



**Village of Williamsville
Historic Preservation Commission
Meeting Minutes --- March 26, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.**

Present: Kate Waterman-Kulpa, Chairman
Wes Stone, Vice-Chairman
Mary Lowther, Member
Chuck Akers, Member
Anthony Bannon, Member
Susan Palmer, Member

Also present: Deborah A. Habes, Deputy Clerk
Matthew Etu, Trustee Liaison
Charles Grieco, Village Attorney

Excused: Dr. Stephen Dyson, Member

Guest(s): Tom Stackhouse, WNY Railway Historical Society
Representatives from Acquest Development

Ms. Waterman-Kulpa opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

ON MOTION by Ms. Lowther, seconded by Mr. Akers, it was moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held on February 26, 2019, as amended.

Motion carried. 6 – 0.

There was discussion regarding the HPC guidelines versus the codified process. It was agreed there appear to be some discrepancies. HPC members would like to see some clarification. The intent was for HPC to be one-stop process for local landmarks. HPC would like to see architectural and site plan review for landmarked properties to be solely under HPC's purview. Village Attorney Grieco stated guidelines adopted as per resolutions are able to be amended easier than guidelines adopted thru codification. Public hearings are required for amendments to the code.

Old Business

Main St. – (Acquest) Application for Certificate of Appropriateness <i>Main Street elevation – Double main entry doors and a single side door</i>

Representatives from Acquest Development were present.

A decision regarding the front entrance doors was tabled at the 2/26/19 HPC meeting to allow the applicants to do more research.

Ms. Lowther shared with fellow HPC members copies of various articles from the past regarding this property that she found in the Williamsville Historical Society archives. They contained photos/illustrations of the former bank building and its related architectural iterations and history since 1917, the year it was built.

The applicants presented revised plans for the doors. Applicants are proposing the replacement of the main entry doors with a set of double 9' high solid wood doors with simulated divided lites. The existing painted solid arched fan detail above the current doors would be eliminated. The single door to the west of the double front entry doors will be replaced with a similar single door with simulated divided lites. The existing arched glass transom detail will remain above the side door. Both doors will provide increased light and transparency. The applicants stated they believe the proposed doors will provide a better sense of proportion with the fenestration of the front elevation. The existing light fixture above the main entry will be re-lamped.

ON MOTION by Mr. Bannon, seconded by Ms. Palmer, it was moved to approve the application for new doors on the Main Street elevation, as per submitted plans dated 3/20/19, and reviewed at this meeting.

Roll Call:	Palmer	Yes
	Akers	Yes
	Lowther	Yes
	Stone	Yes
	Bannon	Yes
	Waterman-Kulpa	No

Motion carried. 5 – 1.

Ms. Waterman-Kulpa stated her reason for voting No was that she believes that the fanned detail above the main entry doors is colonial; the new doors create a façade that was never there; to have one fan detail over the side door and not over the main entry doors does not provide symmetry to the building's facade.

5429 Main St. (Starbucks/Alex and Ani Building) Proposed Landmark Designation

The proposed landmark designation of this property was the subject of public hearings at the Village Board meetings of 1/14/19, 3/11/19 and 3/25/19. Mr. Etu indicated the Village Board closed the public hearing on 3/25/19 and will vote on it at the next Village Board meeting on April 8, 2019. Members of HPC who attended the public hearing of 3/25/19 and who spoke in favor of the designation of 5429 Main St. as a local landmark: Mr. Bannon, Ms. Waterman-Kulpa, Ms. Lowther and Mr. Akers. There was discussion regarding the "*Building Integrity Report*", prepared by Brian Knight Research of Manchester, Vermont, that was presented to the Village Board on 3/25/19 by Laura Smith, counsel for the property owner, TRG Property Management/Trinity Realty Group of Albany, NY. This report was dated 3/21/19.

There was discussion regarding this report. As copies of the report were only received by the HPC members today, they were not able to fully read it. However, Ms. Waterman-Kulpa stated that as she had been at last night's public hearing, and had only a brief chance to glance at the scanned copy she received via email today from Deputy Clerk Habes, she did not believe it supported HPC's opinion that this property is an example of mid-century modern architecture and therefore should be designated a local landmark. Ms. Waterman-Kulpa opined that the report does not speak to the Village of Williamsville's architectural history. So many buildings along the Village's Main Street have been "colonialized" over the decades. This building was not a high-style building to begin with. Over time, elements of a "colonial" facade were applied over a mid-century modern building. Mr. Bannon suggested that the building is a statement of a building in transition. It serves as an index of other such buildings along Main Street.

Trustee Etu indicated that the Village Board closed the public hearing last night and a resolution to designate it as a local landmark will be on the agenda for the next Village Board meeting on April 8, 2019. It will be up to the Board of Trustees to decide whether or not to designate it a local landmark. He will add the subject under his name for discussion at the April 8th work session. Ms. Smith will most likely be in attendance. HPC members might also want to attend.

Village Attorney Grieco stated that if HPC believes they have additional information or evidence to give to the Village Board regarding the proposed designation of this property as a local landmark, the public hearing should be re-opened.

There followed a discussion regarding the "*Building Integrity Report*". Mr. Stone stated the transitional nature of the building's architecture over the decades does not appear to be well presented in the report and does not reflect the Village's historic architectural "arc".

Trustee Etu stated he believes the HPC has been consistent with its position of the building's worthiness as a local landmark and the property owner appears to have been consistent in their point of view that it does not qualify as a landmark building. Does it

meet the HPC criteria? Ms. Waterman-Kulpa believes it meets the criteria of §47-4 A.2 (*embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, a period or a method of construction*).

HPC decided they don't have anything new to share with the Village Board.

175 Oakgrove Dr. – (Oechsner Castle/Dream Island)

Before this evening's HPC meeting, some members of HPC toured the Dream Island property with property owner Sheryl Davies.

It was noted that there is structural damage to many of the stone walls on the property. This is likely due to erosion. Many of the walls appear to have almost disappeared into the creek. Some repairs were made 30 to 40 years ago. The property owners are very interested in replanting the gardens and re-doing the landscaping.

Ms. Waterman-Kulpa would like to see the owners put together a master plan for the restoration of the property. They are in "emergency" stabilization mode right now, just trying to address issues that are in need of immediate repair. This stage could take a year or two. They eventually will need a comprehensive master plan of work to be done in phases over time, so that it does not become a hodge-podge of disjointed projects. HPC does not want to be addressing a series of small projects, one at a time, over a long span of years. They would prefer to see the property owner submit to HPC a comprehensive plan of the structures and property, so that it can be overseen in a cohesive manner with an anticipated, well-thought out result. Ms. Waterman-Kulpa will have a conversation with the property owner regarding this direction.

Ms. Palmer stressed that the property owner is doing a great job, but she would like to see her concentrate on the buildings. The property and buildings were landmarked in 1985. It would be helpful if the property owner could give HPC a copy of the survey of the property so upcoming projects could be better located on the site for review purposes.

There was discussion about the capabilities of the Building Dept. to "flag" historic landmarked properties in their files. Trustee Etu will invite Building Inspector Tim Masters to the April 8th HPC meeting so he can address any questions regarding this topic.

Historic Plaques

Trustee Etu stated that there is money budgeted in the proposed 2019-2020 Village budget for plaques. There was discussion regarding HPC coming up with a priority list of landmarked properties that should be considered first, since the cost of the plaques will limit how many can be purchased per year. Ms. Lowther offered to research which properties have already received plaques and others that should be given priority going

forward. She will also research costs. Trustee Etu will ask DPW Crew Chief Vilonen to measure the plaque on the Meeting House as an example and even possibly remove it so Ms. Lowther can use it as a guide for costing out specs for future plaques. She will get some information and present it to HPC at the April or May meeting.

Mr. Akers would like to see historic marker signs erected at historic sites throughout the Village. This includes sites such as in front of Milo's, as this site was originally a horse track many years ago. Most people don't know that. Ms. Palmer stated she is working with Keaton DePriest about stories such as this.

Trustee Etu invited HPC to participate in the Glen Park Art Festival by having a booth set up where they could share info about the history of the Village and what HPC does. Ms. Palmer stated it would be a wonderful opportunity for HPC to hand out the historic Village landmark children's coloring books she has been working on with Mr. Akers.

Ms. Palmer announced she will be moving out of the Village soon. Village Attorney will research the requirements for HPC membership to see if Ms. Palmer could still continue as a HPC member, as she expressed interest in continuing on if she could.

Lehigh District Update

Ms. Waterman-Kulpa is in contact with Kerry Traynor of UB's Dept. of Architecture and Planning, who has taken on the Lehigh District as a class project with her students. The project should be done by the end of the semester and a report written up.

ON MOTION by Ms. Waterman, seconded by Ms. Lowther, it was moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Motion carried. 6 – 0.

Deborah A. Habes,
Deputy Clerk

**The next regular HPC meeting will be held on
Tuesday, April 23, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.**