

CITY OF HENDERSONVILLE
Historic Preservation Commission

Minutes of the Meeting of April 20, 2022

Commissioners Present: Chris Battista, Jim Welter (Vice-Chair), Cheryl Jones, (Chair), Ralph Hammond-Green, Crystal Cauley

Commissioners Absent: Chris Barron, Chris Dannals, Sam Hayes

Staff Present: Matthew Manley, Planning Manager/Commission Coordinator, Alexandra Hunt, Planner I, Daniel Heyman, Staff Attorney

- I **Call to Order.** Chair called this meeting of the Hendersonville Historic Preservation Commission to order at 5:00 pm.
- II **Agenda.** Chair moved to amend the agenda to include public comment prior to the public hearings and to move Item D up to Item C to keep the COA's together. Commissioner Welter seconded the motion to amend the agenda. Commissioner Hammond-Green moved to amend the agenda to include an update concerning staff approved COA's. Commissioner Welter seconded the motion to amend the agenda. The amended agenda was approved.
- III **Minutes.** On motion of Commissioner Hammond-Green seconded by Commissioner Welter the minutes of the Regular meeting of February 16, 2022 and the Special meeting of March 30, 2022 were approved.
- VI **Public Comment:** Chair stated anyone wishing to speak would have three minutes and no comments can be made on the public hearings for tonight.
- V **Old Business**
- V(A) **Approval of the Findings of Fact - H22-01-COA.** On motion of Commissioner Welter seconded by Commissioner Hammond-Green the Findings of Fact for H22-01-COA were approved.
- V(B) **1420 Ridgecrest Update – Demolition by Neglect (H21-31-DEM).**
- V(C) **Minor works update** – Ms. Hunt gave an update of the staff approved COA's that have been issued.
- VI **Other Business**
- VI(A) **Appointments for the Community Affairs Committee and Designation Committee.**
- VII **New Business**
- VII(B) **Certificate of Appropriateness – William Ford – 412 N. Main Street (File No. H22-024-COA).**

Chair opened the public hearing.

Ms. Hunt stated the city id receipt of an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness from William Ford (applicant and Betty R. Johnson (property owner) for the addition of a vinyl wrapped metal façade on the property located at 412 N. Main Street. The applicant stated in the application they are using

metal to create the vision of wood with a storefront sign. The PIN is 9568-88-0236 and the current zoning is C-1, Central Business and is located in the Main Street Historic District. This is a major work proposal.

The vicinity map was shown. The aerial view of the property was shown outlined in red.

Ms. Hunt stated this is a non-contributing building that was constructed in circa 1920. The building originally had a brick façade that was later stuccoed and modernized. The building has a historical marker that was placed on the building in 2009 and states the use as a Men's' Wear Store and Shoe Store. The photo from 1987 was shown and included in the staff report.

The existing condition of the subject property was shown. Ms. Hunt stated the sign is placed on top of the vinyl wrapped metal façade. It is not all one piece. The sign is separate. Ms. Hunt pointed out the cracks on the façade that the metal is covering. Examples of the use of natural wood for facades on Main Street were shown.

The Design Standards that applied were shown and included in the staff report.

Staff can answer any questions and the applicant is present as well.

Commissioner Hammond-Green asked if the applicant presented a picture of the proposed sign. Ms. Hunt stated currently staff is not in receipt of a sign permit from the applicant. Chair stated it is there already and are now seeking approval for what is already there. It was done after the fact. Ms. Hunt stated correct.

Commissioner Battista stated they do not know what is under the façade. Chair stated stucco but they do not know the condition. Ms. Hunt stated staff is unaware of the condition. She reached out to property manager to see if they had any pictures or photos to see what was there prior to the metal façade being placed on the storefront. They were unable to find or have any photos.

There were no further questions for staff.

William Ford, 412 N. Main Street stated he has photos showing the cracks and they actually go through the whole thing and the metal is actually preserving the structure that is up there. The stucco that was up there was falling and was hazardous to people that were walking underneath it. They thought the metal and steel would hold it and keep it secure. It is actually anchored in to keep it from falling and to preserve it. Chair asked how thick it was. Mr. Ford stated it is a pretty decent piece of steel.

Commissioner Battista asked how it was anchored. Mr. Ford stated it is anchored through the brick. He thought the guy was getting the permit but did not. Chair stated it is anchored through the stucco and through the brick. Mr. Ford stated yes, it goes through the stucco and the brick. Chair asked how many anchor points there are. Mr. Ford stated he could come back at a later date and give her the amount. Chair asked if he knew the condition of the brick underneath. Mr. Ford stated no, the stucco covers it, but the stucco was falling in big giant chips when they were moving in. He put the metal wrap up there to keep it from harming people. The canopy that was there was falling out because of the stucco.

Commissioner Welter stated the stucco was not original and there is brick behind it. He asked if there was any consideration to remove the stucco and go back to the brick. Mr. Ford stated he was not the building owner and did not know what kind of construction cost that would entail. It would also have to

be done for the adjoining building as the stucco goes across on it too.

Chair stated in their guidelines the first one states “whenever repairing or renovating, it is recommended that any non-historic storefront or façade treatments including metal cladding or other non-historic alteration be removed”. Starting from that standpoint because they are bound by the guidelines, they are already at the point that new materials that have been put on are not compatible so technically they would be asking him to take those off when the renovation started. As the applicant, he carries the burden to prove that it is compatible with their guidelines. The guidelines say the metal cladding is not permissible, but it also lists materials that would be historically compatible, even if you were putting it up now, new and so this type of metal façade, the materials that are up there are problematic with the guidelines. Mr. Ford stated he thought steel was allowed as one of the signs on Main Street. Chair stated steel is a material that can be used but with the wrapping and the siding it gives a false impression of what the façade is, so it is the wrapping that doesn’t necessarily comply. She was asking him to give the Commission some testimony as to why he thinks it is compatible and does comply. Mr. Ford stated with it being steel that is what he found was permitted and does comply with it and he went with a piece of solid steel and the price of wood right now is massive. He felt like putting wood up there would cause even more vulnerability having to put more holes up there. Chair asked if there was any consideration to steel that didn’t look like another material. Mr. Ford stated no and talked about rust marks and a building in Leicester that had steel on it and in a year red rust running down the façade. Chair asked if he looked at repairing what was there instead of covering it up. Mr. Ford stated no, there was a lot of renovation for the interior, and they put the most cost on the inside to make it safe for people walking through it.

Commissioner Welter asked if he was aware there were guidelines before he started. Mr. Ford stated he wasn’t aware there were complete guidelines and when talking with the sign manufacturer, he said these were options that he had done before, and he put his faith in him and thought he knew what he was doing since he has been in business for 20 something years and came recommended from other people. He took into consideration his professional opinion.

Chair stated one of the guidelines states design the replacement feature on historic documentation. She asked if he knew if there were any type of facades on Main Street with this type of façade that would be similar. Mr. Ford stated he believes there are buildings with metal on them and also ones that have the wood but to combine them together, he is not sure.

Commissioner Hammond-Green stated the other examples in their agenda are real wood and not wrap.

Chair stated Mezzaluna has a metal feature up top so there are some examples of metal but not metal wrapped facades so this one is distinguishable. Mr. Ford stated he went with the highest quality so that you cannot tell it is not wood. Chair stated their artificial guidelines state you do not use one material to emulate another one. Chair is looking for testimony that this is historically compatible. They need examples that can tie in and show that it is compatible with the district in order to approve it. Mr. Ford stated he doesn’t have that at the moment, but he was trying to emulate the other buildings around them and do it in a way that was meeting a safety factor. The more pieces you put into a building when it already has huge pieces and chips falling apart, the weaker it makes the structure. That was the number one factor with them, to find something to use for a safety factor above anything else and still give a nice, pretty image that doesn’t degrade the downtown area.

Commissioner Battista asked if it was addressed with the owner about the building and pieces falling apart. Mr. Ford stated he would have to talk with his boss, she is out of town.

Commissioner Cauley asked when mentioning Mezzaluna, did they get permission from the HPC for their metal features on their building. Chair stated she did not know. Mr. Ford stated Mezzaluna's sign is starting to rust as well. That was why he did not go with a straight metal on the building, because of the rust factor.

Commissioner Battista stated it is all one piece, the sign and the façade. Mr. Ford stated it is two separate pieces.

Chair asked if there were any further questions or if anyone else would like to speak. When no one spoke, Chair closed the public hearing.

The Commission discussed things being done after the fact and people not knowing the rules. She talked about having five or six guidelines that are violated right now. She felt like as the tenant, he is in an unfair situation. The Commission discussed holding this open for more information and have staff work with them to come up with a compromise and not actually deny it. They talked about the sign not being approved. Chair stated they could hold it open for additional information from the property owner.

Chair reopened the public hearing.

Chair talked about taking a vote or leaving the hearing open and the applicant coming back next month, he has heard the guidelines that apply, and staff can help and try to assess what is there and what complies and the property owner could get involved and tell him if they are willing to do something. This is a larger issue than just a metal facade. She stated they have DRAC that can weigh on materials and what is appropriate. She feels like the tenant is in an awkward position and they are willing to work with him. Mr. Ford stated next month everyone will be out of town on the third Wednesday in May, could they do this in June? Mr. Manley stated they have a façade and a sign that has been put up without permits and staff has not gotten the dimensions of the sign from the applicant in order to process the sign permit and staff has concerns that the sign is too large and would not be a permissible sign. Staff has not received the dimensions and cannot confirm the size and are partially waiting on that and were waiting on the decision on the façade and the HPC's decision on that to move forward on the sign itself. He is hearing there is a lot of concern on the appropriateness of the façade, sounds like there are also concerns about the condition of the building and some property maintenance issues. This could fall under historic guidelines and Demotion by Neglect but also falls under the Property Maintenance Code. They have the historic façade question tonight, the sign component and the property maintenance. There is a responsible party for each of those three aspects. He doesn't think it is ideal to put it off a month and definitely not two months. Chair stated if they deny it, he can turn around and reapply. Mr. Manley stated yes, there is no limitation to applying for a COA. If there is question about this being compatible, that is what the Commission is here to decide tonight. The rest of the aspects can be handled by the appropriate parties after this. Chair stated they would need to vote on this tonight and then he can work with staff on the other issues. Mr. Ford asked if he could leave it up or does he have to take it down. He was worried about taking it down and just having an empty building there. Chair stated they will vote tonight, and the enforcement part is a question for staff, but it doesn't have to come down tomorrow. Mr. Manley stated they can work with the applicant because there is bit of a safety concern. Chair stated safety concerns are considered. Mr. Ford talked about discussing a wood replacement with the owner, but they need to determine the extent of the damage to the façade first. Chair stated they would close the public hearing and take a vote and the applicant can work with staff to move forward.

Chair closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Welter moved the Commission to find as fact the proposed application for a Certificate of Appropriateness, as identified in file # H22-024-COA and located within the Main Street Historic District, if added according to the information reviewed at this hearing and, with any representation made by the applicant on record of this hearing, is incongruous with the character of the Hendersonville Historic Preservation Commission Design Standards for the following reason: The proposed façade would not retain the commercial character of the building through contemporary design and is not compatible with the scale, design, materials, color and texture of the historic building. Commissioner Hammond-Green seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

VIII ***Adjournment.*** The Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Chair