

Submitted: April 15, 2021
Approved: April 15, 2021

**MINUTES OF THE ROCKVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MEETING NO. 2-2021
Thursday, February 25, 2021**

The City of Rockville Historic District Commission convened at 7:00 PM Via Webex

Commissioners Present:

Alan Tabachnick, Chair
Laurie Kawa, Nancy Light, Anita Neal Powell, Mercy Shenge

Staff Present: Sheila Bashiri, Preservation Planner
Andrea Gilles, Comprehensive Planning Manager
Cynthia Walters, Acting City Attorney

I. COMMITTEE/ORGANIZATION REPORTS

A. Peerless Rockville – Nancy Pickard, Executive Director

- Not in Attendance

B. Lincoln Park Historical Foundation – Commissioner Anita Neal Powell, Executive Director

- Ms. Neal Powell – On February 13, LPHF hosted a webinar on Keep Marching Forward Together as a Community and how we get to the next chapter. The webinar was joined by County Executive Marc Elrich, a video by Senator Chris Van Hollen, and US Representative Jamie Raskin. Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton was also on the show. There was also a focus on social health and the Covid-19 pandemic, and economic and social justice. Hopefully, conversations like this will help shape ourselves and how we work with city and county government.
- Commissioner Light inquired about how often these types of events are held and how to get information about when they are held.
- Ms. Neal Powell responded that the events are held about once a month and they are open to the public. Information can be found on their website.

C. Public Comments/Open Forum

- No one signed up to speak in general nor on an agenda item. The Chair closed the public comment/open forum.

**D. Commissioner and Staff Report/Comments
Commissioner Comments**

- Ms. Neal Powell indicated she had comments but would wait until later in the meeting to bring up comments about the HRMP that Ms. Bashiri presented earlier in the month to the Mayor and Council.

- Commissioner Light brought up Preservation Week being only a few weeks away and wondering what the Commission may be planning. Ms. Bashiri suggested that that topic be discussed during New Business at the end of the meeting.

Staff Reports

- Ms. Bashiri will have letters going out to everyone owning historic properties to provide information on tax credit applications, followed up by a tax credit workshop.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of minutes from December 17, 2020 and Certificate of Approval for 401 W. Montgomery Ave.
Motion: Moved for approval by Commissioner Kawa, Seconded by Commissioner Neal-Powell
Roll Call: Unanimous approval

III. CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

HDC2021-01010

Applicant: American College of Dentists

Address: 103 North Adams Street

Request: Certificate of Approval to replace existing vinyl siding, replace existing windows, and replace asphalt shingle roof.

Staff Presentation:

Staff provided a presentation outlining the request and recommended approval. The proposal meets the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation #9*.

Commissioner Questions:

Chair Tabachnick asked about a proposal that was reviewed for this property about a year ago. Ms. Bashiri confirmed that there was a proposal reviewed and approved for new pavers. The applicant's contractor asked if that proposal could be approved again now. Ms. Bashiri explained that the previous approval had expired, so the application would need to be resubmitted for review.

Rob Gilroy, the contractor also confirmed that they would be replacing the front door with a similar but new door. Ms. Bashiri asked that information be sent about the new door.

Ms. Shenge asked if this was a residential house. Ms. Bashiri clarified that it is a non-residential building, built to look residential.

Ms. Kawa asked if the windows are divided lite or simulated divided lite. Mr. Gilroy confirmed that the windows will be true divided lite and new construction windows. Mr. Gilroy also explained that the four first-story windows of the front elevation will be six-over-nine and the rest of the windows will be six-over-six.

Dr. Teresa Gonzalez, applicant, asked for clarification about the brick pavers, the previously approved application. Specifically, how long it would take to re-review the application. Ms. Bashiri clarified that the application could be placed on the next available meeting and if approved, work

could start the next day. There was further discussion about the details of the placement of the bricks and the walkway.

Mr. Gilroy asked if the application for the bricks could be placed on the March agenda, but Ms. Bashiri explained that the deadline for the March meeting had passed, so it could be placed on the April agenda.

Motion: Commissioner Light moved to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Neal Powell

Roll Call: Unanimous approval

IV. EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

HDC2021-01011

Applicant: Sienna Garcia

Address: 202 Lincoln Avenue

Request: Evaluation of Significance for the purpose of demolition.

Staff Presentation:

Staff provided a presentation outlining the request and recommended against approval. The property at 202 Lincoln Avenue does not meet any of the adopted HDC criteria for historic designation, therefore, staff recommended against historic designation.

Commissioner Questions:

Commissioner Shenge: Has the property been maintained? Ms. Bashiri responded that it has been maintained, and that the owners have spent a lot of money to address the issues, but they have been unable to stop the problems.

Applicants Sienna Garcia and Gwendolyn Wilson: They have had several renovations over the past 15 years. The roof was replaced three times and waterproofing had been performed several times. They have spent over \$12,000 trying to get rid of rodents, and they replaced the pipes leading to the city lines. The house has been a money pit, and it is too far gone to be workable.

Commissioner Light: Do you have a plan for what you might build? Sienna Garcia: Yes, talking about some options for a new house with a builder/contractor. Looking at the house at 306 Lincoln Avenue as an example for their new home.

Commissioner Neal Powel: A question for the staff - Will there be in the record that Fabian Garcia, who was a light/medium weight boxer, once lived at the home? Ms. Bashiri confirmed that there will be a digital record. A link to an article about him was also included in the staff report.

Commissioner Kawa and Tabachnick: Asked for more information about the boxer who lived at the house because their internet connection cut out when it was being discussed between Commissioner Neal Powell and Ms. Bashiri. Ms. Bashiri asked the applicant to add to the discussion. The applicants (Sierra Garcia, daughter, and Gwendolyn Wilson, ex-wife, of Fabian Garcia) responded with more information about the boxer. They acknowledged there was history there but asked that it not be a contributing factor in making the decision on the application.

Commissioner Shenge: When did the applicants move into the home? Applicants: In 1986.
Commissioner Shenge: Was the house in good condition when you moved in? Applicants: No, the applicants started working on the house immediately after they moved in. Originally the house was a “shingle house” and they put vinyl siding on top of the deteriorating shingles.

Motion: Commissioner Kawa moved to recommend against historic designation. Seconded by Commissioner Neal Powel

Roll Call: Unanimous approval to recommend against historic designation.

V. DISCUSSION

A. OLD BUSINESS

Staff provided an update on the Historic Resources Management Plan (HRMP) presentation to the Mayor and Council on February 8, 2021. Staff explained that the Mayor and Council did not make a decision about the document at that meeting and asked that staff return with updates for further consideration. Commissioner Light offered to assist with any editing or reformatting of the document, if needed by staff. Commissioner Neal Powell added that she felt what was presented to the Mayor and Council was very thorough and understandable. She added we may want to think about repositioning the contexts of the document. Commissioner Kawa added that it seemed important to have a 5-year working action plan. Chair Tabachnick re-emphasized that this type of document needs to be flexible.

B. NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Light asked about Historic Preservation month. Ms. Bashiri explained that a training is usually held during this time. Staff has been planning a design review training in coordination with the Gaithersburg Historic District Commission. Commissioner Neal Powell mentioned that in the past, depending on cost, commissioners attended the National Trust for Historic Preservation conference in May.

V. ADJOURN

Commissioner Kawa moved to adjourn the meeting, and Commissioner Shenge seconded at 8:21 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila Bashiri