

Easton Historic District Commission
Easton, Maryland
March 9, 2009

Members Present: Mac Brittingham, Joyce DeLaurentis, Pete Leshner, Kurt Herrmann, John Sener, Lena Gill

Absent: Roger Bollman

In the absence of Mr. Bollman, vice chairman John Sener called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as written.

Opening statement given by the Chairman.

The Commission operates under the authority granted to it by section 701 of the Town of Easton Zoning Ordinance. And, I hereby open the record of the public hearing on cases heard this evening and, in accordance with our legal responsibilities, I enter into the record the following items: notice of the public hearing, adopted design guidelines, resumes of commission members and any consultants used by the Commission, records of any previous meetings, and any letters to the Commission on a case.

The decisions of the HDC may be appealed within 30 days of approval.

General Order of the hearing of Applications

- *Introduction of the application by the presiding officer*
- *Presentation by the applicant or his agent*
- *Questions by members of the Commission*
- *Public comment*
- *Petitioner rebuttal*
- *Discussion and consideration by the Commission*
- *Decision motion and statement of Basis for Decision*
- *The applicant may withdraw the application at any time up to when the vote is taken*

A Certificate of Appropriateness shall lapse upon the expiration of the corresponding Building Permit. In the event a building permit is not required, the Certificate of Appropriateness shall lapse six (6) months from its issuance if substantial work is not underway. For good cause shown, this period may be extended by the Commission.

I will now entertain a motion to accept the agenda for this evening.

The agenda for the evening was accepted 6-0.

Consent Docket: no items

Old Business:

3-2009 206/208 August St. Jeffrey Malyan, contractor

In addition to contractor Mr. Malyan, property owner Charles Capute and Rob Sotorio were present to represent the applicant. This application was the subject of a site visit on March 3, 2009 by commission members Ms. Gill, Mr. Leshner, and Mr. Sener, who reported on observations of condition of the windows and doors on the subject property. An item by item report from the site visit was submitted for the record. Several commission members suggested that the condition of windows might allow their

wholesale replacement; others suggested that windows in better condition might be moved to the front, so that replacement windows could be installed only on the side and rear facades. However, the applicant noted that the sizes of the windows on the front were not the same as on the other facades, so such a window location scheme would likely be infeasible.

The applicant provided a sample all-vinyl SDL “builder’s” replacement window, which the applicant explained could be provided in a 2 over 2 light pattern with muntin width to match the existing windows. The applicant also provided a cut sheet for fiberglass replacement doors, suggesting a solid 6-panel door for the front door of each address, and a half lighted door for the rear entrances. The applicant noted that a 5-panel door with horizontal panels to match the existing doors had not been located and may not be made in this replacement material.

The commission found the structure to be a contributing structure to the historic district.

Commission members suggested a 4-panel door from the same provider might be more appropriate, and that the rear door would be more appropriate if the glass is a single pane of glass, rather than 9-light. The applicant agreed to these changes.

Commission members expressed reluctance to accept the proposed replacement materials, as all-vinyl replacement windows have consistently been found not to be compatible with the historic character of the historic district. Furthermore, the proposed replacement windows would change the proportions and light sizes exhibited in the existing windows, which is not consistent with the Guidelines, page 51, recommendation 2.

The applicant agreed to table the application to provide an opportunity to find a more suitable replacement window.

Application tabled as incomplete – Motion by DeLaurentis, passed 6-0.

New Business:

8-2009 102 E. Dover Street O. N. Andrew & Son

Andy Smith of O.N. Andrew & Son represented the applicant. He brought a sample of a louvered shutter made of a high density extruded plastic. He noted that the condition of the shutters on the subject property, also known as the Bullitt House, were in very poor condition, or, in many cases, missing entirely. He proposed the sample shutter as a replacement, noting that it would be mounted top and bottom to the wall with a clear plastic angle piece, but that hinges would also be installed, so that the shutters would appear to work, although they would not in fact swing shut.

The structure was determined to be a contributing structure in the historic district, with a great deal of historical integrity. One book on architectural history describes the building as the best surviving example of Federal style architecture in the town of Easton.

Commission members noted that a similar shutter had been accepted on a contributing structure on West Street, but in contrast to that proposal, where the substitute material was installed only on secondary facades, in locations where shutters were long missing, the Bullitt House shutters were proposed for all faces, including the front, and that existing wood shutters would be replaced with a synthetic material. One member cited Guideline page 52, recommendation 2 as not supporting the proposed replacement.

The applicant requested the application be tabled to provide him with an opportunity to submit specifications for a more appropriate replacement shutter.

Application tabled as incomplete – motion by Herrmann, passed 6-0.

9-2009 30 Locust Street Will Cawley

Mr. Cawley, contractor for the project, presented the application. The subject property, a rental duplex, currently has vinyl siding on the front and weathered cedar shingle on all other facades. Submitted photos provided evidence of the poor condition of the windows on the structure. The applicant proposed replacement windows and replacement vinyl siding to be applied to all sides of the structure. He also proposed wrapping the boxed soffit and fascia in metal to reduce future maintenance needs. In response to a commission question, the applicant said that he would be restoring missing portions of the soffit and fascia on the south side.

The commission found the structure to be contributing to the historic district.

In response to questions from the commission, the applicant agreed to modify his application in the following ways: the vinyl replacement siding would be applied only to the front, where there is existing vinyl; other facades to be repaired in-kind with cedar shingle. At the owner's option, the front façade may be resided with cedar shingle to match the other facades. Second, the soffit and fascia would be repaired in wood, not wrapped in metal. Third, the replacement wooden double hung SDL windows would have permanently affixed exterior grilles, not snap-in grids.

Member Lesher cited Guidelines page 51, recommendation 2 in support of the modified application.

Application approved as modified – motion by Lesher, approved 6-0.

Discussion 203 S. Hanson Street Kave Dutrow

The owner represented herself for the application and presented a landscaping plan including pavers, plantings, an arbor and fence. She noted that she may want to execute the plan in phases, postponing action on the arbor and fence.

Members identified no issues that might contravene the Guidelines, and encouraged the applicant to submit the application, supplementing the landscaping plan with a plat map and one or more photographs.

No action was taken.

Discussion Tidewater Inn Bob Santucci

Bob Santucci of Potomac Hospitality Services appeared before the Commission on behalf of Freeman, the corporate owner of the Tidewater. He explained that a large hotel chain had expressed interest in the Tidewater, but only if certain changes could be made, three of which affect the exterior: individual room climate control units mounted under each window; a canopy over the entrance drive, and automatic doors.

Commission members reacted principally to the proposed units under the window of each guest room. Cutting additional openings in the brick to allow for such units would appear to violate Guidelines page 49, not recommended #1 and #4. No member saw a means to make this change in a way that conforms to the Guidelines.

Member Lesher suggested that the other changes might be less of an impediment. Automatic doors, particularly if existing doors could be retrofitted with the necessary equipment, should be achievable. The canopied entrance drive would be a much more substantial change, and while challenging to design it in a way that would be compatible with the existing building, there should be a way to achieve it within the parameters of the Guidelines.

Items from the Commission: none

The meeting was adjourned about 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pete Lesher

cc: Zach Smith