



York Historical Architectural Review Board
Meeting Minutes
May 23, 2019

Members in attendance included: Dennis Kunkle (Vice-Chair), Mark Skehan, Mark Shermeyer, Dave Redshaw, Ruth Robbins

Absent: Craig Zumbrun (Chair), Rebecca Zeller, Joe Downing, Robyn Pottorff

Consultant: Christine Leggio, JMT Senior Architectural Historian/ HARB Consultant

AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION/RESULT
Welcome and call to order	<p>The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm.</p> <p>The agenda was prepared by the HARB Consultant.</p>	
Changes to the Agenda		
Minutes of April 25, 2019		<p>Mr. Redshaw motioned to approve April 25, 2019 minutes. Mr. Skehan seconded. Approved.</p>
Cases	<p>The following cases are approved and tabled with the recommended actions.</p>	

Case #1 – 340 E Market Street: A request by Greg Lacovitch for the installation of an electronic sign on the property of the Asbury United Methodist Church.

Discussion: The applicant distributed photographs of the church and the proposed sign. The proposed sign is a traditional lightbox on the top half and a digital display on the lower half. The digital sign will be used for public outreach and to disseminate information to the community about church functions. The display would be equipped with emergency alert capabilities and could be dimmed depending on ambient conditions.

Mr. Redshaw asked whether the sign would change itself in response to changing lighting conditions. The applicant indicated that it is a “smart sign” with light sensors that would respond to light conditions automatically.

The applicant explained that the existing, traditional sign faces Market Street and is not visible to automotive traffic. The existing sign would be “dressed up as a monument” and would no longer display information. The proposed sign is approximately the same size as the existing sign.

Mr. Skehan explained that the proposed sign is not appropriate for the historic district, as digital and internally illuminated box signs were never used historically. He pointed out that the historic district guidelines specifically discourage internally illuminated signs. He explained that any existing illuminated signs within the district, with few exceptions, were installed without prior approval. He explained that backlit signs and indirectly illuminated signs are considered appropriate, and that the illuminated sign on the Strand Theater was approved because theaters have a historic tradition of using illuminated signage beginning in the early 20th century.

Mr. Shermeyer stated that he understands the church’s desire to draw people in and be able to communicate to the community and asked the Board whether there could be a compromise that would allow a digital sign that would be appropriate for the surrounding district and would not include a lightbox.

The applicant, Shawn, stated that the church needs to increase its visibility or continue to face competition from suburban churches.

Ms. Robbins stated that the existing sign could be moved or turned and illuminated indirectly to increase its visibility. Mr. Skehan and Mr. Redshaw discussed options for moving the existing sign. The applicants stated that investing in moving the sign wouldn’t have a big enough pay off to justify the cost. They indicated their concern that static signs “are not seen.”

Mr. Shermeyer stated that while the digital sign would not be approved by the Board, he encouraged the applicant to work toward a compromise. He suggested that perhaps a more modern sign with raised letters, rather than a lightbox, which could be set within the stone surround of the existing sign. The applicants restated their desire for a digital display and internally illuminated sign, as proposed.

Motion: Mr. Redshaw motioned to deny the application as presented, because digital and internally illuminated signs are not appropriate to the character of the church or the surrounding district, and Ms. Robbins seconded.

Additional Discussion: The Board understands the desire for the digital sign for enhanced communication but does not want to set a precedent for allowing inappropriate signage within the historic district.

Vote: 4-1. The motion to deny the application passed with Mr. Shermeyer abstaining because he would have liked to have seen a compromise.

Case #2 – 400 W Market Street: A request by the Children’s Aid Society for the replacement of six existing windows with new vinyl windows on the first floor of the property.

Discussion: The applicant stated that the goal of the project is to replace the existing double hung windows and storm windows which cover them with new windows, as the old ones are leaking and in disrepair. They are looking for something low to no maintenance such as a vinyl window, which would be fixed at the bottom sash for safety but operable at the top sash to allow light and ventilation.

Mr. Shermeyer suggested a double hung window with the bottom sash screwed into the frame or otherwise fixed with hardware to prevent it from being opened. Mr. Shermeyer asked whether the applicant would consider an aluminum clad or composite window such as Anderson 100 Series or A Series windows, which mimic historic proportions.

The applicant stated that they had also considered an aluminum storefront window that could be installed in these openings. The Board indicated that those windows have a very “boxy” profile that wouldn’t be appropriate and would likely be more costly than appropriately proportioned composite or fiberglass windows.

The applicants asked whether it would be allowable to have a window with blinds between the glass and Mr. Shermeyer stated that as long as it appeared to be a historically appropriate window with a blind behind, it would be appropriate. Mr. Redshaw suggested fixed shutters that could be left closed at the bottom half of the window on the interior. Mr. Shermeyer suggested a tinted or etched film on the interior of the glass for privacy.

Motion: Mr. Shermeyer motioned to approve the installation of an Anderson 100 series or A series double hung composite or fiberglass window, or similar, with alternative brand to be approved by the HARB consultant, if proposed. Mr. Redshaw seconded.

Additional Discussion: None.

Vote: 5-0. The motion to approve the installation of double hung Anderson 100 Series or A Series windows, or similar product to be approved at staff level, passed with all in favor.

Other Business: None.

Adjourning and next meeting **The meeting was adjourned by general consent at 6:46 pm the next scheduled meeting is set for Thursday June 13, 2019.**

Minutes recorded by Christine Leggio, JMT Senior Architectural Historian/HARB Consultant.