

Lafayette Historic Preservation Commission Meeting Minutes

May 18, 2020

7:00 p.m.

This meeting of the Lafayette Historic Preservation Commission took place online due to the COVID-19 pandemic and Governor Holcomb's shelter-in-place orders beginning Tuesday, March 24. All government offices are closed to in-person public activity until further notice. All nonessential City employees are working remotely whenever possible and are continuing to provide core functions online and by phone. All necessary meetings are being conducted observing safe practices, including conference calls and online streaming (<https://www.youtube.com/user/CityofLafayetteIN/live>).

Commission Members in Attendance: John Burns, Julie Ginn, Kevin Klinker, Sean Lutes, Shawna McCully, Patti Morgan, Amy Paget, Glen Vick and Kurt Wahl

Staff in Attendance: Dennis Carson, Ed Chosnek, John Collier, Michelle Conwell, Dann Keiser, Tony Roswarski

Guests: Andrew Cullison, Andy Gutwein, Doug Mennen

Call to Order

Noting a quorum, President John Burns called the meeting of the Lafayette Historic Preservation Commission to order at 7:03 pm.

John Collier thanked everyone for joining the online GoToMeeting and gave a brief overview of the online meeting process and stated that all votes must be by roll call to be in compliance with Governor Holcomb's guidelines for online public meetings.

Approval of the Minutes

Kevin Klinker moved to recommend approval of the of the April 27, 2020 meeting minutes. Amy Paget seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

New Business

Public Relations and Education Committee report

No report was made by the Public Relations and Education Committee.

District Committee report

No report was made by the Public Relations and Education Committee.

COA Committee report

COA applications:

619 Ferry Street (Duncan Hall)

The request, as presented by John Collier, includes the installation of new black metal fences in two locations on the west side of Duncan Hall. The green space between Duncan Hall and The Press Apartments (formerly the J&C Building) is being used as a cut-through from Ferry St. to the alley and also being used by dog walkers in the neighborhood. Duncan Hall staff would like to remedy the situation by installing 2 sets of fences on the north and south side of the green space to deter cut-through traffic. The first fence is proposed as a 4' tall fence at the top of the slight hill in front of the building (facing Ferry St). It will include a 4' wide gate to accommodate the stepping stone path that connects the main entrance sidewalk with the west sidewalk and west entrance. The second fence will be a 5' tall fence towards the back of the building immediately north of the

parking space that is off the alley on the west side of the building. This section of fence will include an 8' wide double gate so maintenance equipment can easily access the area. The fences will have posts that stop a few inches away from both buildings and will not touch the building. Glenn Vick moved to recommend approval. Kevin Klinker seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

631 Main St

This COA application includes a large infill building in the heart of downtown on what is currently a large surface parking lot. The COA Committee vetted the project thoroughly and shared their concerns with the applicant at the COA Committee meeting. Committee Chair, Kurt Wahl, confirmed that this revised COA addressed their issues with the exception of the lack of windows on the southernmost walls of the building. However, because windows cannot be added there without a variance from the State, which can take several weeks for a final determination, this wouldn't hold up the Committee's recommendation of approval to the full HPC if the applicant shares the outcome of the variance and modifies the design accordingly if the variance is granted. The applicant, Barry Knechtel of KJG Architecture, agreed to do that.

Mr. Knechtel then gave an overview of the proposed project which is a mixed-use development with first floor retail on Main Street, surface parking on the back (south side) of the building (as well as the basement) and four upper floors of residential apartments. A rooftop entertainment area for the residents will be located on the westernmost portion of the building. The north elevation has been designed to emulate four separate facades to give the building a more appropriate scale and sense of vertical orientation instead of one monolithic horizontal building. The south, west, and east elevations will have an accessory look to them, but with some detailing to give a more upscale back (south) elevation. The north elevation utilizes a combination of brick veneer, limestone veneer, and fiber cement panels. Limestone panels on the western portion of the building façade (stair tower) and other limestone or cast stone banding will provide horizontal lines at different floor levels. Juliet balconies will be used on the primary north facade, with some recessed balconies on the south side of the building. The facade will also utilize molded millwork at the cornice to give a more historic capital to the building.

There was considerable discussion among the Commissioners about the building details, its height and whether the building would be compatible with the existing surrounding buildings in the district. Mr. Wahl asked Dann Keiser, Historic Preservation Officer, for his feedback regarding consistency with the Secretary of Interior Standards. Mr. Keiser stated that he doesn't believe that it meets the Secretary of Interior standards or the Ordinance for a visually compatible building in the local district. In particular, he feels the proposed height is much taller than the surrounding 2-3 story buildings and the one-story cluster of buildings across the street. He offered suggestions to address this issue -pushing the 5th floor back or flipping the stair tower (the tallest westernmost portion of the building) to the other side of the building to be adjacent to the taller 4-story building. While some Commissioners were opposed to the height of the building, most were not. Some Commissioners expressed concerns about other details including the percent of the north façade covered with fiber cement, particularly at the top of the building and in the horizontal bands between the upper floors in the transition zones between each of the different building facades. Concern was also raised about the large area of flat limestone panels on the westernmost façade (stair tower) which some felt was too modern for the downtown district and should look more historic and include more brick, particularly on the westernmost façade. Mr. Keiser indicated that more details in the jointing of the limestone wall could help to break up the panels. Other Commissioners felt the building shouldn't try to mimic existing older buildings in the district. The longevity of the fiber cement was questioned, but that was addressed satisfactorily by the architect. Additional comments were shared on the variety of proposed colors of the fiber cement and brick on the building. Developer, Andy Gutwein, stated that he liked the variation in the building façade materials and felt it helped to break-up the building. He said he would consider the feedback received.

An inquiry about the impact on the existing streetscape was made. It was clarified that the streetscape would be repaired or replaced to be consistent with the existing streetscape other than the existing drive entrance to the parking lot which would be removed and replaced with streetscape consistent with existing design. Finally, a question was asked about exterior lighting. Mr. Knechtel stated that hasn't been discussed to date, but the

existing street lights would remain. Mr. Gutwein said they would consider appropriate exterior lighting that highlights rather than overwhelms the façade and would come back to the Commission for approval in the future if that is pursued.

At this point, Mr. Collier shared feedback received via email prior to the meeting, consistent with Governor Holcomb's requirements for accepting public feedback during the COVID-19 situation. Feedback expressing concern about the project was received from the following individuals via email: Jan Applegate expressed concern about the loss of parking, which is out of the purview of the Historic Preservation Commission. Charlie Jennings from Hitt Street shared concern about the lack of public gathering space/offset from Main Street and asked the developer to consider the installation of balconies on upper floors. J.P. Schafer, President of the North Perrin Neighborhood Association objects to the design of the Main Street side of the development, feels it lacks charm that exists elsewhere on Main Street and suggested development more consistent with what was built at 844 Main Street 15 years or so ago. He asked the meeting to be postponed until public can meet face-to-face. Deny the plan until plan fits with the surroundings. He does not object to the size and height. Emails in concurrence with Mr. Schafer's email were received from other members of that neighborhood including Ken McCammon, Norman Currey, John Strong, Grant Freeman, Linda and Edward Schafer. Feedback was also received from Ivy Meyer, President of the St. Mary Neighborhood Association, expressed disappointment with the appearance of the façade and feels it is incompatible with the existing, historic buildings downtown. Tommy Kleckner, Director of the Western Regional Office of Indiana Landmarks, expressed support for downtown infill development, but prefers a design that is sympathetic to the fabric of historic downtown. He addressed concerns about the scale and proportion of the building, the number of different materials proposed on the façade and he suggested some modifications to the Juliet balcony details to help break up the verticality of the building. Quentin Robinson, Tippecanoe County Historian, shared concerns about the building design and provided numerous photographic examples of architectural details on existing downtown buildings that could inform or be incorporated into the design of the building. Comments received from Jan Applegate regarding the loss of parking and Andrew DeSutter regarding the types of businesses and selection process were shared, but are not within the purview the Historic Preservation Commission. All email responses received from the public will be filed as part of the project record.

The Mayor spoke in support of the project and encouraged the Commissioners to support it as well and to keep realistic project scope and investment in mind. He mentioned other recent downtown mixed-use development projects similar to this one and the positive impact they have had on the downtown.

With no further comments from the Commissioners, Mr. Burns thanked the developers, Andy Gutwein and Doug Mennen, and KJG Architecture for their work on this project and for their time and input throughout the review process. He asked for a motion to approve the COA with the conditions raised by the Commissioners. Those conditions include:

1. Reduce the amount of fiber cement on the north façade, particularly in the horizontal bands between the upper floors in the transition zones between each of the different building facades.
2. Show more details to minimize the look of flat limestone panels at west end of building (main entrance to apartments).
3. Add more openings to the south façade if State approves variance.

Julie Ginn moved to recommend approval with the conditions listed above. Kurt Wahl seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Staff Report

No Report

Public Comment

Public comment received via email to web-ed@lafayette.in.gov prior to the meeting were shared by Mr. Collier earlier in the meeting, consistent with Governor Holcomb's guidelines for public comment.


Adjournment

There being no further business to bring before the Commission, Kevin Klinker moved to adjourn the meeting. Patti Morgan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with roll call vote and the meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission was adjourned at 8:28pm.

Respectfully submitted

Michelle Conwell, Recording Secretary

Approved: _____


Glen Vick, Secretary

Historic Preservation Commission