

## GLOUCESTER HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2011

Conference Room, City Hall

**Members Present:** D. Porper, Chair, N. Goodick, R. Pino, P. Shea, C. Nazarian

**The meeting was called to order** at 7:01 o'clock PM by Chairman Porper.

**First item** on the agenda was continued from the previous meeting regarding a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to attach a bracket and a business sign to the building located at 37 Main Street, Map 7, Lot 38. Appearing for the applicant was John Nicastro.

Mr. Nicastro presented a black and white image of the proposed sign with dimensions 36" wide and 24" high. He explained that the sign would be in black and white, as shown, printed on eco-friendly PVC board measuring about 1 1/2" thick by Seaside Graphics.

Mr. Shea suggested that the bracket to hang the sign be copied from an iron bracket for an adjacent attorney's office sign as shown in a photograph of the building façade showing the previous sign in the form of an ice cream cone. Mr. Nicastro noted that the same artisan, Simon Prudenzi, would be employed to make the bracket and all agreed this was a wise course.

Mr. Nazarian suggested that the sign would benefit by framing the board on both sides. There was a discussion of size of the frame element, whether it is a painted band or an actual molding. A width of about 2-1/2" was deemed to be in proportion to the sign size and building context.

Mr. Nazarian further suggested that the frame element could be of a contrasting color. There was a discussion about using deep pink, which appears in the window and shop interior color scheme. Mr. Nicastro reacted favorably to the proposal to color-coordinate the frame.

There was a discussion of lighting the sign since there are is an existing pair of lighting instruments on the face of the building. Mr. Nicastro noted that these are not currently working but it would be an advantage to have some light on the sign. After some discussion, the Commission agreed that the sign could be illuminated but the level of brightness should be kept low so as not to disturb the appearance of the building façade.

Mr. Shea made a motion to approve the design and size of the sign as-proposed, to limit the size of the frame element to less than 3" in width, to approve the deep pink color for the frame, to specify that the bracket be copied from that of the attorney's sign, and that the existing lighting sources may be used but only with low wattage bulbs. Mr. Pino seconded the motion. The Commission voted unanimously in favor and the Chairman noted that the motion was adopted.

**Second item** on the agenda was the request for clarification concerning trim colors and to request a "sign off" (i.e. saying that the actual completed building complied with what was specified) according to the Certificate of Appropriateness for the Lorraine Apartment Building, Located at 80 Middle Street, Map 14, Lot 67. Appearing for the applicant was Gary Rasso.

Mr. Rasso noted that he needed the clarification indicating that he was in compliance with this Commission's terms in order to process a Certificate of Occupancy. The current color of the trim, consisting of corner boards, columns and large-scale building cornice is bone white.

There was some discussion concerning the proposed trim color. Mr. Pino recollected that it was intended to be a darker color. The Commission had a copy of the Certificate but it did not specify a darker trim color. Mr. Pino produced a set of black & white elevations from his folder that appeared to show the trim in contrast to the body of the building in a darker shade. The members agreed that a darker color, such as a

terra cotta or maroon, could make the building blend better with the vernacular architecture of Middle Street but that the white trim was also handsome.

Mr. Rasso noted that the trim will need to be painted in the not-too-distant future and that he would be pleased to return to the Commission for guidance on choosing a color. However, he pointed out that the trim comes pre-finished in bone white and that there was an urgent need for the client to obtain the Certificate of Occupancy from the City so that the building could become economically viable.

There was some discussion about the stone on the lower part of the building and all agreed that it looked very good. Mr. Porper asked about an exterior gas utility box and an electrical box, which currently do not look appropriate. Mr. Rasso replied that both would become less visible as plantings were installed.

Mr. Nazarian (who was not a member when the building design was reviewed) enquired about the boxy protrusion on the Middle Street façade and whether some softening via the use of trim or a balustrade could be employed. A discussion with the elevation drawings showed that this Commission had rejected a thin-scale proposed balustrade on this box previously. Mr. Rasso expressed his willingness to re-introduce a softening architectural element, such as a balustrade, and would seek the guidance of this Commission concerning its scale, materials and design at a later date.

Mr. Pino made a motion to issue the Certificate of Appropriateness. Ms. Goodick seconded the motion. The Commission voted unanimously in favor, the Chairman noted that the motion was adopted, and that he would call the Building Inspector's office the next day to inform them of the Commission's decision in favor of issuing the Certificate.

**Minutes of the previous meeting** had been approved in a prior polling of the members of the Commission. Mr. Nazarian noted that he was erroneously shown as present in the header to the minutes and this was scratched out.

**A proposed letter of thanks** to a HDC previous member, Mr. Burke, was suggested by Chairman Porper. He volunteered to draft and send it out. It was agreed unanimously that this should be done.

**The new Secretary for the Commission** will be Mr. Nazarian, who had volunteered to take the minutes of this meeting, replacing Mr. Burke. It was proposed and agreed unanimously that he should undertake this responsibility. Ms. Goodick volunteered to assist him, if requested.

**A map showing the outlines of the Historic District** was requested by Mr. Nazarian. There was some discussion about the map, its general availability to the public, and how it was created. Mr. Pino loaned Mr. Nazarian his letter-sized copy.

**The meeting was adjourned** at 7:38 o'clock PM by Chairman Porper.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles L. Nazarian  
Secretary