

FRANKLIN HERITAGE COMMISSION

Tuesday, February 27, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.

City Hall

Downstairs Meeting Room

MINUTES

- ❑ **Call to Order: 06:00 PM**
- ❑ **Salute to the Flag**
- ❑ **Roll Call: Present—Bob Lucas, Glen Feener, Paul Trudel, Jeff Whitney, Mike Mullavey, Leigh Webb**
- ❑ **Nominations:** Members Whitney & Mullavey nominated & seconded Glen Feener for Chairman. There were no other nominations and all were in favor. Members Whitney & Trudel nominated & seconded Leigh Webb for Vice Chair. All were in favor. Bob Lucas was nominated for Secretary by Member Whitney. The motion was seconded by Member Webb. All were in favor. Paul Trudel replaces George Dzujna as City Council Representative. Leigh Webb takes Paul Trudel's seat.
- ❑ **Approval of Minutes of the August 22, 2017 Public Commission Meeting.** Whitney / Mullavey motioned / seconded approval of minutes as written. Leigh Webb abstained since he wasn't a commission member at that time. All others were in favor.

New Business

- ❑ **H 18-01: Application for an internally illuminated sign for a nail salon at 334 Central Street, along with façade improvements to include new entry, windows, and painting.**

Applicants Hoang Le, owner and Mary (Tram/Pham?), Art Studio Sign & Neon, signed in. Mr. Le stated that he is putting in a new nail salon and wants to make improvements to the exterior façade of the building to include replacing the front door and windows, along with painting and placing a new sign above the entrance. The sign designer said that the sign would be made with an aluminum support and channel letters with an acrylic face. The letters are lit up internally with LED lights. The design pictured on the application shows the sign on a raceway in front of the transom windows, but it could be moved up to the storefront cornice. If the sign is to be mounted on the cornice it will be held in place with an aluminum mounting bracket painted the same color as the cornice.

Various commission members had questions regarding the materials, the size and the lighting of the sign. The designer stated that the new sign would be 120" wide by 18" high.

Member Webb suggested the possibility of lighting the sign with either downward or upward facing lamps.

Discussion moved to the exterior façade changes and Mr. Le stated that he was taking out the angled display windows and the recessed entry and stoop thereby creating a flat storefront with smaller windows and door. The commission informed him that in so doing, he would have to meet the code requirements which would mean the door would open to the sidewalk. Questions about the safety of having a door swinging into the sidewalk were then discussed along with the size and design of the new door. Mr. Le stated that it would be a 36" stock door with glass. It was discovered during questioning that part of the reason for creating a flat façade was to increase the interior floor space.

Member Mullavey asked how the new façade design would fit in with the rest of the downtown store fronts. Mr. Le indicated that he wished to give the façade a fresh, new look. Member Webb asked if a similar façade was planned for the entire building to which Mr. Le stated 'yes'. Member Whitney said it looked like Mr. Le was planning on reducing the size of the display windows and Mr. Le confirmed that saying that the current windows could not be restored or duplicated.

The meeting was open to the public.

Annette Andreozzi said that the Syndicate Block has not been well maintained over the years and is in need attention, however removing the historic fabric of the building goes against preservation. The design, door size and bulkhead size and style need to be maintained. The original building was made of glass, brick and wood. Vinyl and steel would be out of place. She quoted the Heritage Commission regulations which dictate that repairs and materials should be such that they mimic the original building architecture. She said that the owner's proposed changes are too radical.

The discussion was brought back to the Commission.

Mr. Lewis asked the owner what was beneath the plywood entrance stoop and the owner said it was concrete. Member Webb asked about ADA compliance. Mr. Le said that the step would be removed and a slight ramp would be incorporated in the interior of the building. Member Whitney asked how much space would be gained by going with the flat storefront. Mr. Le said about six feet on each side. (Approximately 30 sq. feet).

Chair Feener stated that he had a problem with moving the door out to the sidewalk, adding that other building renovations have kept their recessed doorways. Member Trudel added that the intent of the recessed entry is to avoid interference with foot traffic on the sidewalk. Member Trudel cited changes in downtown Concord where new façades are totally out of character with the rest of the historic look.

All members expressed concern about an internally lighted sign and again suggested the use of historically compatible lamps to light the sign. Mr. Le mentioned the lighted sign at the Regal Auction House and the commission responded that those lights were reproduced to

resemble the old sign. The lighted sign at Cumberland Farms was installed prior to the formation of the Historic Commission. Mr. Le asked if they would be happy with a sign like the Thrift Shop sign and the members said they had no objection to the design of the Nail Salon sign, just with the internal illumination. It was suggested again that gooseneck lamps with a more historically accurate design might be a better choice for illuminating the sign.

Member Webb asked how quickly the Commission could reconvene if Mr. Le turned in revised plans. Mr. Lewis said it rested with the applicant, but about three weeks. His recommendation would be to continue the hearing to a date to be established and suggested that the applicant could redesign the sign and meet with the Building Inspector about redesigning the façade.

Chair Feener asked for a motion to postpone until an acceptable date was arranged. Member Lucas interjected that he wanted to make sure the applicant understood what would be more acceptable to the Commission before a motion to postpone was voted on.

The sign designer asked what would be an acceptable sign and Member Trudel suggested looking at the signage on the Towle Building next door to the Syndicate Block. Mr. Le said that if the façade needed to stay the way it is he wouldn't need to do anything, but he again stated that the old door doesn't work well. He then asked if it would be acceptable to change the trapezoid design of the recess to a squared up version. Mr. Lucas said that it would create a kind of alleyway that would be less inviting. Member Mullavey said the height of the windows wouldn't be a problem and Member Whitney said that the real issue is bringing the entrance out to the sidewalk, so he would love to see the applicant come back with a new design.

Member Webb motioned to continue the hearing to a new date. The motion was seconded by Member Lucas. Member Trudel asked the applicant if he was amenable to submitting a revised plan or if he was just going to paint the existing building. The applicant responded by asking to what extent can he fix the façade. Member Lucas said that he could reframe, replace the windows, keep the color palate, and install a door that meets code. Mr. Le asked if the Commission would only be happy if all he did was replace the door, to which Member Trudel responded that it isn't about what the members wanted; their decision is based on the guidelines of the Heritage regulations. Mr. Lewis asked for clarification on the replacement of the windows with white vinyl clad windows like those replacing the second story windows. He suggested that the applicant provide photographs of the windows with the number of mullions and more details about the materials Mr. Le would be using.

The motion to postpone was made again and passed by a vote of 6-0-0.

Old Business: None.

Other Business: Member Webb mentioned the Brother's Doughnut sign that was approved by the commission nearly a year ago and added that the new sign has not appeared. He suggested a time limit be established for any approvals given by the

Approved 3-29-18

commission. If the voted on changes have not be done in that time period, a new application must be made and voted upon.

Public Comment: None

Adjournment: 7:08 pm