

CITY OF DOVER
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 16, 2023

The Meeting of the City of Dover Historic District Commission was held on Thursday, November 16, 2023, at 3:30 PM as an In-Person meeting in the City Hall Conference Room (anchor location) and virtually using the videoconferencing system WebEx. With Chairman Czerwinski presiding, the other members present were Mrs. Mason, Ms. Horsey, and Mrs. Ellen H. Richardson. Mr. Street was absent.

Planning Office Staff members present were Mrs. Melson-Williams, Mrs. Kristen Mullaney and Ms. Katherine Oehmke as well as Assistant City Manager Sharon Duca (assisting with management of the Department of Planning and Inspections).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Horsey moved for approval of the agenda as presented, seconded by Mrs. Richardson, and the roll call vote was unanimously carried 4-0. Mr. Street was absent.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MEETING OF OCTOBER 19, 2023

Ms. Mason moved for approval of the Meeting Minutes of October 19, 2023, seconded by Ms. Horsey and the roll call vote was unanimously carried 4-0. Mr. Street was absent.

COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS

Summary of Applications for 2022 and 2023

Mrs. Melson-Williams mentioned that included in your packet first is the Summary of Applications for 2022 and 2023. Most notable is the Kent County Family Courthouse and parking lots project. The Building Permits were issued for both the Courthouse Building and the Parking Garage in late October just after your previous meeting. That project is getting underway. They are starting with some of the sitework activities related to a couple of smaller parking lot projects to kick that off. Additionally, for other projects from 2022, the Delaware Public Archives whom you met with about a roof project, the roof project is underway. It will look different than the blue tarp covering that you may be seeing at the present moment. That is not the final color. Also from 2022, the accessory structure at the John Bell House is also under construction. For 2023, we'll be looking at your fifth application of the year today with a Permit Referral. For other 2023 activities, we have a number of them that have already been completed with a couple of fence projects. The parking lot improvements at 34 The Green is also now under Permit and that is one of the parking lot projects associated with the Kent County Family Courthouse project.

Mrs. Melson-Williams asked if there were any questions on the applications of recent years and their status; there were none.

Summary of Architectural Review Certifications for 2023

Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that there has been a total of 42 Permits in the Historic District area. The Historic District Commission was involved with 6 of them and Staff were able to review the other remaining 36. Some of those include Building Interior Permits for which there is no requirement for the review for Architectural Review Certification. We have seen a good number of Sign Permits and Roof Permits is kind of leading the pack of the types of applications. As I previously noted, probably the most notable are the two Building Permits issued in the last month for the Kent County Family Courthouse and Parking Garage Building.

Mrs. Melson-Williams asked if there were any questions on any particular Permit activity item. There was none.

Department of Planning & Inspections Updates

Mrs. Melson-Williams mentioned that we have a new Code Enforcement Officer that has started in the last few weeks and his name is David. We continue to have two openings; one for a Planner II position and the Planning Director position for the office is also posted. We are coming into the holiday season and there are a number of City sponsored and Downtown activities, most notably the city's tree lighting event is on **November 30, 2023**. There are other events including a parade scheduled in December. Thank you to Sharon Duca who continues to assist in the management and operations of our office in general in this time of some staffing challenges.

Mrs. Melson-Williams asked if there were any questions about those items. There were none.

Projects & Studies ActivitiesUpdate on C-2 Code Amendments Project for Potential Revisions to *Zoning Ordinance* for C-2 (Central Commercial Zone)

Mrs. Melson-Williams mentioned that we had listed here an update on C-2 Code Amendments Project for Potential Revisions to the *Zoning Ordinance* focused on the C-2 zone which is the Central Commercial Zone. That is the zoning classification we find predominantly here in Downtown along the Loockerman Street corridor and some of the adjacent streets. We have been to a Council Committee of the Whole (meeting) and they looked at the concepts for these potential revisions. Included in your packet was the Table that we presented with the current Code and some of the recommended concepts for revision. These focus on uses in the C-2, looking at building height and related topics, parking requirements in the Downtown area, and then some miscellaneous related development type activities associated with development and those requirements. At this point City Council has directed Staff to begin preparation of the formal Text Amendment meaning the writing of Ordinance that would then go through the formal review process for its hearings and adoption. With the cancellation of City Council meetings for the last week in November, Staff is on target for presenting that Text Amendment language to Council at their first meeting in December. If it is recommended to move into the review process, then a First Reading will be scheduled in January and will end up in review and hearing with the Planning Commission in February and back to Council in the March timeframe. Originally, we were predicting a kind of a slightly earlier timeframe for that scenario but with the cancellation of Council meetings it has been pushed back slightly in order to meet all of the notice requirements that it will need once it moves into the formal review process.

As previously mentioned, these are concepts. The actual text is a work-in-progress that the Planning Staff are working on. We'll certainly be able to share that in a future meeting when it's getting ready to move forward through the review process. It is not required to come before this body, but since your Historic District contains areas that are in the C-2 as a zoning district I wanted to keep you up to date as to the status of that project.

Chairman Czerwinski asked if the feedback on this would be outside the previous meeting to discuss the elements to this. I have some problems with how some of the changes are being made. How would I present those views? Mrs. Melson-Williams replied ultimately, it will begin a formal review process with the Planning Commission in February with a hearing.

Chairman Czerwinski asked if it would be public hearing? Mrs. Melson-Williams replied it will be a public hearing. The presentation of the actual proposed Text Amendment to the Ordinance is scheduled for a Council Committee meeting on December 12th. (*Note: The presentation was rescheduled to January 9, 2024*). Certainly, if you have questions or concerns Planning Staff is happy to hear those. We did do a series of stakeholder meetings to gather some input about what potential changes may be needed in the C-2 and conducted a Public Walk-in Workshop. Those activities happened in early October as we were kind of putting together the actual concepts for this.

Chairman Czerwinski mentioned that he finds some of these things problematic. Basically, with the #8 concept for the apartments and they are allowing the first floor to be a lobby for the apartments above. I think that will be a problem in the retail district where you are turning retail into office space for apartments, or it gives the building owners leeway to say well because I don't have retailers in there I am going to use it for office space. It kind of allows them a bypass of City Ordinances as far as the six month ruling out the vacancy rule. I think that people are going to use it as a crutch to say well yeah, it's not being used but I am going to use it for my office for the apartment upstairs. So, I have a real problem with #8 of the Recommended Concepts for Revision.

Chairman Czerwinski mentioned #17 was the other issue. No parking requirements for existing buildings in C-2 Zone and No minimum parking requirements for new construction in C-2 Zone.

Mrs. Richardson mentioned concerns of #16 the ten-story building in Downtown. (Maximum building height 10 stories and 125 feet). Chairman Czerwinski mentioned that it was part of their vertical rising programs.

Chairman Czerwinski mentioned that #17 he thinks it was an issue with no minimum parking requirements and #18 "No minimum parking requirements based on use in the Downtown Redevelopment Target Area." So obviously, they just use a separate set of criteria for parking. Here it's got the minimum parking requirements for different uses such as medical offices, apartments, restaurants, and hotels. There are no minimum parking requirements.

Mrs. Melson-Williams mentioned that (in the Table) the first column is what our Code contains today. The second column is concepts for changes to the Code. Right now, the Code very specifically says that if you're going into an existing building in the C-2 zone, there are new

parking requirements. If you're building a new building in C-2, the zoning district does not have a parking requirement but certain uses trigger a parking requirement. That's what's in #18 and that is through any district in the City. If you're one of these uses, there are specific parking rates based on that use that are called out. The concept is to look at having the Code reflect that there's no minimum parking requirement, meaning a use would not trigger a parking requirement if you're in the Downtown Redevelopment Target Area, which is basically an area that expands from a little bit north of Wesley to down to the Hospital, to the river and to just about the railroad tracks. It is that within that area that there would be a different consideration for how parking is approached.

Chairman Czerwinski asked how that would be done? You just don't know yet? Mrs. Melson-Williams replied that this concept would not set a minimum. What we've heard from developers, even in other instances in the City is that they are not going to build something that doesn't satisfy what they appear their parking needs are. So, they are not going to build an apartment building and expect their tenants to just find parking. They're going to build some level of parking attached to that development activity.

Chairman Czerwinski asked that the Bayard Hotel specifically did not meet the parking requirements? Mrs. Melson-Williams replied that the Bayard when that was redeveloped it was a new build. The parking requirements are slightly different. It did receive a partial waiver of the parking requirements and that is already in our code. It's something that the Planning Commission can consider. So, in that case there is some parking that is on site at the rear and under that building. As part of their proposal to satisfy parking, some of the accessory parking is located within a certain distance of the building. Our Code allows for that today.

Chairman Czerwinski mentioned so now we are going to have possible issues in the future with these structures like the one that is supposed to be at Kunkel's. That's a big complex. So, there's no requirement for that building to have minimum parking requirements? So, they can just put a building there and say go park on the street.

Mrs. Melson-Williams replied that our Code does not say that today. From what we've heard from developers is that they don't build that way. If they want to keep tenants, they're going to manage parking for their tenants. This is some of the concepts here are coming out of the *Transforming Downtown Dover* Master Plan. That Strategic Plan was done by the Downtown Partnership and is looking at how do we think about redevelopment and the future of Downtown from a number of perspectives. That's why we have a series of proposed concepts here that we'll be flushing out in the text amendment for formal review and adoption.

Chairman Czerwinski mentioned that they were also talking about underground parking. Are they still considering that? Mrs. Melson-Williams replied that I can't speak to details of a particular project. There's not been an application.

Chairman Czerwinski mentioned that when he talked to them, they were talking about underground parking which really is not feasible in this area. I think it's a concern when we look at the back of the building that they don't blow off the parking every time they build a structure. There are issues that get worse as the Downtown gets developed. It's going to affect Loockerman

Street and all the streets around that area. Bayard was case one, where they built a building that was not adequately supported in his opinion. Someone has to go a half a block across the street to park. I am hoping that this doesn't continue to happen when you build a building and take away parking. When you do the parking requirement, they are going to look at the least cost and so it ends up being parking. They will say we will do underground parking; and you ask do you realize how high the water table is there?

Mrs. Melson-Williams asked if there were any other questions, thoughts or concerns. There were none.

NEW BUSINESS

Review of Permits Referred to Commission:

HI-23-05 Referral of Demolition Permit #23-1521 at 153 South Bradford Street – Referral by the City Planner to the Historic District Commission for Review of Architectural Review Certification for a Demolition Permit Application #23-1521. The project proposes partial demolition of the existing two-story masonry building by removal of the second floor and construction of a new roof system. The property is zoned C-2 (Central Commercial Zone) and subject to the H (Historic District Zone). The property is located on the east side of S. Bradford Street between W. Loockerman Street and Reed Street. The owner of record is JD Land Corporation. Address: 153 S. Bradford Street. Tax Parcel: ED-05-077.09-02-35.00-000. Council District 4. *Subject of Code Enforcement Case #23-3847 for condemnation.*

Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that this was a Referral of a Demolition and Renovations Permit #23-152 located in the Historic District area specifically at 153 S Bradford Street. Because the project is in the Historic District, it is subject to the Architectural Review Certification process. In certain instances, Staff can review that with the Building Permit and in other instances that very clearly has to come to the Historic District Commission. In the case of this one since it is a partial demolition, the City Planner has referred it to the Commission for consultation on that Permit. The Permit specifically is to do a partial demolition of the existing two-story masonry building. It is to basically remove the second floor of that building and then construct a new roof system. It will leave it as basically a one-story building. The roof system would be a flat roof system. This building is the subject of a Code Enforcement case that was opened in early August related to building conditions that resulted in condemnation. This Permit has been put forth by the property owner as a process to remedy the situation related to that Code Enforcement case. Our Staff Report includes some property information and the history of the property. From our quick research, it appears that the buildings as we see them today were likely constructed in the late 1940s or early 1950s. It is in an area that's part of a National Register Historic District known as the Victorian Dover District. It's a building that's 20th century construction and clearly, it's masonry. With this review, we are looking at the *Design Standards and Guidelines* for the City of Dover Historic District Zone. On page 3 of the Staff Report, we do look at the criteria that the *Design Standards and Guidelines* list for Demolition of buildings. In this case, we've got a partial Demolition of a building so those criteria should be looked at. Quickly on the Staff Findings and building location, there will still be a building footprint there that will remain the same from the massing and design of the building. It remains masonry with a flat roof; however, it would be going from a two-story to one-story. The material of the building is a yellow brick

with a new roof being a membrane roofing material when they reconstruct the roof system for it. We do note that in removal of this, the front facade is what is yellow brick. We suggest retaining some of that yellow brick. It may be helpful in final capping of the wall. As you make the transition from going to a two-story to one story building, demolition basically happens right below the windows that are on the existing second floor where the front facade faces west. From a Demolition Permit standpoint, we do note that the Demolition may be warranted depending on the building's structural conditions and soundness. There is severe cracking in certain areas. This is an option for rehab of the building. It does leave us with a portion of the building intact. With this information from both the Permit and modern-day photographs, we can make updates to the Cultural Resource Survey information that is on file at the State Historic Preservation Office for the building. Attached to the Report is a series of photographs and historic maps. There is a copy of the Permit, the Letter of Referral, and a plan sheet of details, in addition to the *Design Standards and Guidelines* excerpt.

Representatives: Elio Battista Jr., Parkowski, Guerke & Swayze

Mr. Battista mentioned that he was not sure how much background the Commissioners have on what has occurred, but it may be helpful just to see how we got here. With the owners these are two buildings. There is a liquor store being operated by a tenant in the subject building. In August, I believe they were subject to Code Enforcement. It is an old building, either by intent, neglect, or just the passage of time. It needed to be fixed, bottom line. No one is denying that. The owners engaged with a structural Engineering Firm to do a preliminary assessment of the building. That was submitted; there were some questions that came back with respect to the structural report meaning you want to see some more. The Engineering Firm was not able to attend the meeting today, but they were asked to go backout on site and give an update. There were questions from the Planning Office about specific areas they wanted to be addressed. In addition, they are also engaging in a structural survey. The reason that we want the second floor demolished is to fix whatever problem needs to be updated.

The issue that we came across was the subject area with the bowing (of the wall) may or may not occur is up there. I've been informed by the builder and the engineer that it's easier to demo than to fix that and remove the problem if there's one there. Also, the issue of the replacement of bricks that are up there and finding that particular type of brick. So, removing the second floor will definitely ensure the structural integrity of the building and it will have a completely new roof system. The brick that is there we could then use to cap as Staff recommended to fill in where it needs to be on the first floor.

I don't know if you see the pictures now and I'm sorry I don't have more but I did ask the architect if there could be a more detailed architectural drawing. I can pass this picture around. We are trying to keep the same style and color of the building and again it's very rudimentary. It helped me and hopefully you also as to what it would look like. With respect to reading the *Design Standards and Guidelines* criteria, the first element of determining the financial implications of maintaining the property versus demolition. We want to maintain it. We want old things, but there is a Code now to fix it. We can maintain the integrity and enhance the structural integrity with this plan. It's not a question of will it cost too much but can we do it and can we do it right. Its economic issues again to the Historic District and my client to make it look nice with

respect to how it fits in with city planning and the goals of maintaining of how we are going to do it and whatever plans they have in the future. This has to be done. He asked if there were any questions.

Mrs. Richardson stated that the first floor is just as old as the second floor. Mr. Battista stated I want to demolish the whole thing. We are renovating all of it right, by removing the second floor. Then if there is a problem with the building settling over time and again that's a lawyer speaking not the engineer, there's going to be a report as to this eliminates that problem. The ability then to renovate the first floor is enhanced because there's issues if you have to do patchwork on the second floor. If you have the adjoining building and there's issues, then I was told you don't want to do patchwork up the top because you will affect the adjoining building. I want to keep it nice and make it look nice. We can retain the same brick if there is anything that needs to be done in the future, then we are not searching around to find it.

Mrs. Richardson asked if the renovation on the first floor would be exterior only? Are you just talking about the façade? Mr. Battista replied he was referring to the structure and the outside. Right now, it is a liquor store but who knows what it might be in the future. Whatever it is being used for in the future, you have to make sure that the building is structurally sound, it's safe, and meets with your historic requirements.

Mrs. Mason asked if the people who own it are the same people who owned it before when it came to the point of having to be demolished? Are these going to be the same owners at the liquor store?

Mr. Battista stated that you have the building owner and there's a tenant that runs the liquor store. They are the same owners, but they are not shirking any responsibilities.

Mrs. Mason mentioned that they were difficult to get in touch with. Mr. Battista replied that it would not be a problem in the future.

Ms. Horsey mentioned that she had a question regarding the structural integrity of the building next to it and whether the demo of the second floor is going to affect the structure.

Mr. Battista replied that they were told it won't but if they were going to do the other work getting on the roof, lay person terms, then there could be some impact to the adjoining building with one side leaning on the others. Whatever needs to be done has to be done properly, correctly, and soundly. We have engaged an engineering firm. When we hire an engineer, they don't want to lose that stamp. Any risk to the integrity of the firm is hard to get and the next conversation is "I'm committed to a presentation". The goal is parallel, that is why they wanted to engage me.

Chairman Czerwinski stated that he did not have any problem with the execution of demolishing the second floor. What he is concerned about is that you have an engineer doing a review right now that should have been completed before you came to us so that we can evaluate the amount of work it takes either directly versus demolishing it. It makes the Historic District Commission action tough. If the second floor is unsalvageable, I can fully understand taking it off, but if

you're doing this the simplify you know just take a simplification or you didn't talk to engineering enough to evaluate whether to do repairs to the structure. The rest of the structure is not brick it is cinder block, a concrete structure. The cinder block is deteriorated of course because the water gets behind the cracks. There was a comprehensive original report that the structural engineer provided. There were comments back from the City Planning Office saying we want you to address these specific issues.

Mr. Battista stated that this is the original engineering report that was submitted and then this was marked up and there was a letter from the City.

Chairman Czerwinski stated for me cost wise taking the second floor off is cheaper than doing the repair to the existing structure unless that structure is so compromised that it is not repairable, it's not economically feasible to do so. I'm not being told that and I'm not saying that. There's absolutely no way we can salvage this structure because it's just economically not feasible. I don't see any information regarding the second-floor structure. I see damage but we've also seen another company on State Street completely restabilize the whole corner of the building. Now you have identified a catch 22.

Mr. Battista stated that we can fix it. It's not structurally compromised. The City comes back that "we don't like that thought". If you don't like that, then the only other choice we have is to get rid of the whole second floor because you don't like it. We will do whatever satisfies the Code.

Chairman Czerwinski stated that we would like to see the paperwork so that the committee can understand what's going on. Because if it is something that you know that it's just not possible to save the second floor then we would like to know that.

Mr. Battista mentioned that the City has to say that they agree with the engineer that keeping the second floor and that doing XYZ will satisfy them.

Chairman Czerwinski stated that you are not giving us all the information we need because your engineers are just supplementing.

Mr. Battista mentioned that there is a Letter that has been sent out from the Planning Office stating that that they got the report and gave us this supplementing the report that you are about to see. You may look at it and say that we have answered everything. And the City may look at it and say you have not answered everything. The letter is dated August 28, 2023.

Mrs. Melson-Williams mentioned that there is a separate Code Enforcement case and there was an original submission of an engineering report there. Upon the review by City staff, there were some questions that we had in that report. I believe that's what Mr. Battista is referring to. Mr. Battista replied correct.

Mrs. Melson-Williams mentioned that the Letter is not in your packet. What was specifically brought forward to the Historic District Commission was the Demolition/Renovation Permit that was filed. As an option remedy, it was something that Staff could not approve because of the type of work and it was in the Historic District which is why it's before you today.

Mr. Battista mentioned that's why I wanted to fill in on the whole story and that's why the applicant went forward with the partial demolition because then it removes all doubt.

Ms. Horsey mentioned that the Historic District Commission has always wanted to see a building saved as it is. Mr. Battista stated that he understands. Ms. Horsey mentioned that is our highest and best use. It would be mighty nice to have a report from somebody saying how much it would cost to make it structurally sound. Sure, it's more money, but we all have a higher standard in the Historic District.

Mr. Battista stated I am getting the engineer to supplement this report because as we stand now the City said no. If they're saying no its unsound and this is the only way to make it sound, then we come back. The City then has to say okay you've got this supplement and it's structurally sound; it's not condemned, now renovate it. But if they don't come back and say that then this is the only option that we have.

Chairman Czerwinski stated okay then we don't have the final answer.

Mrs. Richardson stated that we need to have their answer first.

Chairman Czerwinski stated that I can't imagine that renovation would cost you more than actually lopping off the whole floor.

Mr. Battista stated we have to get the City to agree to that.

Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that the letter that Mr. Battista is referring to is part of the Code Enforcement case. It is not part of what was brought to you was the Permit that was filed.

Chairman Czerwinski stated that he hated to push this off.

Mr. Battista stated but the good thing is if Code Enforcement says it's okay, we agree with what you just submitted then the business opens, and we move forward. But if they say no then okay.

Chairman Czerwinski stated that makes our decision, but right now I'm not given all of the information to say whether or not we could approve the plan as presented.

Mr. Battista stated again because there's a parallel Code Enforcement final, you can't like crossover. We have to deal with them, but in dealing with them we present our plan. I'm just here to reiterate the commitment of the owner to make this right. Somebody tells us yes or no. If it's no, then we're here again and have to do this. If it is sound and we can open up for business and renovate (repair plan).

Mr. Battista stated it really wasn't a question about cost, it was about safety.

Chairman Czerwinski stated until I can get that amendment and them to finally say "oh yeah well, I took a look and we've got crumbling in the cinder block further down and there's no way we can salvage the structure or because from what I see here it looks like this could actually just

replace a few pieces of cinder block where it's cracked." I need them to come back, or I need the City and/or your engineer to come in and actually have a final decision on the Code issue. Mr. Battista asked Code issue? Chairman Czerwinski replied yes, because as it stands now it is the partial demolition and then renovation. It would make our decision a lot easier because we are here to save the buildings. It's not a very attractive building but it is a building that's distinct to the 1950s. We gotta save the building if we can and we don't want to push to the extent that it is so expensive. Just because the building is condemned doesn't mean that the building has to come down. There are a lot of buildings that are condemned and are not safe. As mentioned, they can do a repair plan and state what has to be done to make the building safe and habitable. They said you need to repair the corners and make sure everything is sealed and that the building structure is as approved by an engineering firm. So, if the engineering firm's supplemental (report) comes in and says all we need to do is those repairs, then yeah. I'm not saying you're not going to be able to go back in right away because you probably won't because it is unsafe. There's a big difference between taking off the whole floor and doing the repairs to the sections that are actually cracked and having them demolished on the second floor. If there are just spots that need to be addressed that could save you money. I would not say patch it but repair it at a fraction of the cost because you would have a whole new roof that needs to be put in. I would definitely have them finish up that report and resubmit it to the City and see what the City says about it. If the City is putting their foot down then come back here and we will discuss their plan.

Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that she would suggest that the Historic District Commission do some type of motion at this point that you're holding off on action regarding this Permit Referral pending submission of additional information and what path that may lead to. I think there needs to be something. I think collectively you have kind of reached that conclusion, but it would be better suited to have a specific motion. Then as the path continues, we'll know eventually which piece is coming back to you and will be able to schedule that for a future meeting.

Chairman Czerwinski asked if it was a motion to deny the request? Mrs. Melson-Williams replied I don't know that it's a motion to deny. I think it could be a motion to defer. That deferral action on this Permit which presents one option for the building because you've heard information about potential alternative options for the building. I think is where we're kind of at; if that makes sense.

Mrs. Richardson moved the deferment of Application HI-23-05 and Demolition/Renovations Permit #23-1521 on the issue until we have additional information from the City Code Enforcement Office and the Applicant. The motion was seconded by Ms. Mason and unanimously carried 5-0.

Mr. Battista asked when he gets the report, do you want me to just respond to this letter that's one that says we got it, but we want more stuff?

Mrs. Melson-Williams mentioned that it is coming out of the Code Enforcement side. I would say yes, just submit it to them and copy me. We will do some type of written notice of the action to defer just so that it starts to tie up this part of the process and let Code Enforcement know what happened regarding it today. So that we're holding one option as you continue to explore hopefully in an expeditious manner other options.

Annual Meeting of Historic District Commission

Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that per your Bylaws, November is the Annual Meeting of the Historic District Commission where you elect the positions of Chair and Vice Chair for the next calendar year. Included in your packet was a copy of the Bylaws. Currently your Chair is Mr. Czerwinski and your Vice Chair is Ms. Horsey. The Bylaws do note that the Chair and Vice Chair can serve two appointed terms which is basically a total of six years.

Ms. Horsey made the nomination that Mr. Czerwinski remain the Chair for the next calendar year. Mr. Czerwinski accepted the nomination. Ms. Mason made the nomination that Mrs. Richardson be the Vice Chair. Mrs. Richardson accepted the nomination.

Ms. Horsey moved to approve by acclamation that these two candidates be accepted as the Chair and Vice Chair. All were in favor by acclamation to accept Mr. Czerwinski as the Chair and Mrs. Richardson as the Vice Chair of the Historic District Commission.

Meeting & Deadline Schedule for 2024

Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that included in your packet a draft of the Meeting and Filing Deadlines for 2024. So basically, we establish a filing deadline that is a Friday in one month and then by meeting that deadline the applications appear the following month. Your meeting dates continue to be the third Thursday of the month at 3:30 pm.

The deadlines are for projects that have to make a formal application to the Historic District Commission. Referral of Permits are not subject to that deadline. They are subject to us having to publish a meeting agenda in a timely fashion.

Mrs. Melson-Williams asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Basically, to file an application with the Historic District Commission there is a Pre-application Meeting that Planning Staff conducts. It helps them understand what their filing requirements are for a project to appear before you. We do anticipate a number of projects coming to you in 2024.

OLD BUSINESS

Certified Local Government (CLG) Program

Mrs. Melson-Williams stated that included in your packet was some information we got from the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs regarding the Historic Preservation Grant Fund application timing. After a number of years of the status of grant money being influx with COVID and various other reasons, they are putting out the numbers for what we may be eligible for using what is Federal Fiscal Year 2023 money. The City is eligible for a grant of just over \$11,000 which requires a match of about \$7,600. The application date is no later than March 1, 2024; and those projects under that grant would need to be completed by September 2025. What was included in your packet is the grant guidelines. There are a number of different types of projects that could be undertaken. They call them eligible grant activities and then there's also a

sense of what the application form looks like. Planning Staff has obviously not had time to really delve into this to put forth some potential projects. We do have the one that we kind of had on the burner for a couple of years that we just haven't gotten to. That was related to your *Design Standards and Guidelines* and looking at alternative materials type information, but there may be something else here that peaks your interest. I would suggest taking some time to read through this. If you've got any questions or ideas today that Staff can explore, we're happy to start to kind of look at that, but this is a grant opportunity. It is not bricks and mortar. It is for things like studies and research, public outreach, National Register nominations, and things of that nature.

Chairman Czerwinski asked what is the completion requirement date? Mrs. Melson-Williams replied September of 2025.

Chairman Czerwinski asked if it was a longer lead time. Mrs. Melson-Williams replied I think it's because they have multiple grant year money, and the Federal year never matches up with anyone's fiscal year or calendar year. I think it's a mix of a couple of things. There may be FY'24 monies but they don't know what those amounts are as of yet.

Chairman Czerwinski seemed to think that it was pretty far out. He was questionable about the timeframe/cutoff. Mrs. Melson-Williams mentioned that they were typically like a year time frame. I think they have been dealing with that issue across the board. I think they're refining how their process works.

Mr. Street asked what is the amount of time to work on a project? Mrs. Melson-Williams replied with an application filing deadline in March. There is kind of a review process and you have to get a grant in place. You are looking at roughly a year.

Chairman Czerwinski asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Mrs. Melson-Williams mentioned that we will look to the City's *Comprehensive Plan* which I always note here that has the Preservation Chapter and the series of goals and recommendations related to historic preservation in the City. There may be some opportunities that present themselves in that document as well.

Implementation of 2019 Comprehensive Plan

Mrs. Melson-Williams mentioned there was no particular information for you all on that other than some of those other studies that I reported on earlier are certainly going towards meeting a number of goals and recommendations of the *Comprehensive Plan*. That is to be expected as part of the overall implementation coming out of the Comp Plan process.

There's a lot of City Departments that have various studies and projects going on. There's a Downtown Pathways project as a study that the MPO is involved in. They had an outreach meeting within the last couple weeks and are looking for ways to improve biking and pedestrian access in and around the Downtown. There's a number of things on the water/wastewater with system improvements and wellhead development. There are a lot of things here in the City that we could point to in the Comprehensive Plan for sure.

Chairman Czerwinski asked if there were any further questions. There was none.

Ms. Horsey moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mrs. Richardson, and unanimously carried 5-0.

Meeting adjourned at 4:45 PM

Sincerely,

Kristen Mullaney
Acting Secretary

Maretta Savage-Purnell
Secretary