

**Town of Elkton  
Elkton Historic District Commission  
August 29, 2018**

**PRESENT:** Paula Newton, Chair; Brian Morgan; Will Whiteman; Brittany Schwartz; Nancy Yerkes; Jeanne D. Minner, Director of Planning; David Beste, Esq., Legal Counsel

**ABSENT:** None

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 June 27, 2018 meeting. She asked if any member had any corrections. Ms. Yerkes stated that she attended that meeting and her name is not on the present list. Hearing no further corrections, she asked for a motion.

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

Ms. Newton introduced the second item on the agenda.

**Request by Mr. Erin O'Donnell of CHF Contractors Ltd for demolition of the house located at 138-140 W. High Street, Elkton.**

Mr. O'Donnell introduced himself to the Commission. He stated that he was present this evening at the request of the owner of 138-140 W. High Street who currently resides in New Mexico. He stated that she purchased the property at auction and that her original plan was to fix up the property and use it as a rental. He stated that, after being informed of the condition of the building on the property, she is requesting permission to demolish the building. He described and showed photographs of the deteriorated condition of the building since the fire many years previously. He stated that the interior had been exposed for so long that there was plant life growing in the interior. He stated that when he examined the building he also found evidence that unauthorized people were using it as a shelter, including setting fires on the floor.

Discussion ensued regarding the purchase cost of the building and the history of the building since the fire.

Ms. Newton asked if there was any public comment in favor of the proposal.

Ms. Sherry Willis of 40 Limerick Lane, Rising Sun, MD introduced herself to the Commission. She stated that she was the owner of properties behind this property, specifically 124 to 128 N. Bridge Street. She stated that the tenants of her properties have been complaining for years about the condition of 138-140 W. High Street. She stated that people remove the boards and use it as a

shelter, the yard is overgrown and has become home to rats. She stated her only concern with demolishing the building is how any lead paint issues will be addressed and how any dust possibly containing lead would be contained.

Ms. Minner stated that she believed that is all taken care of as part of the demolition permit.

Mr. Mark Clark, 136 W. High Street, Elkton, introduced himself to the Commission. Mr. Clark stated that he has no concerns regarding the demolition of this building. He stated that he walked through it after that fire in 2005. He stated that it has been a nightmare property for the last ten (10) to twelve (12) years. He stated that it is not historically significant, it is not important architecturally, and it is not feasible to renovate. He stated that the yard is a jungle and he has seen ground hogs, snakes, rats, squirrels, cats and people on the property. He stated that children play in the alley and it is dangerous for them to enter that yard if the ball goes on the property. He stated that he does have one request if the Commission approves the demolition. He stated that he has been maintaining the hedge and would like the retention of the hedge to be a part of the motion to demolish.

John Downs, Esq. introduced himself to the Commission. He stated that he was the attorney for the Town and is before the Commission tonight at the request of Mayor Alt. He stated it is the wish of the Mayor and Commissioners for this building to be demolished. He stated that there is no economic benefit to restoring it. He stated that the Mayor and Commissioners are grateful that there is finally an owner requesting that it be demolished. He stated that this building is not only a health hazard but it is also a fire hazard.

Ms. Newton asked if there was any public comment in opposition of the request.

Hearing none, she requested a motion.

**MOTION: Mr. Morgan made a motion to approve the demolition contingent upon retaining the hedge. Mr. Whiteman seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.**

Ms. Newton introduced the third item on the agenda.

**Request by Mr. Larry Crouse for replacement of the roof at 200 North Street, Elkton.**

Mr. Crouse introduced himself to the Commission. He stated that he was here this evening to request approval of replacing the slate roof on 200 North Street with asphalt shingles that resemble slate. He stated that the roof has been disintegrating for years and that he has been replacing it as needed but it is in such bad shape now that it all needs to be replaced. He compared the costs of replacing it all with slate shingles with the costs of asphalt shingles and "fake slate" shingles. He showed the Commission samples of different types and color of shingles.

Discussion ensued regarding the fact the building was built in the 1960's and that a slate roof was overkill and there was no need for slate at that time.

Ms. Newton asked if there were any comments from the audience in favor of or opposed to this request. Noting that there was no audience, she asked for a motion.

**MOTION: Ms. Newton made the motion to approve the installation of an asphalt shingle that resembles slate. Ms. Shwartz seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.**

**Old/New Business:** Ms. Minner and the Commission discussed ways to contain health hazard issues such as lead paint during demolition. They further discussed a report done on mitigation of other hazards such as flooding.

Discussion ensued regarding the increase in demolition requests in the Historic District and any ways that it might be curtailed.

Ms. Minner stated that a new owner would be going into Mr. Smiegel's old building but at this time they are not proposing any exterior renovations.

Ms. Minner stated that Brookbend Interiors would be submitting a request for approval of a new sign.

Discussion ensued as to when a sign needs to be brought before the Commission for approval.

Mr. Whiteman inquired about the proposed jewelry shop next to his office on Main Street.

Ms. Schwartz stated that she met the woman and that it will be fine jewelry and that the woman has a shop in Oxford.

Discussion ensued regarding other businesses in the downtown area.

Ms. Minner updated the Commission as to the status of the plank house at 260 W. Main Street.

Ms. Newtown asked for a motion to adjourn.

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

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:05 PM.