

Sykesville Historic District Commission Minutes

August 28, 2017

DRAFT

The Sykesville Historic District Commission (SHDC) meeting was held on August 28, 2017 in the Conference Room at the Sykesville Town House. Commissioner Fogg called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

PRESENT: Commissioners Norman Fogg, Melissa Clark and Michael Johnston. Council Member Stacy Link

STAFF: Ian Shaw, Mayor
Kerry Chaney, Town Clerk

SHDC MINUTES: April 25, 2017– all motioned to accept the minutes as written with Commissioner Clark abstaining.
May 23, 2017 – all motioned to accept the minutes as written with Commissioner Johnston abstaining.
July 13, 2017 – all motioned to accept the minutes as written.

REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS:

- **# 17-12 7610 Main Street Formal Approval of Patio**
The architect for this project was in attendance. This was discussed via email between the Commissioners. It was decided to use pavers placed in a running bond pattern in the color South Mountain Sand for the patio. The old railroad rails must be exposed because they are an important part of the history of the Town. The SHDC agreed to the cutting and raising of the rails so they would be exposed when the patio was level with the existing front porch. There was some discussion about stepping stones placed between the patio and the sidewalk instead of pavers. The pathway was shown as an ADA accessible option if the patio was depressed to the level of the rails. Because the patio is now flush with the porch, ADA accessibility is achieved via the porch. The sidewalk North of 7610 Main Street is not ADA accessible. If the sidewalk is fixed to be ADA accessible, and the owners want to revisit the idea of placing an ADA accessible pathway from the sidewalk to the patio, the SHDC agreed that the same pavers used for the patio would be acceptable for the pathway.

Commissioner Fogg motioned to approve application #17-12 for a patio at 7610 Main Street with an amendment to the original plans that the tracks would be cut and raised to be visible within the patio pavers and that the connection was not created between the patio and the sidewalk, as this application is in compliance with the guidelines, pages 52-57, Public Spaces and Landscape features. Council Member Link seconded. All voted in favor with Commissioner Clark abstaining.

- **Follow up about the Business Use of Sidewalk Permit Applications**

Kerry Chaney, Town Clerk, explained that letters were sent to the business owners who submitted a permit application based on what was discussed at the May 23, 2017 SHDC meeting. Also, a permit application has been distributed to merchants for use when placing merchandise on the sidewalks, as these would not fall under the SHDC purview for review.

The SHDC agreed that any items not in compliance with the guidelines that received a letter should be removed by September 15, 2017. After this date, a second letter will be sent to the business owner about the noncompliant items. Items that have a clearance issue will be sent to Town staff for review from a zoning perspective.

- **#16-19 Warfield Complex Development Plan**

Sean Davis and Steve McCleaf presented the proposed grading for Parcel E/F of the Warfield Complex. They have concerns about conflicting guidelines pertaining to preserving existing landscaping and constructing new buildings to be on the same scale as the historic buildings. Richard Wagner, David H. Gleason Associates, explained that a balance should be found between the guidelines, and it is up to the SHDC to decide the balance.

The applicant presented a map of the proposed sticks of townhomes showing if they will be constructed using a bay system or a stepped system. The sticks that run North to South are predominantly the bay system; the sticks that run East to West will predominantly be the stepped system. The three sticks of townhomes along Springfield Avenue will either need the most dramatic stepped system or they will need to dramatically change the grading including retaining walls.

If the grading were changed for these townhomes, a four foot retaining wall would be needed 52 feet behind the western most stick of townhomes, an eight foot retaining wall would be needed 25 feet behind the middle stick of townhomes, and a four foot wall would be needed 32 feet behind the eastern most stick of townhomes. The driveways would be at their maximum slope and Springfield Avenue would be about level with the second floor of the townhomes. This was noted as Scheme A.

If the stepped system is used, the townhomes are used as the retaining wall. The majority of the lower levels of the townhomes would be underground from the Springfield Avenue side. The townhomes would be similar to a split level front entry. This was noted as Scheme B.

It was discussed that every historic building sits up higher than the road. The stepped system, Scheme B, would allow the three sticks of townhomes to be perceived to sit higher than they would in Scheme A because of where the view from Springfield Avenue lines up with the townhomes.

The applicant also presented 3D views, one from the circle looking into Parcel E/F, one looking from the village green toward the historic buildings, and one from the historic buildings looking toward Parcel E/F. The existing trees were not superimposed on the 3D views to allow the buildings to be seen.

Commissioner Clark asked if it was possible to gain height horizontally by changing the floor and ceiling heights internally to the basement level only, making up grade in the rear of the townhomes, to allow for a level roof line. The applicants said it was possible, however it would be difficult and would have to be worked out with the builders. They suggested creating a bay system by using similar architectural features in groups instead.

There are also five proposed retaining walls that the applicant is looking into removing. The northern most one is proposed to be five feet high and 105 feet long; the second is proposed to be three feet high and 148 feet long; the third one is proposed to be seven feet high and 120 feet long; the fourth one is proposed to be seven feet high and 121 feet long; and the fifth and southern most wall is proposed to be 2 feet high and 55 feet long. The townhomes would be 15 feet away from the retaining wall at the closest point. It is possible to flip the one stick of three houses to be front facing garages so the walls would be in the backyards of those townhomes rather than the front.

In response to Richard Wagner's memo dated August 22, 2017, it is possible to relocate the parking spaces to provide an open view, and BGE will have to confirm if the lights are Dark Sky approved. The buffer along the park and Integrace property is irregular, and the plantings inside Parcel E/F should be irregular as well.

Council Member Link motioned to approve Scheme B for the stepped system for Parcel E/F based on the memo dated August 22, 2017 from Richard Wagner, with the understanding that the applicant will maintain consistent elevations from the second floor level to the roof peak on a minimum if the two center bays of each stick, with grade changes accomplished at the rear garage level. And the applicant will attempt to investigate if this "consistent elevation" method could be expanded to additional bays per stick along Springfield Avenue. And with the condition placed upon comment 1.c on page two of Richard Wagner's memo that the irrigation system will be included if Carroll County approved the water usage. The retaining walls at the western boundary of the site are approved in concept of height and length with final approval of material and landscaping treatment, as well as final landscaping, locations, spacing/regular/irregular patterns at the final subdivision plan approval. Commissioner Clark seconded. All voted in favor

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Gate House Museum –The Gate House Museum (GHM) curators have been working on three more wall displays that are due to be completed by the end of August. Curtains have been purchased for the windows. Jack is hoping to install a TV on one wall over the next few weeks. Then the whole 100 years ago display will be complete.

The Smithsonian project drove a lot of people to the museum. The GHM appreciated approximately 60 visitors over that time period, lots of them kids. As part of the project, the museums did a little passport program, where you went to each museum, answered some questions and got your passport stamped. There were prizes for the kids. It was a great idea, and Jack and Andrea plan to come up with something similar soon that just involves the GHM. It's a great way to bring in kids and make things fun. It'll be a sort of treasure hunt for facts and we'll have some prizes at the end of the program.

Come September focus will once again shift to marketing and archiving.

BUSINESS:

- Observation of violations within the Historic District: Patapsco Distilling Company has neon signs in their windows. A letter will be sent giving him 60 days to remove the neon signs. There were also rocks placed in front of the Distilling Company without approval from the SHDC. They must be removed immediately, and an application for landscaping will be accepted in the future. Kerry Chaney will deliver the letter in person on Wednesday.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, Motion was made by Commissioner Fogg and seconded by Council Member Link to adjourn at 8:54 P.M. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kerry Chaney, Recording Secretary