
**CITY OF MIDDLETOWN
DESIGN REVIEW & PRESERVATION BOARD**

MINUTES

June-11-03

Present

J. BIANCO, CHAIRMAN
J. FORTUNA
P. EVANS
N. STAMLER
B. KRONENBERGER

Absent

M. BRADY
N. GOFF
B. PLUMLEY
D. BROWN

Also Present

M. WACKERS
R. SCHMIDT
J. CROUSE
J. ROSENTHAL
J. RUMBERGER
COCA-COLA REP.

The meeting commenced at 5:30 PM.

Upon a motion by J. Bianco, he called the first order of New Business.

First, the Chair called Middlesex Realty to present the sign application for the Forest City Wine and Spirits and the Scrub Club. Seeing that no one was present the chair decided to table the application until the next meeting.

Second, the Chair called Middletown Coca-Cola to present their sign application for 320 South Main. The sign would be a freestanding sign perpendicular to the street featuring. P. Evans asked what type of light will be used. The representative from Coca-Cola answered that it would be external, and that the location would be up to the preference of the Board, either overhead or from the ground. The Board favored ground light. P. Evans motioned that the Board approve the proposed sign, with the condition that it be lit from the ground and that the light source be screened to only project onto the sign. The Board approved unanimously.

Third, J. Crouse presented the proposed demolition of 183, 187/189, & 191 Pine Street for a new parking lot to service the expanding Athletic Center. J. Crouse stated that the existing structures are all in poor condition, with considerable amounts lead and asbestos, and rehabilitation in all of the cases will close to equal the current value of the buildings. The new parking lot would ease current on-street parking and traffic flow. This is part of the complete master plan that Wesleyan is currently developing.

J. Bianco noted that this is a historically significant area with one building dating form the 19th century. While M. Wackers noted that these buildings were not registered in the Middletown Historic Registry, J. Bianco state that the fact that all of these buildings are 50 years old makes them historically by definition. P. Evens asked how does it impact the neighborhood? J. Crouse responded that he had meetings with a neighborhood group, whose name he could not remember, and they where interested in saving as many trees as possible on the properties. J. Fortuna asked if J. Crouse had a written statement to that effect, and when none could be represented, J. Fortuna stated that without proof, such a statement could not be considered by the Board.

P. Evans asked what the timetable for this project is? J. Crouse responded by saying in order to not create a parking problem with the expanding Athletic center in the fall this project need to be completed over the summer. B. Kronenberger asked to see how this would fit into Wesleyan's overall campus master plan. J. Crouse offered to walk the area with the Board inorder to explain what is going on. With that P. Evans motioned to table this item and schedule a walking tour with the Board and J. Crouse, between now and the next regular meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Fourth, seeing that B. Kronenberger would have to leave soon, the Chair requested that any other items that need a vote tonight should be presented now. J. Rumberger presented the porch renovation on 136 High Street that would bring the porch up to code height of 42". The materials being used would be newer and easier to maintain, and an example of a similar project show how this project would look when finished. P. Evans asked how this is going to look with the existing columns and the new handrails. J. Rumberger answered that the handrail would connect at a point with the columns that would look historical, but the goal here is to bring the handrail up to code. J. Bianco said that while it may not look historically accurate it is a compromise that is required, and further mentioned that the entire porch would be improved from the existing one. P. Evans motioned to accept the project as presented. The motion was approved unianimously.

At 6:10 pm B. Kronenberger had to leave. With only four board members present the Board had lost quorum.

Fifth, R. Schmidt presented a new ramp and window replacement project for 167 High Street. The project would add a ramp to the back end of 167 High Street and the current location is screened considerable by vegetation and other buildings. The ramp would attach to an existing porch through an existing handrail opening. Any kind of aesthetic elements will be appropriate of the style and period of the building. P. Evans motioned to accept the project as presented. The motion received four "ayes". Members of the Board not present will have their votes requested.

Sixth, J. Rosenthal presented a number of changes to various properties in order to bring them up to fire code. The properties and types of items presented are below:

154 Church Street-	raise handrail on porch, install handrail on front steps
250 Court Street-	raise handrail on porch , match handrails on back entrances
151 Church Street-	install handrail on front steps
170 College Street-	install handrail on front steps
65 Pearl Street-	install handrail on front steps
107 High Street-	raise handrail on porch
159 High Street-	raise handrail on porch
163 High Street-	install handrail on porch
135 High Street-	install handrails on front steps
69 High Street-	raise handrail on porch

J. Rosenthal mentioned that mockups of all of these are available to be seen at 163 High Street. J. Bianco favored the use of materials that accomplished the code requirements but left the as little visual obstruction as possible and while meeting the historical style of each individual building. No one style would be appropriate for all. P. Evans motioned that the stair handrails can be approved as shown, that when installing new or raising handrails it should be done as to not add bulk or produce unnecessary visual obstructions. If there is a questionable application of this motion then is should be presented to the Board. The motion received four "ayes". Members of the Board not present will have their votes requested.

Seventh, R. Schmidt presented the Downey House project at 294 High Street. R. Schmidt stated that he was looking for the Boards opinions on the work to day, before he presented his final concept at the next Design Review meeting in July. Wesleyan is trying to make a Humanities Village, centered around the Downey House. R. Schmidt wanted to move the existing ramp that is positioned before the bay window and move about twelve feet toward the left. This would then better use an existing door, to become a functioning entrance. The ground would be graded to allow handicapped access to two entrances on Court Street. The back of the building and existing structures there would be better screened with vegetation. The old and new portions of the building would be married together to reflect the style of the older portion of the building. The Boards concerns with the new changes came over the marriage of the old house with the newer addition. The 1930's addition has a character and dimensions that could not be easily married.

At 7:00 pm J. Fortuna had to leave. The Board was left with three board members present.

The Board favored keeping the existing roofline of the additions, allow the removal of the bay window , and allow the matching of façade color.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

William Warner, Department Director