

Design Committee Meeting  
Minutes –May 22, 2008

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Location: 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room City Hall



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**Present:** Gudrun Patton, Terry Lyons, Ron Gari, Gary Kackstetter, Jeri McKeon-Andersen, Christy Conn, Brian Shorkey, Jennete Marsh, Bruce McCullen, Eric Conn, Jeannette Ambrose, Mindy Arnold-Main Street Manager, and Nathan Voght-DDA Director

**Absent:** Jeff Hansen-Chair, Pam Lewis, Bernadette James, and Terry Wilson.

1. **Call to Order;** Meeting called to order by M. Arnold at 6:10 pm.
2. **Approval of Design Committee Minutes** from May 8, 2008

**Motion by B. Shorkey, supported by E. Conn to approve meeting minutes from May 8, 2008 as presented. Motion passed unanimously.**

3. **Review Facade Incentive Program Applications**

202 S. Michigan: M. Arnold reviewed an article from the Livingston County Press & Argus about the recent collapse of the building's facade. The owner has indicated that he will submit a façade improvement grant application hopefully by June 1<sup>st</sup> or by September 1<sup>st</sup>.

Clery's: N. Voght advised the Committee that we need to justify the \$10,000 per building (\$50,000) that Mr. Clery is asking for and that if we wished, we could grant Conditional Approval to the request, despite the fact that the application material still lacked a formal cost estimate. Mr. Clery is applying for 5 of his 7 buildings and will apply for the remaining 2 in the next fiscal year. N. Voght reminded the Committee that we could not give Final Approval of the request because of the missing cost estimate. The Committee then had much discussion of how we wished to handle what was in front of us. The options were to end the discussion until the cost estimate was received, to give formal advice but to not give Conditional Approval, or to give Conditional Approval. After much discussion, the Committee consensus was to give formal advice to Mr. Clery but to not grant Conditional Approval.

B. McCullen then spoke about his professional opinion on what the cost estimate might be, based on work that he has already performed for Mr. Clery. B. McCullen's estimate is that Mr. Clery is eligible for a total of \$46,560, based on the low bid that Mr. Clery received. B. McCullen's estimate breakdown was as follows:

| Address  | Façade \$ | Mason Repair \$ | Total Cost | 50% Cost | Architecture Fees |
|----------|-----------|-----------------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| 201      | 23000     | 7000            | 30000      | 15000    | 1800              |
| 201 Side | 2500      |                 | 2500       | 1250     |                   |
| 119      | 11500     | 3500            | 15000      | 7500     | 750               |
| 117      | 11500     | 3500            | 15000      | 7500     | 750               |
| 115      | 11500     | 7000            | 18500      | 9250     | 750               |
| 113      | 11500     | 3500            | 15000      | 7500     | 750               |
| 113 Side | 2500      |                 | 2500       | 1250     |                   |
| Totals   | 74000     | 24500           |            | 44250    | 4800              |

B. McCullen pointed out that Mr. Cleary was eligible for half of the total architecture fees, meaning that the total 50% cost of \$44,250 was added to \$2,400 for a total of \$46,560.

*(Note: While doing the minutes, B. Shorkey noted two math errors that B. McCullen made. First of all,  $\$44,250 + \$2,400 = \$44,650$ , which is \$100 more than B. McCullen estimated. Second, and more importantly, the total of \$44,250 for the 50% Cost column is wrong. That should be \$49,250. This would mean that Mr. Cleary is eligible for the entire \$50,000.)*

B. McCullen handed out drawings that he had prepared of the Cleary’s project and pointed out the proposed changes, which include new cornices, masonry repair, and repointing. He further noted that the project does not include replacement of the balconies, but they are shown on the drawings as “future additions.” J. Ambrose asked about the paint color scheme. T. Lyons said that he wants to see a color sample and a color rendering before final approval is granted. J. Ambrose asked how far the cornice will wrap around the sides of the 201 E. Grand River Ave. property and 113 E. Grand River Ave. property and what the historical justification for the wrap-around. B. McCullen had an old picture that showed that there was no historical wrap-around of the cornice, but that it was necessary for structural reasons. He further noted that the wrap-around will not project from the wall. When asked, B. McCullen confirmed that the side wrap-arounds were not being cost estimated the same as the front cornices.

There was much discussion by the Committee on how to proceed and whether to act formally on the materials as presented. N. Voght indicated that it is within our rights as the Design Committee to ask for additional information from the petitioner in order to properly judge the application. Most of the Committee members were comfortable with this, but there were some interpretations from some Committee members that we should not have been looking at the information as provided until the final cost estimate was included and the application complete.

The Committee decided by consensus to have a letter written to ask for additional information in order for the applications to be complete in accordance to the application guidelines, but not to make any formal motion of Conditional Approval at this time. The letter, to be written by N. Voght, indicated that the following was to be included for Final Approval:

- A formal bid broken down by Tax ID number

- Samples of paint colors, including a rendering of at least one storefront
- Photographs of existing conditions
- More detail in the cost estimates than has been already provided

There was discussion at this point on how to handle the application fee, which is written as \$250 per building (application). To date, Mr. Cleary has paid \$250 for the single application for the 5-building project. B. Shorkey suggested that the Committee should address this issue in the future and exempt adjacent buildings from additional fees. T. Lyons suggested that the application fees are Staff's issue to work out with the petitioner, not the Committee's. M. Arnold will discuss and resolve this issue with N. Voght.

#### **4. Historic Preservation and Design Awards Program**

J. McKeon-Andersen said that the Committee did not receive all award nominations that had been turned in by the public and specifically brought up the Opera House's application. M. Arnold said that all nominations that had been received had been turned over to the Committee and that the Opera House had not turned in one themselves and other committee members agreed. B. Shorkey suggested that for next year's awards, we need to begin the nomination and judging processes earlier. M. Arnold suggested a start date in March and that we should consider a different method for efficient visiting of nominated buildings, like forming a subcommittee of the Committee. G. Patton felt that the Committee could have awarded multiple awards. B. McCullen suggested we revisit the entire award program criteria. J. McKeon-Andersen brought up the difference between "business district" and the DDA and suggested that the library is not commercial. J. McKeon-Andersen continued by complimenting the food while stating that there was too much. M. Arnold wrapped up the discussion by pointing out the press coverage in the Press & Argus.

#### **5. Walking Tours**

The 3:00 tour on Saturday was rained out, but 3 people showed up for it. The 1:00 p.m. Saturday tour had one person. Both the 1:00 and 3:00 tours on Sunday had 4 people in attendance. B. Shorkey pointed out that a total of 12 people in four tours over two days in what was the best attended Howell History Days ever was low and suggested that the tours need to be re-evaluated. It was suggested that the weather might have been a factor, but B. Shorkey pointed out that the weather did not keep people from attending other outside events, including the ice cream social. In addition, C. Conn reminded the committee that the tours attract a different audience than other activities like the ice cream social. The committee agreed to continue the tours during History Days because one of the committee's goals is to educate the public about the City's architectural history and the importance of historical preservation.

J. McKeon-Andersen gave tours at the Courthouse and said more people toured the Courthouse than ever before. The home tour was also well attended, as noted by several Committee members. C. Conn suggested that we give two different tours, an historical tour and an architectural tour. It was suggested that the walking tours need more publicity. M. Arnold said will try to get some good samples of Walking Tour podcast from other communities for our next meeting.

**6. Streetscape**

The benches have been ordered; estimated time of arrival is July 1. The historical district signs have received MDOT approval and are in production. M. Arnold pointed out the newspaper ordinance editorials from the Press & Argus. B. Shorkey noted that the Planning Commission had received a first draft of the ordinance at the meeting of May 21<sup>st</sup>.

**7. Alley Surveys**

B. Shorkey gave a status report of the alley survey responses and said that the Committee would have a draft at the next meeting. M. Arnold said that the DDA will discuss a possible Downtown Master Plan at its next meeting. The committee is in favor and agrees a plan is much needed.

**8. Design Assistance Brochure**

M. Arnold has reviewed the draft; will print and distribute to the Committee at the next meeting.

**9. Advanced Design Training**

The attendees of the MHPN Conference described what they thought of the event and what they learned. M. Arnold noted that she needs a one-page report from the attendees for the MS/DDA Board.

**8. Other Business**

Volunteer Hours: B. McCullen 18, B. Shorkey 18, C. Conn 20.5, J. Marsh 1.5, E. Conn 1.5, T. Lyon 5.5, G. Kackstetter 21, J. Ambrose 38, G. Patton 4, J. McKeon-Andersen 42, and P. Lewis 5.

**9. Adjourn**

**Motion made by C. Conn to adjourn at 8:10 p.m. and it was supported by T. Lyons. Motion carried unanimously.**

Next meeting will be June 12, 2008 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room of City Hall.