

# TOWN OF GEORGETOWN - PLANNING COMMISSION

---

## Meeting Minutes February 15, 2012

### ATTENDANCE

#### Commissioners

Rob Robinson  
David Pedersen  
Rodney Marvel  
Miles Potter

#### Staff

Jocelyn Godwin, Planning  
Tim Willard, Solicitor  
Jamie Craddock, Planning

#### 1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Commissioner Robinson called the meeting to order in the Town Hall at 5.58 p.m.

#### 2. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 18, 2012 MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Potter moved, seconded by Commissioner Marvel, to approve the January 18, 2012 regular meeting minutes as presented. **APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)**

#### 3. CASE #2012-04 **Demolition Request**

*An application by Sussex County Council, for approval to demolish all buildings located at 111 East Pine Street, identified as Sussex County Tax District 135 Map 14.20 Parcel 224.00 zoned HD (Historic District).*

Commissioner Marvel recused himself from this application, for employment reasons.

Hal Godwin, Sussex County Deputy Administrator, presented the application. The plan is to raze the buildings and provide parking for employees and visitors.

The Comprehensive Plan was reviewed and a goal listed is to strengthen the downtown which included supplying sufficient parking. The parking provided currently is open to the public. The County staff has been restricted from parking on the Circle to reserve parking for visitors to the Town. Parking problems are noticeable when there are court activities in the Courthouse. Monday mornings are most difficult for employees as jurors are parking within their lots, causing employees to park some distance away in front of residential properties. The Comprehensive Plan also mentions that demolition of accessory and under used buildings is recommended to avail new parking opportunities. Parking is also recommended to be behind businesses as the property on Pine can provide for the main business community on Market Street.

The zoning is HD, Historic District, permitting the use of UB1 zoning for automobile parking lots and parking garages.

The demolition ordinance asks for the effect of the structure on the health, safety and welfare of the community. There have been unauthorized persons living in the structures requiring the

Police and Code Enforcer of the Town to address the property as it is unsafe. The property was purchased in 2005, in an advanced state of disrepair. The plan from the beginning was to remove the structures from 111, as well as from 115 Pine Street, for parking. Notes from 2005 indicate the house was not livable or insurable and should be removed.

The Design Standards will be addressed with the plan and will include replacing the sidewalk on Pine Street and installing a 15' wide planting area just behind the sidewalk as a buffer.

Commissioner Potter asked when the structure was originally built and if there was any significance in any of the prior owners. Mr. Godwin stated the best they can tell the house was built around 1860. The property transferred in 1873. Documents are difficult to read. Oldest recordation appears to be a property transfer of a lot in 1857. The early property owners were Noah Butcher (1855), transferred to Carol Ann Cannon, and then to Thomas Hatfield (1873). The last transfer before the County was to Hazel Mariner in 1946.

Current pictures of the house were provided showing a traditional home, it appears it was built all at once, it was built on the ground allowing moisture to the structure, there was no ornate trim and the stair banister was gone at the time of purchase.

Commissioner Pedersen confirmed with the Town Solicitor that additional documents provided by the Planning Department, at his request, may be discussed. They are public documents.

Commissioner Pedersen clarified that while the original application was submitted in 2005, this current application is submitted under Chapter 84, Demolition. The original application was declined, as there was no site plan submitted.

Commissioner Pedersen read the 2006 request from the Fire Chief asking to use the property for training prior to demolition of the structures by the County and questioned if a permit was granted from the Town and if the smoke test could be considered as demolition. Mr. Godwin confirmed that permission was granted by David Baird, then Town Manager, verbally.

Commissioner Pedersen expressed concern that no documentation confirmed the condition of the premise at the time of purchase. Demolition by neglect seems to be the biggest issue.

Chairman Robinson concluded that while demolition by neglect occurred, the condition of the structure now is deteriorated. Commissioner Potter stated the history looks as though the property was distressed at the time the County purchased it with the intent to demolish.

Mr. Godwin provided the history of the project within the County. The priority of the project was changed in 2008 requiring reapplication for demolition. The County provided time for the Town to pursue moving the structures with several extensions up to three years with no contacts in reference to the properties. The County is currently 53 parking spaces short for their 245 employees.

Chairman Robinson expressed disappointment in the County and their willful neglect of the properties.

**Commissioner Potter moved, seconded by Commissioner Robinson, that the building is a non-contributing structure for the reason that it is not salvageable. APPROVED, C. Robinson – Yea, C. Potter – Yea, C. Pedersen – Nay, 2-1.**

Commissioner Marvel rejoined the Commission.

**4. CASE #2012-06 Historic Review**

*An application by Bernardon Haber Holloway Architects, LLC., on behalf of State of Delaware, Department of Historical & Cultural Affairs, for approval of site improvements and exterior renovations to be made to 10 South Bedford Street, identified as Sussex County Tax District 135 Map 14.20 Parcel 224.00 zoned HD (Historic District).*

Kevin Rychlicki, of Bernardon, Haber & Holloway Architects, presented the application. The site currently does not meet the requirements for ADA access. ADA accessibility is not grandfathered. The applicant proposes to demolish the existing concrete ramp, steps, wood hand rail and the site sidewalks. Proposed is a brick sidewalk from the current parking area to the old Sussex Courthouse, a brick ramp up to the existing door, new steps of cast stone down to a landing and additional sidewalks to the front of the courthouse to Bedford Street.

The base is to be brick or colored concrete. A new handrail will be installed (simple metal) that will be painted. The Commission questioned the metal handrail as it appears too modern.

The parking area is being expanded with an aisle way and a handicapped curb cut at the corner of Bedford and Pine Streets.

The Commission would like to have the applicant show brick sidewalks and simplify the handrail to a look more appropriate to the age of the courthouse. The applicant agreed to make some changes and bring back new drawings next month.

**Commissioner Marvel moved, seconded by Commissioner Pedersen, to TABLE the application until next month. APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)**

**5. CASE #2012-07 Historic Review**

*An application by Sussex Ventures, LLC., for approval of a historic sign to be located at 17 East Market Street, identified as Sussex County Tax District 135 Map 14.20 Parcel 206.00 zoned HD (Historic District).*

Drew Ward, of Sussex Ventures LLC, presented the application. The proposed sign will be in the same physical location as the existing sign. It will be a vinyl sign with an overlay.

Commissioner Potter questioned the appropriateness of the sign in the Historic District. Concerns are with the colors, lettering and the bloomers (items on the line).

Chairman Robinson asked when the store was planning on opening. The applicant stated they hoped to open within the next 30 days.

Chairman Robinson explained that the Commission has been focusing on the Historic District and trying to promote appropriate color schemes and understated signage. The Town is trying to encourage business and does not intend to put up obstacles. The concern is the sign proposed is not historic.

Jessica Breeding, offered to make the items more antique looking on the clothesline.

The Commission asked the applicant to have Ad-Art make some adjustments (reduce clothing on the line, adjust and mute the colors) and present revision to the Planning Department for final approval.

**Commissioner Pedersen moved, seconded by Commissioner Marvel, for the Applicant to work with the Planning Department, and subject to their approval, to revise the sign in accordance to the discussion. APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)**

Commissioner Pedersen recused himself from the next three applications due to employment.

**6. CASE #2012-05 Sign Review**

*An application by Delaware Technical Community College Owens, for a new sign to be located at 121 Bridgeville Road, identified as Sussex County Tax District 135 Map 14.00 Parcel 41.00 zoned ED (Education District).*

Lin Faucett, Director of Administrative Services with DTCC, presented the application. The new sign will be a brick wall and in the middle will be the new logo. The ampersand has been removed and color has been added. The sign will be out of the right of way and will be lit.

**Commissioner Potter moved, seconded by Commissioner Marvel, to APPROVE the sign application as presented. APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)**

**7. CASE #2012-03 Conceptual/Preliminary Site Plan**

*An application by Element, on behalf of Delaware Technical Community College, for the conceptual site plan review and preliminary approval for the construction of a 5,089 square foot addition on the Del Tech Campus, identified as Sussex County Tax District 135 Map 14.00 Parcel 41.00 zoned ED (Education District).*

David Kuklish, of Element Design, presented the application. The addition will be in the interior courtyard of the Jason Building. None of the addition will be seen from the road.

The design is compatible with the rest of the building. A historical marker is onsite with the building and the architecture of the original building has not been changed.

**Commissioner Potter moved, seconded by Commissioner Marvel, to APPROVE the preliminary site plan application as presented. APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)**

**8. CASE #2012-02 Conceptual/Preliminary Site Plan**

*An application by Land Tech Land Planning, LLC., on behalf of Delaware Technical Community College, for the conceptual site plan review and preliminary approval for the construction of a 10,000 square foot building on the Del Tech Campus, identified as Sussex County Tax District 135 Map 14.00 Parcel 42.00 zoned ED (Education District).*

Jeff Clark, of Land Tech Land Planning, LLC, along with Mike Kobin, of George, Miles & Buhr, LLC, presented the application. Along with the new building, another project will be the parking lot, which will be cleaned up and reorganized. Plantings will be added. The new structure will share the entrance of the Energy House. There will be no entrance off of Ennis.

The wastewater lines are being rerouted and the water line will remain to the left of the building. Concern was expressed by the Commission regarding the distance of the water line from the building.

The setbacks do not conform to the ED requirements; however, the setbacks conform with the average setback of the existing buildings. Architecturals were presented for a 20' tall building, with steel sides. The colors will be the green along the bottom and on the roof, balance will be white to match the rest of the campus.

The Commission expressed concern with the elevation facing Ennis Road. Buffer landscaping was suggested. The applicant explained there is limited area to expand on what they have presented in landscaping.

**Commissioner Potter moved, seconded by Commissioner Marvel, to APPROVE the preliminary site plan application contingent upon Town, County and State compliance and approvals. APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)**

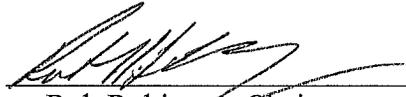
**9. PLANNING DEPARTMENT REPORT**

Parking recommendations will be presented to the Commission next month.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Pedersen moved, seconded by Commissioner Marvel, to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m. **APPROVED** (UNANIMOUS)

APPROVED:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Rob Robinsen, Chairperson

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jocelyn Godwin, Planning