

MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING  
**OWOSSO HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
MAY 16, 2012 at 6:00 p.m.  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS / CITY HALL

**MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER** at 6:04 p.m. by Vice-Chairman Vincent Gonyou.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Vice-Chairman Vincent Gonyou, Secretary Phil Hathaway, Commissioners James Eaton, Matthew Van Epps, and Gary Wilson.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Chairman Scott Newman, Commissioner Lance Omer.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Sarah Warren-Riley, Housing Program Manager; Adam Zettel, Assistant City Manager and Director of Community Development; Charles P. Rau, Building Official; Tom Manke, Petitioner for 118 S. Washington.

**AGENDA APPROVAL: Motion by Commissioner Hathaway, supported by Commissioner Van Epps to approve the agenda for May 16, 2012 as presented.**

**Yeas: All. Motion was passed.**

**MINUTES APPROVAL: Motion by Commissioner Hathaway, supported by Commissioner Van Epps to approve the minutes for the meeting of April 18, 2012.**

**Yeas: All. Motion was passed.**

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

- 1) Staff Memorandum
- 2) Meeting minutes of April 18, 2012
- 3) Staff approval guidelines – revision draft

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:** None.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS:** None.

**ITEMS OF BUSINESS:**

**1) 118 S. Washington Street – Sign Application**

The applicant, Tom Manke of 118 S. Washington wants to re-open the back of this address to the way it was. He wants to use the back door. His proposed sign matches the signs at Gilberts True Value Hardware and Maurer Heating & Cooling Co., yet it is smaller than the sign at the Jade Buffet next door. The sign will be down on the wall, not on top of the building as the frame currently sets.

Commissioner Wilson asked what would be used at the back of the building. Mr. Manke replied it would be extra seating and cooking like a European café with a walk thru to the café to the front of the building. The garage door may be open for meetings, bands and services.

Commissioner Van Epps said the back of the building appears to be non-contributing as though it was added on. Mr. Zettel stated there can be non-contributing elements on a building. Mr

Van Epps stated he would be more concerned if the sign in question was on the front of the building and the sign didn't look like it would meet the Secretary's Standards.

**Motion by Commissioner Van Epps, supported by Commissioner Eaton, to issue a Notice to Proceed for the sign on the back of the building at 118 S. Washington Street as applied for.**

Discussion: Commissioner Hathaway believes the issue is more complex. He thinks it's inappropriate with the lights. There is potential to this building. We need an economic inducement. All the other signs are not adequate in character in historic signs. The proposed sign is a valid sign, but we hope to do better.

Mr. Zettel stated that procedurally we need to have findings because of the nature of the building at the rear.

Mr. Manke stated because we are a non-profit, some other people are helping out. This is a 1930's style, the same as on the theater. What is the commissioners' timeline? He prefers the 1930's.

Mr. Hathaway said a box of florescent lights doesn't reflect an era.

Mr. Van Epps stated this doesn't fit the standards. Phil's (Commissioner Hathaway) suggestion might bring you a sign that the board would be more comfortable with. Mr. Zettel and Ms. Warren-Riley could help you. If there is grant money available, would you be ready to try for some? Mr. Manke agreed to the flat wall sign.

Mr. Manke asked if there are any photos available. Mr. Hathaway stated there is a book upstairs to show you 30 – 40 examples. Mr. Manke replied that he could do what Rolling Smokes and Avon did. Mr. Hathaway stated those signs had pre-existing sign frames.

Mr. Manke asked if he could use the sign from Agnew's. Mr. Hathaway replied yes. Mr. Manke – but the frame is not acceptable? Mr. Hathaway – that's correct.

Commissioner Van Epps stated that the commission wants to work with you. You have the right to install the sign. We prefer you work with the staff and see if there is grant money available. Mr. Zettel suggested that the sign is OK and maybe look into grants.

**Motion by Commissioner Van Epps, supported by Commissioner Eaton to withdraw the last motion.**

**Motion by Commissioner Van Epps, supported by Commissioner Eaton to allow the Owosso Downtown Historic District Commission, finding that the exterior improvements at 118 South Washington Street meets all the Secretary of the Interiors Standards, as well as local standards, hereby directs staff to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work and building permit application as applied for and illustrated conditioned upon the following:**

1. Made of anything but plastic.
2. The sign will be flat on the building, flush on the side.
3. Below the roof line and fits in the approximate space.
4. Centered on the building.

Discussion: Mr. Manke asked if he could put lights on the back of his building. Mr. Zettel said yes.

**Yeas: All. Motion was passed.**

Mr. Manke was instructed that his next step was to see the Building Official about the building permit. Mr. Zettel advised that he could see him about the grant program. Mr. Manke stated he wanted the sign up before Curwood Festival.

## **2) Review and Revise Guidelines for Staff Approval of Applications**

Ms. Sarah Warren-Riley, Housing Program Manager, stated some tentative revisions were made. Commissioner Hathaway commented that he liked the phrasing, "if it fits the existing frame."

Discussion continued with Commissioner Van Epps stating for the staff to err on the side of caution and call a meeting of the commission when in doubt.

Commissioner Wilson reviewed several items and staff noted the particular changes.

The following additional changes to the Staff Guidelines were requested:

#2. Change to read "not plastic or vinyl coated **and** does not appear to be so."

#5. Add "hazardous trees"

#14. Add "Sandblasting or the use of any other abrasive processes is strictly prohibited in the district."

### **STAFF APPROVAL GUIDELINES CITY OF OWOSSO DOWNTOWN HISTORICAL DISTRICT COMMISSION**

**WHEREAS**, Article IX of the City of Owosso Ordinance authorizes the Owosso Downtown Historic District Commission to "delegate the issuance of certificates of appropriateness for specified minor classes of work to its staff," and "the commission shall provide to the delegated authority specific written standards for issuing certificates of appropriateness";

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that, the Owosso Downtown Historic District Commission defines the following activities as "minor classes of work" which may be approved by the commission staff, city planner or building official:

1. **Replacement of signage** provided that: 1) the new sign fits within an existing frame or replaces a sign in the exact location and with the same size, lighting, and material of the existing sign or 2) that the sign fits within the existing sign panel provided that the materials do not detract from historic features and that the signage is generally congruous with adjacent signage.
2. **Replacement of the fabric of existing canvas awnings** provided that the new canvas is not plastic or vinyl coated and does not appear to be so.
3. **Replacement of existing fencing** provided that: 1) the fence is in the same location and is composed of the same or more historically appropriate material; 2) the fence is the same height; and 3) it is a chain link, wrought iron, or flat board fence. Chain link or metal security type fences may not be installed in the front open space or within the side open space on the street side of corner lots.

4. **Installation of glass blocks to replace basement windows** provided that: 1) the glass block is recessed in the opening to the location of the existing window; 2) screening or grates are installed on the exterior to cover the glass block; 3) the windows are no larger than 36" wide and 24" high; and 4) the windows are located on the sides and rear of the property.
5. **Removal of dead, diseased, hazardous or damaged trees** provided that: a written statement by a professional is provided documenting the condition and that the trees are not savable, or it is an emergency situation as determined by the building official.
6. **Replacement of gutters and downspouts** provided that: the size, materials, configuration, and placement match the existing.
7. **Replacement of roofs** provided that: the materials, color, and roofline match the existing.
8. **Replacement of existing windows** that are deteriorated beyond repair and that match the existing in size, type, location, material and muntin pattern; bare metal finishes (except for aluminum cladding), Low "E" reflective or tinted glazing are not permitted unless they match the existing.
9. **Installation of new storm windows and storm doors** that match the opening size and are not bare metal; that mullions and meeting rails of storm windows match the prime windows; and the design of the storm door is similar in style to the prime door.
10. **Replacement of non-original windows or doors**; or windows or doors in non-contributing resources; with new windows or doors that are an accurate restoration using historical, pictorial, and physical documentation, or a new design that is compatible with the openings and historic character of the building.
11. **Installation of new skylights** or solar panels on non-character defining roof surfaces not visible from the street provided the skylights are flat, do not extend more than 8 inches above the roof surface, are similar to the color of the roof material and cover not more than 10% of the roof surface on which they are located; bare metal finishes, bubble or domed skylights are permitted only on flat or rear-facing roofs.
12. **Installation of new wood clapboard siding** or artificial siding that replicates clapboard where the existing siding is artificial and provided the exposed vertical dimension of the new "clapboard" is no more than five inches or within one inch of the missing or covered original; no new material may cover nor require the removal of any original trim or architectural detail such as ornamental shingles, carved brackets, window hoods and the like.
13. **Removal of artificial siding** to repair and restore original siding.
14. **Cleaning of masonry** provided the application meets the requirements in Preservation Briefs 1: Assessing Cleaning and Water-Repellent Treatments for Historic Masonry Buildings and Preservation Briefs 6: Dangers of Abrasive Cleaning to Historic Buildings. Sandblasting or the use of any other abrasive processes is strictly prohibited in the district.

15. **Reconstruction of masonry** to exactly match the existing in color, size, texture, coursing, mortar profile, color, composition, and joint width.
16. **The installation of satellite dishes** or antenna, provided the location is not visible from the street or sidewalk in the front, or if a corner lot, the street or sidewalk on the side.
17. **Installation of new handrails** that match the existing balustrade may be added to porch steps, or the replacement of non-original handrails with replicas of documented original handrails, or new compatible handrails.
18. **Re-construction of existing fire escapes** in a matching or smaller size.
19. **The replacement of existing on-grade walkways, stairways, retaining walls and driveways** in the same location in matching or compatible materials.
20. **Replacement of concrete basement walls** provided that the exterior of the portions of the walls above grade are finished in a material matching the original or with a smooth parge coat.
21. **Window and door boarding** provided that the boarding-up is temporary and for the protection of the building; and the boarding is painted to look like windows or a dark color such as black or brown. Boarding used for ventilation techniques allowing air flow into the building should be similarly painted a dark color.
22. **Reconstruction of existing historic porches** or porch elements provided the materials and design exactly match the existing materials and design.
23. **Reconstruction of existing non-historic porches** to match the existing design or the historic design that is documented using historical, pictorial, or physical documentation, or a new design that is compatible with the historic character of the building.
24. **Replacement of non-original garage doors and overhead doors** with new doors that are compatible with the design of the garage and/or structure and are located within the existing or historic opening.
25. **Installation of air conditioning or mechanical equipment** provided that the equipment is not visible from the street or sidewalk and does not destroy historic features.
26. **Replacement of internal and external lighting on signs**, provided the replacement matches the same in materials, intensity, placement, and configuration.
27. **The replacement of existing decks** in the same location in a matching or smaller size; or the expansion of decks on non-contributing resources provided the expansion does not negatively impact historic resources.
28. **The replacement of existing public or other right-of-way features** such as signs, planters, lighting and other objects in the same general location and in matching or improved materials and configuration.
29. **The addition of permanent or temporary public or other right-of-way features** such as signs, construction materials, lighting, barricades, and other objects that are

required in relation to a public works project, a traffic control order, or other public need.

30. **Removal of materials that are not historic in nature** such as awnings, signs, etc. Any and all applications denied by staff may be taken to the ODHDC for review.

The staff of the City of Owosso reserves the right to forward any and all applications to the ODHDC for review for any reason.

**Motion by Commissioner Van Epps, supported by Commissioner Gonyou that the Owosso Downtown Historic District Commissioner hereby approves the proposed revisions to the Staff Approval Guidelines, dated May 7, 2012, with the changes as discussed and noted. Yeas: All. Motion was passed.**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Motion by Commissioner Van Epps, supported by Commissioner Hathaway to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m. Yeas: All. Motion was passed.**

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Phil Hathaway, Secretary

mms