

BIRMINGHAM HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 1, 2017
Municipal Building Commission Room
151 Martin, Birmingham, Michigan

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Historic District Commission (“HDC”) held Wednesday, February 1, 2017. Vice-Chairperson Shelli Weisberg called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

Present: Board Members Mark Coir, Keith Deyer, Natalia Dukas, Thomas Trapnell, Vice-Chairperson Shelli Weisberg, Michael Willoughby

Absent: Chairman John Henke recused himself; Alternate Board Members Adam Charles, Dulce Fuller

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

02-01-17

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
HDC Minutes of November 2, 2016

Motion by Mr. Coir

Seconded by Mr. Trapnell to approve the HDC Minutes of November 2, 2016 as submitted.

Motion carried, 6-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Coir, Trapnell, Deyer, Dukas, Weisberg, Willoughby

Nays: None

Absent: Henke

02-02-17

HISTORIC DESIGN REVIEW
325 S. Old Woodward Ave.
Adachi Bistro
CBD Historic District

Zoning: B-2 General Business, D-3 Downtown Overlay

Proposal: The applicant proposes to make alterations to the exterior of the Ford-Peabody Mansion and implement an outdoor dining and landscaping plan to

allow for the operation of the Adachi Bistro, a newly proposed Bistro in the CBD Historic District.

The building was originally constructed in 1878 by Frank Ford and designed by Detroit based architect Almon Varney as a Victorian style home. The building was sold in 1920 to be used as a Masonic Lodge. It was then sold again in 1968 to be used as commercial space.

In order to gain approval of the Bistro, the applicant is required to obtain a Special Land Use Permit ("SLUP"). This requires approval from the HDC as well as a review and recommendation from the Planning Board. Final approval will be determined by the City Commission.

The applicant proposes to alter the exterior of the building by converting five (5) existing windows into doors. In addition, the applicant proposes to remove the existing ramp and staircase on the north elevation and replace it with a larger one that extends further west along the north elevation to allow for access to the two new door openings. Also, the applicant is proposing to construct a small staircase on the south elevation that would allow access to the new doors on the south elevation.

Two of the window conversions are located on the front elevation. As with the other proposed conversions, the applicant proposes to remove the window and the brick below the window sill in order to install a new door jam and French door. Above the door a transom window is proposed that would retain the existing curve of the window. This process is proposed to be repeated on the window conversions on the north and south elevations.

Outdoor Dining Area: The outdoor dining area is proposed to be located predominately in the front open space of the building. All of the outdoor dining will be located on private property. The applicant is proposing a total of 86 seats in the expanded outdoor dining area, seventy-nine (79) of which are located at dining tables, and seven (7) are labeled as casual seating. Four (4) of the casual seats are located around an outdoor fire pit and the other three are located on the front porch of the building.

Landscaping: The applicant is proposing an extensive landscaping plan for the outdoor dining area and surrounding property inspired by the Adachi Museum of Art in Japan. The proposed landscaping will be a combination of rock outcroppings, gravel gardens, ground covers, ornamental grasses, and several new and existing trees. The plan also calls for a new Japanese inspired perimeter rail, a water feature and a fire pit. The applicant has submitted a detailed description.

Trash/HVAC Enclosure: The applicant is proposing to construct a new 6 ft. high masonry enclosure with gates that will contain the trash receptacles and the HVAC units for the building.

Mr. Baka said he was somewhat concerned with the conversion of the windows to doors but he has since found some photos that show those windows are not even original.

Mr. Chris Longe, the architect, explained the fence will be just a gateway with two panels on each side of the entrance to the garden. The dining area is defined by landscaping. The doors that would replace the windows will be original to the design of the building, all full height. In response to Mr. Deyer, he noted the balcony they have added on the second floor makes the north (Brown St.) side of the building more significant and interesting.

Ms. Dukas thought this restaurant and Japanese garden will be a great addition to the City; but she was not sure this is the right building for it. Mr. Longe replied the plan gives this building a potential for activity that it hasn't ever had.

Mr. Willoughby indicated his sense is that it would be very cool to restore the front of the building back to its absolute original, and on the north side follow the Secretary of the Interior Standards by not trying to replicate the 1890s, but do something that is more modern but compatible. Further, he explained there is a lot of Japanese influence in Victorian architecture. Therefore, to him it is not foreign.

Mr. Ken Koza, the restaurant owner, noted there are many homes in Japan that are inspired by Victorian architecture. The building appealed to them because of the front garden area. They named the restaurant Adachi, after the world famous gardens. They are adding the doors in the front because of the functionality of serving the patios and all the areas, which is also why they have added doorways on the side.

Mr. Willoughby noted he designed the Museum of Japanese Folk Culture in Florida. Their thinking was if the Japanese had grown up in Florida, what would they do based on the resources they had. He talked about the philosophy behind it all and suggested using actual Michigan plants and planting elements for the garden. Mr. Koza indicated that everything they are using is indigenous to Michigan except for the Japanese maples. All of the landscaping will do well here.

Mr. Coir was not opposed to puncturing through some of the elongated windows to create doors. The restaurant will need access capability. He wanted to see an alternative view of the porch and some of the details. He is not opposed to this adaptation of the building.

Mr. Willoughby announced he would restore the S. Old Woodward Ave. facade to its original condition. He would take the north (Brown St.) facade and apply the Secretary of the Interior Standards so as not to re-create some 1890s look. He would give liberty to the east (back half) of the building because it was done at a time when the thought was to mimic the original architecture. He agreed this is a great thing to have come to Birmingham. The principals of a Japanese garden are more appealing to him than applying the pieces of a Japanese garden.

Ms. Dukas was in agreement. However, she was not thrilled with changing five windows into doors. However, she understood that some of that is necessary for what they are trying to accomplish. There are a lot of people going in and out of a restaurant by nature. She thought some of it can be fixed by restoring the original porch.

Mr. Deyer concurred with the previous comments, but he was also troubled with the terrace on the west elevation. There are seventeen (17) tables and a fire pit and there really isn't a lot of space to do very many Japanese type Adachi things. Further, he was concerned with the lack of permeability of that whole surface. The water has to go somewhere and this property is elevated.

Mr. Trapnell agreed with the comments about the historical standards for the north balcony look. He was not terribly concerned about turning several of the windows into doors. In terms of the planting elements, the water flow is a major issue to address, but the garden incorporates Birmingham and Japanese influences. Therefore it is not going to be faithful to a given Japanese garden and concepts. As long as it is tastefully executed he is not concerned about it.

Mr. Willoughby summarized what the board is looking for:

- On the S. Old Woodward Ave. side, restore the building to its original look;
- Any additions to the north (Brown St.) elevation should meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards by distinguishing from the original architecture;
- With respect to the garden, focus more on the spirit of a Japanese garden and less on the parts. It is a western philosophy to line the fire pit with the bay window. In Japan it would not be there.

Mr. Deyer noted that the board wants to work with this applicant. They would like to see the building reflect as much as possible what it was, but also as pointed out, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. So, this is just offering some suggestions for when the applicant comes back in two weeks with a proposal.

Motion by Mr. Willoughby

Seconded by Ms. Dukas to postpone the Historic Design Review for 325 S. Old Woodward Ave., Adachi Bistro, to February 15.

Motion carried, 6-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Willoughby, Dukas, Coir, Deyer, Trapnell, Weisberg, Willoughby

Nays: None

Absent: Henke

02-03-17

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS AND COMMUNICATIONS

A. Staff Reports

-- Administrative Approvals

- 245 Maple Rd. - Paint existing sign and awning black.
- 100/55/99 Old Woodward Ave., The Woodward Building - Entry relocation.
- 205 - 219 N. Old Woodward Ave., The Huston Building - To review the glass being changed (lower portion only) and signage review.
- 100 Townsend, The Townsend Hotel - Proposed landing and step for second means of egress on Merrill St. utilizing existing doors. Also we would like to replace our awnings on Townsend St., only the material, not the structure, to the material color that was approved for the Pierce and Merrill St. awnings related to the dining room construction.
- 761 E. Maple Rd. - To make and install non-lit blade sign (5 sq. ft.).
- 255 S. Old Woodward Ave., Capital Title Insurance - Install a 34 in. x 232 in. (54.7 sq. ft.) non-illuminated wall sign.

-- Demolition Applications

1448 Haynes	962 Abbey	580 Frank	1968 Stanley
415 Argyle	1630 W. Lincoln	1022 Raynale	1707 Webster
1377 Lyonhurst	870 Chapin	579 Henrietta	724 Lakeview
711 Abbey	1455 Quarton	629 Pierce	619 W. Frank
607 W. Frank	1669 Webster	1251 Shipman	1060 Smith
172 George	701 Hanna	1315 Cole	1243 Stanley
410 E. Southlawn			

B. Communications

-- Commissioners' Comments (none)

02-04-17

ADJOURNMENT

No further business being evident, the commissioners motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

Matthew Baka
Sr. Planner