

Approved

**MINUTES
VILLAGE OF HINSDALE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
Memorial Hall
19 E. Chicago Avenue, Hinsdale, IL
July 7, 2021
6:30 P.M.**

Call to Order & Roll Call

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) was called to order by Chairman Bohnen on Wednesday, July 7, 2021 at 6:34 p.m. in Memorial Hall of the Memorial Building.

Roll call was taken and a quorum was present at the meeting.

Present: Chairman John Bohnen, Commissioner Sarah Barclay, Commissioner Alexis Braden, Commissioner Frank Gonzalez, Commissioner Bill Haarlow, Commissioner Jim Prisby

Absent: Commissioner Shannon Weinberger

Also Present: Bethany Salmon, Village Planner

Approval of the Minutes – May 5, 2021

Chairman Bohnen introduced the minutes from the May 5, 2021, meeting and asked for comments. A motion was made by Commissioner Braden, seconded by Commissioner Gonzalez, to approve the May 5, 2021 minutes as submitted. The motion carried by a roll call vote of 6-0 as follows:

Ayes: Commissioners Barclay, Braden, Gonzalez, Haarlow, Prisby, and Chairman Bohnen

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Commissioner Weinberger

Sign Permit Review

a) Case A-06-2021 – 34 E. Hinsdale Avenue – Bake Homemade Pizza – Installation of One (1) Wall Sign

Paul Bander, representing the sign contractor Aubrey Sign Company, was present at the meeting to answer questions from the Commission. The applicant provided an overview of the revised changes to the proposed wall sign originally presented at the Historic Preservation Commission on May 5, 2021. Mr. Bander confirmed that the proposed sign will now be mounted to the window mullions in the transom area. The sign is non-illuminated with a black flat panel and dimensional acrylic text.

Commissioner Prisby noted the proposed changes addressed the previous concerns of the Commission, which were discussed at the meeting in May.

Commissioner Prisby asked the applicant if wall-mounted gooseneck lighting was installed by the owner or the business. Mr. Bander confirmed it appeared that someone had installed gooseneck lighting and he would discuss the removal of the lighting with the business owner. Ms. Salmon stated that this could be handled as a code compliance issue if the lighting was not removed and staff would work with the business owner.

No public comment was made at the meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Haarlow, seconded by Commissioner Barclay, to recommend approval of the sign permit request for Case A-06-2021 for Bake Homemade Pizza located at 34 E. Hinsdale Avenue. The motion carried by a vote of 6-0 as follows:

Ayes: Commissioners Barclay, Braden, Gonzalez, Haarlow, Prisby, and Chairman Bohnen
Nays: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Commissioner Weinberger

b) Case A-10-2021 – 137 S. Garfield Street – Union Church of Hinsdale – Installation of One (1) Ground Sign with a Bulletin Board

Matt Klein, the applicant and representative of the Union Church of Hinsdale, was present at the meeting and provided an overview of the proposed sign.

Commissioner Barclay asked for additional information on the proposed lighting. Mr. Klein confirmed that the logo located in the column on the left side of the ground sign would not be illuminated, the text above the bulletin board would be internally illuminated, and LED string lights would be installed around the inside of the frame of bulletin board and the fixture will be completely shielded.

Commissioner Prisby asked if the existing ground sign is illuminated. Mr. Klein confirmed that the existing sign is illuminated, but was not sure when it was turned on.

Chairman Bohnen asked if there are proposed hours of illumination. Mr. Klein confirmed that the Church will comply with the Village requirements. Staff confirmed that because the illuminated ground sign is located on lots abutting or across the street from and visible from any residentially zoned area, it shall not be illuminated between the hours of 10:00 P.M. and 7:00 A.M. except that such sign may remain illuminated during such time as the activity to which the sign pertains is open for business so long as such sign is not a public or private nuisance.

Commissioner Prisby asked the applicant what material the proposed cabinet was to be constructed of. Mr. Klein stated that he believes it will be constructed of aluminum or a typical sign material. There was a brief discussion on the structural support of the sign and if the limestone cap would be able to be supported.

Commissioner Prisby stated that the limestone block size proposed for the base of the ground sign appears to be too small and doesn't appear to match the stone used on the church building. Commissioner Prisby recommended that the applicant look into using a larger block at the base and the cap of the base should be constructed of matching limestone instead of bronze aluminum. Commissioner Prisby also noted that the applicant could consider using a matching brick on the side column. There was a discussion on why brick was not chosen, which may better match the brick used on the building. Laurie McMahan, from Union Church, stated that they changed the building material from brick to limestone during the design process to better match the entrance area on the south side of the building. It was noted that the rendering may not accurately represent the true appearance of the limestone blocks.

Several Commissioners expressed support for using a limestone cap on top of the sign base instead of an aluminum cap. This change would provide better separation between the different materials, will enhance the visual appearance, and help tie the sign into the historic building and the historic district. Commissioner Haarlow noted that other churches in the historic district have constructed new ground signs entirely of masonry, which better fits into the context of the historic district. The ground sign for Grace Episcopal Church nearby in the Historic District utilized all stone that fit into the context of the surrounding area and building.

Commissioner Haarlow asked if the new ground sign and new bulletin board sign will impact the number of temporary banners posted on the church property. Mr. Klein noted that that the church still plans to put up temporary banners.

Nancy Cox, a resident that lives nearby Union Church at 127 E. Third Street, spoke at the meeting. Ms. Cox expressed concerns over the proposed lighting, noted she would like to see a rendering of what the ground sign would look like illuminated at night, and asked if the applicant explored natural landscaping options to help the sign fit in with the historic homes nearby.

There was a discussion on the proposed lighting. Several Commissioners recommended that the applicant provide additional lighting information and a rendering of the illumination and brightness of the sign at night. The Commissioners noted that the applicant should explore using LED lights with a warm white color and less lumens compared to the selected bright white color with the highest level of lumens shown on the specification sheet.

The Commission recommended that the applicant consider replacing the aluminum base cap with a limestone cap, using a different limestone block size on the base of the sign, providing a rendering and additional details on the proposed LED lighting, and exploring changes to the light intensity and select a warm white color.

The applicant stated at the meeting that additional information will be brought to the Plan Commission on July 14 for review.

A motion was made by Commissioner Barclay, seconded by Commissioner Gonzalez, to recommend approval of the sign permit request for Case A-10-2021 for Union Church of Hinsdale located at 137 S. Garfield Street. The Commission recommended that the applicant consider replacing the aluminum base cap with a limestone cap, using a different limestone block size on the base of the sign, providing a rendering on the proposed LED lighting, and exploring changes to the light intensity and select a warm white color instead of a bright white color. The motion carried by a vote of 6-0 as follows:

Ayes: Commissioners Barclay, Braden, Gonzalez, Haarlow, Prisby, and Chairman Bohnen
Nays: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Commissioner Weinberger

c) Case A-13- 2021 – 28 E. Hinsdale Avenue – Marabella Home – Installation of One (1) Wall Sign

The applicant was not present at the meeting. Ms. Salmon requested that the Commission provide comments, which has been helpful for other sign permit applications.

Commissioner Prisby commented that he preferred the signage is centered over both the entrance doors and the storefront windows rather than being centered over just the storefront window.

Because the applicant was not present, the Commissioners tabled a vote.

The Historic Preservation Commission recommended tabling the vote for the sign permit request for Case A-13-2021 for Marabella Home located at 28 E. Hinsdale Avenue to the next meeting scheduled for August 4, 2021 where the applicant will be present to discuss the signage plans.

d) Case A-14-2021 – 110 S. Washington Street – County Line Home Design Center – Installation of One (1) Wall Sign

Chairman Bohnen recused himself from the vote as he is an owner of the County Line Home Design Center.

The sign contractor, Pat Franz, provided an overview of the proposed sign and answered questions from the Commissioners. A sample of one of the individual letters was also shown to the Commissioners at the meeting. Mr. Franz stated that the individual letters are constructed of wood and will be located in the façade above the storefront windows.

Commissioner Braden asked if “County Line” will be located anywhere on the store or sign. It was confirmed that the sign will only include text for “Home Design Center.”

Commissioner Gonzalez noted that the proposed “S” letter appeared to be mounted on the pilaster, which extends forward and therefore would place the “S” on a different plane than the other letters. There was a discussion over the existing pilaster / column located within the proposed signage area at the upper left side of the storefront windows. Several Commissioners noted concern that the letters would be located on different planes.

Due to visual concerns over the appearance, the Commission recommended that all of the letters be located on the same horizontal plane.

Several options were discussed, including mounting the letters on different individual stem lengths or all letters on a backer ground. It was determined that individual letters will be made thicker to create the appearance that all are located on the same plane.

The Historic Preservation Commission recommended approval of the sign permit request, Case A-14-2021 for County Line Home Design Center located at 110 S. Washington Street, subject to the letters be mounted on the same linear plane, by a vote of 5-0 (1 absent, 1 recused). Chairman Bohnen recused himself from the vote as he is associated with the business.

A motion was made by Commissioner Braden, seconded by Commissioner Haarlow, to recommend approval of the sign permit request for Case A-14-2021 for County Line Home Design Center located at 110 S. Washington Street, subject to the letters be mounted on the same linear plane. Chairman Bohnen recused himself from the vote as he is associated with the business. The motion carried by a vote of 5-0 (1 recused, 1 absent) as follows:

Ayes: Commissioners Barclay, Braden, Gonzalez, Haarlow, and Prisby
Nays: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Commissioner Weinberger
Recused: Chairman Bohnen

Public Comment

Chairman Bohnen asked for any public comments. There was no public comment pertaining to non-agenda items

New Business

a) Pre-Demolition Sales

Commissioner Braden stated that a pre-demolition sale took place at a historic home in the Robbins Park Historic District on Elm Street. The pre-demolition sale was listed online and offered interior features of the home for sale, including historic features. The house was listed for sale, but the new buyer had apparently not closed on the property yet. The buyer technically could have backed out of the sale, which could leave a house stripped of its history. Additionally, a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition of the house was not brought to the Historic Preservation Commission for review and a demolition permit was not issued by the Village. Commissioner Braden noted concern over these types of sales and questioned how the Village could handle these types of demolition sales that strips a home of its history. Houses are being gutted before the Village can review if the house can be saved.

There was a discussion on pre-demolition sales. There have been pre-demolition sales in the Village before, but they are not as common. As the Village works through changes to Title 14, the Village could use this an opportunity to address pre-demolition sales.

Ms. Salmon noted that it appears the pre-demolition sale did not appear to require a demolition permit. Because exterior changes were not included as part of the demolition sale, it technically was not required to be reviewed before the Historic Preservation Commission yet. Ms. Salmon noted that we could look at the definition of demolition. However, most historic preservation codes would not require a review for interior changes. Only exterior changes are subject to a review. Staff can follow up on this item at the next meeting.

b) Permit / Construction Status

Chairman Bohnen asked for the construction / permit status for two properties. Construction at 419 S. Oak appears to have stopped and construction at 241 E. 1st Street appears to have never started. Staff can check on the status of these permits and will provide an update to the Commission at the next meeting.

Old Business

a) Signage in the Downtown and Robbins Park

Ms. Salmon presented several design options for the Robbins Park Historic District street sign toppers for the Commission to discuss. Street sign toppers from other communities were reviewed to determine the Historic Preservation Commission's design preferences in terms of logos, text, color, size, and scale. Ms. Salmon stated she will use this information to obtain a quote from sign contractors and then move forward with an actual design.

Ms. Salmon stated that the existing street signs have a white background and black text. Staff was informed that the older street signs with a black background and white text are slowly being replaced with the white background and black text. Commissioner Haarlow noted that several existing street signs are vandalized and are falling over. It would be beneficial to work with Public Services to have signage replaced where needed or fixed as part of this process.

The Commission then discussed several design options for the street sign toppers. Overall, the Commissioners stated they are not aware of any previous logos for the Robbins Park District and a logo is not necessary.

For the text, several Commissioners noted the importance of including "National Register Historic District" or "Historic District" in the sign topper, but acknowledged that there is limited area to include a lot of text. At the four corners of the Robbins Park Historic District, the Commission discussed installing four additional signs that could be slightly larger, with additional text, and potentially mounted on decorative poles. The goal of this would be to define the edges of the district with signage that is a slightly more prominent and decorative. Due to the ability to have larger signage at the four corners, it may be ideal to include "National Register Historic District" text at only the four corners and abbreviated text on each of the street sign toppers.

For the selected colors, the Commission favored either a dark green background with white text, a brown background with white text, or a black background with white text. Commissioner Haarlow noted that using a black background with white text could reference and tie back to the original street signs that are being replaced.

Commissioner Haarlow also asked if there was an opportunity to work with the EDC on funding to pay for historic signage, which was done in the past. Ms. Salmon noted that separate funding was put aside in the budget to upgrade the existing wayfinding signage and wood ground signs in the Village. Staff is currently looking into quotes for these signs and will be engaging the same sign contractors to see if this will help with the budget and design. There was a discussion on other existing signage in the Village as well as how the Robbins Park signage will tie into the other signs.

b) Amendments to Title 14 – Status Update

Ms. Salmon stated that the Committee of the Whole & Historic Preservation Commission originally anticipated to be held before the Board meeting on July 13 was cancelled due to a conflict with the Finance Commission meeting. Staff was unable to find a time to reschedule the meeting due to scheduling conflicts. The next meeting will be held before the next Board meeting on August 10. This meeting will focus on zoning relief and other incentives as part of the discussion on amendments to Title 14.

Commissioner Braden noted that she had begun working through the list identifying significant buildings in the Village. Any buildings not on the list could be added later. There was a brief conversation on the past discussion around the proposed changes to Title 14.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Commissioner Prisby, seconded by Commissioner Gonzalez, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:51 p.m. after a unanimous voice vote of 6-0.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bethany Salmon, Village Planner