

MINUTES OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
November 18, 2019

The regular meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission was called to order by Chairman James Hartshorne at 5:00 p.m. at 118 W. Cook Avenue, Libertyville, Illinois.

Members present: Chairman James Hartshorne, Les Galo, Katherine Hamilton-Smith, and Mike Kollman.

Members absent: Thor Jondahl and Melissa Senatore.

A quorum was established.

Village Staff present: John Spoden, Director of Community Development, and Chris Sandine, Associate Planner.

Commissioner Hamilton-Smith made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Kollman, to approve the October 28, 2019, Historic Preservation Commission meeting minutes, subject to the following change: 1) Replace “Motion denied 6 - 0” with “Motion denied 0 - 6” on Page 7.

Motion carried 4 - 0.

Old Business:

**HPC 19-02 Nick Dimitriou, Authorized Agent for Main Street Ventures
602 N. Milwaukee Avenue**

Request is for a Certificate of Appropriateness for new signage.

Mr. Nick Dimitriou, representative for Chrissoula’s Restaurant, presented the proposal for new signage at 602 N. Milwaukee Avenue. Chairman Hartshorne reminded the Commissioners that the applicant has been open for one (1) year and the Commission was going to reconvene on the color of the signage. Mr. Dimitriou stated he thought the discussion was going to be whether the Village has received any more complaints on the sign colors. Commissioner Hamilton-Smith requested some background information on the proposal from Staff. Mr. Chris Sandine, Associate Planner, stated the petitioner first appeared before the Commission over a year ago to request an updated tenant façade. Mr. Sandine stated the proposal was to paint their tenant space white and have blue trim work with matching signage. Mr. Sandine stated that when a final inspection was completed, it was noted the blue hue on the signage does not match the blue hue of the painted trim work. Mr. Sandine noted a complaint was filed from the public about the colors installed. Mr. Sandine stated the applicant was provided the choice to re-install signage to match, paint the trim work to match, or receive an approval from the Historic Preservation Commission and Village Board of Trustees to keep what has already been installed. Mr. Sandine noted Mr. Dimitriou has taken the route of requesting an approval to keep what has been installed since he did not have the funds to paint the trim work or obtain new signage. Mr.

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Sandine reminded the Commission that in February 2019, they continued Mr. Dimitriou to November 2019 so that he could get his business up and running. Mr. Sandine noted there has not been any more complaints about the sign color to date. Commissioner Hamilton-Smith confirmed the differences in the blue hues is why the applicant is appearing before the Commission. She questioned who the complaint was from. Mr. John Spoden, Director of Community Development, stated the complaint was from a member of the public. Commissioner Hamilton-Smith confirmed one (1) person has complained out of the entire Village.

Commissioner Galo stated he has no issues with the installed design. Commissioner Kollman stated the options were to re-paint the trim or redo the signage. Mr. Dimitriou provided a picture to Commissioner Kollman and noted that it is difficult to discern the color differences in the picture. Commissioner Hamilton-Smith questioned if the blue doorway will be re-installed this winter. Mr. Dimitriou stated he has found a different solution so it will not be re-installed. Mr. Dimitriou stated that if he were to have the colors match on the outside, he would need to have the colors changed on the inside, too. Commissioner Kollman questioned what would be required to have the signs match. Mr. Dimitriou stated the signs are custom-made from TNT and the entire sign will need to be re-made.

Commissioner Hamilton-Smith stated she noticed the doorway when it was installed, but she is not bothered by the slight change in blue that is existing. Commissioner Galo stated he has no issues with the existing design. Commissioner Hamilton-Smith questioned the course of action for the proposal. Mr. Sandine stated the Commission will make a recommendation on the signage for the Village Board to review.

Chairman Hartshorne stated he is okay with the two corner panels reading as signage. Chairman Hartshorne stated the white lettering helps break up the blue colors. Commissioner Hamilton-Smith noted the colors do not bother her, but it would be better if the colors were the same. Commissioner Kollman questioned how it would look if all of the upper cornice panels were painted the same color. Chairman Hartshorne noted it might look worse with those two colors. Mr. Dimitriou noted there have not been any more complaints and questioned how obvious the difference in hues are to the public. Commissioner Kollman noted it is more than the complaints, since it was initially approved to the same color. Commissioner Kollman noted it should not be a large expense to paint a few cornice panels. Commissioner Hamilton-Smith confirmed the sign has been created in a sign shop. Commissioner Kollman noted any color can be matched in a sign shop. Commissioner Kollman suggested painting the cornice panels, but not the trim-work. Mr. Dimitriou questioned if it looks bad and the Commission wants it to change. Commissioner Kollman stated the Commission would approve the design and cannot come back afterwards. Chairman Hartshorne noted he thinks the color change at the top would only cause more complaints.

Commissioner Hamilton-Smith made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Galo, to recommend the Village Board of Trustees approve the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for signage as installed at 602 N. Milwaukee Avenue, in accordance with the plans submitted.

Motion approved 4 - 0.

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New Business:

HPC 19-06 Kal Pence, Authorized Agent for Morton Rubin
406 N. Milwaukee Avenue

Request is for a Certificate of Appropriateness for new signage.

Mr. Kal Pence, representative for The Runner's Edge, presented the proposal for new signage at 406 N. Milwaukee Avenue. Mr. Pence stated the proposed sign is being moved from Wilmette to the Libertyville location. Commissioner Hamilton-Smith confirmed the signage is in compliance with the Village Ordinance for size and lighting. Commissioner Hamilton-Smith questioned how the Commission should be reviewing the proposal. Mr. Spoden stated the proposed signage is subject to review for appearance and how it fits with the structure. Mr. Spoden noted Staff only has the authority to approve signage when it is under an established sign criteria. Commissioner Hamilton-Smith confirmed the signage will be backlit to offer a silhouette effect. Commissioner Kollman questioned the white background on the sign panel. Mr. Pence stated the white is a sign panel backer in aluminum.

Commissioner Kollman questioned if the white will match the fascia. Chairman Hartshorne noted the wall has been painted a blue color, and is not the white color. Commissioner Hamilton-Smith confirmed the tenant painted the wall a blue color. Mr. Pence stated the blue has been painted to match the upper blue color. Chairman Hartshorne questioned how the blue sign will mesh with the blue color on the wall.

Mr. Bob Klein, owner of The Runner's Edge, stated he has owned the business for approximately 30 years and is ready to pass the baton to Mr. Pence. Mr. Klein stated the design for the sign was created based on the initial Wilmette design criteria. Mr. Klein stated the sign will be placed on a mechanical timer to ensure it does not emit a lot of light. Mr. Pence stated they did not want to have the white background, which differentiates them from B. Bungalow. Mr. Spoden noted that painting the wall requires the review of the Historic Preservation Commission and the approval of the Village Board of Trustees. Mr. Pence and Mr. Klein apologized for painting the wall before gaining an approval. Mr. Kollman noted in a previous conversation that there was some discussion about painting the wall and how it affects the rest of the building. Mr. Spoden recommended approving the sign and background with this proposal, so they are covered for both exterior changes.

Commissioner Kollman noted the design seems modern compared to the rest of the downtown, but he is okay with it since it is an existing sign. Commissioner Kollman noted there should be some continuity in the design along the street. Commissioner Kollman thinks the neighboring signage will be fighting with each other, but that should be up to the owner to regulate. Commissioner Hamilton-Smith noted she does not think the sign will be too jarring, but agrees it is more modern. Commissioner Kollman noted the personality of the facade is changing with the signage, but there are no current design guidelines to regulate them. Commissioner Galo noted the backlit design to show the silhouette is not glaring.

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Commissioner Hartshorne questioned how the sign will look on the wall color, noting it is difficult to imagine. Commissioner Galo questioned how the alcove has been painted. Mr. Pence stated the interior side walls are white and it is dark blue on the wall above it. Commissioner Kollman questioned the timeline for installation. Mr. Pence suggested installing the signage on December 1. Mr. Klein stated the sign is currently being held in storage by the sign company so they would like to have the sign installed as soon as possible. Commissioner Kollman stated he would like to see the proposed sign against the existing wall color. Mr. Klein stated they would need their sign company to produce a mock-up of the signage. Mr. Klein stated the blue will not be a true representation because of printers. Mr. Pence stated the blue in the sign will not match the blue background. Commissioner Hamilton-Smith confirmed there will be two different blue colors. Commissioner Hamilton-Smith questioned if the Commission would need to purchase a new sign or paint the background color white. Commissioner Kollman stated it is unknown without seeing the proposal. Mr. Pence stated it will be a blue color, on a white color, on a different blue color. Commissioner Hamilton-Smith questioned if it was an option to approve the signage on the existing blue painted background and then review it on-site. Commissioner Hamilton-Smith suggested that if the Commission does not like the appearance of the sign on the blue background, having them paint the background white. The Commission and applicant agreed with this suggestion.

Mr. Spoden suggested a two-phase approach, 1) Approve the signage as submitted, but not the background color; and 2) At a later date, review the signage on site to confirm which color background will be required. Commissioner Kollman noted it provides the Commission an opportunity to look at it in the real world. The applicant stated they accept this proposal and will paint the background white as discussed, if required.

Commissioner Hamilton-Smith made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Kollman, to recommend the Village Board of Trustees approve the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for signage at 406 N. Milwaukee Avenue, with the caveat that the Commission will review the installed signage on March 16, 2020, to ensure the sign aesthetically matches the blue background wall or the background wall will be painted white.

Motion approved 4 - 0.

COMMUNICATIONS AND DISCUSSION:

Approval of the 2020 Historic Preservation Commission Meeting Dates.

Commissioner Galo questioned if it is appropriate to meet on Martin Luther King Day. Commissioner Hamilton-Smith questioned if the Village is open. Mr. Spoden stated the Village is open and meetings have been scheduled on this date in the past.

Commissioner Galo made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hamilton-Smith, to approve the 2020 Historic Preservation Commission meeting dates.

Motion approved 4 - 0.

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Commissioner Hamilton-Smith noted May is National Historic Preservation Month. Commissioner Hamilton-Smith suggested the Commission think about how they can convey history and education about the Historic Preservation Commission to the public.

With no further discussion, Commissioner Kollman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hamilton-Smith, to adjourn the Historic Preservation Commission.

Motion carried 4 - 0.

Meeting adjourned at 6:13 p.m.