

**Town of Elkton
Elkton Historic District Commission
October 5, 2022**

PRESENT: Paula Newton, Chair; Mickey Thompson; Christine A. Brimm Hurschman; Jeanne D. Minner, Director of Planning; David Beste, Esq., Legal Counsel

ABSENT: None

Ms. Newton called the meeting to order at approximately 6:10 p.m. 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 to 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 to 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 item on the agenda is approval of the minutes from the August 24, 2022 meeting. She stated that she had one correction. Ms. Newton asked if the commission had any other corrections. There were no other corrections. She then called for a motion.

MOTION: Mr. Thompson made a motion to approve the minutes of August 24, 2022 subject to the noted correction. Ms. Hurschman seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Newton introduced the second item on the agenda, which was the request of Justin Hill for placement of a black wrought iron fence with gate.

Request of Justin Hill, applicant for 213 East Main Street, Elkton, MD. The request includes placement of a black wrought iron fence with gate.

Present at the meeting to represent this request was Mr. Justin Hill. Mr. Hill stated he appreciates the Commission striving to maintain the historic nature of the Town. He stated in the front of his building there is a flower bed bordered by brick and he would like to place a black wrought iron fence. The fence will go from the corner of his brick front porch along the edge of the flower bed and then behind the existing bricks on the front. He stated there will be a 4' wide gate with an arch at the front of the sidewalk to the house and the fence will then run up to the other side of the porch. He stated in addition he will have ornamental iron balls on the fence corners and gate posts.

Ms. Newton called if the Commission members had any questions. Mr. Thompson had no questions. Ms. Hurschman had no questions for this applicant.

Ms. Newton asked for comments from the audience in favor of or in opposition to this submittal. There was no one who wished to speak for or against this request.

Ms. Minner informed Mr. Hill that a building permit would be required for the fence from the Town Building Department and he should submit that application to Mr. Chip Bromwell.

MOTION: Motion was made by Mr. Thompson is approve the request presented by Mr. Justin Hill for 213 East Main Street for a black wrought iron fence. The motion was seconded by Ms. Hurschman and unanimously approved.

Request of Steven Forrest, applicant for 265 Mackall Street, Elkton, MD. The request includes replacing existing windows with vinyl replacement windows. The request also includes removing walls of enclosed front porch and open up with support posts to allow an open concept and feel. Replacing porch floor with composite decking and painting all porch trim boards.

Present at the meeting to represent this request was Mr. Steven Forrest. He stated he purchased this property the last day of August last year and the property has not been rented since that time due to extent of repairs which needed to be done. There has been no water or electricity to the building but they recently put in all new electric service, panels and hub. They are in the process of having the power restored once all the inspections are completed.

He stated they are now working on the exterior of the building. He stated the existing front porch is rotted out including the floor boards, side walls, and fascia. He noted almost all of the glass in the windows has been broken and they are in very bad shape.

Mr. Forrest referred the Commission to the photographs submitted which show this property and a neighboring property which has an open porch. He stated he would like to open the front porch in the same manner as the other property. He stated they would also like to replace any windows which are inoperable. They are aware of three windows but there may be others which will also need to be replaced. He stated the existing windows are vinyl and they will be replacing them with new vinyl windows.

Mr. Thompson asked if they would be replacing the porch from the corners of the house or only where the porch is currently. Mr. Forrest stated they would only be replacing the existing width of porch.

Ms. Newton asked the condition of the interior front door. Mr. Forrest stated the door isn't in terrible condition but it is an older door with glass panels. He stated the locks are slightly corroded and don't latch as well as they should so they would like to replace the door as well.

Mr. Thompson asked if the chain link fence would be removed. Mr. Forrest stated he hadn't considered any changes to the fence but he would like to remove it eventually. Ms. Minner asked if he was considering wrought iron. He stated he thought that would look better.

There was discussion of the satellite dish and antenna on the house. Mr. Forrest stated both the satellite dish and the antenna would be removed. He mentioned the decorative areas on the

building and said they are planning to keep those trimmings. Ms. Minner asked if his intention was to rent the property. He confirmed he would be renting. Ms. Minner asked if a lead paint inspection had been done and Mr. Forrest stated they have a certificate from an inspection that was done in 2020.

There was discussion of the materials for the porch supports. Mr. Thompson encouraged him to maintain as much natural material as possible in order to keep a similar look of other houses in the neighborhood. Ms. Newton asked if the porch was concrete. Mr. Forrest stated the porch has concrete steps the porch itself is made of wood. They are planning to replace the floor with poly flooring.

The Committee members had no further questions.

MOTION: Motion was made by Ms. Hurschman to approve the request. Mr. Thompson modified the request to include removal of the chain link fence. Ms. Newton called for approval of the motion. All Commission members voted to approve the modification and the motion passed unanimously.

Request of Jeremy Booher, applicant for 156 West Main Street, Elkton, MD. The request includes placement of a front entrance portico.

Present at the meeting to represent this request was Mr. Jeremy Booher. Mr. Booher stated they are hoping to place an entrance to the building facing toward Howard Street. He said when they purchased the building it had a banquet hall in the downstairs. He would like to place a roof in order to create a front entrance. He stated they would like to place cedar beams for a rustic look. He mentioned that this is not the original building.

Ms. Minner mentioned that the property falls in the Historic District as well as the Critical Area. There was discussion regarding the square footage of the portico with respect to the Critical Area requirements. Ms. Minner noted Mr. Booher would need to apply for a building permit from Chip Bromwell if the request is approved. Mr. Thompson asked for clarification regarding the entrance off Howard Street. Mr. Booher noted the building is 'L' shaped. He stated the entrance to the salon will be from Main Street. He confirmed there will be an entrance to the hall from the parking lot entrance off Main Street but the main entrance to the banquet hall will be from Howard Street.

Ms. Newton noted they had been before the Commission and they were approved at that time. There was discussion regarding the renovations which have already been done to the building. Ms. Newton stated the current renovations will provide the back of the building with an entrance. Mr. Booher mentioned some of the renovations they have completed including the repairs to the retaining wall.

Ms. Minner asked if the banquet hall was already open. Mr. Booher confirmed it is open. Ms. Newton asked the capacity of the banquet hall. Mr. Booher stated the upstairs will hold 50 people while the downstairs will accommodate 100 people. There was discussion regarding catering.

Mr. Booher stated they do not do any catering they simply supply the space for events. Ms. Booher stated they work with a number of local party planners and caterers on a regular basis. The committee members agreed this will be a positive addition to the downtown area.

Discussion ensued regarding the property at 144-146 W. Main Street. Ms. Minner noted there had been plans made for that property and a great deal of time was spent getting approvals to develop it, specifically applications to the Critical Area Commission and issues with parking. She stated if they were able to contact the previous owners that would be of great help to them. Discussion continued regarding the improvements that were planned for that property.

There was no further discussion regarding this agenda item.

MOTION: Motion was made by Mr. Thompson to approve the placement of a front entrance portico as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Hurschman with the remaining Committee member voting as follows: Ms. Newton – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business – Ms. Minner said slow progress is being made on the Holly Hall Building. The Town attorney is looking into having the deed restriction removed with regard to subdividing the property by either contacting the descendants of the owner who placed original deed restrictions on the property to agree to allow the restrictions to be removed or if Holly Hall had assigned another non-profit to take over jurisdiction of the easement. She stated Ms. Warburton had donated a large amount of money from Associated Cecil Endeavors to the Historic Elk Landing Foundation. She said Mike Dixon and Josh Brown were trying to determine if any oversight was given to them with respect to the easement. Mr. Beste asked the name of the agency which is preventing the subdivision.

Ms. Minner noted there is the deed restriction but there is also an easement with respect to what can be done with the building in the direction of Route 213. Mr. Beste said he would speak with Mr. Downs concerning the property. He feels there is an easier way to address these deed restrictions and easement. Ms. Newton mentioned that she had spoken with Ms. Deborah Storke, who is a descendent of the owners of the Holly Hall Center and was also one of the original Historic District Commission members, and she had no objections.

Mr. Beste explained that if the easements and restrictions run with the land then they are saddled on that land and you just can't get rid of them. But if the purpose of the easement and restriction is now defeated then it no longer serves the original purpose. He said he would speak with Mr. Downs concerning the easements and restrictions to see what is able to be done through legal channels.

New Business – Ms. Minner stated she submitted a grant application to Community Parks & Playgrounds to acquire the Foard property at the end of East High Street for a pocket park. She has received two appraisals: one appraisal was very low and the second appraisal was actually the same as the asking price. She said we will wait to see what happens. This has been something that has been in the Comprehensive Plan and the Downtown Master Development Plan. She said

she would love to see a nice park there for the residents. She said there are no parks close enough to walk to in the area and there is no active play equipment available for the children. It would be a nice area to sit and relax while the children play. It was also suggested maybe there could be a table for adults to play chess.

Ms. Newton asked about the status of other properties in Town. Ms. Minner stated there has been interest in the Minihane's property who wished to place apartments there. There were concerns regarding ADA accessibility and parking. She noted the property is adjacent to a number of public parking lots and we want to encourage density in the downtown. She said that the way the building had been laid out as a hotel, and with the current building standards, there wouldn't be room for more than maybe seven (7) apartments. Discussion ensued regarding past plans for the building which never developed.

There being no further items to discuss Ms. Newton called for a motion to adjourn.

MOTION: Motion was made by Mr. Thompson to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Hurschman with the remaining Commission member voting as follows: Ms. Newton – Aye. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Brie Humphreys