

HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, October 22, 2014

5:30 p.m.

50 W. Gay St. – First Floor - Conference Room B

Applicants or their representatives must attend this hearing. If applicants are absent, it is likely that the application will be continued until the Commission's next hearing. If you have any questions please call Randy Black (645-6821) in the City's Historic Preservation Office. A Sign Language Interpreter, to "Sign" this meeting, will be made available for anyone with a need for this service, provided the Historic Preservation Office is made aware of this need at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the scheduled hearing time. To schedule an interpreter, please call 645-8620 or TDD 645-3293.

Commissioners Present: Steward Gibboney, Beth Clark, Abbie Faust, Robert Palmer, Charles Rowan, Tom Wolf (arrived 5:39)

Commissioners Absent: Dan Morgan

City Staff Present: Randy Black, Connie Torbeck

- I. CALL TO ORDER (5:32 p.m.)
- II. SWEARING IN OF CITY STAFF
- III. IDENTIFICATION OF COMMISSIONERS PRESENT
- IV. APPROVAL OF Thursday, September 11, 2014, SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
MOTION: Clark/Rowan (5-0-0)—Meeting Minutes APPROVED
- V. SPECIAL MEETING IN ACCORDANCE WITH CITY CODE AND COMMISSION BYLAWS

City Code Chapter 3117.04 Historic Resources Commission Organization: Duties.

The duties of the historic resources commission shall be as follows:

- L. To provide for regular and special meetings to accomplish the purposes of paragraphs A. through K. herein. (Ord. 1045-98 § 9; Ord. 0946-04 § 7; Ord. 897-05 § 7.)

Historic Resources Commission Bylaws: ARTICLE VI (1): Meetings

- D. Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson or by the written request of five members of the Commission. The purpose of the meetings shall be stated in the call. Except in cases of emergency, at least three days notice shall be given by the Secretary of the HRC to each Commission member and to the City Clerk.

VI. HISTORIC DISTRICT SIGNAGE BACKGROUND

In response to ongoing concerns voiced by property owners and residents, a Historic Preservation Office staff survey of existing commercial signage installed in the historic districts was conducted in late 2012.

*At the **February 21, 2013 H. R. C. meeting**, a motion was made directing the H. P. O. staff to schedule a meeting to review and confirm commission sign review procedures and standards in historic districts with the H. R. C. subcommittee members to be identified.*

*At the **June 21, 2013 H. R. C. meeting**, a motion was made adopting a draft 'For Rent' signage policy for all historic districts and properties subject to Historic Resources Commission review and approval as required by City Code Chapters 3116 and 3117. Based on the discussion with concerned property owners and Historic Preservation Office staff research, the commission established a subcommittee to work with the Historic Preservation Office staff to finalize a signage policy language subject to final approval by the full commission.*

At the May 15, 2014 H. R. C. meeting the For Rent Signage Policy was adopted by the H. R. C. (see Attachment #2—For Rent Signage Requirements).

May/June, 2014 Code Enforcement Officers issued letters and/or Code Orders to all property owners with signs installed prior to H. R. C. review and approval as required by City Code Chapters 3116 and 3117.

The September 11, 2014 Historic Resources Commission (H. R. C.) Special Meeting was held for discussion and analysis of signage standards for residences in historic districts.

VII. HISTORIC DISTRICT SIGNAGE APPLICATION DISCUSSION & REVIEW

Applications for commission review of all signs have been submitted (see Attachment #1—‘Table of Applicants and Property Addresses).

DESIGN STANDARDS for RENTAL SIGNAGE in HISTORIC DISTRICTS

1. **Hold Two (2) Public Meetings** to review and discuss historic district signage requirements for rental property
2. **Finalize the Appropriate Historic District Signage Requirements for Rental Property** including, but not limited to:
 - Location on site
 - Size
 - Number of signs allowed per property
 - Length time allowed for installation
 - Installation method
 - Material(s)
 - Amount of text (Name, Number, Email, Web Address)
 - Lighting
 - Color(s)
 - Other

3. Two Options Previously Established

Option 1) One sign only, placed in the front yard in a standard metal real estate sign frame with one bolt-in sign panel eighteen inches high by twenty-four inches wide or less (24” x 18” max.). Signs panels to be two-sided and text to be limited to phone number and contact/company name;

Or

Option 2) One sign only, placed on the inside glass of a front elevation first floor widow with the text to be limited to the words “For Rent” and contact name and phone number. Sign size to be no more than eighteen inches wide by twelve inches high (18” W x 12” H).

SYNOPSIS:

- *George Ypsilantis (Della Co.) asked if the options presented on the agenda were final or if they were still open for discussion.*
- *Connie Torbeck noted that an option of an in yard sign could be appropriate for some.*
- *GY agreed it should be an option since some owners live in the home and rent out rooms.*
- *GY asked to discuss the signs that have been up for many years.*

- *Charlie Martin (Eventide) indicated that he doesn't mind the option of real estate sign but would want branding to differentiate from other owners.*
- *Commissioner Beth Clark addressing Code Enforcement Supervisor John Hughes – how many options are appropriate? Are more options a problem for code enforcement purposes?*
- *Steven Moberger noted that real estate signs get vandalized. They should be a uniform size so that they are consistent. Not 8x10, but a brand. Does not want signs to be a nuisance.*
- *CM would not mind a standard that mandates size, shape, font, etc.*
- *BC noted that it would need to be seen from the sidewalk rather than seen by approaching the building.*
- *CM agreed. Also felt that it should be higher up to protect from vandalism.*
- *GY indicated that he uses a regular real estate size but is willing to change.*
- *SM noted a size of 18x24.*
- *Diane Hoenig (resident) said she does not like the signs up high on the buildings at all since it is not typical of what you would find in a residential neighborhood – she feels it degrades the neighborhood.*
- *DH is supportive of temporary signs, doesn't think that permanent signs are safe (i.e. that they make the neighborhood an increased target for crime). She noted that any changes to buildings in the historic district need to have a CoA.*
- *DH felt that 30-60 days was an appropriate amount of time to display signage – as needed – with the understanding that the rental season is all year round.*
- *DH would not like to see signs on second floor between windows – feels it is architecturally unacceptable.*
- *Commissioner Steward Gibbone noted that the signs do have some value to police and fire.*
- *Commissioner Abbie Faust indicated that more information was necessary regarding font sizes as they relate to visibility (distance).*
- *CM said that he does not want to have to apply for a CoA every 30 days. Also showed concern that monument signs would be vandalized and expensive.*
- *SM is okay with a standardization of size/font/etc – monument signs would stand out more.*
- *CM indicated he would want name, phone number, and website on the signs.*
- *Choice of phone number OR website was mentioned as a possibility.*
- *Commissioner Tom Wolf noted that if anyone came before the commission asking for signage in these locations that they would not be considered.*
- *SG said that neighborhoods do change and that these districts have. It appears that a permanent sign in a different location could be achieved.*
- *AF noted that the second floor location, though very visible, is not appropriate for the streetscape. Next to door may be appropriate. It might be a case by case basis for location or inclusion of house #'s based on architectural style and age of the building.*
- *Commissioner Robert Palmer said that the vandalism issue has been made clear. Agreed that different types of buildings can warrant reviews for signage on case by case basis. Permanent signs may be appropriate in some situations but there would need to be a more uniform style for all. A third option (i.e. permanent signage) can be reached.*
- *Commissioner Charles Rowan would like to see research on other cities. Permanent signs should be near entrance and take the form of plaques. The branding on the sign should be modest – not necessarily advertising. Signage would have name and phone number, at a minimum.*
- *CR also noted that he understood the issues with a 30 day limit. Is there an alternative permanent sign that would not be on the house itself, in addition to a smaller sign with 2 lines of text, something removable.*
- *BC proposed the 3rd option be a sign with 2 lines of text using a standard font and color on the 1st floor, limited to 1 sign per structure and no lighting. Both the staff and commission need time to draft the 3rd option and then will send to property owners for review prior to adding.*
- *TW thanked everyone for participating, the meeting provided useful input. Agreed that a third option needs to be drafted. Suggested that third option could be similar to current signs, just with darker colors to match house – less presence.*

- *TW asked if it is possible the signs move to alley side. Something small, beside the door on the first floor could work. With regards to standardizing – need to think about, may be something to be said for variety.*
- *DH noted that expense is not taken into account for shingles, etc. and has not been a consideration for other residents in the historic district. Her understanding of code is that no signs are allowed – HRC's job is to preserve historic nature – permanent signage does not seem to comply with the standards. Indicated desire to preserve character of neighborhood – she moved in when she was a student so she has been on both sides. A sign in the window is something she would be agreeable to – muted – goes with area. 18x24 seems large, even if not in a window but somewhere nearby – it needs to be standardized.*
- *DH asks that there not be any grandfathering – whatever might end up being decided – provide 6 months to a year to replace, but in the end the signs that are up are not permitted.*
- *CM would like to see the signs grandfathered.*
- *Randy Black: The third option will be worked on and put together and then placed on the regular agenda.*
- *BC would like to see draft reviewed by all residents and property managers before placing on the agenda.*

VIII. HISTORIC DISTRICT FINAL ACTION – 3RD OPTION TO BE DEVELOPED

IX. OLD BUSINESS

X. NEW BUSINESS

XI. ADJOURN

MOTION: Clark/Rowan (6-0-0)—Adjourned (6:37 p.m.)