

**LOWELL HISTORIC BOARD
MINUTES
Mayor's Reception Room, Lowell City Hall
July 11, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.**

Note: These minutes are not completed verbatim. For further detail, contact the Lowell Historic Board, Lowell City Hall, Room 51, 375 Merrimack Street or refer to video recordings available online at www.LTC.org.

Members Present: Jeffrey Harris, Chair; Lisa "LC" Cassidy, Troy Depeiza, Aurora Erickson, Kerry Regan Jenness, Richard Lockhart, Christine McCall,

Members Absent: George Villaras, James Wilde

Others Present: Stephen Stowell, Administrator

The following represents the actions taken by the Historic Board at the 7/11/2022 meeting. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting occurred in hybrid form, both in-person and via the Zoom video conferencing platform.

Chair Harris called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

1. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. **DLHD-22-42: 199 Market Street**

The Vlahos Building (1934). Application for a Historic Permit by Gregory Lamarre Anderson for exterior rehabilitation pursuant to the Lowell Historic District Act (Chapter 566, Acts of 1983).

On Behalf:

Gregory Lamarre Anderson, 199 Market Street
Anthony Nganga, Studio 26 Associates

G. Anderson introduced and described the proposed project while A. Nganga presented project plans.

Speaking in Favor:

None

Speaking in Opposition:

None

Discussion:

R. Lockhart asked, from a Planning Board perspective in terms of parking and such, what type of tenant might

be planned for the first floor. G. Anderson said they were looking for a retail tenant and that discussions were ongoing with a current tenant downtown.

T. Depeiza said he appreciated the project and was wondering about the proportions of the parapet, that the central section seems narrower than in the historic photograph. A. Nganga appreciated T. Depieza's attention to detail but that the intention is for the parapet to reflect the proportions seen in the historic photograph.

C. McCall stated her excitement for the project and that it will be good to see this dead spot along Market Street activated and thanked the applicant for investing in downtown Lowell.

L. Cassidy appreciated the approach to the building's restoration and asked about the plan for the panels below the storefront windows. A. Nganga said the plan is to have that area be wood panels.

K. Jenness thanked the project team and noted she has lived on Market Street for 12 years, looking at the dilapidated storefront, and appreciated the plans.

A. Nganga noted he previously worked with G. Anderson on creating LaLa Books on Market Street and that has become an important part of that area of the street along with Warp and Weft and others. He said he believes this will be a good project and is happy to be associated with it.

The Administrator said that finding the 1934 image from the Lowell Courier was key in the development of the façade rehabilitation plans. Absent the image, maybe some original design elements would have been found under the brick veneer but a lot of assumptions would have been made regarding the design approach. He noted that the adjustments on the ground floor will allow for separate entrances for the retail space and upper floor apartments while the details of the TreMonte storefronts on Palmer Street will help guide the design of the storefronts here.

Motion:

By K. Jenness, seconded by R. Lockhart, to:

Vote to issue the Historic Permit for the exterior rehabilitation of 199 Market Street in the Downtown Lowell Historic District conditional upon the following:

1. Submittal, review, and approval of final storefront design and details including, but not limited to, shop drawings, door specifications, and glass based upon on-site investigation and historic documentation prior to commencement of work;
2. Submittal, review, and approval of final details related to all aspects of the window scope of work including, but not limited to, shop drawings, paint color, any proposed interior screen systems (no exterior screens permitted; dark frames on interior screens), and blinds (dark color) prior to commencement of work;
3. Submittal, review, and approval of material and color samples for masonry repair/reconstruction, repointing, metal work, wood, and paint. On-site cleaning, mortar, masonry, metal, and paint samples will be required for review and approval prior to commencement of work;
4. A complete roof plan, designs, technical specifications, mock-ups, colors, and sightline studies will be required to be submitted for review and approval for any proposed rooftop elements including,

but not limited to, mechanical equipment, decks, rails, and headhouses prior to commencement of individual work items; and

5. Submittal, review, and approval of any scope of work alterations and final design/construction details including, but not limited to, light fixtures and signage prior to commencement of individual work items.

Work is consistent with Sections 2.301, 2.31, and 2.32 of the Design Review Standards for the Downtown Lowell Historic District.

Unanimously approved, 7-0.

B. DLHD-22-43: 17 (aka 21) Spring Street

A one-story, concrete block warehouse (ca. 1950). Application for a Historic Permit by Ellen Casazza for installation of a mural pursuant to the Lowell Historic District Act (Chapter 566, Acts of 1983).

On Behalf:

Ellen Casazza

E. Casazza introduced and described the proposed mural project.

Speaking in Favor:

None

Speaking in Opposition:

None

Discussion:

The Chair noted that in the photograph presented, snow is seen plowed against the wall proposed for the mural. He was concerned about moisture and salt being trapped against the wall and potentially causing deterioration to the mural if the practice were to continue. E. Casazza said that there is a curb there and that the plow driver will be directed to not plow up against the wall.

K. Jenness stated her support for the mural.

L. Cassidy said that given the location, she did not see it distracting from the historic value of the area, nor is the building historic.

Motion:

By R. Lockhart, seconded by L. Cassidy, to:

Vote to issue the Historic Permit for the installation of a mural at 17 (aka 21) Spring Street in the Downtown Lowell Historic District conditional upon the following:

1. Submittal, review, and approval of final mural specifications including, but not limited to, dimensions and materials. No bleed of the mural is allowed on to any other building elevations. An on-site review and confirmation of final dimensions to occur prior to project start; and

2. Submittal, review, and approval of final installation details and any scope of work alterations prior to commencement of work.

The mural is proposed for a previously-painted concrete block wall of a ca. 1950 one-story building and is consistent with the Board's Mural Policy in terms of type of building, façade proposed for installation, and location.

Unanimously approved, 7-0.

2. OTHER BUSINESS

B. Enforcement/Violations Update

Work continues to assist businesses with DPD's Sign and Façade program assistance as well as Historic Board Sign Grants. Several businesses have removed lit "open" signs that have crept in during the pandemic and work continues to assist them and others on signage needs.

The Board's recent minimum maintenance actions continue to reap success with work being completed at 123 Merrimack Street to address storefront repairs and repainting while similar work is underway at the Hildreth Building at 45 Merrimack Street and the Thompson Building at 133 Merrimack Street. It is expected that work on the storefronts at the Welles Block at 169 Merrimack Street will be underway shortly. All of these minimum maintenance projects will be completed by the beginning of the last week of July.

With regard to the Saab Building at 147 Central Street, as you recall the Board voted at the June 13 meeting to find that violations existed and that a fine of \$100 for each of the seven violations would begin to accrue daily. The certified mail card has yet to be returned and once it does, fines will begin to accrue and the case will be sent to the Law Department after seven days to seek compliance in Superior Court.

K. Jenness inquired about the lit "open" sign at 45 Palmer Street. The Administrator said that he would visit the business and that he had also followed up with the Hellenic American Academy's electronic sign to ensure that the rate of change was within the approved parameters and that no scrolling was taking place.

C. Administrator's Report

The Administrator noted that the materials in the packet are for informational purposes and would be included in the record.

Upcoming Projects:

Several projects are in the review stage and will require public hearings including new housing along upper Father Morissette Boulevard in the Downtown Lowell Historic District and new housing at Willie and Wiggins streets and at Fletcher and Cross streets in the Acre Neighborhood District. Post-permitting review and approval of design details and materials continues at a variety of projects including 733-735 Broadway Street, 62 Gorham Street, 80 Gorham Street, 555 Merrimack Street, 78 Middlesex Street, 133 Middlesex Street, the various recently approved mural projects, and the minimum maintenance actions at 45 Merrimack Street, 123 Merrimack Street, 133 Merrimack Street, 133 Merrimack Street, and 169 Merrimack Street.

National Alliance of Preservation Commissions Forum:

The Administrator will be attending the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions biennial Forum, the only national conference focused on the issues facing local historic preservation boards and commissions, in Cincinnati July 14-17. The event was last held and attended in Des Moines in 2018. The Administrator is a past Board member of NAPC and has been involved in planning and presenting at prior Forums as well.

NPS Masonry Workshop:

The Administrator assisted Lisa Cassidy with a National Park Service masonry workshop held in Lowell the week of June 13. Workshop participants were able to visit 80 Gorham Street and learn about the recently completed structural and masonry reconstruction work that was undertaken there.

Social Media:

Social media continues to be a very popular and effective community engagement and outreach tool for the Board. The Board's Facebook page has 7,120 followers while individual posts continue to reach thousands. Other platforms include Instagram (1,638), Twitter (724 followers), and Pinterest (29 followers).

Next Meeting:

The Board's next meeting is scheduled for Monday, August 8, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in the Mayor's Reception Room.

3. ADJOURNMENT

Motion:

By K. Jenness, seconded by L. Cassidy, to:

Adjourn the meeting at 6:25 p.m.

Unanimously approved, 7-0.

ATTEST: _____
Stephen R. Stowell, Administrator