

**LAWRENCE HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION  
AGENDA MEETING JULY 23, 2015 6:30 PM  
ACTION SUMMARY**

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Commissioners present: Arp, Bailey, Foster, Hernly, Quillin  
Staff present: Cargill, Simmons, Zollner

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**ITEM NO. 1: COMMUNICATIONS**

- A. Receive communications from other commissions, State Historic Preservation Officer, and the general public.
- B. Disclosure of ex-parte communications.
- C. Declaration of abstentions for specific agenda items by commissioners.

Commissioner Hernly declared his abstention from Item 5.

**ITEM NO. 2: CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. May 21, 2015 and June 18, 2015 Action Summaries.
- B. Administrative Approvals
  - 1. DR-15-00191 1008 Massachusetts Street; Sidewalk Dining; Downtown Design Guidelines Review
  - 2. DR-15-00259 917 Louisiana Street; Rental License; State Law Review
  - 3. DR-15-00260 920 Ohio Street; Rental License; State Law Review
  - 4. DR-15-00263 804 Pennsylvania Street; Special Use Permit; State Law Review
  - 5. DR-15-00273 1047 Massachusetts Street; Commercial Mechanical Permit; State Law Review and Certificate of Appropriateness Review
  - 6. DR-15-00274 801 New Hampshire Street; Commercial Remodel; State Law Review
  - 7. DR-15-00276 731 Massachusetts Street; Sign Permit; State Law Review, Certificate of Appropriateness Review and Downtown Design Guidelines Review
  - 8. DR-15-00277 935 Massachusetts Street; Sign Permit; State Law Review, Certificate of Appropriateness Review and Downtown Design Guidelines Review
  - 9. DR-15-00278 1904 Massachusetts Street; Temporary Sign Permit; Certificate of Appropriateness Review
  - 10. DR-15-00282 723 Massachusetts Street; Rental License; State Law Review
  - 11. DR-15-00283 412 W 10<sup>th</sup> Street; Rental License; State Law Review
  - 12. DR-15-00284 900 New Hampshire Street; Sign Permit; Certificate of Appropriateness Review and Downtown Design Guidelines Review
  - 13. DR-15-00302 734 Vermont Street; Communication Equipment; Certificate of Appropriateness Review and Downtown Design Guidelines Review

**ACTION SUMMARY**

Motioned by Commissioner Arp, seconded by Commissioner Hernly, to approve the Consent Agenda.

Motion carried 5-0.

*Ms. Zollner suggested they move on to Item 5 to give the applicant for Items 3 and 4 time to arrive. The Chair altered the order of the agenda items to allow for the applicant to arrive for Items 3 and 4.*

**ITEM NO. 3:** DR-15-00258 and DR-15-00311 739 New York Street; Residential Demolition and New Construction; Certificate of Appropriateness Review. The property is located in the environs of the Sparr House (742 Connecticut), Lawrence Register of Historic Places.

### **STAFF PRESENTATION**

Ms. Zollner presented the item.

Commissioner Foster asked if there is an alley behind the property and if there is something in the staff report that addresses properties in the area with front-facing garages.

Ms. Zollner said she believes there are three front-facing garages on the south end and some detached garages in the historic environs.

### **APPLICANT PRESENTATION**

Mr. Eric Jay, Struct/Restruct, said the property is a challenge because there are seven infill houses on the block and also some interesting historic houses. He said they plan to demolish and rebuild because the existing house layout and size is not compatible with his clients' lifestyle. He explained the overall height of the proposed structure is 25 feet- the south eave is 20 feet and the north is 17 feet. He explained that the glass garage door is an effort to give the illusion of a large window and to reduce the impact of the front-facing garage. He also explained the porch size and materials.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Dennis Brown, Lawrence Preservation Alliance (LPA), said LPA likes the design and doesn't think this needs to nuance gabled structures since it's brand new, but an interesting problem is the garage. He said it's front facing and attached, and the typical garage treatment is detached and in the back. He said there is no line of sight to the garage from the listed property. He voiced concern that approving a front-facing garage might set a precedent or encourage more demolition.

Ms. Peggy Robinson, 743 New York Street, said her main concern is the setback. She said you don't see her house in the renderings, but it's only 13 feet from the subject property.

Ms. Shirley Bromlake, 743 New York Street, said she echoes Ms. Robinson's comments but also pondered whether the value of the proposed project would negatively affect the neighboring properties. She feels the proposed materials and contemporary design are not in character with the neighborhood. She stressed the importance of her view from the north windows of her house and how much she cherishes the plants and wildlife she's able to enjoy currently. She mentioned that several houses, including hers and the subject property, were built as part of the Affordable Urban Homestead Act.

Ms. KT Walsh said a proposed Urban Conservation Overlay District would address issues such as the roof, detached garages, front porches, and other things that would complement the historic nature of the neighborhood. She stressed that this modest housing is really important and the mass is too big. She feels the neighbors' potential for solar panels in the future should

be considered. She feels the garage should be moved behind the house. She welcomed the Portillos to the neighborhood.

Ms. Robinson said thinks this project will be out of scale with the rest of the neighborhood, but she looks forward to having the Portillos as neighbors.

### **COMMISSION DISCUSSION**

Commissioner Foster said this is an environs review for the listed property that's a block away. He recognized what a huge impact this might have on neighbors to this project. He suggested the HRC give the ARC clear direction as to what should be accomplished.

Commissioner Arp said he'd like to hear from staff about the size in relationship to other properties, and he thinks the issue of the front-facing garage is interesting. He asked if it is in the HRC's purview to rectify the front-facing garage as proposed with new construction.

Ms. Zollner said Commissioner Arp is correct in that there was no design review when the current structure was built, and that front-facing garages are typically a more suburban design element.

Commissioner Arp asked if the environs review limits options for addressing the garage.

Ms. Zollner said this is a Certificate of Appropriateness review which focuses on compatibility in the environs, and because the environs is a bit fractured, it's ultimately a question for the Commission as to whether the design encroaches on the listed property. She said staff feels that the main point of the environs review for this property is to retain the residential character. She said she did discuss ways to reduce the impact of the garage with Mr. Jay.

Commissioner Arp asked for staff's opinion about the size of the proposed structure.

Ms. Zollner said it will likely be the largest structure on the block- even larger the structure at 7<sup>th</sup> & New York Streets.

Mr. Jay said it will be the third largest house on the block (footprint).

Ms. Zollner noted that both houses on the north end of the block are on double lots.

Commissioner Hernly asked if there is an alley down the other side of New York Street. He mentioned there are lots of curb cuts on the opposite side of the street.

Ms. Zollner said there is an alley.

Commissioner Hernly said those are mostly old houses that have a carport or parking along the side.

Commissioner Foster said if this was an empty lot and new construction, he would be more concerned about the front-facing garage. He said the proposed is an in-kind replacement. He said he appreciates the residential design.

Commissioner Bailey said he doesn't feel they're setting a precedent.

Mr. Jay said they did change the roof shape based on comments from the neighbors. He said the actual height on the south wall is only 10 feet.

They discussed the height and volume of the porch.

Ms. Robinson asked for clarification regarding Mr. Jay's comments on the square footage of the house across the street.

Mr. Jay said he was referring to site coverage as opposed to square footage.

Ms. Robinson thanked Mr. Jay.

Commissioner Foster mentioned he'd like to come up with an alternative material for the metal panel.

Mr. Jay said they considered stucco but it's very expensive.

Commissioner Bailey said he feels the design should be left alone due to their purview, but the materials should be reviewed.

They agreed that staff should review the materials.

#### **ACTION TAKEN**

Motioned by Commissioner Bailey, seconded by Commissioner Arp, to approve the project with the condition that the final materials be reviewed by the Historic Resources Administrator.

Unanimously approved 5-0.

**ITEM NO. 4:** DR-15-00312 929 New York Street; Residential Addition; Certificate of Appropriateness Review. The property is located in the environs of the William Watts House (946 Connecticut), Lawrence Register of Historic Places.

#### **STAFF PRESENTATION**

Ms. Zollner presented the item.

#### **APPLICANT PRESENTATION**

Mr. Eric Jay, Struct/Restruct, said this is a simple project that includes the addition of a bedroom, closet, bathroom, and small entry area. He explained some design details and what materials will be used.

Commissioner Hernly suggested they could keep the window in the bathroom and just use milk glass.

**No public comment**

#### **ACTION TAKEN**

Motioned by Commissioner Arp, seconded by Commissioner Quillin, to approve the project with conditions as outlined in the staff report.

Unanimously approved 5-0.

**ITEM NO. 5:** DR-15-00316 815 Vermont Street; New Construction; Certificate of Appropriateness Review and Downtown Design Guidelines Review. The property is located in the environs of the Lucy Hobbs Taylor House (809 Vermont), Lawrence Register of Historic Places and is located in the Downtown Urban Conservation Overlay District.

### **STAFF PRESENTATION**

Ms. Zollner presented the item and reminded the Commission that they will not take action on the item tonight.

Commissioner Foster asked about the process of providing feedback and asked why the applicant didn't meet with the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) prior to coming before the Historic Resources Commission (HRC).

Ms. Zollner said the ARC cannot comment on a project unless the Commission takes action and refers it to the ARC.

Commissioner Foster asked if the project had not been officially submitted.

Ms. Zollner said the project has been submitted, but they would like feedback regarding overall height, massing, setbacks, and scale. She said commissioners can provide feedback but cannot make comments on how they intend to vote if certain directions are followed.

Commissioner Foster said usually, when the Commission hears an item, there has been a review by staff. He asked why this item has not been reviewed by staff.

Ms. Zollner said the project is not an action item this evening. Staff can do a thorough analysis with a more complete application.

Commissioner Foster said this is a situation that he's not entirely comfortable with, since this is not a typical position for the Commission.

Commissioner Arp asked how the scale of the project fits in with other buildings on the block, commenting that it looks rather tall, and also how it relates to the neighborhood to the west. He also asked about the original vision for New Hampshire and Vermont Streets; specifically, where staff is in the process of creating those standards, since this will be a precedent-setting project on Vermont Street.

Ms. Zollner encouraged commissioners to give comments and feedback directly to the applicant, including suggestions for wording feedback and the types of questions to ask that are appropriate. Regarding the vision for New Hampshire and Vermont Streets, she said that began a couple years ago and the process was not completed. She said some people suggested staff create a plan for Downtown that specifically addressed those corridors, but as far as she knows, that never progressed.

Commissioner Arp feels this is a critical structure because it will set a precedent, so it's important to get the height just right for this project.

Ms. Zollner suggested they might also direct questions to the applicant regarding four-sided architecture.

Commissioner Arp said that is a concern of his because it looks as though only the front façade is finished. He mentioned the 9 Del Lofts building looks unfinished from the back, and although he understands there are economic reasons for doing that, he feels it's important to finish all sides of a building.

### **APPLICANT PRESENTATION**

Mr. Mike Myers, Hernly Associates, presented the proposed project drawings on the overhead. He said the applicant and architect have looked at a certain number of stories but he's unsure how much the overall height can fluctuate. He said they are utilizing some of the nicer more durable materials on the back, without competing with the primary façade. He said materials include brick on the first two stories and limestone on the upper floors.

Commissioner Foster asked if the limestone will be used on the back of the building.

Mr. Myers said the materials on the back would be a matching material, perhaps traditional stucco, but not limestone on all four sides. He said the basement would be a parking garage, commercial space on the ground floor, businesses on the second floor, and residential on the top two floors.

Commissioner Foster asked about the reason behind their setback requirements.

Mr. Myers said he assumes it's to create some urban space and to make the Lucy Hobbs Taylor House more visible.

Commissioner Arp asked if there was discussion about the reasoning behind the height.

Mr. Myers said yes. They looked at surrounding buildings and recently constructed buildings in the area. He added that the old Lawrence House on this lot was three tall stories. He feels Vermont Street is mostly commercial, and the distance from and scale of the houses in Old West Lawrence makes this appropriate.

Commissioner Foster mentioned the setback for the north elevation.

Mr. Myers said it not only provides breathing room for the historic property but would also provide the ability to place windows on that side of the building.

Commissioner Foster said he also notices doors on that elevation.

Mr. Myers said yes, it would act as a pedestrian walkway for smaller commercial spaces toward the back of the building.

Commissioner Foster asked if they considered building to the lot line and seeking an easement on the property to the north.

Mr. Myers said he's not sure if they've considered building to the lot line, since they are trying to be respectful of the historic property, but it also allows openings in the north wall which is not fire-rated.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Dennis Brown, said he appreciates the applicant taking this step to get feedback. He said he's concerned about the height, the benchmark for which he feels is 123 W 8<sup>th</sup> St. He pondered whether the mass of the project could be relaxed in some way, perhaps by adjusting the parking arrangements. He said he prefers the drawings that offset the entry to the south.

Ms. Lindsay Crick agreed with Mr. Brown's comments, but also suggested they could maintain the four floors while decreasing the height. She said the building seems boxy and suggested stepping back the corners and continuing materials all the way up to the top two floors. She stressed the importance of four-sided architecture.

Ms. KT Walsh said she agrees that it's a little too tall and feels they might consider stepping it down toward the neighborhood. She also mentioned that in 2012, the East Lawrence Neighborhood Association (ELNA), Lawrence Association of Neighborhoods (LAN), and the Lawrence Preservation Alliance (LPA) requested the City look at New Hampshire and Vermont Streets and perform an overall Downtown study addressing height and mass. She said Dave Evans has the full record of the process. She explained that the issues were addressed at a joint HRC/Planning Commission meeting in 2013, and the results of which were presented to the City Commission in January 2014. She said the City Commission voted to direct staff to have a study session regarding those guidelines, which never happened.

Commissioner Arp said that is what he was referring to earlier.

Ms. Walsh offered to forward her information to staff.

## **COMMISSION/APPLICANT DISCUSSION**

Commissioner Arp said he would like to see the view of the project from homes on Tennessee Street. He also stressed the importance of four-sided architecture.

Commissioner Foster said his main concern is setting a precedent with the setbacks.

Mr. Myers said if residences are involved they must have windows.

Commissioner Foster said he is only referring to the front elevation. He mentioned the property frequently mentioned is 123 W 8<sup>th</sup> Street, and its strength is its simplicity. He appreciates the suggestions to soften the scale and corners a simpler design might detract less from the historic property.

Mr. Myers said surrounding properties on Vermont Street have not been built to the lot lines historically.

Commissioner Foster said he's thinking about future development and a broader issue.

Mr. Myers asked if Commissioner Foster feels that Vermont Street should develop like Massachusetts Street as opposed to its more eclectic building history.

Commissioner Foster said he looks at the Downtown Design Guidelines that cover the three major blocks, and as density increases, they aim to mimic Massachusetts Street.

Mr. Myers said most of the prominent buildings on Vermont are not built like Massachusetts Street (to the lot line).

Commissioner Foster pondered how to accommodate density and maintain consistency throughout downtown without building to lot lines.

Mr. Myers said he feels Vermont should be patterned in the way it's been developed historically.

Commissioner Arp asked whether balconies are historically appropriate.

Mr. Myers said the applicant is fond of balconies and he was able to find historic precedence for balconies on Massachusetts Street.

Commissioner Foster said he would be interested in seeing the pictures Mr. Myers is referring to.

Mr. Myers said he thought they were attempting to reduce mass by pulling the balconies inward.

Commissioner Foster said projecting balconies seem like a better approach.

Commissioner Arp said the older buildings are very elegant and sleek, whereas newer developments are cobbled together projecting balconies and no real rhythm.

Commissioner Foster said the subject of windows on side elevations is a big deal, which was a problem on New Hampshire Street projects.

Commissioner Bailey suggested they bring down the height, and mentioned that the Lawrence House was only three stories.

Mr. Myers referenced a photo of the Lawrence House and pointed out that each story was very tall.

Commissioner Quillin said she's interested in viewing photos of the streetscape elevations.

Mr. Myers thanked the Commission.

**ITEM NO. 6: MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS**

- A. There were no Board of Zoning Appeals applications received since June 18, 2015.
- B. There were no demolition permits received since the June 18, 2015 meeting.
- C. Architectural Review Committee approvals since June 18, 2015.

Ms. Zollner said she requested an actual materials board for the Pachamas project because they are no longer interested in blue stone and want to go with metal panels.

- D. There was no general public comment.



E. There were no miscellaneous matters from City staff or Commission members.

**ADJOURN 8:34 pm**