

HISTORIC AREA COMMISSION
New Castle Town Hall
Meeting via Zoom Technology
August 13, 2020

Present: Laura Fontana, Chairperson
Kevin Wade
Justin Day
Bill Walters

Absent: Mark Chaump

Also Present: Leila Hamroun, Architectural Consultant
Jeff Bergstrom, City Building Inspector

Ms. Fontana convened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. Roll call followed and a quorum to conduct business was declared.

Approval of the Minutes

A Motion to approve the Minutes of the June 11, 2020, meeting as amended was made, seconded, and on vote, was unanimously approved.

Old Business

46 West 3rd Street – DeAscanis Homes, Inc.

An Application was submitted for the demolition of a 2-story garage and construction of a single family house with 1-2 off-street parking spaces.

Mr. DeAscanis explained that they wish to build a single family home on the lot with 1-2 off-street parking spaces along the side. He noted there was some question as to whether the lot is in the flood plain. Mr. Bergstrom noted that based on the lot size and the size of the home, the building falls within the requirements set out in the Code. Whether the property is in the flood plain or not is not within the purview of the Historic Area Commission.

Ms. Hamroun noted that the houses on the street align and based on the drawings, it appears the proposed house will have a slightly different alignment and height. She stated the Applicant would have to provide drawings showing the relationship to other houses on the street. Ms. Hamroun noted that Hardie Plank is being proposed for the sides of the house; however, because both sides of the house are visible from the public right-of-way they should be sided in wood. She added that all other materials are appropriate.

Ms. Hamroun stated the Applicant needs to provide an elevation drawing showing the scale of the proposed house and how it aligns with the existing homes relative to height and porch depth.

There was further discussion of the height of the house and whether the front porch will align with other porches on the street.

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Mr. Walters opined that he was not particularly concerned if the height of the home does not match the other houses on the street, noting that there are many examples of homes next to each other that have varied heights throughout the City. He added that not every house has to look the same.

Ms. Hamroun noted that the Guidelines include a graphic supplement that takes into consideration rhythm, alignment, scale and proportion. Mr. Wade noted that the alignment of the eave and cornice would be acceptable and stated it would be helpful if the Commission had an elevation showing the existing houses in relation to the proposed house.

During discussion it was noted that the third floor is living space, and the proposed material for the driveway is brick from the sidewalk to the front of the house, with asphalt back from there.

Mr. Wade asked if the steps on the proposed porch will extend beyond other steps of houses on the street, and Mr. DeAscanis stated there are four risers, while other homes have only three risers, and opined that the steps would extend farther toward the sidewalk. Ms. Hamroun referenced drawings submitted and noted that the porch is 6' wide and the risers extend onto the sidewalk. Mr. Wade stated he had no objection to a setback or the roof, however, he would like to see a rendering of the proposed house in relation to the other homes on the street to get a better idea of proportion. Mr. Day asked if the Code spoke to the depth of steps and Mr. Bergstrom stated that City Council gives easements for sidewalks, but to comply with ADA regulations, the sidewalk should be 5' wide.

Ms. Fontana asked if asphalt were an appropriate material and Ms. Hamroun clarified that typically if the driveway is visible from the public right-of-way, it is preferred to have brick with grass berms in between as opposed to asphalt.

Ms. Fontana reiterated that more renditions are required showing what the house looks like in relation to the neighboring houses for the front porch, stairs, height and driveway. Mr. Wade reiterated he has concerns about how the porch sits relative to the sidewalk, and wants to have a sense of how different the proposed house will be relative to other houses on the street.

Ms. Fontana recommended the Application be tabled to allow the Applicant time to provide additional information required by the Historic Area Commission. The requested information must be submitted no later than 10 days prior to the next scheduled public meeting to be included on the Agenda. After discussion, it was noted that a façade and site plan showing the adjoining properties should be presented by the Applicant. Mr. DeAscanis stated he understood what the Commissioners were requesting.

Ms. Fontana asked the Applicant to bring a sample of Hardie Plank to City Hall so the Commissioners can inspect it.

Mr. DeAscanis noted that they are proposing Anderson Series 100 fibrex windows on the side and rear. Ms. Hamroun stated that the windows are visible from the public right-of-way they should be wood. Ms. Hamroun stated that sketches can be emailed to her and Mr. Bergstrom for consultation, and she can advise the Applicant if she would approve the proposed plan or not, thereby giving the Applicant time to make any necessary modifications to the plan before the next meeting. Mr. Bergstrom will provide addresses of homes that have the type of driveway Ms. Hamroun described.

Mr. DeAscanis noted that part of the Application is for demolition of the existing two-story garage and asked if that portion of the Application could be approved. Ms. Hamroun stated she had no objection to the demolition of the garage. It was noted that even if the demolition is approved, there is no guarantee that the proposed house will be approved.

Ms. Fontana restated that the Applicant will provide:

- Sample of Hardie Plank;
- Elevation of streetscape showing the scale of the proposed house relative to the neighboring homes; and
- Aerial visual of the proposed house, showing where it will sit on the lot and how far the steps will project into the right-of-way.

Ms. Fontana stated that two Motions will be made: (1) to demolish the garage and (2) to table the Application to the next public meeting. She reiterated that approval of the demolition does not guarantee an approval of the Application to construct the house as proposed.

A Motion to approve the portion of the Application for demolition of a two-story garage at 46 East 3rd Street was made, seconded and unanimously approved.

A Motion to table the portion of the Application for construction of a single family house until the next meeting to give the Applicant time to provide additional information 10 days prior to the next scheduled meeting was made. The required information is:

- Sample of Hardie Plank;
- Elevation of street scape showing the scale of the proposed house relative to the neighboring homes; and
- Aerial visual of the proposed house, where it will sit on the lot and how far the steps will project into the right-of-way.

The Motion was seconded, and on vote was unanimously approved.

New Business

419 Williams Street – Bethany UAME Church

The Applicant is requesting approval to replace the front door of the church on Williams Street. Rev. Bernette Dickerson appeared to represent the Church.

Ms. Fontana remarked that this should have been a Tier 1. Ms. Hamroun explained that a wood door is appropriate; however, because the design is so distinct, there will be a mail slot, and the hardware may be atypical for a front door in New Castle she felt HAC might want to review the Application. Rev. Dickerson explained that the door will have a gold mail slot and door knob.

After discussion Ms. Fontana stated that this type of Application could be Tier 1 in the future.

A Motion to approve the Application to replace the front door as presented was made, seconded and unanimously approved.

206 Delaware Street – Dwayne Foster and Aaron Vederman

The Applicant is requesting approval to install a new roof and siding on a back window on the 3rd floor rear of the house. The Applicant proposes using mastic vinyl cedar impression siding. Four shutters on the second floor on the front of the house will also be replaced.

Ms. Hamroun stated that wood louvered shutters were appropriate and the roof is a non-issue; however vinyl is not appropriate in the Historic District. She added that wood siding would be preferable; however because the area is at the back of the house and not visible from the public right-of-way, Hardie Plank or another engineered wood is appropriate. Mr. Wade recommended that a sample of the siding be submitted to the Building Official for approval.

Ms. Hamroun stated for the Record that all materials proposed in the Application are appropriate with the exception of the vinyl siding.

A Motion to approve the Application with conditions was made. Materials for the roof and shutters are approved as presented. Either wood siding or appropriate engineered wood siding is approved.

Mr. Wade recommended that engineered wood siding be pre-approved by the Building Official.

Ms. Fontana amended the Motion:

A Motion to approve the Application with conditions was made.

- Materials for the roof and shutters are approved as presented.
- If wood cedar siding is not used, a sample of appropriate engineered wood siding is to be submitted to the Building Official for approval.

The Motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

122-124 Delaware Street – Nora Lee’s French Quarter Bistro/Alfred Boland

An Application was submitted on July 8, 2020, to construct a pergola on a rear lower flat roof and a pergola in the rear yard with hard/soft roof.

122 Delaware Street – Nora Lee’s French Quarter Bistro/Alfred Boland

An Application was submitted on July 28, 2020, to construct a structure in the rear yard for bicycle rental storage. Mr. Tom Chambers, business owner of a bicycle rental shop was present to discuss the Application.

The Applicant was not present. Ms. Fontana stated the Commission could (1) discuss the Application and make recommendations, or (2) table the Application and ask the Applicant to provide additional information at the next public meeting. Ms. Hamroun stated that attendance at the meeting is recommended; however it is not required. Mr. Wade recommended tabling the Application, stating he wanted to hear directly from the Applicant. Mr. Bergstrom noted that if an Application is not acted upon within 60 days it is approved by default. He added that if the Application does not contain sufficient information to approve it, the Application should be denied and the Applicant would have the chance to appeal the denial. Ms. Hamroun opined that there is sufficient information for her to give a recommendation. She added that the Applicant’s absence is not justification for rejection because it is not mandatory.

After discussion Ms. Fontana stated there was sufficient information in the Application and the Commission should discuss the both Applications. Thereafter a determination can be made as to whether more information is needed.

Ms. Hamroun explained that the Applicant wishes to construct two pergolas: one pergola attached to the rear lower flat roof and one free standing pergola in the rear yard. She stated that a pergola on top of a second story is not an appropriate structure in the Historic District and she would not recommend it. She added that if the rear yard free standing pergola is removable she might recommend it; however, it is quite large (16’ x 24” x 12” tall) and a free standing pergola is not something that one would typically have in the Historic District in a rear yard.

Ms. Hamroun stated “No” to the roof pergola, and stated more information is needed relative to the location and size of the free-standing pergola. She added that the rear yard pergola conflicts with the Application for a rear yard structure for rental bike storage.

A Motion to deny the roof pergola portion of the Application was made, seconded and unanimously approved.

A Motion to table the rear yard pergola portion of the Application was made pending additional information relative to:

- Size
- Materials
- Design
- Footprint
- Location
- Pavers/surface treatment below
- Lights

The Motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

122 Delaware Street – Nora Lee’s French Quarter Bistro/Alfred Boland

An Application was submitted on July 28, 2020, to construct a structure in the rear yard for bicycle rental storage. Mr. Tom Chambers, business owner of a bicycle rental shop was present to discuss the Application.

Mr. Chambers explained that the Application is for approval of a small structure to be built to house rental bikes at the rear of the property. During discussion it was noted that the prefab structures pictured with the Application are not aesthetically appropriate for the Historic District, and it was recommended that the Applicant have a structure custom built to house and secure the bicycles. Mr. Chambers stated signage for the bike rental shop would be temporary.

Ms. Hamroun noted that the Application is for an additional commercial structure/mini addition that is visible to the public right-of-way. She opined that because of its use the Application must be looked at in terms of location and visibility. Ms. Hamroun added a Plan will be required showing scale, what will be changed on the property, access, and how the proposed structure will fit in with the requested rear yard free standing pergola.

Ms. Hamroun stated that in its current state, she would not recommend approval of the Application.

Ms. Fontana recommended that the Application be tabled with conditions. Mr. Chambers provided additional information on the vision for the structure. Mr. Bergstrom stated that the proposed location is at elevation 10 in the flood plain and recommended that the Applicant consult with a Civil Engineer to prepare a Plan. Ms. Hamroun recommended that the Applicant review the Historic Area Commission Guidelines on the City website. Ms. Fontana added that the Plan and requested information must be presented 10 days prior to the next public meeting in order to have the Application added to the HAC Agenda. She recommended that the Applicant also consult with Mr. Bergstrom and Ms. Hamroun.

A Motion to table the Application as presented was made, conditioned on the Applicant returning to HAC with an appropriate Plan with the following:

- Plan
- Scale
- Access
- Materials
- Footprint
- Drawings

The Motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

116 Delaware Street – Jessop’s Tavern/Justin Day

An Application to install a pent eave on the front of 116 Delaware Street to match the pent eave on the front of 114 Delaware Street was submitted.

Mr. Day stated that he is seeking approval to add a pent eave to the property adjacent to Jessop’s Tavern matching dimensions and materials as the eave on 114 Delaware Street (Jessop’s Tavern). Mr. Day noted that the start of any approved construction is unknown and asked if there were a statute of limitations on a Building Permit or HAC approval. It was noted that the HAC Certificate expires when the Building Permit expires, and a Building Permit is valid for one year.

Ms. Hamroun clarified that the intent is to match the materials, depth and slope of the Jessop’s Tavern eave, and noted that it would be appropriate at the location.

A Motion to approve the Application as presented with adjusted height, and depth, with slope to match the eave on the Jessop’s Tavern building was made and seconded.

Ms. Hamroun suggested that for consistency of look the shingle of the proposed eave match the roof shingle of the building rather than the cedar shake shingle used on the Jessop’s Tavern eave.

The Motion was amended to read:

A Motion to approve the Application with adjusted height, shingles to match the roof shingles of 116 Delaware Street, and depth and slope to match the eave on the Jessop’s Tavern building was made and seconded. On vote, the Motion was approved with a vote of three in favor and one abstain (Mr. Day).

Mr. Bergstrom reiterated the Building Permit expires one year after the date of issue. He added that if the Permit expires and the exact same structure is being built the Building Official can renew the Permit for one additional year.

Miscellaneous

Next Scheduled Meeting

Ms. Fontana stated the next meeting will be September 10, 2020.

HAC Application Form

Ms. Fontana stated that review of the HAC Application revisions should recommence over the few months.

Electric Car Chargers

Mr. Day noted that the City may be installing electric car charging stations and asked if the Historic Area Commission would have any input in the City’s decision. Ms. Hamroun opined that HAC should definitely give input about the streetscape and suggested that how other Historic Districts have handled the installation of electric car chargers could be

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reviewed. Mr. Day noted that Ms. Pam Patone indicated electric car chargers may be installed in front of the Trustees building and in parking lots. Mr. Bergstrom stated that MSC is aware that discussions should be held with HAC relative to installation of electric car chargers in the Historic District. Mr. Walters opined that there may be a nationally uniform way that electric car chargers are installed. Ms. Hamroun added that in Europe some areas have made electric car chargers look like a bollard.

There being no further business to discuss, Ms. Fontana called for a Motion to Adjourn.

A Motion to adjourn was made, seconded and unanimously approved, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:29 pm.

Kathy Weirich
Stenographer