

Minutes
Historic Resources Board
City Commission Room, City Hall
1101 Poyntz Avenue
July 26, 2010
4:00 p.m.

Members Present: Patrick Schaub; George Lauppe; Michael Krysko; Michael Dudek.

Members Absent: Ray Weisenburger, Chair; Tom Roberts, Vice Chair; Brooke Norman-Tapp.

Others Present: Walt Pesaresi; Bart Thomas; Linda Glasgow.

Staff Present: Cam Moeller, Planner II.

The Board selected Schaub to run the meeting due to the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair.

1. **Consider the minutes of the June 28, 2010, Historic Resources Board meeting.**

By acclamation, the Board tabled consideration of the minutes to the next meeting.

2. **Review of Contributing Structure within Downtown Manhattan Historic District & Environs Review**

Wall Sign & Awning Sign, Mr. P's Party Outlet, 316 & 318 Poyntz Ave (Woolworths Building & Higinbotham Building – Contributing Structure; also within environs of Manhattan State Bank, Community House and Riley County Courthouse)

Moeller provided an overview of the proposal.

Walt Pesaresi, owner of Mr. P's Party Outlet, said the proposed wall sign will be similar to the former Woolworths sign, which occupied the same two buildings in the 1940s and 1950s, in terms of its placement on the façade and the area it would encompass.

Pesaresi spoke of his wish to expand the existing wall sign and awning sign for Mr. P's to increase the visibility of his business. Pesaresi said views of the existing signs are obstructed by a street tree. Pesaresi said that, with the existing wall sign and awning placed above 318 Poyntz only, customers frequently do not realize they can also use the entrance at 316 Poyntz. Pesaresi said he has spoken with most all of the neighboring businesses and has their support for the proposed signs.

Bart Thomas, Thomas Signs, said that older, historic areas have to be allowed signage. Thomas said he likes that the proposed sign for Mr. P's is placed lower on the building façade rather than taking up the whole building.

Krysko said that while one sign for the business would be preferable, he was sympathetic to the issues raised by the applicant.

Lauppe noted that the Board would be using the *Standards and Guidelines for Evaluating the Effect of Projects on Environs* in evaluating the proposed signs.

Schaub said that, generally, signs spanning two buildings are not recommended from a preservation standpoint. Schaub said that if the Historic Resources Board had been in existence at the time it may not have recommended approval of the Woolworths sign.

Schaub said he has a concern with the amount of information included on the proposed wall sign, which includes hours of operation and location of parking. Schaub said most historic signs are simple in terms of the amount of content, usually limited to the name of the business.

Pesaresi said he did not want to simply duplicate the existing wall sign, which is why the proposed second wall sign has additional information rather than the name of the business.

Pesaresi noted that the sign for Weisner's includes a listing of services they provide.

Schaub said that the lettering used to list services on the Weisner's sign is sized and proportioned in a different manner than what is proposed for the Mr. P's sign.

Linda Glasgow said that, historically, signs did not have highly vivid colors. Glasgow said she doesn't think the colors of the proposed sign contribute to the historic feel of the downtown and would prefer colors that would be less vivid and saturated.

Glasgow said she agreed with Pesaresi's assessment that trees create a visibility problem for businesses and that trees were not present downtown in the historic past.

Lauppe said he understood that Pesaresi was trying to portray "party colors" with the colors selected.

Krysko questioned whether there may be an alternative that would be acceptable, other than what is proposed or having duplicate signs on the two buildings.

Pesaresi said that within the downtown redevelopment area there are bigger signs than what he is proposing, that are not obscured by trees. Pesaresi indicated that any alternative that involved adjusting the placement of the existing wall sign on the building would require a great deal of expense.

Dudek said he likes the proposed awning in that it unifies the two buildings. Dudek said the proposed wall sign, however, includes too much information.

Schaub said if this sign proposal was approved, it would open the door to other businesses to do the same thing. Schaub said signs of this character are not represented in the historic photos.

Schaub moved that the Board find that the proposal does not meet *The Standards and Guidelines for Evaluating the Effect of Projects on Environs* and will not encroach upon, damage or destroy the environs of the historic properties. Specifically, the Board finds that the proposal does not meet the Guideline which recommends against "installing new signs that are incompatible and/or inconsistent with the size, shape, and character of the signs are typical in the environs."

Dudek seconded the motion, which passed on a vote of 4-0.

Schaub moved that the Board find that the proposal meets *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*. Schaub noted that the Secretary of the Interior's Standards do not directly address signs.

Lauppe seconded the motion, which passed on a vote of 4-0.

3. Discuss potential Historic Districts & the nomination process

Moeller updated the Board that planning staff has met with members of the East Park neighborhood to talk about concerns they have related to infill development. Among the options the neighborhood may consider is the formation of a historic district.

4. Announcements and Updates

Moeller informed the Board that the Strong House, 1916 Beck Street, would be re-considered for nomination to the National Register by the Kansas Historic Sites Board of Review at their August meeting. The Strong House has already been approved for listing on the Register of Historic Kansas Places.

Moeller updated the Board about there being a couple of applications for interior renovations of historic properties which had been forwarded to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for review. The Board indicated there was not a need for the Historic Resources Board to review interior projects.

5. Future Items

The Board identified items for further discussion, including: design guidelines for signs in the Downtown Historic District, participation in a speakers bureau, and downtown streetscaping.

6. Upcoming Meetings

- Monday, August 23, 2010
- Monday, September 27, 2010

7. Adjourn

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Cam Moeller, AICP, Planner II

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