

**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 18, 2020**  
Held Remotely Via Zoom And Telephone Access

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Minutes of the regular meeting of the Historic District Commission ("HDC") held Wednesday, November 18, 2020. Chairman John Henke called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

**1) ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Chairman John Henke; Vice-Chairman Keith Deyer; Board Members Gigi Debbrecht, Natalia Dukas, Patricia Lang, Michael Willoughby (all Committee members located in Birmingham, MI)

**Absent:** None

**Administration:** Nicholas Dupuis, City Planner  
Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist

Chairman Henke asked all meeting participants to be mindful of not speaking over each other.

**11-92-20**

**2) Approval Of Minutes**

**Motion by Mr. Willoughby**

**Seconded by Ms. Dukas to approve the HDC Minutes of November 4, 2020 as submitted.**

**Motion carried, 6-0.**

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: Willoughby, Dukas, Debbrecht, Deyer, Henke, Lang

Nays: None

**11-93-20**

**3) Courtesy Review**

None.

**11-87-20**

**4) Historic Design Review**

**A. 361 E. Maple – Hawthorne Building**

Chairman Henke noted that the HDC received a letter from Mel and Geri Kaftan and a memorandum from Timothy Stoepker, legal representative for the Kaftans, both in opposition to the proposed project.

CP Dupuis gave an overview of the item.

Chris Longe, architect for the project, and Victor Simon, owner of 361 E. Maple, were both present.

Referencing a similar design proposed by the applicant in 2018, Chairman Henke asked Mr. Longe to distinguish between the previous design and the current one the owner is proposing.

Mr. Longe stated:

- The original facade is now included in the proposal.
- The new proposal includes more dramatic setbacks than the previous proposal.
- The new proposal includes design elements for that aim to complement the design of the building to the east.

Mr. Willoughby proposed that the second and third stories could be stepped six feet back from the first story, with the fourth story stepped back further from the third and the fifth story stepped back even further from the fourth. He originally recommended the six feet back for the second and third stories because the drawings showed that the first floor windows would be recessed six feet in from the facade. He said he would want to see perspective drawings of the building in context because he thought that would give the HDC a better sense of the proposal.

When Chairman Henke pointed out that the first floor windows are not currently recessed, Mr. Willoughby said it gave him pause that the original historic facade was proposing to be changed.

Chairman Henke floated the idea that the building could be four stories instead of five.

Ms. Lang stated she was interested in seeing a draft from Mr. Longe of something influenced by Mr. Willoughby's suggestions.

Chairman Henke and Mr. Willoughby were not in favor of the east wall being solid brick above the third or fourth floor.

Ms. Dukas asked Mr. Longe why he thought the proposed massing would be appropriate.

Mr. Longe said that it was actually the Kaftans' building and the Christian Science Reading Room building that were currently out of place. He said the proposal to make 361 E. Maple five stories is appropriate because the zoning allows for it, the 2016 Plan encourages it, and consequently most of the buildings in that area would likely have vertical additions in the future. He said the plans for 361 E. Maple would not seem overwhelming once the likely vertical additions on the other nearby buildings occur.

Mr. Willoughby largely echoed Mr. Longe's statement, saying that just because a five story building would be out-of-step with the current streetscape does not mean that it would remain that way. He said doing something like his suggestions might allow the massing to be less overwhelming. He also said that it is the HDC's charge to both preserve a historic building and to encourage the development that is permitted by zoning.

There was HDC consensus that the presently proposed massing would overwhelm the existing streetscape.

Mr. Deyer, Ms. Dukas, and Ms. Debbrecht said they would not be able to accept the proposal in its current iteration both due to the proposed massing and due to a feeling that the proposed addition drowned out the historic nature of the first floor facade.

Mr. Stoepker reviewed the contents of his memorandum for the HDC.

Mr. Simon said the project proposal intends to make a mixed-use building that would be a positive contribution to the community.

Chairman Henke gave the applicant the choice of having the HDC vote on this proposal or having the HDC postpone the item so that edits to the proposal could be made.

Mr. Longe indicated the applicant team preferred the latter option.

**Motion by Ms. Dukas**

**Seconded by Ms. Lang to postpone the historic design review of 361 E. Maple.**

**Motion carried, 6-0.**

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: Debbrecht, Dukas, Deyer, Henke, Lang, Willoughby

Nays: None

**B. 100 N. Old Woodward – Maplewood Building (Parks Building)**

CP Dupuis reviewed the item.

Chairman Henke reported that City Attorney Currier stated that the HDC was allowed to put restrictions on how the restoration of the building goes forward and the means and methods to be used.

There was HDC consensus that the canopy segment of the historic design review should be postponed until there was more information available about the building's facade.

Mr. Deyer recommended that the applicant consider returning at a later date with a proposed sign plan for HDC review.

**Motion by Mr. Deyer**

**Seconded by Ms. Debbrecht to move the portion of the historic design review regarding the canopy to a later date.**

**Motion carried, 5-1.**

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: Deyer, Debbrecht, Dukas, Henke, Lang

Nays: Willoughby

Victor Saroki, architect for the project, confirmed that the owner had no intent to pursue an addition on top of the current building. He also said that the owner was amenable to paying a building inspector, but that they just wanted to come to some terms with the City so it would not be open-ended.

Chairman Henke said that would be acceptable. He said the applicant should create a proposal for the means and methods of the reconstruction and some proposed inspection dates.

Chairman Henke was also adamant that not one piece of travertine should be removed before a City-supplied onsite building inspector was present at the project and a means and methods proposal from the applicant had been approved.

There was HDC consensus that once the travertine is removed, subsequent to an approved means and methods plan, the travertine should be stored in case the underlying facade has irreparable damage and the travertine needs to be put back on the building.

Chairman Henke requested that photos of the higher header height on the inside of the building be submitted as part of the means and methods plan.

There was HDC consensus that CP Dupuis could administratively approve the proposal to temporarily install Citizens Bank at 129 E. Maple as long as glazing and material specifications are submitted to the Planning Department and the plans remain substantively similar to the ones currently proposed.

Mr. Saroki confirmed there were no plans to demo the rear of the building.

#### Public Comment

David Bloom asked if the applicant's plans for roof use would be reviewed by the City.

Chairman Henke confirmed that roof uses would be part of the review process.

#### **Motion by Mr. Deyer**

**Seconded by Ms. Dukas to recommend that the City Commission approve the Historic Design Review application and issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for 100 N. Old Woodward – Parks/Maplewood Building – provided the conditions below are met. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation standard number(s) 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 9 will be met upon fulfillment of the condition(s): 1. The applicant must submit specification sheets for all new storefront glass; 2. The applicant is required to retain and compensate an on-site City Building Inspector during major restoration activities with the timing and the schedule to be mutually agreed to; 3. That the petitioner will provide means and methods for removing the travertine and all phases of restoration and construction, and the timing to do that as well as repairs; and, 4. When the petitioner returns to the HDC to review the canopy proposal they will also provide a building sign plan.**

**Motion carried, 6-0.**

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: Deyer, Dukas, Willoughby, Debbrecht, Henke, Lang

Nays: None

**C. 412 Willits – Stickney House**

Seeing that the applicant's proposal was now in line with the ordinance requirements, and that the current proposal included smaller changes than the proposal that was previously approved by the HDC, there was HDC consensus to approve historic design review application.

**Motion by Mr. Willoughby**

**Seconded by Mr. Deyer to recommend that the City Commission approve the Historic Design Review application and issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for 412 Willits. The work as proposed meets The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation standard numbers 1, 2, and 9.**

**Motion carried, 6-0.**

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: Willoughby, Deyer, Debbrecht, Dukas, Henke, Lang

Nays: None

**11-94-20**

**5) Sign Review**

None.

**11-95-20**

**6) Study Session**

None.

**11-96-20**

**7) Miscellaneous Business and Communication**

**A. Pre-Application Discussions**

**B. Draft Agenda: December 2, 2020**

**1. None**

**C. Staff Reports**

**1. Administrative Sign Approvals**

**2. Administrative Approvals**

**3. Demolitions**

**3. Action List - 2020**

**4. Historical Preservation Collaboration Matrix**

**11-97-20**

**Adjournment**

**Motion by Mr. Willoughby**

**Seconded by Ms. Debbrecht to adjourn the HDC meeting of November 18, 2020 at 9:18 p.m.**

**Motion carried, 6-0.**

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: Willoughby, Debbrecht, Deyer, Dukas, Henke, Lang

Nays: None

Nicholas Dupuis  
City Planner

APPROVED