

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
HEARING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 23, 2012**

Commissioners

Scott Winnette, Chairman
Robert Jones, Vice Chairman
Gary Baker (not present)
Shawn Burns (not present)
Kate McConnell
Stephen Parnes
Tim Wesolek
Brian Dylus, Alternate

Aldermanic Representative

Michael O'Connor

Staff

Lisa Mroszczyk Murphy, Historic Preservation Planner
Christina Martinkosky, Historic Preservation Planner (not present)
Scott Waxter, Assistant City Attorney
Matt Davis, Manager of Comprehensive Planning (not present)
Shannon Albaugh, HPC Administrative Assistant

I. Call to Order

Mr. Winnette called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. He stated that the technical qualifications of the Commission and the staff are on file with the City of Frederick and are made a part of each and every case before the Commission. He also noted that the Frederick City Historic Preservation Commission uses the Guidelines adopted by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation published by the U. S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, and these Guidelines are made a part of each and every case. All cases were duly advertised in the Frederick News Post in accordance with Section 301 of the Land Management Code.

Announcements

There were no announcements.

II. Approval of Minutes

1. February 9, 2012 Hearing/Workshop Minutes

Motion: Tim Wesolek moved to approve the February 9, 2012 hearing and workshop minutes as written.
Second: Brian Dylus
Vote: 6 - 0

II. HPC Business

There was no HPC Business.

IV. Consent Items
a. Cases to be Approved

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 2. HPC12-81 | North Pointe | Sue Creamer |
| Amendments to Level II approval | | Nexus Energy Homes |
| <i>Lisa Mroszczyk Murphy</i> | | |

Vote: 6 - 0

b. Cases to be Continued

V. Cases to be Heard

- | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| 3. HPC12-06 | 185 W. All Saints Street | Taylor Thames |
| Replace front stoop | | |
| <i>Lisa Mroszczyk Murphy</i> | | |

Staff Presentation

Ms. Murphy entered the entire staff report into the record and stated that this application concerns the replacement of an existing stoop at the front entrance of a contributing resource. The existing stoop is composed of a stone slab on brick with a concrete step. The replacement stoop will consist of a landing set below the existing threshold and a single step that wraps around the landing. Overall dimensions of the stoop will be 5'-3" by 4'-0". It will be constructed entirely of brick laid in running bond.

Applicant Presentation

Taylor Thames, owner of 185 W. All Saints Street, stated that they wanted to replace the stoop entirely because it is compromising the structure in cellar with the ability of water and moisture to get down into the cellar from a 45 degree slope underneath the stoop. There are also holes about an inch to two inches on either side of the stoop. The moisture in the cellar and basement has already affected the joists in the foundation to a certain extent. He went on to say that there has been some deterioration underneath the porch and stoop that will be managed if it is replaced.

Commission Questioning/Discussion

Mr. Winnette asked if the applicant would be okay with the conditions staff put on the approval. Mr. Thames answered yes.

Mr. Wesolek asked if the piece of slate was sloped 45 degrees or if the sidewalk was sloped 45 degrees. Mr. Thames answered that the piece of slate is only pitched at a minimal grade towards the concrete but a steel plate was put across an old opening underneath the porch.

Ms. McConnell asked if there was a preference to which way the brick ran since in the photographs that were provided the bricks are running in one direction and in the drawings the bricks are running a the opposite direction. Mr. Thames answered that when he consulted with the architect and contractor it was brought to his attention to have it running horizontally.

Public Comment – There was no public comment.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of the application to replace the existing stoop with a new brick stoop according to drawing A1 dated 01-10-2012 to include the following modifications:

- The landing is to be extended to 36” deep to meet code requirements;
- The horizontal surface of the landing is to be brick laid in running bond; and
- The side elevation to feature the stair wrapping entirely around the landing.

It is recommended that the final brick selection is submitted for staff approval.

Motion: Brian Dylus moved to approve the application to replace the existing stoop with a new brick stoop according to drawing A1 dated 01-10-2012 to include the following modifications:

- The landing is to be extended to 36” deep to meet code requirements;
- The horizontal surface of the landing is to be brick laid in running bond;
- The side elevation to feature the stair wrapping entirely around the landing;
- The final brick selection is submitted for staff approval.

Second: Tim Wesolek

Vote: 6 - 0

4. HPC12-39

122 W. 4th Street

Meredith Steere

Replace door

Lisa Mroszczyk Murphy

Staff Presentation

Ms. Murphy entered the entire staff report into the record and stated that the applicants are seeking approval to replace an existing four panel historic wooden door on the front of a contributing resource dating from 1897-1904 with a new thicker custom built four panel wood door.

Applicant Presentation

Meredith Steere, owner of 122 W. 4th Street, stated that the hardware that is on the door is not working well. The door and hardware look similar to the interior doors in the house so it is not a substantial exterior door. She added that her preference would be to replace the door with a similar door with hardware that would be usable. Ms. Steere went on to say that over time things need to be repaired and upgraded to something that would be a better replacement of the door itself. The new door would not affect the exterior of the house at all and she proposed to paint the door the same color as the existing.

Commission Questioning/Discussion

Mr. Dylus asked if there was a vestibule when you entered the door. Ms. Steere answered no.

Mr. Wesolek asked if they were proposing to put in a new wood door. Ms. Steere answered yes and she took the measurements so it will look exactly the same. Mr. Wesolek asked if the mail slot would be put back in. Ms. Steere answered yes only it would be slightly larger so things of today’s size could fit in there. She added that she was almost certain the mail slot was a replacement not what was there originally.

Mr. Dylus asked if the carpenters have looked at the door and told her that it is not repairable. Ms. Steere answered yes and they would need to rebuild the framing in the interior.

Mr. Jones asked if the carpenters were going to scribe the door to fit the existing opening because it is shown in the photographs that the door is not square. Ms. Steere answered that they are going to make it so the door can be straight and when it is fitted into the opening they will cut it to fit the opening so it will take into account the settlement of the house and it will then be a tighter fitting door. Mr. Jones asked how

thick the existing door is. Ms. Steere answered that it is the same width as an old interior door. Mr. Jones asked how much thicker the new door will be. Ms. Steere answered about a ¼ of an inch thicker so they will be building it up from the inside.

Mr. Parnes asked how the door would fit into the original opening and not affect the door's relationship to the exterior molding at the top of the door. Ms. Steere answered that it would not from the outside but would from the inside since they will need to build it up in the interior to fit the new door.

Mr. Dylus asked if any part of the door was rotten. Ms. Steere answered no. Mr. Dylus asked what type of hardware the applicant was planning on putting on the new door. Ms. Steere answered that she would look into something that is similar to what is there that has a key.

Mr. Winnette stated that after his site visit and from looking at the photographs provided he was in agreement with staff that the door could be repaired. The Guidelines are saying that original doors and their hardware must be identified, preserved and repaired. There are many cases that come before the Commission with doors and windows and the Commission follows the Guidelines given to them by the City's leaders to uphold. Mr. Winnette added that staff suggested different way to repair the door in the staff report and there may be some ways for it to be repaired that also meet the needs the applicant is hoping for in being able to put the proper locks in but maintaining the integrity of the door so the mail slot will still be there.

Ms. McConnell stated that it would be possible to repair the door so that they could actually get a key that worked in the door. It may not be a key that you would get from Lowe's or Home Depot but there is a possibility to take that door apart and get the lock to work.

Mr. Wesolek stated that by the time the applicant would do everything it would take to fix the door and take all the locks out to redo it the door would turn out looking worse because there are going to be big pieces of wood missing where the current locks are there and it will end up looking like patchwork. Mr. Dylus agreed and added that a new door would add more security. Ms. McConnell stated she disagreed and that once the door would be stripped and repaired a skilled craftsman could make all of those mends and patches flush door is painted you would not see the difference. They could possible take off the one side where all the locks are and put on an entirely new piece of wood on that side. Mr. Parnes added that to him the Guidelines are very clear and there seemed to be a lot of assumptions being made. He stated that there are preservation carpenters and preservation specialists and he would at least like someone with that type of knowledge to be able to look at the door and see whether it can be repaired and not simply replaced.

Public Comment – There was no public comment.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends denial of the application because the existing historic wooden door can be preserved, made weathertight and secure with the selective replacement of parts or retrofitting to fit the original opening.

Motion: Kate McConnell moved to deny the application based on the fact that the application is inconsistent with the Frederick Town Historic District Design Guidelines for doors because the door can be repaired and made weathertight and secure with selective replacement of parts or retrofitting to fit the original.

Second: Stephen Parnes

Vote: 4 – 2, Timothy Wesolek and Brian Dylus opposed

Replace double doors at side entrance

Lisa Mroszczyk Murphy

Staff Presentation

Ms. Murphy entered the entire staff report into the record and stated that this application concerns the replacement of paneled wood double-leaf doors on a contributing resource with flush steel doors. The existing frame and sill will also be removed. The doors are located on the west side of an addition that was constructed in 1927. The church was originally constructed in 1900.

Applicant Presentation

Helen Smith, Reverend at Centennial United Methodist Church, stated that Centennial United Methodist Church is located in the heart of the downtown district in Frederick City. Reverend Smith stated that their sanctuary was built in 1900 under the leadership of worshipers who wanted to provide a welcoming Christian presence in the community and be a contributing member of the community by offering a place to worship and get educated. She went on to say that they received the staff report and they respected the findings but they felt like there were some important elements that could not have been known by the staff. She stated that the existing doors are not the original doors and they provided documentation showing the doors were replaced in 1951. She went on to say that from the outside view of the doors one might surmise that all that is needed is paint and that the doors do not need replacement however by looking at the photographs provided you can see that it is not the case. She said that there is a crack on the bottom of the doors that makes it far from airtight and they have tried to make a number of repairs over the years one of which was to place a wedge of wood underneath to allow for a sliding bolt to be placed on the door to secure it. Reverend Smith went on to say that the door is rotting at the bottom and there is a rather large air hole that allows a lot of weather in. She said that the handle that is shown in the photographs is one that has been replaced a number of times. It has been placed there in an attempt to secure the door because the door is out of square a bit it is hard to close the doors. She added that they have had to add a center piece to hold the doors together to allow the lock to work and various attempts at repairing the doors have been done to their best effort and due to the continual repair it has weakened the doors. She stated that the bottom edges are rotten and splintered and cannot be further repaired. She went on to say that they are responsible for the well-being and security of all members of the community that attend the various events the church holds and the replacement doors will add security. She stated that the existing doors have been kicked in more than once from someone trying to gain entry illegally and being mindful of those they serve they have come to realize there is an urgent need for clear unobstructed vision through a window in the doors for safety and protection. They feel the alley doors need a panic bar apparatus on the inside of the door to ensure emergency egress and the more secure locking mechanism with the panic bar apparatus would provide security for person's inside the building as well as prevent improper entrance from the outside of the doors. Reverend Smith added that they attached a copy of the police reports at Centennial Church because of the folks they have coming and going some can be troublesome so they have had to rely on the City Police numerous times. They understand the HPC Guidelines for replacements to match the original doors which would call for replacement to be made of wood however as noted these doors have been kicked in on multiple occasions and there is a legitimate security concern and they need the added security of a steel door to deter such a thing from happening again. She went on to say that the sills on the existing doors would need to be replaced but the opening would not be altered. She added that the doors are not visible from the street and a person would need to walk into the alley for them to be seen.

Mark Disney, member of Centennial United Methodist Church, stated that with the way the doors are set up they do not get kicked in but pried out so people just have to pry them out and they open up. He stated that there is a larger slide bolt to help keep them secure but once you put enough pressure on the doors they walk together and eventually open. He added that there is more damage done to the inside of the doors and he has fixed them numerous times to the point that they are not repairable.

Commission Questioning/Discussion

Ms. McConnell asked how they proposed to keep someone from prying two new doors open. Mr. Disney answered that steel is stronger than wood and they would be upgrading the hardware to prevent the doors from locking into each other.

Mr. Dylus asked if they had looked into any raised panel steel doors that would look more similar to the existing doors. Mr. Disney answered that they could find out but they are trying to keep cost at a minimum. Ms. McConnell asked if they had researched any wood clad steel doors so it would be wood on the outside but steel in the interior. Mr. Disney answered no.

Mr. Parnes asked if they have explored other options such as security cameras to see who is coming and going. Mr. Disney answered no but the doors still need upgrades.

Mr. Jones asked if there was a metal astragal between the existing doors. Frank Clements, member of the Centennial United Methodist Church, answered that it is metal and unless you look at it closely you think it is wood because it was painted recently. Mr. Jones asked if the doors were locking into that or each other. Mr. Clements answered that the doors are locked by a barrel bolt to prevent the doors from being pulled open from the alley but it cannot be locked when there are people in the building.

Mr. Winnette stated that the context of this case is different than the previous case considering the use of these doors and the photographs that were provided that shows the rot in the doors. He added that the particular doors they are suggesting may not be ideal doors but agreed that the existing doors would not be repaired in a way to make them functioning for a long term period. Mr. Wesolek agreed.

Ms. McConnell stated that she understood the applicant's issues with the current condition of the doors but she would to see if there are other options out there that may be more historic than what is being proposed. Mr. Winnette stated that one option before them would be to continue the case to the next scheduled hearing to give the applicant some time to meet with staff and look into different door options. Mr. Winnette asked the applicant if they would be willing to continue the case to the next scheduled hearing. Ms. Smith answered yes.

Public Comment – There was no public comment.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends denial of the application because the original doors are not deteriorated beyond repair.

Motion: Scott Winnette moved to continue the case with the permission of the applicant to the March 8, 2012 hearing.

Second: Tim Wesolek

Vote: 6 - 0

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shannon Albaugh,
Administrative Assistant