

The regular meeting of the **Historic District Commission** was held on Tuesday December 13, 2016, at 5:00 p.m. in the Board Chambers of Town Hall, 500 Poplar View Parkway.

The following Staff members were present: Development Director, Mr. Jay Cravens; Town Planner, Mr. Jaime Groce; and Administrative Specialist, Mrs. Sandi Robbins.

Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Brooks led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call:

Chairman Lee asked Mrs. Robbins to call the roll to see if there was a quorum.

Kelsey – absent, **Rozanski** – present, **Cox** – present, **Todd** – present, **Lee** – present, **Brooks** – present, **Walker** – present.

Quorum present.

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Lee asked if there were any corrections to the minutes from the November 15, 2016 meeting.

Hearing none, Chairman Lee called for a motion to approve the minutes as presented.

Motion by Commissioner Rozanski, and seconded, to accept the minutes from the November 15, 2016 meeting.

Roll Call:

Rozanski – yes, Cox –yes, Todd – yes, Brooks – yes, Walker –yes, Lee – yes.

Motion approved.

Approval of the Agenda

Chairman Lee asked if there were any changes to the agenda.

Mr. Jaime Groce stated there is an item on consent. The applicant agrees to the conditions and there haven't been any questions from neighbors.

Motion by Commissioner Walker, and seconded, to approve the agenda as presented.

Roll Call:

Rozanski – yes, Cox –yes, Todd – yes, Brooks – yes, Walker –yes, Lee – yes.

Motion Approved.

Consent Agenda:

Chairman Lee asked if there were any questions of staff, or if there was any one present who wished to have this item heard.

Hearing no further comments, he called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Motion by Commissioner Rozanski, and seconded, to approve the Consent Agenda with the conditions of approval as attached to the staff report.

HDC16-47– 151 W. South Street– Request a Certificate of Appropriateness for fencing.

To approve the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for fencing (Exhibit 2) at 151 W. South Street, subject to the following conditions.

1. Any deviations from the proposed side yard fence design shall require the approval of the HDC and/or staff prior to beginning work.
2. The fence shall not be expanded into the front yard without approval by the HDC.
3. A fence permit, with exhibits consistent with the HDC’s Certificate of Appropriateness, must be obtained from the Codes Department.

- EXHIBITS**
1. Applicant’s cover letter (received 11/28/16)
 2. Applicants Exhibits (received 11/28/16)
 3. Recent photos showing views from South and Mills Street (taken 12/7/16)

Roll Call:

Rozanski – yes, Cox –yes, Todd – yes, Brooks – yes, Walker –yes, Lee – yes.

Motion Approved

Formal Agenda:

HDC16-46 – 121 West Poplar Ave (Collierville Subdivision Lot 82) – Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for new residential construction

Mr. Jaime Groce gave the staff presentation as outlined in the staff report. This is a corner lot that faces Poplar Avenue and the proposed house would have a wraparound porch and driveway from Walnut Street. The proposed house does not mimic an existing architectural style in the Historic District. It is more of a Traditional Southern Vernacular style. There is nothing in the Guidelines that says a home has to be of a certain style or emulate a style that is in the Historic District. The house just needs to be complimentary to the other styles in the Historic District through its design details.

The house will mostly be brick with some siding and will be two stories tall with raised foundation and a corner porch. The corner porch will encroach into the required setback. The BZA will take up the porch encroachment into the setback. He explained the difficulty of finding the recorded subdivision plat for this lot.

- EXHIBITS**
1. Applicant’s cover letter and application form, received 12/6/16.
 2. Letter from property owner, received 12/6/16.
 3. Plot Plan, received 11/29/16.
 4. House Plans, received 12/6/16:
 - a. Interior floor plans
 - b. Roof plan
 - c. Exterior Elevations
 5. MLGW Address Assignment, received 11/29/16.
 6. Existing Zoning and Aerial Photo, received 11/29/16.
 7. Exterior finishes, colors, and examples, received 11/29/16.
 8. Surrounding Building Footprint Patterns.

The zoning is R-1 Low Density Residential and the lot size is about 11,000 square feet. The 11,000 square feet is actually smaller than what is allowed in R-1. The minimum size lot in R-1 is 15,000 square feet. It is believed this lot was created many years ago prior to our current standards, although there was no documentation provided by the applicant to show the exact date this lot was created. This is a heavily wooded lot and there is an existing tree in the building envelope that the builder will have to remove to put the house on the lot. The builder does want to save as many existing trees as possible.

Mr. Groce explained the roof plan and elevations proposed for this house.

There was a discussion over if inoperable shutters, designed to look functional, are appropriate in the Historic District even though the HDC has approved some in the past.

Mr. Groce stated the Guidelines ask for the HDC to look at the proposed building setback, proportion, and scale. He stated the scale of the proposed two story house will fit in pretty well on Walnut Street because it will be beside another two story house, but the house it is beside on Poplar Avenue is a one story house. There are some design techniques that can be used to help soften the difference between the houses. On the other corner of Walnut Street there is the historic high school which is a massive two story building. The proposed home could help to “step down” in scale along Poplar from west to east.

He stated setbacks are important to look at for this site. The Historic District Guidelines say new construction should generally be between 85% and 115% of the average front setback distance from the street or existing adjacent historic structures. He estimates the proposed house on Walnut Street would be 55% of the observed setback and 74% of the observed setback from Poplar Avenue.

He explained what the BZA will be discussing this Thursday.

He explained that the existing landscaping and proposed landscaping should help hide and soften the proposed house especially from views along Walnut Street.

Chairman Lee asked if there were any questions of staff.

Commissioner Cox recused himself at this time.

Hearing no further questions, Chairman Lee asked the applicant if he would like to make a statement.

The applicant did not wish to make a statement.

Commissioner Rozanski stated it seems to him that they are deviating from multiple parts of the Design Guidelines for this particular house because it is encroaching on two sides and how it relates to the neighboring houses along Walnut & Poplar. The houses on Walnut & Poplar are all setback substantially off the road. It seems like this house is completely different in how it's approaching and addressing established patterns along Walnut or Poplar. The lot is only 11,000 square feet vs the 15,000 square feet R-1 required minimum and they want to put a 3,200 square foot home on it. It seems like they are trying to fit a lot of house in a very small space. He is concerned how it will impact the other homes in that direct area. The old high school across the street is a commercial property and therefore not the fabric he is looking at.

Commissioner Todd stated she believes since it is a corner lot, the lot constraints should be taken into consideration otherwise she would agree with Commissioner Rozanski

Commissioner Walker stated it is a very visible corner. It's a tough little lot.

Chairman Lee stated he agrees with Commissioner Rozanski comments. We are not only pushing the envelope for the minimum setback, but also the encroachments and the height of the building along Poplar. It's a lot of change from what the Guidelines recommend. It seems it should more appropriately match the buildings on Poplar. He does like the large porch and the wrap around idea. He doesn't care that the porch is more than 33% of the width of the house because a lot of houses on Walnut have large porches including the one next door.

Commissioner Walker stated if the house transitioned from a one story into a two story form that might help with the transition concern.

Commissioner Rozanski stated you lose a lot of buildable area on a corner lot.

There was a discussion of the houses being built on Mt. Pleasant and their size and lot width compared to the situation of the proposed house and its small corner lot.

Commissioner Rozanski asked if the changes in roof pitch on the south elevation could be avoided.

Mr. Darnell stated yes sir.

Hearing no further comments, Chairman Lee called for a motion.

Motion by Chairman Lee, and seconded, to approve the applicant's request for approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for new residential construction, at 121 West Poplar Avenue (per Exhibits 3, 4, and 7), subject to the following conditions:

1. Any changes or deviations from the approved plans will require staff and/or HDC approval prior to construction.
2. Exhibit 3 shall be revised to show an 8-foot deep porch on the Walnut Street/west elevation. The depth of the porches shall also be labeled on Exhibit 3.
3. The average finished floor elevation at the front façade (facing Poplar Avenue) shall be labeled on Exhibits 3 and 4 and be a minimum of 18 inches above grade.
4. Exhibit 3 shall be revised to note the material for the front walk and concrete driveway. The paving materials shall be compatible with the character of the area and comply with the Historic District Design Guidelines.
5. Decorative "carriage house" doors shall be used on the south elevation given how visible it will be from Walnut Street. Provide product details to the Planning Division prior to issuance of a Building Permit.
6. The evergreen screen along the southernmost property line shall be installed prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for the home and shall be a plant chosen from the Town's adopted plant list.
7. If the BZA does not approve variances for the porch encroachments by 12/13/17, then approval of this Certificate of Appropriateness shall expire.

Chairman Lee stated if there is no other discussion then he will call for a vote.

Roll Call:

Rozanski – no, Cox –recused, Todd –no, Brooks –no, Walker –no, Lee –no.

Motion Denied.

Other Business

Chairman Lee asked if there was any other business.

Mr. Groce stated there have been no administrative approvals since their last meeting. There have been some new sign permits. Bank of Tennessee on Mulberry has a pending hanging sign and a wall sign. Mane Street Hair Group, which was 189 S Main, is occupying the Cottage on Main old building. They are working with Codes on interior modifications and plumbing.

The Charles Davis House owned by the Porter family, has been nominated for the National Register. This is not in the Historic District, but is a very historic home with a rich history.

At the last meeting Commissioner Cox asked for more information on how the Town regulates existing tree removal. The Town's tree ordinance is complicated because of its history and because it lives in many different places within the Town's laws. Staff is aware of that and have a goal of trying to put it all in one place which would make it easier to find and easier to use. It's going to be awhile before the "cleanup ordinance" can be in an adoptable format. There was a law suit in 1999 that set some ground rules for tree preservation and mitigation as it relates to single family development. There was a settlement to this law suit and the Town is prohibited from regulating the removal of existing trees on single family lots less than 1 acre. That's one overriding rule that prevents us, whether it's in the Historic District or not, from getting involved in the removal of trees for new or existing single family dwellings. When it comes to commercial property, the tree policy allows us to require tree preservation and tree mitigation.

There was discussion over if the Town could strongly advise the preservation of trees and how preserving the trees in the historic district is important because of their contribution to the rhythm of the Historic District.

There was a discussion over how tree preservation works in Franklin, TN, which does regulate tree removal on single family lots & has a tree removal permit process.

A discussion ensued over the need for further discussion over preventing people from arbitrarily cutting down 100 year or older trees and to see if in the local historic overlay that the court order might not apply. Mr. Groce said he would ask the Town attorney about that.

With no further business, Chairman Lee adjourned the meeting at 5:42 p.m.

Secretary, Laura Todd