

Schenectady Historic District Commission

**Meeting Minutes
March 24, 2022**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Yager called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Patricia Yager, Chair; Shaun Andriano; Richard Unger; Joe Fava; Dr. Dean Bennett; Matt Smith, Senior Planner; Sylvia Jimison, Development Staff.

ABSENT: Christopher Marney, Assistant Corporation Counsel and Frank Gilmore

III. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

IV. ADOPTION OF MEETING MINUTES

Motion by Commissioner Unger, seconded by Commissioner Andriano, to approve the amended Minutes of the February 24, 2022.

Motion carried unanimously.

V. CALL FOR MEMBERS OF PUBLIC TO SPEAK ON AGENDA ITEMS

None.

VI. APPLICATIONS

A. Consideration for approval submitted by Niressa Sukhu and Parasram Sooknanan to install replacement windows. The premises is located at 68 Union Ave. in the Union Triangle Historic District.

Mr. Sooknanan appeared before the commission. Commissioner Yager asked the applicant whether he was returning to explain to the commission which vinyl windows he was intending to replace with aluminum clad windows. The applicant stated that he had sent information to Matt Smith regarding the front windows indicating that they were existing wood windows.

Mr. Smith clarified for the commission that the applicant had sent information regarding the front windows, and the applicant intended to keep those windows after determining that they were wood. He explained that the applicant was returning to determine which windows were visible from the street, and which ones would be allowed to be replaced with vinyl. He stated that he determined that all of the side windows on the driveway side were visible from the street, and that the windows on the neighboring house side

were technically visible, but would leave it to the commission to determine how visible they are in allowing a composite material.

Commissioner Unger stated the windows towards the rear of the property on the alleyway side can't be seen and would be okay with vinyl, but clarified it that he wouldn't want to see the windows flush with the building, and would prefer to see a wood frame and the window set back.

Commissioner Andriano stated that it could be possible to install the windows and would need to find out how to fasten them, but that it also depends on the thickness of the frame and properly flashing the window would need to be addressed.

Commissioner Bennett, stated that with the front windows being wood he was hoping the sides would be approved for vinyl considering the existing windows are vinyl and the owner had already purchased the new windows.

Commissioner Andriano stated that he wouldn't be opposed to allowing vinyl windows towards the rear on the side between the two houses, but that the driveway side is clearly visible from the street.

The applicant stated that he would like to reiterate that he already paid for the windows and was hoping for a different determination.

Mr. Smith stated that the commission is bound by the preservation standards in their decision-making process and cost is not a factor included in those standards so it can't be taken into consideration. He explained that if the applicant is not satisfied with the commission's determination then he can appeal the decision to the Board of Zoning Appeals.

RESOLUTION

Motion by Commissioner Andriano, seconded by Commissioner Unger to approve the application with the following conditions:

1. The project will be completed within one year.
2. The windows on the front elevation and the first window in from the front on the second floor west elevation are currently wood, and will remain.
3. The other windows on the west elevation, aside from the one identified in condition #2, as well as any windows on the rear of the property, may be replaced with vinyl.
4. The windows on the driveway side elevation will be replaced with white, all-wood or aluminum-clad wood windows, in a one-over-one configuration in the same size as the existing windows.
5. The third floor windows on the front will remain.

And with the following finding of fact:

1. This is a Type II SEQRA.
2. The Commissioners cited Preservation Standards #2, #5, and #6 as the guidelines for their decision.

Motion carried unanimously.

B. Consideration for approval submitted by Franca DiCrescenzo for final approval of the brick color on an exterior replacement wall. The premises is located at 22 N. Church St. in the Stockade Historic District.

Ms. DiCrescenzo indicated that she met with the Commission 6-8 months ago and showed the Commissioner brick samples to learn if there were acceptable for replacement wall. The bricks were varied but closely related in color.

Commissioner Fava wanted to know if the bricks would be painted, and the applicant stated that she wanted to keep the color of the natural bricks.

Commissioner Yager inquired if the applicant would be putting up a gate between the new wall and the existing wall.

RESOLUTION

Motion by Commissioner Unger, seconded by Commissioner Unger to approve the application with the following conditions:

1. The project will be completed within one year.
2. Any of the three submitted brick color samples may be used, but only one of the chosen colors may be used for the entire wall.

And with the following finding of fact:

1. This is a Type II SEQRA.
2. The Commissioners cited Preservation Standards #2, #5, #6, and #9 as the guidelines for their decision.

Motion carried unanimously.

C. Consideration for approval submitted by Build Pros to install new roofing shingles. The premises is located at 1445 Wendell Ave. in the GE Realty Plot Historic District.

The applicant stated that the existing roofing is leaking and missing shingles and would like to replace the existing three-tab shingle with an architectural shingle in the same color.

Commissioner Yager asked if the applicant isn't proposing three-tab replacement shingles due to supply issues.

The applicant stated that three-tab is an old roofing technology and could probably only get enough to patch a section of the roof,

RESOLUTION

Motion by Commissioner Bennett, seconded by Commissioner Unger to approve the application with the following conditions:

1. The project will be completed within one year.

And with the following finding of fact:

1. This is a Type II SEQRA.
2. The Commissioners cited Preservation Standard #6 as the guideline for their decision.

Motion carried unanimously.

D. Consideration for approval submitted by CE Biscuit LLC to install a replacement gate. The premises is located at 17 Front St. in the Stockade Historic District.

The applicant stated that he would like to replicate the gate that existed prior to removing that section of the wall and it will look like the gate that currently exists next to the garage. He would also like to paint the garage doors a Hunter Green to match the gates.

Commissioner Andriano asked what species of wood he will be using. The applicant stated that it will likely be yellow pine.

RESOLUTION

Motion by Commissioner Andriano, seconded by Commissioner Bennett to approve the application with the following conditions:

1. The project will be completed within one year.

And with the following finding of fact:

1. This is a Type II SEQRA.
2. The Commissioners cited Preservation Standards #2, #5, and #9 as the guideline for their decision.

Motion carried unanimously.

E. Consideration for approval submitted by St. John the Evangelist to paint the building. The premises is located at 126 Front St. in the Stockade Historic District.

Father Carlino and Mary Ellen Brockbank appeared before the commission. Ms. Brockbank stated that the property is owned by St. John the Evangelist and is Father Carlino's residence.

Commissioner Yager stated that the chosen color under natural sunlight is very bright blue and would compete a lot with the neighboring properties on either side. She suggested a more neutral color and provided some yellow and neutral color samples that she thought would work better. Commissioner Fava stated that he doesn't care for the color either, given the current streetscape and suggested a color similar to that at 108 Front Street.

Father Carlino stated that he doesn't care for a yellow color at all, and asked if there were some gray colors he could look at instead.

Commissioner Bennett stated that even though if the color is similar to the neighboring houses, as long as it's not a bad color and it's what the owners would like, then he is okay approving the submitted blue. He stated that the question at hand is whether the proposed blue is an inappropriate color for a historic district house.

Commissioner Bennett made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Unger to approve the color as submitted. Commissioner Andriano voted in favor, with Commissioners Yager and Fava opposing. The approval failed.

Commissioner Unger stated that the reason he voted to approve the color is because he doesn't feel it's fair that a homeowner is held to a certain color palette simply because a neighboring house painted their house that color first. Commissioner Bennett agreed.

Commissioner Andriano stated that from an architectural perspective, the commission is trained to work with the fabric of the city. Commissioner Unger stated that as a city planner he is trained as well, but explained that he doesn't believe color fits in that category because it can be easily changed.

The applicants looked at the color palette that Commissioner Yager had provided and settled on a blue-gray color instead.

RESOLUTION

Motion by Commissioner Andriano, seconded by Commissioner Fava to approve the application with the following conditions:

1. The project will be completed within one year.

2. The body of the house will be painted Blue Mountaintop (HGSW3325) from the Sherwin Williams paint collection.
3. The trim will be painted Alabaster (SW7008) from the Sherwin Williams paint collection.
4. The wood will be repaired in-kind.

And with the following finding of fact:

1. This is a Type II SEQRA.
2. The Commissioners cited Preservation Standards #2, #5, and #6 as the guideline for their decision.

Motion carried unanimously.

F. Consideration submitted by Weston Shapiro to install new roofing shingles. The premises is located at 237 Green St. in the Stockade Historic District.

The applicant stated that he would like to install an architectural shingle in place of the existing three-tab shingle. He stated that the roofing company suggested he use an architectural shingle because of both supply chain issues as well as it being a superior product to the three-tab shingle. He stated it would be in the Quarry Gray color.

RESOLUTION

Motion by Commissioner Unger, seconded by Commissioner Andriano to approve the application with the following conditions:

1. The project will be completed within one year.
2. The shingle will be in the Quarry Gray color.

And with the following finding of fact:

1. This is a Type II SEQRA.
2. The Commissioners cited Preservation Standard #6 as the guideline for their decision.

Motion carried unanimously.

VII. Miscellaneous

None.

VIII. Adjourn

Motion by Commissioner Unger, seconded by Commissioner Fava, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:24 p.m.