



City of Gaithersburg

31 South Summit Avenue
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20877

DRAFT

Historic District Commission Meeting Minutes
City Hall - Council Chambers
Wednesday, September 28, 2016, 7:30 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Historic District Commission was called to order at 7:30 p.m. with Chair Kirtz presiding. Committee members present: Marc Feinstein, Mary Jo LaFrance, Robert Love, John Roddy, and Dean Ventola. (Alternate Commissioner Love did not participate in the public meetings because a full commission was present.) Staff present: Chris Berger, Sandra Gross, Frank Johnson, Tom Lonergan, Martin Matsen, and Trudy Schwarz.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. August 24, 2016

Motion was made by John Roddy, seconded by Mary Jo LaFrance, that August 24, 2016, be approved.

Vote: 5-0

III. HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT REVIEWS

A. HIST-7414-2016 5 South Summit Avenue Central Business District (CBD) Zone Rehabilitation of Olde Towne Park Plaza HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT

The commissioners had no conflicts.

Planner Berger provided an introduction. The City locally designated the property in 1983. In 2014 the Mayor appointed citizens to an ad hoc committee to study the plaza and identify goals and features for the site. The Planning Commission reviewed the plans at its September 7, 2016, meeting and approved with no conditions.

Steven Torgerson, a design associate at A. Morton Thomas Engineering, gave a PowerPoint presentation of the plaza rehabilitation. He was joined by Sandra Gross, an engineer with the City's Public Works, and Tom Lonergan, the City's

economic development director. The focal point will be a multifunction space that will feature a splash fountain. The project will include parking, bioretention areas, pavers, lighting, benches, landscaping, and decorative air conditioning screens that feature historical images of Gaithersburg. Shade structures may also be constructed depending on the budget.

Commissioner Feinstein was complimentary of the design, specifically the splash fountain. He inquired about the reduction in size of the parking lot. Mr. Torgerson and Economic Development Director Lonergan both said the ad hoc committee discussed the topic, and the plaza's parking lot size was a compromise. Commissioner Feinstein said some of the light poles appeared too narrow and out of scale. Mr. Torgerson responded that the tall light poles are intended to be secondary to the trees among them. Commissioner Feinstein inquired about how the parking lot will be closed for special events. Parking barricades will be placed at the lot's entrance.

Commissioner La France had similar concerns about the lighting but was satisfied with Mr. Torgerson's response.

Vice Chair Roddy asked if the splash fountain was to have a varied grade. Mr. Torgerson said the grade will slope about an inch to the middle of the fountain.

Commissioner Ventola asked how many parking spaces will be lost with removal of the existing lot. It will be about a dozen spaces. He inquired about the status of the Budd Car. It is proposed to be moved pending development to the adjacent parcel to the east. He asked if the parking islands in the proposed lot will be raised or flat. They will be raised. He complimented the air conditioning screens but was concerned the perforated panels may not block the appearance or sound of the units. He also praised the lighting under the benches, use of the parking lots for vendors, reduction in size of on-site parking, multifunctionality of the fountain, potential installation of shade structures, LED lighting, train allee, and trees.

Chair Kirtz was also complimentary of the project. However, he said the benches were too modern for the site.

Motion was made by Dean Ventola, seconded by John Roddy, that HIST-7414-2016, 5 South Summit Avenue, Central Business District (CBD) Zone, Rehabilitation of Olde Towne Park Plaza, **HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT**, be approved.

Vote: 5-0

B. HIST-7401-2016
111 Meem Avenue
Medium Density Residential (R-90) Zone
Deck alteration; gate installation
HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT

There were no conflicts.

Planning Berger provided a staff presentation. The building is noncontributing to the Chestnut/Meem Historic District. The applicant seeks to alter the existing deck and install a gate on the existing fence.

The applicant and owner, Xiaozhong “Alex” Bao, was available for questions.

Commissioner Ventola inquired about the height of the proposed fence. It will be 8 feet tall. He said the fence appeared to be excessive and asked the applicant why it was so tall. Mr. Bao said he bought the property with the existing fence already in place and did not wish to replace it with a lower fence.

Commissioner La France agreed the fence was too high and suggested the fence be lowered should it be rebuilt.

Commissioner Feinstein reminded that the existing fence was approved by the HDC in 2001.

Motion was made by Dean Ventola, seconded by John Roddy, that HIST-7401-2016, 111 Meem Avenue, Medium Density Residential (R-90) Zone, Deck alteration; gate installation, **HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT**, be approved with one (1) condition:

1. The applicant must receive a fence permit and deck permit from the City before beginning work.

Vote: 5-0

C. HIST-7413-2016
102 Chestnut Street
Medium Density Residential (R-90) Zone
Tree removal
HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT

There were no conflicts. Commissioner La France disclosed she lives in the Chestnut/Meem Historic District.

Planner Berger provided a staff presentation. The applicant seeks to remove an apple tree in the rear yard that is in poor condition.

All commissioners agreed the tree was in poor condition and should be removed with the condition that a replacement tree is planted. Commissioner Ventola

added a second condition that the stump is ground down to grade.

Motion was made by Mary Jo LaFrance, seconded by John Roddy, that HIST-7413-2016, 102 Chestnut Street, Medium Density Residential (R-90) Zone Tree removal, **HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT**, be approved with two (2) conditions:

1. The applicant shall plant a replacement tree on the property of a species listed on the Chestnut/Meem Historic District Guidelines' suggested plant list.
2. The stump shall be down ground to grade.

Vote: 5-0

IV. STAFF UPDATES

V. COMMISSION UPDATES

Chair Kirtz said the Maryland Association of Historic District Commission's Crab Feast on September 10 in Cambridge, Maryland, was a success.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by John Roddy, seconded by Marc Feinstein, that Adjournment, be approved.

Vote: 5-0