

**MINUTES – HARB Regular Meeting
May 3, 2021**

MINUTES

**HARRISBURG ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
May 3, 2021
VIRTUAL MEETING ON ZOOM PLATFORM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Trina Gribble, Chair
Anne Montgomery, Assistant Codes Administrator
April Rucker
Camille Bennett
Kali Tennis

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jeremiah Chamberlin, Vice Chair

STAFF PRESENT: Frank Grumbine, Historic Preservation Specialist and Archivist
Isaac Gaylord, Deputy City Solicitor

OTHERS PRESENT:

CALL TO ORDER: 6:27 PM

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Ms. Montgomery moved, and Ms. Rucker seconded the motion to Approve the April 5, 2021 minutes. The motion was adopted by unanimous vote (5-0).

OLD BUSINESS: N/A

NEW BUSINESS:

1. 111 State Street, filed by the Pennsylvania Bar Association, to install a six-foot steel fence to enclose the western facing concrete porch.

Mr. Grumbine gave a synopsis of the case report recommending the request be Approved with the following condition(s):

1. If anchoring of fence is necessary, anchors must be installed through mortar joints and shall not damage historic brick.

The case was represented by Paul Skolka 111 State Street, Harrisburg PA 17101 (aka “the Applicant”).

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Mrs. Gribble asked if there was an image of the proposed fence. Mr. Grumbine stated that the proposed fence will be an identical replica of the existing gate on the eastern grocer's alley of the property which was included in the application.

Mrs. Montgomery stated that she is fine with the proposal with the condition as stated. Mrs. Gribble stated that she thinks that matching the existing gate is appropriate and that the proposed condition is also appropriate. The Applicant stated that he is able to meet the proposed condition.

Ms. Bennett moved; Ms. Montgomery seconded the motion to Approve with Conditions. The motion was adopted with a unanimous vote (5-0).

2. 1233 North 3rd Street, filed by Broad Street Market Alliance, to rehabilitate and update the existing signage facing west towards Verbeke Street.

Mr. Grumbine gave a synopsis of the case report recommending the request be Approved for the following reason(s):

1. The Secretary of Interior Standards and the Harrisburg Historic District Design Guidelines state that the use of aluminum or other metal is an appropriate material for new signs within historic districts.
2. The proposed changes to the sign will increase the structural integrity of the sign thus ensuring the safety of the public and the historic building.
3. The replacement of the existing deteriorating signage will have a positive impact on the historic district, the neighborhood, and community identity.

The case was represented by Kreg Paul of RPM Signs at 4029 Green Street Harrisburg, PA 17110 and Josh Heilman 210 Cumberland Street Harrisburg, PA 17102 (aka "the Applicants").

The Applicants stated that the existing sign was installed around 1996 and the existing neon bulbs will be replaced with LED back lighting and that the deteriorated plywood will be replaced with aluminum. The Applicants stated that the new additions to the sign include the silhouettes of the market buildings which will improve structural integrity of the sign and should have a long lifespan.

Ms. Tennis asked if there will be any aesthetic changes to the sign. The Applicants stated that there is the addition of the silhouettes of the buildings to the sign which add structural support to the new signs.

Mrs. Gribble asked if there are any issues with zoning. Mr. Grumbine stated that he spoke with the Planning Director and stated that there are no issues with zoning.

Ms. Tennis asked if the existing letters are being used. The Applicant stated that the yellow letters are being reused and the patina will be preserved.

Ms. Bennett moved; Ms. Rucker seconded the motion to Approve. The motion was adopted with a unanimous vote (5-0).

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3. 1108 Penn Street, filed by Jonathan Hendrickson, to remove the existing historic cast iron metal fence to install a dog ear style wood privacy fence.

Mr. Grumbine gave a synopsis of the case report recommending the request be Denied for the following reason(s):

1. Although not likely original to the building site, the existing historic cast iron fence has retained historical value in its current setting on the property and to the streetscape.
2. The Secretary of Interior Standards state that “Replacing an entire site feature from the restoration period (such as a fence) when repair of materials and limited replacement of deteriorated or missing components are feasible” is not recommended.
3. The Secretary of Interior Standards state that “Removing or substantially changing...site features which are important in defining the overall historic character of the property so that, as a result, the character is diminished” is not recommended.
4. It is recommended to retain the relationship between historic buildings and significant historic landscape features. The removal of the historic cast iron fence would result in a loss of historic materials and craftsmanship and would have a negative impact on the historic streetscape.

The case was represented by Jonathan Hendrickson, 1108 Penn Street Harrisburg, PA 17102 (aka “the Applicant”).

The Applicant gave a synopsis of the history of his property and that it is likely one of the original houses within the Midtown neighborhood. The Applicant stated that the existing cast iron fence is not original to the house and was installed in the early 20th century and that it is potentially from the Harrisburg Cemetery. The Applicant stated that people have accessed his back yard through the cast iron fence and stated that there are security and safety issues for his family. The Applicant states that a wood fence would be more appropriate for safety, security, access, and context of the historic property. The Applicant also states that the cost of repairing the fence is prohibitive and doing so would not be practical. The Applicant stated that he is open to suggestions for the type of wood privacy fence to install.

Mrs. Gribble stated that she appreciates all the research performed on the history of the property and the fence and gives the HARB the ability to make an educated decision. Mrs. Gribble said the existing cast iron fence has historical value and its relocation and reuse is important. Mrs. Gribble also said a layered fence approach is an option.

The Applicant stated that he looked into installing a privacy fence behind the existing cast iron fence and stated that doing so does not fix the gate size of the existing fence and that the new fence installation will disrupt the integrity of the cast iron fence.

Ms. Tennis asked if there are images of the existing cast iron fence. The Applicant shared his screen to show existing conditions photos of the fence. The Applicant also discussed the style of wood privacy fences to replace the cast iron fence including capped & batten style, dog eared, composite, and picket style. The Applicant stated that he prefers the capped style or the existing dog-eared style wooden fence.

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Mrs. Gribble stated that she prefers the fence to be wood but some composite materials are sometimes acceptable depending on their quality and likeness to wood and that PVC is never acceptable. Mrs. Gribble also recommended the use of 6x6 posts are better to uses for fences and that she does not have a preference for either dog eared for capped fence and thinks both are appropriate.

Ms. Montgomery stated that she also does not have a preference for either style. Mrs. Montgomery asked the Applicant if he knows if there are similar styles of fencing at the Harrisburg Cemetery. Mr. Grumbine stated that he recently visited the cemetery and stated that there are one or two examples of cast iron fences in the cemetery. The Applicant stated that he is aware of some people who would be interested in ownership of the fence.

Ms. Montgomery stated that she would be fine with the removal of the fence as long as it is reused in an appropriate context. Ms. Tennis stated that she agrees and that the issues of safety and security are important. Mrs. Bennett stated that she agrees. Mrs. Rucker stated that she agrees.

Mrs. Gribble stated that there should be conditions if the proposal is to be approved. Mr. Gaylord stated that the condition could read that the existing fence cannot be removed until a donor location is found. Ms. Tennis stated that there should be a reasonable effort to remove and relocate it because sometimes preservation is not feasible due to issues with removal.

Mr. Grumbine read the proposed conditions as “the existing cast iron fence shall be reused and installed on the exterior of another property within City Limits.” The second condition is to be that “the fence can’t be removed until donor location is identified.”

Ms. Rucker asked when the project is to begin. The Applicant stated as soon as possible.

Ms. Rucker and Ms. Tennis stated that they feel putting a condition for approval to identify a new location is not necessary. Mrs. Gribble stated that she wants the fence to be preserved. Ms. Montgomery stated that the applicant obviously cares about the fence and wants it to be preserved and has demonstrated that he will find a new location for the fence. Mrs. Gribble stated that there can just be one condition that the fence shall be relocated. The Applicant stated that other people outside of Midtown have expressed interest in the fence for reuse.

Mr. Grumbine stated that the Condition could read that the fence should be relocated within City limits. Ms. Rucker, Ms. Montgomery, and Mrs. Gribble agreed. Mr. Grumbine read the condition as “the existing cast iron fence must be reused and installed on the exterior of another property within City limits.” Mr. Grumbine asked if there are any other proposed conditions. Mrs. Gribble said no.

Ms. Rucker moved; Ms. Bennett seconded the motion to Approve with Conditions. The motion was adopted with a unanimous vote (5-0).

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OTHER BUSINESS:

1 Vote on adoption of new 2021 Historic District Design Guidelines.

Mr. Gaylord asked Mr. Grumbine if the most recent version of the guidelines is publicly available. Mr. Grumbine stated that the most updated version of the new guidelines is not on the City website as there have been minor changes. Mr. Gaylord stated that he would recommend that the HARB table the vote for the following month to ensure that the most updated version of the new document is available on the website. Mr. Grumbine stated that he will finalize some updates and make sure it is uploaded to the City website for public viewing. Mr. Gaylord stated that Council could likely vote on the document before the summer hiatus if HARB votes on the document in June. Ms. Tennis stated that she loves the new updated guidelines and feels that they are extremely comprehensive.

Ms. Montgomery moved; Ms. Bennett seconded the motion to Table voting on the new Historic District Design Guidelines. The motion was adopted with a unanimous vote (5-0).

Discussion ensued about historic preservation training and the installation of 5G poles throughout the City. Mr. Gaylord expressed that the City has very little authority over public utilities installed in right of ways.

ADJOURNMENT: 6:46 PM

Ms. Montgomery moved, and Ms. Rucker seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion was adopted by unanimous vote (5-0) and the meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM.