

**Town of Elkton  
Elkton Historic District Commission  
January 25, 2017**

**PRESENT:** Paula Newton, Chair; Brian Morgan; William Whiteman; Jonathan Pugh; Jeanne D. Minner, Director of Planning; John Downs Esq., Legal Counsel

**ABSENT:** Brittany Schwartz

Ms. Newton called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and stated that this is a meeting of the Historic District Commission and that a quorum was present. She stated that the Commission operates under the authority granted it by the Town of Elkton. She further stated that the qualifications of the Commission members are on file with the Town of Elkton. The basis of the decisions of the Commission be consistent with the Town's Ordinances, they are on file with the Town of Elkton and are hereby made a part of the record of each and every action of the Commission at today's meeting. Each application heard today is considered on its own merits and is not to be considered as establishing a precedent for any other application.

Ms. Newton stated that the first item on the agenda was approval of the minutes from the September 28, 2016 meeting. She asked if any member had any corrections. She stated that she had one (1) correction. The date for the minutes from the previous meeting is not the same as the date in the motion for approval of the minutes.

She asked for a motion.

**MOTION: Mr. Morgan made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 28, 2016 meeting as corrected. Mr. Whiteman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

Ms. Newton introduced the second item on the agenda.

Candace Myruski of the Commonwealth Heritage Group (CHG) introduced herself to the Commission. She gave a short biography of her background and qualifications. She outlined the existing tools that they used in order to draft the Elkton Historic District Design Guidelines (Guidelines). She explained how the CHG felt these Guidelines would be a tool the Commission would use in making decisions in the various cases brought before them. She stated that Appendix A of the Guidelines is a checklist to make sure the Commission's decisions are made in a consistent manner. She stated that the applicant would also receive the checklist so that they could see what information the Commission would be using in making a decision. She stated that Appendix B was the Historic Work Permit application and Appendix C contained the relevant sections of the Town's Zoning Ordinance for the Historic District. She asked the Commission if they had any questions regarding how to use the Guidelines or any questions regarding the content therein.

Ms. Newton stated that she is the only Commission member present that has been seated since this process started. She really likes the draft before them tonight. She stated that she felt that this rendition is more Elkton specific than the previous draft presented. She stated she likes the fact that along with the pictures is a narrative regarding what is important about the structure. She further stated that she did notice a couple of things that she would like to mention. She pointed out the date for the creation of the Historic Commission was incorrect; that on page six

(6) Garrett Island had two (2) t's; that on page eight (8) it is Cecil College, not Cecil County College, on page twenty-nine (29) Figure 4.1 should read Trinity Episcopal Church, and in Appendix C the Zoning Ordinance had been amended regarding signs.

Ms. Minner asked that CHG verify the population in Elkton in 1942. She stated the population quoted seemed a little high. Ms. Minner stated that pages nine (9) and ten (10) reference the Howard Hotel and she felt that it should be identified as either former Howard Hotel or currently Minihanes Irish Pub and that on page sixteen (16), regarding the review process, the language is a little awkward. She recommended leaving the adoption date out and stating which article of the Zoning Ordinance is being referenced. She further stated that the wording in parenthesis of the same paragraph is not clear as to which document is being referenced.

Ms. Newton stated that she had comments on the brochure. She stated that #5 on the map is incorrect and needs to be placed to the right of North Street. She stated the other comment was that there is a circa date under the photograph of Elkton Middle School but none for the other structures depicted.

Ms. Minner informed the Commission that the Town publishes a quarterly Resident's Guide and that she did have information regarding the Historic District included.

Ms. Newton stated she had one procedural question. She asked if they see a property that is being neglected would the Commission be allowed to contact the owner by letter regarding the condition of the property.

Ms. Minner stated that the proper procedure according to the Zoning Ordinance would be to contact code enforcement and the code enforcement officer would address the owner.

Ms. Newton asked about any new developments with the historic Holly Hall building.

Ms. Minner updated the Commission on the plans for the building.

Mr. Morgan stated that he had a couple of questions/comments regarding the Guidelines. He stated he was focused on page sixteen (16). He stated this section discusses when a work permit is required. He said that item four (4) referred to "installation or siding, shingles...." He stated that the 'or' should be 'of'. He stated that while he appreciates the flexibility the document provides, the use of words like substantially or significant could become problematic. As an example, he asked how a substantial change in paint color is quantified.

Ms. Minner stated that previously the Commission had been counseled that unless a color palette is adopted that the Commission should leave paint color alone. Ms. Minner further stated that the language regarding requirement of a work permit is consistent with the Town's Zoning Ordinance.

Ms. Newton asked about the process for adopting the Guidelines.

Ms. Minner stated that there would be an advertised public hearing before the Commission. The Commission would then make a formal recommendation of approval for adoption to the Mayor

and Commissioners. The Mayor and Commissioners would then hold a public hearing and then formally adopt the Guidelines.

Ms. Minner stated that a consultant from CHG would appear at a workshop prior to the public hearing to present the corrected document and answer any questions.

Discussion ensued regarding the size of the Historic District and what should drive the decision as to what areas should be included.

Discussion ensued regarding possible workshop dates and public hearing dates.

Ms. Newton pointed out that the Commission did not have a Vice Chair.

Ms. Minner stated that, with regard to the brochure, an individual would know if they are in the Historic District by either looking at the brochure but also by consulting the Town's Comprehensive Plan. She also requested that the Town's Zoning Ordinance, as amended, be referenced and that it could be found on-line at the Town's website. She recommended also that the regulations for the Town Center District be reviewed as most of the Historic District is also zoned Town Center.

Ms. Newton asked if there was any new business.

Ms. Minner stated that there were two (2) gentlemen who met with her regarding two (2) buildings on West Main Street, one (1) of which is on the Maryland Historic Trust listings, that were coming up for public auction. They were considering purchasing the buildings and demolishing them. After meeting with Chip Bromwell and herself regarding the process, they apparently have not pursued it any farther.

Ms. Newton asked for a motion to adjourn.

**Motion:** Mr. Pugh made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Whiteman seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.