

CITY OF HENDERSONVILLE
Historic Preservation Commission

Minutes of July 15, 2009 Meeting

Commissioners Present: Staci Blatt, Bette Carter, Ralph Freeman (Chair), George Henry, John Ogletree, Larry Phillips, Brook Tate, Jo Tyler

Commissioners Absent: Barbara McCoy

Staff Present: Tim Murphy, City Planner; Lu Ann Welter, Administrative Assistant

I Call to Order. The Chair called the monthly meeting of the Hendersonville Historic Preservation Commission to order at 5:01 p.m.

II Agenda. *On motion of Commissioner Tyler, seconded by Commissioner Blatt, the Commission approved the agenda.*

III Minutes. *On motion of Commissioner Ogletree, seconded by Commissioner Blatt, the minutes of June 17, 2009 were approved.*

IV 238 N. Main Street, Certificate of Appropriateness. After swearing in potential witnesses for this hearing, the Chair opened the public hearing. At the request of Tim Murphy, City Planner, Commission File No. H09-27-COA was admitted into evidence, and the Commission took official notice of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Hendersonville and the Commission's Design Guidelines. Mr. Murphy gave the following background:

The Planning Department is in receipt of an application for a certificate of appropriateness from Ilene Morton to undertake the following work at 238 North Main Street:

1. Replace the fabric awning with a metal awning.

The Historic Preservation Commission has authorized Staff to approve awnings as a "minor work" if the proposed awning is consistent with the *Design Guidelines*. Design Guideline 2.1.11. states that "Metal awnings are generally not appropriate, but can be used in some instances if they are compatible with the historic character of the building". Since the proposed awning may be inconsistent with Design Guideline 2.1.11., Staff has forwarded this application to the Historic Preservation Commission for review as a "major work".

The subject property is listed as **contributing** in the *Main Street Local Designation Report*. The property is described as:

236-244 N. Main Street. Brunson's Store Block. ca. 1905.

Two-story brick Commercial Style building with a corbelled cornice and a row of diamond-shaped projections below the corbel table. Five cast iron pilasters survive at irregular intervals between the shop windows. The four storefronts have been altered to varying degrees, with the most changes on the north end where display windows are angled back from the street. Brunson's Furniture occupied the building in the 1920s (Sanborn maps).

The subject property is listed as **contributing** on the National Register and described as:

236-244 N. Main Street. Brunson's Store Block. ca. 1905.

Low brick commercial structure with corbelled cornice and a row of diamond-shaped projections below the corbel table. Five cast iron pilasters survive at irregular intervals between the shop windows. Modernized at street level. Sanborn maps indicate construction between 1901 and 1908. Brunson's Furniture Store has occupied the building since 1920s.

A blue metal awning was installed by the applicant in May 2009 without receiving Certificate of Appropriateness approval. Attached is a photograph of the previous fabric awning and the current metal covering. The frame of the awning has not been replaced. As shown in the attached photographs, the awning frame covers the entire storefront. The awnings on the adjacent storefronts are fabric.

Mr. Murphy reported the applicant did not meet with the Design Review Advisory Committee. The Chair asked if there were any questions for staff. There being none, the Chair asked the applicant to come forward. James Kasalajtis said he is here to testify for the applicant Ilene Morton, also here but not feeling well, and has been involved with Gypsy Heart for years. He said Gypsy Heart has been here for fourteen years and prior to that it was next door. He said there was an awning at that location which they changed out, moved next door and put up a new awning. He said they never needed a permit before. He said the old awning was torn and flapped in the wind. To replace the torn one, they called the awning company that put it up to begin with and it was going to cost more to replace it than it cost initially. He said the economy is bad and it is hard to stay in business. He said they stayed with the same color and the metal was less expensive. He said they did not know they needed a permit and people have complimented them on it. He said they are willing to take it down but will not be able to take the frame down as a crane was used to put it in.

Commissioner Phillips asked about installing ice breaks as most metal roofs have. Mr. Kasalajtis said he is willing to do that though there isn't much snow here. Commissioner Phillips said it would be a safety factor to have them. Commissioner Carter said she finds it hard to believe they did not have knowledge of this procedure with information out there. The Chair asked if they were involved with DHI. Mr. Kasalajtis said no, they like to keep low key. Commissioner Tate asked if they noticed there were no other metal awnings. Mr. Kasalajtis said if you look at old pictures of Hendersonville, there were no awnings. The Chair said the Commission and DHI have worked to get the word on the historic district, there are great resources for businesses and finds it to imagine they did not know they had to go thru this process. The Chair added he is disappointed and asked what we can do about this. Commissioner Carter said monthly information goes out to all businesses and is not always read. Commissioner Tate asked if this was the same frame as before. Mr. Kasalajtis said yes and said they may not be able to put a new awning up if the metal one has to come down. He said cloth awnings last about seven years and when he asked the company about repairing it, they said they couldn't. He said they got quotes from four companies. Commissioner Tyler asked is the same company that would put up a new awning could remove this one. Mr. Kasalajtis said he put up the metal one. Commissioner Carter commented the local awning companies know about this process. Mr. Casitas said he only got quotes from the companies. Lee Henderson-Hill asked to speak.

The Chair swore in Lee Henderson-Hill. Ms. Hill said she is the Executive Director of DHI

commenting the previous awning was torn and flapped around for several months. She stressed with current economic times and less money to spend, business owners are facing difficult decisions. She said the metal is better than an empty frame.

With no further questions, the Chair closed the public hearing. Commissioner Henry said his biggest concern is sending the message that the metal awning is okay or that it's okay because they didn't know. Commissioner Tate agreed with Commissioner Henry's comments and about the ice breaks. Commissioner Tyler suggested a time factor for replacing the awning. The Chair said it would still not follow the Guidelines. Commissioner Blatt pointed out the Guidelines just says "Metal awnings are generally not appropriate", it doesn't say they can't be used. Commissioner Tate said metal awnings were more common in the fifties. Commissioner Carter asked if the architectural metals sections would address this. Mr. Murphy said those are more for railings and such. Commissioner Ogletree said he agreed with Commissioners Tate and Henry. Commissioner Phillips said he did not like the idea of a naked frame being up there. Commissioner Henry asked to reopen the hearing to ask the applicant some questions. The Chair reopened the hearing.

Commissioner Henry asked the applicant the approximate quotes on the fabric awning. Mr. Kasalajtis said around \$700 whereas he paid \$160 for the metal and put it up himself. With no further questions, the Chair closed the hearing.

The Chair said he feels for the applicant and the comments from Ms. Hill but said they need to follow the guidelines for all the merchants downtown. The Chair called for a motion. Commissioner Carter asked if a lack of motion would table the item. Commissioner Tate said they need to decide this tonight. Commissioner Henry asked if there were any grants or monies that could help put a new one up. The Chair said not that he knew of. Commissioner Henry said he is not in favor of the metal awning or a naked frame. He asked if they could deny it but give six months to get it replaced. The Chair asked if denied then fines would be levied by the Zoning Department. Mr. Murphy said yes.

Commissioner Tate moved the Commission to find as a fact that the proposed application for a certificate of appropriateness, as identified in file number H09-27-COA, if constructed according to the information reviewed at this hearing and any representations made by the applicant on the record of this hearing, is incongruous with the character of the Main Street Historic District with the following condition: that based on the economy the current awning could stand for six months but would then be replaced with an appropriate awning to be reviewed by the Commission. The awning frame must be removed if an application for a certificate of appropriateness is not submitted within six months. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Henry and passed unanimously.

- V Main Street Guidelines.** The Commission reviewed the proposed changes to the Guidelines. In discussion, the Chair commented existing murals are a historic part of Main Street. Commissioner Tate said she didn't feel like restoration of them needed to come before the Commission. Commissioner Carter asked about new murals being painted on buildings. Commissioner Phillips said the Design Guidelines prohibit painting brick that hasn't been painted before.

Commissioner Carter moved the Commission to adopt the amended Hendersonville Historic Preservation Commission Main Street Local Historic District Design. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tate and passed unanimously.

Commissioner Phillips moved the Commission to adopt the amended Hendersonville Historic Preservation Commission Rules of Procedure. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Blatt and passed unanimously.

VI Committee Reports –

- Designation Committee – No report.
- Community Affairs – No report.
- District Improvement – No report.

VII Commissioners Comments. On behalf of the Commission, the Chair commended Lee Henderson-Hill on the great job she has done and wished her well in her new job.

VIII Staff Comments. Mr. Murphy reported City Council approved the expansion of the Main Street District at their last meeting.

Mr. Murphy noted the Main Street study report completed by Ms. Argintar and said he should receive the State' comments in the next week.

Mr. Murphy said Eva Richey had contacted staff about providing historic information for the trolley. Commissioner Carter updated the Commission on the trolley and how it will be available for events in the future.

Mr. Murphy asked the Commission how they would like the façade grant information distributed. It was decided that staff would mail information on the grant to the property owners in the Main Street District and Commissioner Tate volunteered to distribute it to the business owners. The Commission also agreed to have COA information distributed to the business owners at the same time.

IX Financial Report. *The Financial Report was passed by consensus.*

X Adjournment. *The meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.*