

City of Findlay
Design Review Board
Third Floor Conference Room, Municipal Building
Wednesday, December 13, 2023– 6:00 p.m.

Minutes

Members Present:
Brian Hurt
Josette Brinkman
Tim Mayle
Charles Gerringer

Members Absent:
Jeff Fort
Heather Clow
Brad Wagner
Eric Van Renterghem

Staff Attending:
Matt Cordonnier, HRPC Director
Laura Ewing, HRPC Staff

CALL TO ORDER

Matt Cordonnier called meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

ROLL CALL

The following members were present: Charles Gerringer, Brian Hurt, Tim Mayle and Josette Brinkman.

NEW ITEMS

- Petition for Certificate of Appropriateness #CA-20-2023 filed by Findlay Land Investments LTD for Union Home Mortgage to approve signage at 125 E. Main Cross St.**

GENERAL

The subject property is located at 125 E. Main Cross St.

PROPOSAL

- The applicant wishes to install a non-illuminated blade sign. Measurement is 32” x 17”. In addition, the application also includes a glass door graphic measuring 36” x 12”. The glass dimensions are 36” x 84”.

STAFF ANALYSIS

- The proposal is using an appropriately sized sign as well as appropriate coloring for both the hanging sign and the door graphics. The graphics on the glass door will cover 14.29% of the glass. The maximum area allowed to be covered by graphics on the exterior of glass is 35%.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

HRPC Staff recommends approval of CA-20-2023 at 125 E. Main Cross St

Mr. Cordonnier explained that a hanging sign must be at least 10' from the ground, and the proposed sign meets those requirements as well as all others.

Mr. Hurt asked if this goes where the "Visit Findlay" sign was. Mr. Mayle confirmed that it is the same place. Mr. Hurt also asked if there would be lighting for the sign. Mr. Cordonnier stated that although there has been consistency for lighting on building signs that are attached flush to a building wall, there has not been guidance for hanging signs. Ms. Brinkman stated that the lighting is in place and will be used for the new sign.

Mr. Hurt motioned to approve the sign, seconded by Mr. Mayle. Mr. Hurt, Mr. Mayle & Mr. Gerringer voted "yes", Ms. Brinkman abstained, the motion was approved.

Frank Quinn & Devin Miles, with Heritage Ohio were in attendance to give a presentation on historic preservation. Mr. Cordonnier presented some issues that have arisen in downtown Findlay and explained the origin and history of the Downtown Design Review Board. The board members in attendance introduced themselves and how they are involved on the board. Mr. Cordonnier discussed a previous project application, its historic implications and how the board came to its conclusion. Mr. Quinn asked about the use of legislation when making board decisions and suggested having legislation that works for what the board needs, whether that is legislation for a new board or if it's for a subcommittee within the board. He also suggested that there be legislation for specifics like demolition by neglect if that's an issue and that it would provide due diligence without discrimination. Mr. Mayle felt that the boundaries for the Downtown Design Review Board would not apply to South Main St. Mr. Cordonnier agreed that a separate board would be needed for specific historic preservation.

Mr. Cordonnier also discussed that the new County Court building will be asking for an alteration on the exterior material of their original plan. Mr. Quinn stated that this is a good example of why having a good ordinance with specific details for things like material can be useful.

Mr. Quinn discussed that Heritage Ohio has an easement on the Rawson building in Findlay and reviewed how they could approve changes based off of Secretary of the Interior Standards. He explained that not all historical aspects should all be preserved, but that historical aspects in good standing, which can last for decades, could be preserved. Mr. Quinn felt that the board is on the right track and the willingness to communicate with the downtown building owners is positive. He suggested reviewing the ordinance and guidelines on how those can be improved.

Mr. Miles suggested hosting an educational meeting for the public with specifics in mind, like signage, as a way to encourage communication with the community. Mr. Miles and Mr. Quinn suggested looking into a CLG Grant for any proposed boards or updating the current legislation and guidelines. They also discussed the possibility of adding a board for historic preservation, who should be included on that board and suggested visiting some of the Tiffin and Toledo boards to see how they have handled the separate boards.

Mr. Cordonnier asked who is the first person we should call to best understand the process in starting a historic district. Mr. Quinn suggested contacting Nathan Bevil with Ohio History Connection as well as the Mayor of Newark.