

**VILLAGE OF HINSDALE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
Wednesday, January 4, 2023**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Village of Hinsdale Historic Preservation Commission was called to order by Chairman Bohnen in Memorial Hall of the Memorial Building, 19 E. Chicago Avenue, Hinsdale, IL on Wednesday, January 4, 2022 at 6:31 p.m., roll call was taken.

PRESENT: Commissioners Sarah Barclay, Alexis Braden, William Haarlow, Jim Prisby and Chairman John Bohnen

ABSENT: Commissioners Shannon Weinberger and Frank Gonzalez

ALSO PRESENT: Bethany Salmon, Village Planner

Approval of Minutes – December 7, 2022

Chairman Bohnen asked for comments on the draft of the December 7, 2022 Historic Preservation Commission meeting minutes.

Commissioner Prisby made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Barclay, to approve the draft meeting minutes of the December 7, 2022 Historic Preservation Commission meeting minutes as submitted. The motion carried with a roll call vote of 5-0 as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Barclay, Braden, Haarlow, Prisby and Chairman Bohnen
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: Commissioners Weinberger and Gonzalez

Findings and Recommendations

a) Case HPC-07-2022 – 701 Taft Road – Application for Local Landmark Designation

Commissioner Haarlow stated that he had concerns about the ambiguity of landmarking the wing wall that is attached to a structure and is not free standing, but also located on two abutting properties. Commissioner Haarlow asked if anything needed to be said in the findings or in tonight's approval to address these concerns with the wall.

Discussion took place about the ability to landmark a wall that was not fully located on the 701 Taft property. Ms. Salmon suggested amending the ordinance to address the concern of the shared wall rather than amending the Findings and Recommendations of the Commission. Ms. Salmon suggested working with the Village attorney to add clarifying language to the ordinance, perhaps requiring a Certificate of Appropriateness for future changes to the wall.

Further discussion took place about also checking the plat of the abutting property for any type of language about the shared wall, such as an easement. Chairman Bohnen stated that typically language to address issues such as a shared property is addressed at the real estate closing. He suggested obtaining a copy of plat of survey for both properties for a better understanding. Ms. Salmon stated she would work on obtaining the plats for both properties and provide some suggested language to be included in the ordinance that would be recorded at the county.

The Commission discussed the possibility of an easement already in the works or already in existence on the abutting property plat based on comments from the December meeting. Commissioner Haarlow asked if a discussion to follow up on this topic be added to next month's agenda as an item and vote to approve

the Findings for the landmark application at tonight's meeting. Ms. Salmon responded she would follow up on provided plats for the properties, have a discussion with the property owner about any easement language, reach out to the Village Attorney about the appropriate language to include in the ordinance and include the topic on the agenda for next month's meeting. Ms. Salmon also stated that the second reading at the Village Board meeting was scheduled for January 17th, providing some additional time to make changes if necessary.

Commissioner Haarlow made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Braden, to approve Case HPC-07-2022 – 701 Taft Road – Application for Local Landmark Designation as submitted. The motion carried with a roll call vote of 5-0 as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Barclay, Braden, Haarlow, Prisby and Chairman Bohnen
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: Commissioners Weinberger and Gonzalez

Sign Permit Review

a) Case A-1-2023 – Sign Permit Review – 50 S. Washington Street, Unit 101 – Caviar & Chevre – Installation of One (1) Permanent Window Sign

Smreti and Vishal Didwania were present to address the Commission.

The applicant was asked to confirm that the black rectangle shown on the application was not part of the sign. Mr. Didwania stated the black rectangle was included on the application to more clearly show the white font of the window sign and was not part of the proposed sign, which will be installed on a clear glass window.

Commissioner Haarlow stated the sign and name of business were elegant.

Commissioner Braden asked what the store would be selling. Ms. Didwania responded that the business would feature handbags and costume jewelry.

Commissioner Barclay made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Haarlow, to approve Case A-1-2023 – Sign Permit Review – 50 S. Washington Street, Unit 101 – Caviar & Chevre – Installation of One (1) Permanent Window Sign as approved. The motion carried with a roll call vote of 5-0 as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Barclay, Braden, Haarlow, Prisby and Chairman Bohnen
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: Commissioners Weinberger and Gonzalez

b) Case A-2-2023 – Sign Permit Review – 14 W. First Street – Elevare MD – Installation of One (1) Wall Sign and One (1) Projecting Sign

Shaun O'Brien, of Legacy Sign Group, was present to address the Commission. Mr. O'Brien provided a brief overview of the wall and projecting sign. Mr. O'Brien stated that the application for the wall sign includes a proposal to paint the cornice black and the background white and would consist of installing halo-lit letters for "Elevare". Mr. O'Brien stated the other letters of the "MD" and "Plastic Surgery & Medical Spa" would not be illuminated and the "MD" would be set behind the "Elevare" letters.

Mr. O'Brien stated the proposed projecting sign would be located on the brick to the left of the wall sign, would be non-illuminated, aluminum fabricated, and project about three (3) feet. The sign will measure sixteen inches (16") by twenty-four inches (24") and would contain white and gold font on a black background.

Commissioner Prisby asked for clarification on the difference of sign color of the Board approved sign. Ms. Salmon stated that in the previous Exterior Appearance and Site Plan approval, the proposed wall sign was shown with a black background and tonight's application makes a change from that original rendering to one with a white background.

Commissioner Prisby asked how the reflection of halo light behind the "Elevare" off the gold "MD" letters was addressed. Mr. O'Brien stated that there is three quarters of an inch (3/4") between the letters of the illuminated portion and the non-illuminated portion. A very small amount of light will reach the "MD" and "Plastic Surgery & Medical Spa" portion of the sign but the amount of light would not be significant.

Commissioner Prisby expressed concern of the halo lighting due to an inconsistent background but liked the logo and acknowledged the creativity of it. He asked how and if the Village measures the candle light after installation. Ms. Salmon responded the amount of light is checked on a complaint basis for signs. Dr. Michael DeWolfe, the business owner, stated that this same type of sign is installed on his other business location in Chicago and offered to provide a photograph of the sign in night conditions to eliminate the concerns that the un-illuminated portions of the sign are not really visible. Commissioner Prisby stated that a photograph would be very helpful.

Mr. O'Brien added that this type of sign has been installed frequently by Legacy Sign Group in the past and can be problematic in some instances but did not feel it would be in this case. Mr. O'Brien stated the shade of the halo-lighting might be slightly gold in color in proximity to the "MD" letters but the letters themselves would not be illuminated. Mr. O'Brien described another sign at an airport location and the minor change the inconsistent background caused in the night lighting.

Commissioner Haarlow asked if the finish of the "MD" letters would be matte. Mr. O'Brien stated the letters would have a polish finish on it, which actually helps to absorb the light rather than reflecting it. Mr. O'Brien added that a white diffuser could be added to the back of the illuminated letters if the reflected light is problematic.

Dr. DeWolfe showed the Commission a photograph on his phone of the sign at the other business location to help with the understanding of a night time appearance of this type of sign. Ms. Salmon requested Dr. DeWolfe email a copy of that photograph to her so it can be included in the Plan Commission packet.

Commissioner Barclay asked Commissioner Prisby if his concern was with the appearance of the logo on the sign or the appearance of the streetscape of the Village. Commissioner Prisby responded it was the appearance of the Village streetscape that was his top concern. Commissioner Braden asked if the color of the "MD" letters be changed if the illumination is problematic. Commissioner Barclay stated she was failing to see the issue. Chairman Bohnen added that the problem may not be recognized until after the sign was installed.

Commissioner Braden asked the applicant why the blade sign was requested on a building that was on an alley corner. Dr. DeWolfe explained the blade sign was necessary to add above the secondary entrance to the business, the door the medical patients would be utilizing to gain direct access to the elevator from the spa entrance utilized by retail consumers. Commissioner Braden stated that she believed the blade sign was making the space look a little busy and suggested a window sign be utilized instead.

Mr. O'Brien stated the rendering in the application packet mistakenly shows the location of the proposed blade sign. Mr. O'Brien stated the correct location of the blade sign would be on the opposite side of the building, near the second floor medical patient entrance. The Commission stated that the location of the blade sign near the patient entrance made sense and did not appear to block the view of signs belonging to neighboring businesses. Ms. Salmon requested that Mr. O'Brien provide the revised drawing the next business day to be included in the Plan Commission application.

Mr. O'Brien confirmed that no brick would be painted above the patient door. A panel constructed from material consistent with the sign would be painted black and installed over the unpainted brick. It was also confirmed that the black panel would contain a small amount of crown molding and that the blade sign would project from this panel.

Chairman Bohnen asked if the trim in the background of the sign was included in the calculation of the sign size and if so, was the sign size compliant. Ms. Salmon stated the trim was not included as part of the sign background and can be considered an architectural feature in this case. She went on to state that with the background calculated as part of the sign size, the size would still be compliant with the code requirements.

Commissioner Haarlow summarized the trim and background components and colors of both signs for clarity and stated the need for accurate renderings of the proposal to be submitted to the Village for the Plan Commission meeting.

Commissioner Haarlow made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Prisby, to approve Case A-2-2023 – Sign Permit Review – 14 W. First Street – Elevare MD – Installation of One (1) Wall Sign as submitted. The motion carried with a roll call vote of 4-1 as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Barclay, Braden, Haarlow, and Chairman Bohnen
NAYS: Prisby
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: Commissioners Weinberger and Gonzalez

Commissioner Haarlow made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Prisby, to approve Case A-2-2023 – Sign Permit Review – 14 W. First Street – Elevare MD – Installation of One (1) Projecting Sign as amended to the changes discussed and detailed in the meeting minutes. The motion carried with a roll call vote of 5-0 as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Barclay, Braden, Haarlow, Prisby and Chairman Bohnen
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: Commissioners Weinberger and Gonzalez

Ms. Salmon asked the applicant and contractor to provide updated renderings of the correct sign colors and locations the next business day. Commissioner Haarlow requested the updated renderings be provided via email to the HPC members.

Public Comment

No public comments were shared.

New Business

No new business items were shared.

Old Business

a) Amendments to Title 14 – Status Update

Ms. Salmon provided a preliminary packet containing the first list of historic properties to be considered for the Overlay District at the public hearing on February 1, 2023 for review by the HPC. She stated that forty-eight (48) property owners have initiated contact with the Village expressing interest in the program. Ms. Salmon stated the packets contain a summary of available information for each property provided by the Historical Society and other sources but noted there were a small number of properties east of County Line Road where a limited amount of information was available.

Ms. Salmon stated that things may change before February but the packet included a summary table, the checklist of criteria and information on each property. She provided the packet to HPC with the intent to provide ample time to preview the large amount of information. A final copy of the information will be provided to the HPC before the February meeting.

Commissioner Braden clarified the process of the HPC members using the packet provided to familiarize themselves with the cases and confirmed that a mass Public Hearing would take place for each property at the next meeting. Ms. Salmon confirmed that would be the optimal course and that the attorney is reviewing the posting for the hearing before sending it to publication.

Commissioner Braden confirmed that each of the properties on next month's list volunteered to be part of the program and she expressed appreciation for including 605 East Third Street. Commissioner Braden asked for clarification on the course of action taken if a Commissioner disagreed with the HPC about the eligibility of a single property because the approval process is designed to include the approval of many properties with one vote.

Ms. Salmon stated that the attorney is working on specifics such as this and what the course of action will be for Commissioners whose homes are on the list avoid any conflicts, and how to structure the motion. Ms. Salmon reminded the HPC that their vote would be a recommendation include the properties on the overlay list and not to provide any specific incentives for each property. It was also noted the final approval vote of the properties on the list would go to the Village Board for a vote.

Ms. Salmon summarized the next steps of written notification to the approved property owners, posting the application for incentives on the website, working with the Village Attorney to develop a notice of inclusion to be recorded for each property, and providing homeowners on the list with information on the process of applying for financial incentives. Ms. Salmon stated she has shared with interested properties owners that the financial incentives will be subject to availability of resources in the fund and that the Board intends to fund the program annually.

Chairman Bohnen asked about the property owner names included on the most recent documents. Ms. Salmon stated the property owner names have been removed at this time, the owners are not technically applicants but a contact person can be requested from her. She added the list for publication would not contain personal information. It was also noted that if the size of the first list is too large to discuss in one meeting, it would be possible to split the recommendation for inclusion on the list over multiple meetings.

Commissioner Haarlow suggested that Commissioners who have properties on the list recuse themselves from voting as long as a quorum could be obtained to avoid any future conflict. Ms. Salmon stated the Village Attorney would be consulted to determine the best method to handle this situation. It was also noted that strong attendance by the Commissioners for the February meeting was needed.

Commissioner Braden asked for clarification on the process for property owners applying for incentives, specifically how it related to the HPC. Ms. Salmon explained that applications for property tax rebates or grants will come to the Historic Preservation Commission acting as a recommending body in a public meeting and the application would move forward to the Village Board. The second type of incentive application, including building permit fee waivers, expedited plan review and zoning relief will come before the HPC for approval with final authority. The path followed for these types of incentives is shorter than the path for tax rebates or grants.

Commissioner Braden asked what will be done to bring a continual stream of requests in the future. Ms. Salmon stated that letters would be sent to specific properties that the Village would like to see be on the list. The Historical Society has a semi-complete plaque list that could be a source of homes to receive the invitation letter as well as a list created by the Village a couple years ago. Commissioner Braden also suggested a possible Q&A to educate homeowners about the process to get on the list. Chairman Bohnen suggested that the Village reach out to realtors with an educational presentation about the program. Ms. Salmon added that specific language to be included in the listing could be shared with agents to encourage them to use it while they market a house that could be or already is eligible for incentives.

Commissioner Haarlow asked about the possibility of including the list on the Village website to assist with the education of the public. Ms. Salmon stated that there is a draft website that is currently in development and that she is open for suggestions. Commissioner Braden asked if the Village can assist with media pushes to promote the program. Ms. Salmon responded that she believed that would be possible. It was also suggested the plaque letter could also include some language about the program and coordination of information between the Village and the Historical Society take place. Commissioner Haarlow suggested the Hinsdalean be approached about writing a story about the program. Ms. Salmon added that her conversations with the homeowners of the 48 properties on the first list are excited about the program and preservation of homes even if they did not have any projects planned in the very near future.

b) Village of Hinsdale 150th Anniversary Celebration

Ms. Salmon reported that the December meeting was cancelled and that she didn't have new information to share. The next meeting is scheduled for January 18th at 10:00 a.m.

Commissioner Braden asked if the HPC budget rolls over, it was confirmed that it does not. Commissioner Braden suggested the HPC brainstorm ways to utilize funds, such as providing some funding for the Historical Society's plaque program and the 150th exhibit. Commissioner Haarlow suggested funding to restore the railing atop of Memorial Hall. Ms. Salmon stated that funds were included the 2023 Village budget to restore the roof railing and because the building is landmarked, any proposed changes would need to come to the HPC for review.

Commissioner Braden asked if the Zook home at KLM was included on the incentive listed. It was confirmed that it was. It was stated the Historical Society could be the applicant.

Commissioner Braden asked if the educational event at the library about the incentive program was still planned for February. Ms. Salmon confirmed the event is scheduled for February 27th and the date is on the Village Community Calendar.

Ms. Salmon stated the February event could be added to New Business for the next HPC meeting. Commissioner Braden requested funding for the plaque program also be added to New Business as well as using snippets from YouTube to push information using social media.

c) Robbins Park Historic Gateway Signs

Ms. Salmon stated that there are no updates to share at this time but the next step is to obtain bids which are expected soon. Once the sign plans are developed, Ms. Salmon stated that those would be coming forward for review.

Chairman Bohnen stated that the Christmas Walk event was very well attended and well done.

Commissioner Haarlow stated that he had recently attended some Village Board meetings with the interest of restoring the intersection of Sixth St. and Park to brick instead of asphalt. It was stated that two (2) intersections of Sixth, at Oak and Elm, are brick. Commissioner Haarlow stated that part of what makes the Historic District special are First St. and Sixth St. As part of the master infrastructure plan, Sixth St. is up for bid and the RFP states that the entirety of Sixth Street could be done in concrete or asphalt. Commissioner Haarlow stated that Sixth St. should be redone in brick, despite the high cost, because of the one hundred (100) year life span.

Chairman Bohnen asked if Sixth St. had storm sewers, Commissioner Haarlow responded only at the intersections. It was stated that the storm and sanitary sewers were last done in the 1940s and it is currently a combined system that needs to be separated. Chairman Bohnen stated that the key to the long life span of a brick street is a quality base and it would be appropriate to restore the brick street with the proper base at the time the sewer work begins in 2024. It was stated that now is the time to begin the discussion about preserving the brick. Commissioner Barclay stated that the streets are a part of the Historic District and changes to the material would impact the street scape.

Commissioner Barclay asked Chairman Bohnen to share the nature of the discussions that took place when First St. was redone. Chairman Bohnen stated that the main crux of the discussion was about the impassable condition of the street and the lack of storm sewers with minimum discussion about the project being an opportunity to redo one (1) block of the street in pavers.

Further discussion took place about the streets being Village owned parts of the Historic District and it was difficult to understand why the option to repave the street with bricks was not being considered by the Village Board and the importance about bringing the topic to the forefront.

Chairman Bohnen stated that raising the level of sentimentality early in the process could result in civic action of the owners involved which could influence a decision on road material the board approves. He shared the example of how the neighbors on First St. organized and were prepared to store the brick road pavers during construction and assist in the paver removal and/or replacement.

The HPC discussed beginning a campaign now to make the residents aware that re-installing the brick is not being considered as an option for the Sixth St. construction. It was stated that the residents purchased their homes with the ambiance of the brick and the HPC believed most residents are unaware of the plan not to reuse them. Chairman Bohnen stated that he believed a public hearing should be added to the agenda to allow the organized residents of Sixth St. and others an opportunity to speak on the topic. It was stated that the Village has preserved the pavers of Sixth to date and should continue to do so despite the higher cost or the need to push the project out.

In response to Commissioner Braden's request to be notified of the date of the Board's discussion of the topic, Ms. Salmon stated she would ask the Engineering Department for the time line and include it as part of a follow up email to the HPC. Chairman Bohnen asked Ms. Salmon to communicate to the Engineering Department that replacing the bricks on Sixth St. with concrete or asphalt should be removed from the RFP.

Chairman Bohnen reminded the HPC of the importance to continue to work toward the goals of part two (2) of Title Fourteen and signage in the downtown district.

Adjournment

Commissioner Prisby made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Braden, to adjourn the regularly meeting of the Village of Hinsdale Historic Preservation Commission meeting of January 4, 2023.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 p.m. after a unanimous voice vote of 5-0.

ATTEST: _____
Jennifer Spires, Community Development Office