

**Town of Elkton  
Elkton Historic and Architectural Review Committee  
December 15, 2014**

**PRESENT:** Paula Newton, Chair; Mark Clark; Josh Brown; Jeanne D. Minner, Director of Planning

**ABSENT:** Brittany Schwartz; Steve Leonard; John Downs Esq., Legal Counsel

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 the first agenda item is the approval of the minutes from the meeting of July 30, 2014. She asked if anyone had any comments or corrections regarding the minutes. She stated on the first page the second motion should read Josh Brown and there should be a period on the second page above the last motion.

**MOTION:** Mr. Brown made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Mr. Clark seconded the motion. Ms. Newton called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously.

**Request by Mr. Dave Gipson and Mr. Mark Mears, representing Union Hospital of Cecil County to demolish the duplex located at 132/134 W. High Street, Elkton.**

Mr. Gipson and Mr. Mears introduced themselves to the Commission. Mr. Gipson stated the hospital had taken a 10 year renewable lease on the property located at 123 Singerly, which used to be a medical office building. He stated it was the intent of the hospital to make some renovations to the building and use it as a hospital operated urgent care center. He stated that for a medical use the facility has adequate parking based on square footage but they believe that as an urgent care facility there will be times of peak use particularly in the late afternoon and evening. He stated that they have negotiated with the owners of the adjacent properties, a duplex at 132/134 W. High Street and their intent is to acquire the properties, demolish the building, and extend the parking area for 123 Singerly Avenue. He stated that if they receive approval to demolish the building they will move forward with engineering plans and proceed through the Town approval process.

Mr. Clark stated that his office was next door to this duplex. He stated that while it is old it is not historically significant.

Mr. Brown asked Mr. Clark whether he saw any historic value in the building at this time.

Mr. Clark stated that the building is in terrible condition and due to the number of renovations it has limited historic value and is not one of a kind.

Ms. Newton stated that she would like documentation of the interior and exterior of the structure in order to have something on record. She stated she realized that the owners had no interest in restoring the duplex.

Discussion ensued regarding ownership of the alley, the possibility of fencing the parking area and the fact that while livable only half the duplex is occupied and there is no interest in restoring it.

Ms. Newton asked if there were any more questions from the Commission. There being none she noted there was no public in attendance. She requested a motion.

**MOTION:** Mr. Clark made a motion to approve the request for demolition as submitted. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Old Business:** Mr. Brown asked where they stood with regard to the Standards and Specifications for the Historic District.

Ms. Minner stated that she had tried to contact Brian Kelly who did the work at Elk Landing but did not receive a response. She stated she then e-mailed JMA, the company Mr. Kelly works for, asking if they were interested in submitting a proposal but again did not receive a response. She stated her next step is to call the company and find out whom to contact and if their web page information is correct.

Mr. Clark stated he had spoken with one of the principals at JMA and that they were very interested. He stated they just needed to find who the right person is. He stated he had also spoken with a John Milner associate at an award ceremony and they were also interested. He added that a woman who used to work for him had contact with graduate students at the University who may be interested in designing the standards for a graduate project. He stated he would e-mail Ms. Minner three (3) names.

Discussion ensued regarding the growth of Union Hospital into the residential areas. Mr. Brown stated that Mr. Rodney Little with Maryland Historic Trust retired after thirty-seven (37) years and that Mr. Little had a quote that went "Buildings aren't necessarily significant because their old, buildings are old because they are significant." He stated that he wasn't sure, once standards were created, whether or not Elkton as a whole would be accepting of them.

Ms. Newton stated that she felt that the areas of Town worth saving are getting smaller and smaller.

Mr. Brown further stated that he felt the current historic district is too unwieldy and that, in his opinion, several pockets or voluntary easements on certain properties would be better and that they could concentrate on helping save those areas/buildings that want to be saved.

Ms. Newton stated that the one (1) significant building they haven't been successful in saving is the Rollins building and that you don't get any more significant than that building.

Mr. Clark stated that the problem was that this Commission had no "tools" to force anyone to comply with the regulations.

Discussion ensued regarding the on-going problems with the Rollins building and creating levels of significance for existing buildings.

**New Business:** None.