

Historic District Commission

June 24, 2021

Meeting Minutes

Chairwoman Andi Eddlemon called the meeting of the Historic District Commission to order at 6:05 p.m. on Thursday, June 24, 2021 at City Hall in the Council Chamber.

Present: Commissioners Jerry Tucker, Ed Starr, Andi Eddlemon, and Josh Hauser

Absent: Commissioners James Henson, Carol Hauer, and Camille Fox

Staff present: Charles Graham, Kim Wallis, and Chrystal Howard

ITEM 1a. Roll Call / Sound Check

Chairwoman Eddlemon opened the meeting, conducted roll call and declared a quorum.

ITEM 1b. Oath of Office

On Tuesday, June 15th, 2021, the Gastonia City Council passed a motion reappointing Carol Hauer as an appointed member. Ms. Hauer was absent; therefore, she will be sworn in at the next meeting.

ITEM 1c. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Tucker made the motion to approve the May 27, 2021 meeting minutes. Commissioner Starr seconded the motion and the motion passed (4-0).

Chairwoman Eddlemon provided an explanation for public hearings on Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) applications and order of business.

Chairwoman Eddlemon stated because of the quasi-judicial format of the hearings, persons wishing to speak and offer evidence are required by North Carolina law to be sworn in or affirmed. Ms. Howard administered the affirmation.

ITEM 2. Public Hearing – Certificate of Appropriateness (File # PLCA202100226)

- Enrique Lagos
- 501 S. Chester Street
- To install new siding on house

Chairwoman Eddlemon opened the public hearing recognizing Kim Wallis, Planner for the purpose of staff presentation. Ms. Wallis stated the applicant's name, property location, and the Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) request to install Hardiplank siding on exterior of his home. She displayed the zoning map and described the property. She read the findings provided in the staff report. At the April 22nd Historic District Commission (HDC) meeting, the applicant received approval for removing existing wood siding with the condition of installing TruExterior Boral siding. Ms. Wallis displayed a photo of the siding that was on most of the house. She displayed photos and dimensions of HardiPlank Fiber Cement Lap Siding Smooth and the existing German siding, or "drop siding" which is a thin-plank German siding. Per request of Chairwoman Eddlemon, Ms. Wallis displayed an email from the applicant, summarizing that Mr. Lagos was unable to find the siding, and that he called the number online and was told that there was no one in North Carolina that sells the siding. She displayed a map, provided by the applicant, of locations where the product was sold. Ms. Wallis displayed the recommendation made by Brett Sturm, with SHPO, for replacing the German siding and read, "Aside from milling the wood, I have seen a form of composite siding made by Boral—it's called "TruExterior"...and is composed of a mixture of resin and fly ash...Even the thinnest board available...will have a slightly wider look than the existing, thin-plank German siding, which is somewhat unusual." Ms. Wallis read the Excerpts from the Design Guidelines provided in the staff report.

Commissioner Starr requested the picture with dimensions be displayed again and Ms. Wallis displayed the siding. The existing German siding and HardiPlank Fibert Cement dimensions were read aloud. It was noted that the Boral Tru/Exterior Siding-Cove/Dutch Lap was similar to the HardiPlank siding with a 5" board that was flat with a ½" lap creating a recessed appearance. Chairwoman Eddlemon asked if the idea was to mimic the depth not the width and Ms. Wallis replied that she was correct. Commissioner Hauser stated the profile of the Boral TruExterior was the same but the flat piece was extended further. He shared that he also explored online plus extended the search radius and number of locations and found a couple stores nearby. One found was in Rockwell and Asheville. Ms. Wallis searched online and displayed the stores.

Enrique Lagos, 501 S. Chester Street of Gastonia, NC was recognized. Mr. Lagos, applicant, stated he called several places in Charlotte and South Carolina and was told they did not sell it. He called a

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store that sold the product, but was told they only sell to their clients with accounts. Commissioner Hauser stated he called 84 Lumber and they can source the siding. Mr. Lagos stated he also called them for siding and high joist, but would only sell to their clients with accounts. Commissioner Starr stated he was dealing with shortages and high costs of materials over the last year. Brief discussion ensued on possible shortages, policy of companies, or supplying commercial accounts, or older clients as reasons for not selling products to individuals without accounts. Commissioner Hauser stated his 84 Lumber contact should contact him soon with availability and pricing and will forward to staff. Mr. Lagos explained that the HardiPlank at Home Depot was very similar in look in profile with curvature, but was a different material. Mr. Lagos stated the Boral TruExterior siding had bad reviews and was not a recommended product. Discussion ensued on the original application that height of siding was considered and that it may not be possible to mimic the style. Ms. Wallis displayed the Hardiplank Colonial Smooth siding. Commissioner Starr inquired about the dimensions and asked if it was less than 5". Mr. Lagos stated it was 5", but only 4" is seen. Mr. Hauser stated this was closer in dimensions compared to the Boral TruExterior siding. Mr. Lagos reminded the commissioners that the house currently has three to four different siding styles and the Hardiplank Colonial Smooth was very similar to one of sidings. Commissioner Starr commented on Hardiplank being a superior product from durability and handling. He added that it may not be feasible to get the width unless custom milled. Regarding durability, installation, easier to source, and withstanding better, Commissioner Starr recommended Hardiplank as the superior product. Commissioner Hauser and Commissioner Tucker agreed. Chairwoman Eddlemon stated she liked the narrow face as far as aesthetics.

Commissioner Hauser made a motion to approve with the condition of Hardiplank Colonial Smooth in white and Commissioner Starr seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved (4-0).

ITEM 3. Other Business

Subcommittee Meeting Tonight, if Needed: A subcommittee meeting was needed. Commissioners Eddlemon, Hauser and Starr stated they would participate.

Ms. Wallis stated Commissioner Eddlemon was reappointed as Chairwoman and Commissioner Starr was reappointed as Vice-Chair.

ITEM 4. Adjournment

There being no other business, Chairwoman Eddlemon adjourned the meeting at 6:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Chrystal Howard, Secretary

Andi Eddlemon, Chairwoman