

**Town of Elkton
Elkton Historic District Commission
January 31, 2018**

PRESENT: Paula Newton, Chair; Brian Morgan; Brittany Schwartz; Will Whiteman; Jeanne D. Minner, Director of Planning; John Downs Esq., Legal Counsel

ABSENT: Jonathan Pugh

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 July 26, 2017 meeting. She asked if any member had any corrections. She stated that the second paragraph needs a period. Hearing no further corrections, she asked for a motion.

MOTION: Ms. Schwartz made a motion to approve. Mr. Morgan seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Newton introduced the second item on the agenda.

Request by Alberto and Heather Vasquez, representing Vasquez Construction, for a demolition and reconstruction at 260 W. Main Street, Elkton.

Ms. Vasquez introduced herself and her husband, Alberto, to the Commission and stated that she was before them this evening for approval of the demolition and reconstruction of the duplex dwelling located at 260-262 W. Main Street, Elkton.

Ms. Newton noted that there was no one from the public in attendance and stated that, therefore, they would proceed to any questions and/or discussion from the Commission.

Ms. Vasquez said they had bought this building along with the building next door, 264 W. Main Street, and they had a structural engineer look at this due to its poor condition. She stated that the engineer's recommendation was to remove and replace this building. She stated that she had given a copy of the engineer's letter to the Town.

The Commission reviewed information that had been presented to them by the Town that evening regarding inclusion of the property in the Maryland Historic Trust.

Ms. Newton asked if the engineer had made any mention of a log structure within the existing dwelling.

Mr. Vasquez stated that the engineer had not.

Ms. Newton gave a brief history of that section of Main Street and stated that the property is on the Inventory of Structures at Maryland Historic Trust, which states there may be a log cabin within the western section of the building.

Discussion ensued regarding what Mr. Vasquez has found, the engineer's comments, the general condition of the building and review of the pictures of the inside and outside of the building.

Mr. Whiteman questioned what their options were to determine if indeed the internal structure of the existing building was a log cabin.

Ms. Newton stated that she felt at a minimum there should be a very careful demolition of the parts that are not part of the log cabin. She stated that she is using the log cabin that was found on Bow Street as her reference. She provided a history of how that cabin was discovered and saved and eventually moved to an area behind the Cecil County Historical Society.

Mr. Morgan asked the applicants what their timeframe was with this project.

Ms. Vasquez replied that if they receive approval they would like to start this Spring.

Ms. Newton stated that start date would give the Commission time to investigate further into the situation and options. She stated that the Commission should make the effort to look into options for saving the building in part or in whole.

Ms. Minner asked how hard removing the inside or outside of the 'skin' would be to see what is actually underneath.

Mr. Whiteman stated that that is what he would like to see done and he believed it was something the applicant was capable of doing himself. He asked about the condition of the foundation of the building.

Mr. Vasquez stated that the crawl space and foundation are in very bad condition.

Mr. Whiteman suggested that they make a motion to table the project until the applicants can remove the 'skin' inside to see what is underneath and in what condition it is.

Ms. Newton asked for a motion.

MOTION: Mr. Whiteman made a motion to table the project until the applicants can remove the 'skin' inside to see what is underneath and what condition it is in. Ms. Schwartz seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

New Business: Ms. Minner stated that she was the next agenda item. She stated that the Mayor wanted to reconfigure the Town Square on Main Street. She stated that they received funding from CDBG because handicap access improvement is part of the reconfiguration. She explained what handicap accessible improvements were being made and how the reconfiguration would proceed. She stated the project is being presented to the Commission because the property is within the Historic District. She requested any comments or questions from the Commission.

Discussion ensued regarding the project, the reuse of existing brick and the history of the site.

Ms. Newton requested a motion regarding the proposed reconstruction and renovations to the brick stoop at 108 North Street and the Town's brick courtyard at 101 E. Main Street, Elkton.

MOTION: Ms. Schwartz made a motion to approve the plans as presented. Mr. Whiteman seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Newton stated that under new business the next item is the election of officers. Ms. Newton asked for nominations.

MOTION: Mr. Whiteman made a motion to elect Ms. Newton as Chair. Ms. Schwartz seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. Ms. Newton accepted the position.

MOTION: Mr. Morgan made a motion to elect Mr. Whiteman as Vice Chair. Ms. Schwartz seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. Mr. Whiteman accepted the position.

Old Business: Discussion ensued regarding the proposed new uses for the Mitchell Building. Ms. Newton stated that the owner Mr. Rollins had approached her regarding possible uses and she also discussed with him, as part of improvements to the area behind the Historical Society building, a possible mural on the side of a building at the rear of the Mitchell House property.

Discussion ensued regarding the proposed "village" improvements to the rear of the Historical Society building.

Ms. Minner updated the Commission as to the status of the Holly Hall Building improvement project.

Ms. Newton asked about the proposed new use of Lyon's Pharmacy and whether or not they would be required to come before the Commission. Ms. Minner stated that so far no permit applications have been received.

Discussion ensued regarding various properties in the downtown.

MOTION: Mr. Morgan made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Whiteman seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.