

**FRANKLIN HERITAGE COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING
CITY HALL- BASEMENT MEETING ROOM
Wednesday, August 10, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.**

MINUTES

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

- Salute to the Flag**
- Roll Call**

Present: Councilor Glen Feener, Michael Mullavey, Jeff Whitney, Paul Trudel, Richard Lewis (Planning and Zoning Director) and Planning and Zoning Assistant Angela Carey.

Absent: Bob Lucas.

Officers

Member Mullavey moved and Member Whitney seconded to elect Glen Feener as Chair. There were no further nominations. All were in favor.

Member Whitney moved and Member Trudel seconded to elect Mike Mullavey as Vice Chair. There were no further nominations. All were in favor.

Member Feener moved and Member Whitney seconded to elect Bob Lucas as Secretary. There were no further nominations. All were in favor.

- Approval of Minutes: July 14, 2014 Heritage Commission Meeting**

MOTION: Member Trudel moved and Member Mullavey seconded to approve the minutes of the July 14, 2014 Heritage Commission regular meeting. Member Whitney abstained as he was not present at that meeting. All others were in favor of approving the minutes as submitted; motion passes.

New Business

H15-001: TRCC Housing Limited Partnership I, Owner; Ralph Littlefield, Vice President, Applicant, requests approval to conduct exterior renovations, on property located at 38 River Street, Tax Map/Lot # 117-081-00, New Map O8, R-3 Zone (One- Two- and Three-Family Residential District). The exterior renovations included a yellow or cream colored vinyl siding, new windows, replacement roof, repair exterior doors, replace porch/stair railings to code, and retaining wall repair.

Ralph Littlefield, Vice President of TRCC was present; he was accompanied by Jon Eller, and Cindy Lewis, project architect. He indicated that it is hard to find funds to renovate these types of buildings. Mr. Eller has helped create a relationship with the Federal Home Loan Bank and the Meredith Village Savings Bank. The funds for this project are coming from the Federal Home Loan Bank, with MVSBS acting as the sponsoring bank. The funds are private, not federal. All 6 of the apartments in the building are rented at an affordable rate to help provide good housing opportunities for those of a lower income bracket.

Mr. Littlefield explained that the goal of the project is to complete some needed repairs and upgrades to the building. The plan is to install improved insulation under the proposed vinyl siding, as well as in some portions of the roof/attic areas. The new siding will have a 4-inch reveal, and the siding will be of a high quality that will have a good lifespan. A "heritage Cream" color was selected as being the most appropriate for the building. In

determining the best way to approach the upgrades, it was decided that the cost of regular painting of the wood siding is not cost effective, and the high cost would only result in increase in the rents that needed to be charged the residents. The vinyl siding would solve the maintenance problems that have plagued the building for many years.

The existing shingles will be stripped, any needed repairs to the underlayment will be made, and a water shield and Architectural shingles will be installed.

The existing replacement windows are old and many do not function well; new parts for the windows are very difficult or impossible to find. The installation of another round of replacement windows was discussed, but it was determined that installing new whole sash windows with higher R-values and improved quality is the way to proceed. There are approximately 71 new windows to be installed.

The other work components involve work on the stairs and railing, in order to bring them up to code. The railing will be painted white to match the proposed trim color on the building. The sidewalk will be repaired to make it safer for all residents; the retaining wall has some trees growing at the top and they are pushing the wall out a bit so these will be removed. The parking drainage basins will be upgraded. Exterior doors will also be replaced to add further energy efficiency; the new doors will have the same look at the current doors.

Public Comment

Chair Feener opened the discussion to the public. Franklin resident Annette Andreozzi outlined some her thoughts on the overall project. She is okay with the exterior work on the retaining wall, driveway and sidewalk. She indicated that the porch is not original and the repair and painting of the railing is not a problem. She is concerned with the proposed vinyl siding.

She indicated that wood clapboards, if installed and painted properly can age as well as vinyl siding. This Historic District is unique since it covers governmental, commercial, and residential buildings. She worries that the vinyl will not be installed well and water will get behind the siding and cause future problems. She is also concerned with the proposed windows not having the same profile and historic look. It was her recommendation that if the Commission was to approve the vinyl siding that a 4-inch reveal be required and the sash around the window be a darker color than the window trim, since this was the common historic look for a building of this era. She also added that the older windows in this type of building were typically “2 over 2” design.

Franklin resident Leigh Webb indicated that he is concerned that the painting of the siding was only done about 6-8 years ago, but the paint is flaking and peeling so quickly. Mr. Littlefield indicated that it was his understanding that the wood clapboards were not properly stripped before the paint was applied. He also raised the concern with the window replacement.

Mr. Eller indicated that the option of properly removing and stripping the clapboards and then repainting and re-installing them would be very cost prohibitive. As was mentioned earlier, one of the goals of the project is to increase the energy efficiency for the building, and this can be achieved with the new insulation under the vinyl siding and the added roof insulation. Keeping the building cost efficient from an energy prospective helps to keep the building affordable for their tenants.

Architect Lewis stated that the 1-inch pf insulation under the vinyl siding, along with the “Tyvek” type wrap will greatly save on energy costs.

Director Lewis read into the record the email received on Sunday the 9th from Franklin resident Elizabeth Jewell of 99 Prospect Street voicing opposition to the approval of the vinyl siding since this “plastic” look does not belong in the historic district.

Public Hearing was closed.

Board discussion

Chair Feener brought the discussion back to the members of the Commission. It is his feeling that the project is a good one and applying conditions along the lines of the discussion to date will help protect an appropriate level of historic integrity while at the same time insuring that the building can be better maintained with the proper energy savings necessary today. He favors the darker window sash and the “2 over 2” window design.

Member Mullavey says that he feels all of the important questions have been adequately answered. Member Whitney feels that it is not the role of the Commission to stand in the way of necessary maintenance improvements or energy efficiency upgrades when the proposed improvements can involve historical sensitivity. Member Trudel says that he thinks the proposed improvements are all positive and he is okay with the proposed window design and the overall energy efficiencies achieved with this work.

Chair Feener asked Director Lewis to review the conditions that have been discussed so far. The list includes:

1. The vinyl siding will be Heritage Cream and installed with a 4-inch reveal;
2. The New windows will be the 2 over 2 style with a darker sash, and white trim boards. The dark green color was discussed as being a preferred option;
3. The roofing will be the architectural shingles, with the Heather Charcoal being the style discussed;
4. The work on the porch and railing is approved, with the railing to be painted white;
5. All of the work on the retaining wall, the sidewalk, and the driveway area is approved as discussed and presented by the applicant.

The applicant also indicated that they would be keeping the address sign and it will be refurbished.

MOTION: Member Trudel moved and Member Mullavey seconded that the Franklin Heritage Commission approve the application [H15-01] request of TRCC Housing Limited Partnership I, Owner; Ralph Littlefield, Vice President, Applicant, requests approval to conduct interior renovations on property located at 38 River Street, Tax Map/Lot # 117-081-00, R-3 Zone (One-, Two- and Three- Family Residential District). The Commission finds that the installation of the proposed exterior renovations does not undermine the purpose section of Chapter 78 and is subject to the following conditions:

1. The vinyl siding will be Heritage Cream and installed with a 4-inch reveal;
2. The New windows will be the 2 over 2 style with a darker sash, and white trim boards. The dark green color was discussed as being a preferred option;
3. The roofing will be the architectural shingles, with the Heather Charcoal being the style discussed;
4. The work on the porch and railing is approved, with the railing to be painted white;
5. All of the work on the retaining wall, the sidewalk, and the driveway area is approved as discussed and presented by the applicant.

All were in favor of the amendment to the motion. All were in favor of the motion as amended. Motion passes.

Old Business: None.

Other Business:

The Commission discussed some of the recent signage in the downtown area. The signs for the “Smoke Shop” and the consignment shop were installed without any permits. Director Lewis did speak with both shop owners and informed them that the Commission would discuss the best course of action. The signage at the Shepard Block building [“Toad Hall”] was also discussed. The owner of this property did inform the Planning Office that signage was needed and that if the Commission thought the color did not match an historic look it could be modified per the request of the Commission.

The Commission reviewed the approved color palette and it was the consensus that some broader flexibility needed to be given beyond just the smaller number of “approved” colors. Director Lewis pointed out this is one color palette from one company, and there are many historic color options on the market. He also pointed out that it has been his practice that if a sign permit comes in and the color scheme fits into the historic palette then his office has been issuing the permit. The Commission was comfortable with this approach.

It was the consensus of the Commission that the color of the “Smoke Shop” sign did not match up with any historic color for downtown; Director Lewis will speak with the shop owner and inform him that the sign can either be repainted in an appropriate color or the owner can come before the Commission for review and action on the current color scheme. A sign permit from the Planning Office is also needed.

The sign for the consignment shop is currently an acceptable color scheme, but a sign permit is also needed from the Planning Office.

The Commission felt that the signage for the Shepard Block fell within the acceptable color scheme and that no further action was necessary. This work has already received a sign permit.

It was noted that the Commission will be busy in the near future with the improvements with the Buell Block, and the building directly across from City Hall, as well as the CATCH project in Riverbend Mill. Director Lewis did point out that back in 2008 the Commission did already approve some improvements to the Riverbend Mill consistent with their approved Site Plan, but that fact notwithstanding, the Commission does look to be busier in the near future.

Public Comment: None.

Adjournment

MOTION: Member Trudel moved and Member Whitney seconded to adjourn the August 10th, 2015 meeting of the Heritage Commission, at 7:30 p.m. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Lewis
Planning and Zoning Director