

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION HELD TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2021 AT 1:00 P.M. IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, MACKINAC ISLAND, MICHIGAN

Chairman Finkel called a regular meeting of the Mackinac Island Historic District Commission to order at 1:08 p.m.

PRESENT: Lee Finkel, Andrew Doud, Alan Sehoan, Lorna Straus, Nancy Porter

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Zoning Administrator, Dennis Dombroski, Architect, Richard Neumann (via Zoom), Attorney, Gary Rentrop (via Zoom), Attorney, Erin Evashevski (via Zoom)

Motion by Straus, seconded by Doud to approve as written, and place on file the minutes of the regular meeting Tuesday, August 10, 2021. All in favor. Motion carries.

Motion by Porter, seconded by Doud to approve as amended and place on file the Agenda. The amendment was to add "Verizon Update" to *Old Business*. All in favor. Motion carries.

CORRESPONDENCE

• **Gary Rentrop Statements – July 10, 2021 & August 10, 2021**

Rentrop summarized his statements. Straus commented that when looking at the statements he was working solidly on the City of Mackinac Island business. Motion by Straus, second by Finkel to place the statements on file. All in favor. Motion carries.

• **Letter from City Clerk re: Arches Budget**

The City Council approved the budget request. Motion by Doud, second by Finkel to place the letter on file. All in favor. Motion carries.

• **Letter from City Clerk re: Establishing an Escrow Account**

The City Council forwarded this Agenda item to the Finance Committee for review. Motion by Finkel, second by Sehoan to place the letter on file. All in favor. Motion carries.

• **Letter from City Clerk re: Becoming a Certified Local Government**

The City Council authorized proceeding with the process to become a CLG. Rentrop stated the HDC is $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way there. Rentrop is to complete the process in the next couple of months.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

• **Arches Committee – Alan Sehoan**

Sehoan reported that the two interns were on the island working on the survey. The interns were not comfortable going on to the larger properties in Hubbard's Annex so it was determined that permission will be requested before they go. Corrigan is currently entering the information the intern's collected on the other two districts.

STAFF REPORTS

- **MD21-008-052(H) Spata – Spindle Replacement**

Dombroski stated this is a like for like replacement of rotted spindles and rail.

- **CD21-036-055(H) Puttkammer/Valentic Window Replacement**

Dombroski stated this is a like for like replacement of the 2nd floor window and rotted framing.

- **CD21-002-060(H) Schueller – Siding and Window Replacement**

Dombroski stated this is a like for like application for rotted siding replacement, replacing the existing dormer window, and rebuilding four front facing first floor windows.

Motion by Sehoan, second by Doud to accept the Staff Reports. All in favor. Motion carries.

OLD BUSINESS

- **C17-055/56-027(H) Benser – Mr. B's**

Bob Benser stated they would like to add two stairwells to the roof deck that lead to enclosures to service equipment, for fire suppression and would like to have a roof-top deck for guests on the 2nd and 3rd floors. In response to Neumann's negative review the applicant has reduced the coverage to 8%. The applicant stated he is not asking for approval today. He is presenting it for discussion purposes only and would like to come back and present in the October meeting. Neumann stated he had two primary concerns. One, the extensions of the stairwells to the roof still creates a partial additional story that will be seen from various areas in town and up on the bluff and Fort Mackinac. Neumann stated the HDC is supposed to preserve the historic feel of the island. When creating the guidelines, one of the attributes was the varying heights on Main Street. This change would be "another nail in the coffin" in trying to maintain the varying heights. Second, this sets a precedent for other owners that might want to take advantage of a roof top deck. Benser stated that he does not agree that the enclosures would be very visible. The enclosures are only 8% of the entire roof. Benser believes the roof top will be very nice. Benser presented his new drawing reflecting the 8% coverage rather than the 13%. The reduction is in the west side stairwell. Doud requested pictures of what the roof top will look like from various areas in town. Sehoan asked what the current roof access is to be. Benser stated a hatch. Doud stated that any building owner is going to want to build to the 40' allowable height. Rentrop stated that a lot of time was spent discussing the tunnel effect on Main Street. Rentrop stated that the HDC should seriously consider throwing out the design guidelines. This whole project started on the wrong foot to begin with. The HDC allowed the applicant to demo an historic resource without following the guidelines of our own Ordinance. The criteria was not explored prior to allowing the demolition. Doud stated he thinks that is the job of the HDC. Rentrop stated that he had to back up and create a resolution to the back the HDC out of the decision they made without considering the guidelines. The ordinance and state

statue specifically provide criteria you must look at before allowing demolition. ^{Rentrop stated} ~~I think~~ the HDC needs to redo its guidelines if they want to decide what looks good rather than the current job of protecting historic structures. Neumann further said the HDC should be protecting the overall ambiance of the district in addition to individual buildings. Benser stated he does not think this project creates the tunnel effect on Main Street. Doud stated that he thought Shepler's went from 1 to 3 stories, the setbacks were nowhere near ~~the give~~ ^{mat} of Benser's building. Neumann stated that the difference is that the blue building was next door and the precedent was set for how the new building would look next to the existing building, and the blue building is not a contributing structure. Rentrop stated he does not want to stand in the way of what the HDC wants to do. He just believes the HDC has lost sight of their design guidelines. If Doud believes everyone is going to go for the 40' height, that should be addressed in the guidelines. Finkel stated the applicant has come back a number of times with revisions. Finkel believes if the applicant would have come to the HDC with the project in its entirety, he does not think the project would have been approved. Finkel believes it is time to stand their ground. It is a small request, but still a painful one. Doud again asked Benser to provide pictures of the proposed project and views from different areas. Doud stated that the HDC's job is not to stop building, but to help building be done right. Straus stated that she cannot vote in favor of this revision. Straus has been impacted by Neumann and Rentrop's ^{mat} comments. Seeing differing heights on the water side of Main Street was very welcome in terms of the context of our historic city. Straus believes this is where the HDC should draw the line on this project. Doud stated he thinks this is a great project and that the applicant is giving on the 2nd and 3rd floors. The HDC is here to help develop right. Benser stated he will resubmit the application in October.

- **Verizon Update – Gary Rentrop**

Rentrop stated the City has entered into a new agreement with the ^{Verizon} ~~City~~. The new agreement includes:

2nd antenna on top of Chippewa Hotel near the center of the building.

The safety cones have been replaced with a tape on the floor of the roof and warning signs.

Lilac Tree plans were modified so all equipment matches the background.

An additional antenna was added to the Mission Point antenna.

Harrisonville pole was moved away from the General Store.

The City Council approved the agreement with conditions. Porter confirmed with Roy Shryock that the staff feels safe on the top of the roof.

NEW BUSINESS

- **CD21-003-053(H) Jeffrey Steiner – Cottage Repairs/Alterations**

The applicant introduced himself and then summarized all of the proposed work. Neumann made a favorable review of the project, and stated he liked the proposed shutters, which are

authentic and functional, and agreed with the applicant that shutters would not be installed on the front second window which has more detailed trim. Straus commented that almost everyone used to have shutters, but now only about half do. Straus likes the shutters, but if the applicant was proposing the shutters for safety, he could rethink it. Motion by Sehoyan, second by Doud to approve the application. Roll call vote: Ayes: Doud, Finkel, Sehoyan, Straus, Porter. Nays: None. All in favor. Motion carries.


• **R121-076-054(H) Joshua Dorcey – Renovations**

Neumann stated that the proposed changes are extensive but since it is not a contributing structure, the changes are in the spirit of the existing house. Therefore, Neumann feels the overall effect of the changes are appropriate and compatible with the West End Historic District. The contractor, Roy Shryock stated the changes are a big improvement. Motion by Doud, second by Sehoyan to approve the application. Roll call vote: Ayes: Doud, Finkel, Sehoyan, Straus, Porter. Nays: None. All in favor. Motion carries.


PUBLIC COMMENT

Doud asked what year Mr. B's was built. Porter stated her father had built it and it was in the 1950's. Doud then asked if Shepler's was there then. The Commission did not think so. Doud is trying to define contributing and non-contributing. Neumann confirmed that going forward, whether a building is contributing or not, should be weighed. In some instances a non-contributing building may create a cohesive district identification. Rentrop further explained that if changes to a non-contributing structure are proposed you should look at whether those changes are consistent with the surrounding contributing structures. Therefore, all structures should be considered because downtown is such a confined cohesive downtown.

With no further business there was a Motion by Doud, second by Finkel to adjourn the meeting. All in favor. Motion carries. Meeting was adjourned at 2:36 pm.



Lee Finkel, Chairman



Katie Pereny, Secretary