

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