

**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 4, 2015**
Municipal Building Commission Room
151 Martin, Birmingham, Michigan

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Historic District Commission (“HDC”) held Wednesday, February 4, 2015. Chairman John Henke called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Present: Chairman John Henke; Board Members Keith Deyer, Vice Chairperson Shelli Weisberg, Michael Willoughby

Absent: Board Members Mark Coir, Natalia Dukas; Student Representatives Mitch Boorstein, Cambria Rush

Administration: Matthew Baka, Sr. Planner
Carole Salutes, Recording Secretary

Since four affirmative votes are needed to pass a motion, and there are only four board members present, the chairman offered petitioners the opportunity to postpone their hearing to the next meeting when a full board might be present. Mr. Surnow indicated they would like to proceed this evening.

02-12-15

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES
HDC Minutes of January 21, 2015**

**Motion by Mr. Willoughby
Seconded by Ms. Weisberg to approve the HDC Minutes of January 21, 2015 as presented.**

Motion carried, 4-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Willoughby, Weisberg, Deyer, Henke

Nays: None

Absent: Coir, Dukas

02-13-15

**HISTORIC DESIGN REVIEW
100 S. Old Woodward Ave.
Wachler Building
CBD Historic District**

Zoning: B-4 Business Residential

Proposal: The applicant is seeking approval to renovate the exterior of the two-story, multi-tenant building. The property is a non-contributing resource in the Central Business District Historic District. The proposal includes removing the entire existing façade and window system on all sides and installing new storefront window and doors systems, as well as re-cladding the façade with a combination of honed marble, flamed and brushed granite, zinc panels and cor-ten steel accents. In addition, the proposal calls for accent lighting and zinc clad entrance canopies on the W. Maple Rd. and Pierce elevations.

Design:

East (S. Old Woodward Ave). Elevation

The petitioner proposes to replace the existing windows and doors with clear glass in anodized aluminum frames and clad the front elevation of the building in black flamed and brushed granite. A 5 ft. tall cor-ten steel panel will separate the glazing of the first and second floor. To the north of the granite pillars the remainder of the east face will be clad in zinc panels and honed marble cladding that will wrap around from the north elevation of the building.

North (W. Maple) Elevation

The petitioner proposes to replace the existing windows and doors with clear glass in anodized aluminum frames. The pillars separating each bay of windows will be clad in dark gray honed granite. A dark gray flamed and brushed granite base is proposed to run the length of the north elevation. Zinc panel cladding is proposed to separate the glazing systems of the first and second floor as well as to accent the roof line as a cap. Above the second floor windows will be a 5 ft. 3 in. section of white honed marble cladding that extends the length of the building. At the west end of the north elevation a vertical section of marble cladding will extend from the ground level to the roof cap.

In the approximate center of the north elevation there are two clear glass single doors proposed. A 23 ft. 9 in. wide zinc clad entrance canopy is proposed to be installed above the doors. The plans as submitted indicate that there will be three cor-ten steel panels mounted to the north elevation.

West (Pierce) Elevation

The proposed treatment of the west elevation is very similar in style and materials to the north elevation. The petitioner proposes to replace the existing windows and doors with clear glass in anodized aluminum frames. The pillars separating each bay of windows will be clad in dark gray honed granite. A dark gray flamed and brushed granite base is proposed to run the length of the west elevation. Zinc panel cladding is proposed to separate the glazing systems of the first and second floor as well as to accent the roof line as a cap. Above the second floor windows will be a 5 ft. 3 in. section of white honed marble cladding

that extends the length of the building. At the north end of the west elevation a vertical section of marble cladding will extend from the ground level to the roof cap.

At the north end of the west elevation there is one clear glass single door proposed in the approximate location of the current door. A 14 ft. 6 in. wide zinc clad entrance canopy is proposed to be installed above the door. The plans as submitted indicate that there will be three cor-ten steel panels mounted to the west elevation.

South (Alley) Elevation

A portion of the south elevation is treatment in the same fashion as the existing face on the elevations of the building that face a street. In this area the old façade will be removed and replaced with a dark gray brick on the majority of the elevation. At the corner of the building at Pierce the honed marble will wrap the corner from the west elevation. Between the marble and dark grey brick will be a 4 ft. wide three section window that extends vertically the full height of the building. The elevation will also have one large clear glass window and retain the existing steel door, which will be painted dark grey.

Glazing Requirement: The Downtown Overlay standards require that all buildings must have a minimum of 70% glazing on the first floor between 1 and 8 ft. above grade and a maximum of 35% glazing on all upper floors. Based on the plans as submitted, the first floor provides approximately 79% glazing which easily meets the requirements. In order to maximize the glazing, and therefore natural light, on the second floor the applicant is proposing the maximum amount of glazing.

Lighting: The applicant is proposing to install 20 ft. 8 in. decorative backlit aluminum fins that will be installed vertically on the newly clad granite pillars along the north and west elevations. The fins will be mounted near the top of the first floor windows and extend upwards to just above the roof line. Along the top of the roof line the applicant is proposing to install accent lighting that will run the length of the building. All proposed lighting is LED.

Signage: The applicant is not proposing signage at this time. However, they are proposing to install address numbers that exceed the 8 in. maximum height permitted by the Sign Ordinance. This provision of the Sign Ordinance allows for address numbers up to 8 in. in height to be permitted in addition to the total allowable signage of the site. Accordingly, the applicant has been advised that if they wish to move forward with the oversized address letters then the area of those letters will be counted against the total allowable signage for the building.

Mr. Deyer prefaced his comments by saying he likes everything the architect has done. However, there are two items that are questionable in his mind:

- Lighting along the roof - he is not sure that is totally appropriate in the CBD;
- Two black pincer columns on the east side. He is not as concerned about the verticality as he is about the section along the roof that raises the roof line. It seems too much for that corner.

Mr. Jeffrey Surnow, 320 Martin, the building owner, described how the white lighting would wash the building. Ms. Weisberg liked the building and lighting. Mr. Willoughby said he would like to see more people use light to highlight the architectural details of a building. He loves the layering and the stepping back from the facade to the roof to this element that pops up in the dark granite. He received confirmation that the mechanicals will be hidden behind the granite.

Motion by Mr. Willoughby

Seconded by Ms. Weisberg to approve the Historic Design Review for 100 S. Old Woodward Ave., Wachler Building, as submitted.

Mr. Deyer expressed his intention to vote against the motion.

Chairman Henke took comments on the motion from members of the public at 7:33 p.m.

Mr. Surnow described how very important it is for him to keep the integrity of this city as much as he can. In his opinion this is the best corner in the City of Birmingham and it is the best corner in Oakland County. So, he doesn't want to do something that is just about daytime Birmingham. He wanted anybody that visits this area to be able to see the building and appreciate it 24/7. That is why the proposal has the vertical light and the accent light. The look and the lighting are important to him because he wants to keep the retail and office at the highest level and the highest integrity he can. This building will do that for them. He went on to explain how every little detail has been very carefully thought out.

Mr. Kevin Bittison, Bittison Architecture, said that drawing from the Ordinance, part of their initial thought was to create an architectural feature that would visually bring people to that intersection. Mr. Willoughby agreed that the east facade needs a vertical element.

Mr. Deyer said what bothers him more than anything is the black section that is extended half way across the roof of the building. Mr. Bittison explained how that section becomes a massing element. As well, it creates space within the building and anchors the building to the corner by creating additional dimension to the overall building height. Mr. Willoughby suggested the black element will become less visible as one approaches the building.

Mr. Deyer indicated he is willing to trust the architect's judgment based on the previous things he has done. However, he is bothered by the roof lighting

because it hasn't been done anywhere else in town. Mr. Bittison explained it will be a very low-level exterior strip LED that will emit a small white glow in order to provide dimension. Mr. Deyer then said he would vote yes because he doesn't see any reason to delay the project or re-design it. However, his compromise would be to leave the roof lighting to be considered before a full board at another time.

Mr. Surnow affirmed he wants to make sure that whatever he does is very subtle and very first class. That is what this corner deserves and what the rest of the city deserves.

**Amended to his motion by Mr. Willoughby
Seconded by Ms. Weisberg that the Historic Design Review for
100 S. Old Woodward Ave., Wachler Building, is approved as proposed
except the rooftop perimeter lighting is approved conceptually to subtly
light the zinc panels above the roof, subject to HDC further review based
upon City Zoning Ordinance lighting standards. Once rooftop lighting is
constructed, petitioner will return to HDC for approval.**

There were no comments from the public on the amended motion at 8:15 p.m.

Motion carried, 4-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Willoughby, Weisberg, Deyer, Henke

Nays: None

Absent: Coir, Dukas

02-14-15

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS AND COMMUNICATIONS

A. Staff Reports

-- Administrative Approvals (none)

-- Violation Notices (none)

-- Demolition Applications

- 1609 Maryland
- 185 Southlawn
- 864 Chestnut
- 1976 Shipman
- 1524 Fairway
- 1006 Humphrey

B. Communications

-- Commissioners' Comments (none)

02-15-15

ADJOURNMENT

No further business being evident, the board motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

Matthew Baka
Sr. Planner