review by the HPC upon the condition that the coloring, size, shape and placement of the signs shall continue to be the same as what is approved herein.

Memorandum

To: *Heritage Preservation Commission
Chad Adams, City Manager*

From: *Molly Patterson-Lundgren, Planner
WSB & Associates, Inc.*

Date: *August 23rd 2016*

Re: *Request for certification of appropriateness for façade repair/work 125-127 E
Clark Street*

Background & Proposal

In July, Building Official Rob Rice, notified Harold Kamrath that concrete surface of the building he owns at 125/127 East Clark was falling onto the public sidewalk creating a potential unsafe situation and that the upper façade of the building needed to be repaired or replaced. The loose pieces have now been removed and Mr. Kamrath is considering different options to repair or restore the upper façade. Options include removal of all or a portion of the remainder of the concrete material replacing it with a similar product or removal of the material completely with the potential need to repoint the brick and replace some of the brick members. Mr. Kamrath has indicated he will likely apply for Broadway Ridge funds to assist in financing this project which does require a certificate of appropriateness issued by the HPC.



An additional consideration is that the attached barbers shop is under separate ownership. The concrete surface is also chipping from that portion of the structure and it will likely need to be addressed in the near future as well.

Analysis

Initially Mr. Kamrath approached the City to pull a building permit to repair the surface and to inquire as to the potential of funding for this project. Staff suggested that he instead consider the complete removal of the concrete material and restoration of the original bricks underneath. The Secretary of Interior Standards indicate that “The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.” Because the concrete altered the original brick façade, it was felt this option should be explored, especially when the use of public funds might be involved. The historic photo shows the presence of uncovered brick both in the upper façade/cornice area as well as in the bulkhead under the windows at the barber shop.



Barber shop at 129 E Clark c. 1980

Information from the National Register Nomination form (2003 amendment) indicates that 125-129 E Clark was built before 1884. While the configuration (pattern) of windows, doors and storefronts remains as it was historically, the storefronts themselves have been altered to a point that it was determined the building was non-contributing to the district at the time of the nomination. The condition of the brick underneath the concrete is not known, but from areas where it is visible, it looks to be in poor shape. It is also not known if the brick is original to the building or if the entire façade was “re-bricked” at some point in the past.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends the commission discuss the different options with Mr. Kamrath to determine the best one. Staff suggests that the option selected should 1) alleviate near future safety concerns with concrete falling onto pedestrians, 2) improve the appearance of the currently cracking & crumbling upper façade, and 3) seek to do no additional damage to existing bricks underneath the covering. These factors along with potential costs may point to a recovering of the brick to be the best option both from a cost benefit standpoint as well as from a preservation

standpoint. At some point current or future owners may wish to do a more complete façade renovation and preserving the brick to their current level of condition might be the best option. Or, if removal of the covering material finds that most bricks are in good condition, a restoration of area leaving the bricks uncovered may be an option.

Requested Motion:

WHEREAS, the property owner at 125-127 E Clark Street was notified by the City Building Official that repairs were required at the building due to concrete falling from the upper façade to the sidewalk, and

WHEREAS, the precise condition of the brick underneath the remaining concrete is not known at this time, and

WHEREAS, the building is considered to be non-contributing to the historic district due to the extent of modifications done to the façade, NOW THEREFORE

The Heritage Preservation Commission approves a Certificate of Appropriateness for

- A. The removal of the remaining concrete and replacement of it with a similar product/material recovering the brick OR***
- B. The removal of the remaining concrete and repair of the brick upper façade including repointing of mortar and replacement of bricks where needed due to deterioration leaving the area of exposed brick at the end of the project.***

The following conditions apply to this approval:

- 1. If resurfacing with concrete is done, color of the final surface shall be _____***
- 2. If bricks are to remain exposed at the end of the project, best management practices as outlined in the "Preservation Briefs" available from the Secretary of Interior shall be utilized. Mortar used for repairs shall be matched in color to any remaining existing mortar in the area. Any replacement bricks shall be matched to the best of the contractor/owners ability with final approval of any new bricks to be made by a committee of the following individuals: _____ [no more than two members of the HPC should be listed]***
- 3. The property owner or City staff shall contact the owners of the barber shop to determine if they would like to participate in the project (assuming a cost share on their part) so that the entire upper façade of the property might be consistent at the end of the project***
- 4. All necessary approvals or building permits as required shall be required per the City Building Official with final approval of the project to***

Memorandum

To: *Heritage Preservation Commission
Chad Adams, City Manager*

From: *Molly Patterson-Lundgren, Planner
WSB & Associates, Inc.*

Date: *August 23rd 2016*

Re: *Request for certification of appropriateness for Signage at 143 West Clark*

Background & Proposal

In February the HPC approved a Certificate of Appropriateness for modifying the façade of the bank and in April, one for signage. Meeting the definition of wall signs, the “channel letters” applied directly to the building façade were approved for the south side of the building facing Clark and in a second location applied to the permanent awning of the north side facing the parking lot.

Additional wall signs have been installed on either side of the doorway entry on Clark and approvals for these are now being sought. These are 74.5 x 29 inches in size and made of vinyl material on metal frames. They replace smaller signs previously in those locations.



Doorway entry signs prior to rehab.

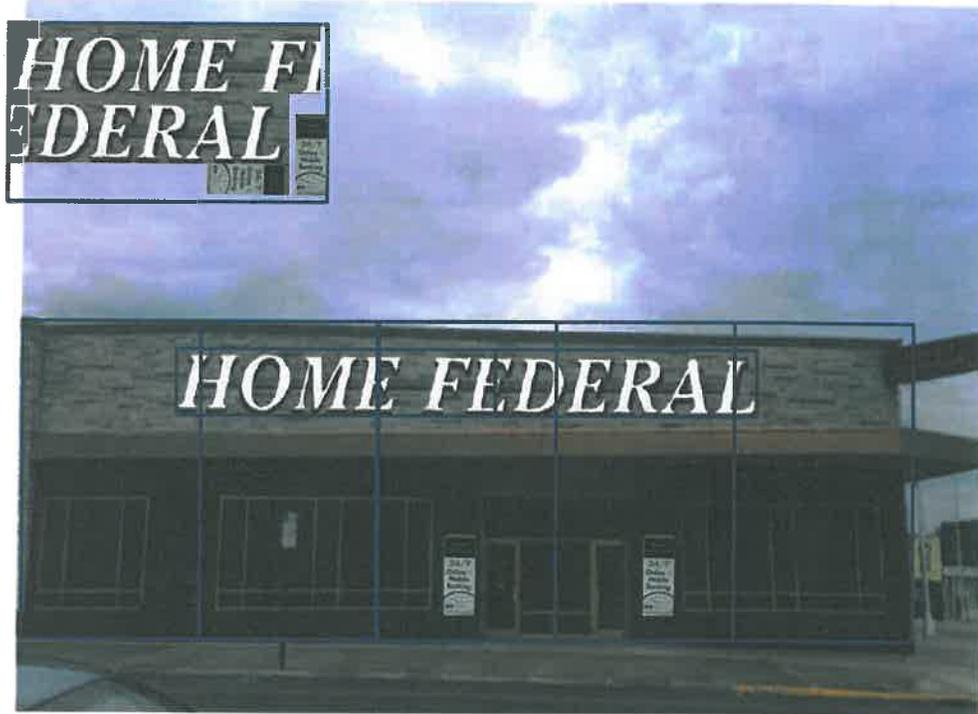


New doorway signs under review

Analysis

Signage requirements from Article IV of the Zoning Code provide that “wall signs” are a permitted use in the B-3 Downtown Zoning District. Wall signs are defined as a sign attached flat against or represented on the wall or face of a building. Wall signs shall not project more

than 18 inches from the wall or face of the building. The maximum aggregate wall sign area, including projecting signs, for each building face shall not exceed 20 percent of the building face on which the signs are installed. The following illustration shows that the proposed signage on the south side of the building is just under the 20% allowed.



The combined wall signage covers less than the 20% of the building façade as required (South elevation) including the two new signs on either side of the doors (superimposed on an older photo).

The Architectural Guidelines for Preservation of the Albert Lea Historic Commercial District utilize different terminology than then the Zoning Code. “Storefront” signs, which are permitted, are described as those which are located in the horizontal band dividing the windows from the façade of the building. The only types of wall signs mentioned in the guidelines are painted wall signs and it indicates that “new wall signs on historic buildings are prohibited”.

Sign materials are addressed in the Guidelines (on page 24) and painted wood and metal are identified as the most appropriate for the buildings within the period of significance of the historic district (1874-1928). Plastic is identified as a more modern material and is acceptable provided the designs of such signs are consistent with the historic character of the district. Because this building is of a much later date than the period of significance of the district, it may be appropriate to modify and say that the sign design should be consistent with the period of the *building*. This is what was determined by the HPC when the Home Federal sign was approved early this year.

The Secretary of Interior Standards do not specifically address new signs as a design feature on their own. As a new future on the building, the same guidance pertaining to the rehabilitation of the site apply in that they should be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing of the building to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

In addition to the above standard considerations, these two signs seem to be more temporary or short term in nature. Often, vinyl signs of the type are used to advertise a special or seasonal product, a sale, or new services and are changed out on a regular basis by the business. The application does not indicate how long these existing signs are intended to remain and **as they currently exist there is no reason that staff can find that they do not qualify as a wall sign**, the same for any permanent wall sign. However, there may be a desire for such changeable signs for this or other businesses in the historic district and the commission may want to consider whether there is the ability to approve signs of this type and allow a business to change them over time without additional HPC review and approval. Staff suggests that the commission discuss this issue with the applicant so that it is understood if the bank will need to come back for a new approval if these signs are planned to be changed out at some time in the near future.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval of the proposed signage based on the fact that the signs meet the definitions of a wall sign and are within the maximum size allowed for wall signs which is 20% or less of coverage on any wall façade.

Requested Motion:

Whereas the new signs indicated in the application dated August 19^h for Home Federal Bank at 143 W Clark Street

- 1. meet the signage requirement of the zoning code, are consistent with Local Historic District Guidelines and Secretary of Interior Standards, and*
- 2. do not adversely affect the historic nature of the site or downtown historic district, The Heritage Preservation Commission approves the Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed wall signs on either side of the doorway facing Clark Street as shown in the application.*