



City of Powell, Ohio

Historic Downtown Advisory Commission

Tom Coffey, Chairman

Marge Bennett

Larry Coolidge

Richard Fusch

Deb Howell

Chris Meyers, AIA, Architectural Advisor

MEETING MINUTES SEPTEMBER 16, 2010

A regular meeting of the Powell Historic Downtown Advisory Commission was called to order by Chairman Tom Coffey at 6:15 p.m. on Thursday, September 16, 2010. Other Commissioners present included Marge Bennett, Larry Coolidge, Richard Fusch and Deb Howell. Eric Fischer, Development Planner was present. Chris Meyers, Architectural Advisor was absent.

HEARING OF VISITORS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

There was none.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Mr. Fusch moved to approve the meeting minutes from June 3, 2010. Ms. Bennett seconded the motion.

VOTE: Y = 5 N = 0

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Applicant: Cute as a Button, Carole Smith & Andrea Thompson
Location: 38 W. Olentangy Street
Zoning: DB, Downtown Business District; HD, Historic District Overlay
Request: Approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness to allow for the removal of the white fence in front of the building, just north of the sidewalk.

Carole Smith, applicant, said she and her daughter, Andrea Thompson, request the removal of the white fence in front of their business. She said they feel it is not very attractive and is the only fence in town that is in front of a business. She said they think it takes away from the beautiful home their shop is in. Ms. Smith said they would like to do some planting in front of the porch area and their landlords have agreed to put spot lights on their sign to make it more visible.

Eric Fischer, Development Planner, said the fence was a part of the original streetscape plan and this house was not as restored as it is today. He said at the time the house was used as storage/warehouse rather than a retail shop. He said the fence helped detract from the building's condition. Mr. Fischer said Mr. Fallieres is the owner of this building and it has been restored nicely. He said this business is doing well at this site and removal of the fence will assist their business. He said the shop owners have attempted to utilize the fence by adding ribbon but the fence shows signs of wear and damage (Exhibit A). Mr. Fischer said Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness to remove the fence. He said the removal will be completed at the owners' expense and Staff has a letter from the owner stating his approval. Ms. Smith said their business will pay to remove the fence.

Chairman Coffey opened this item to public comment. Hearing none, he closed the public comment session.

Chairman Coffey asked if the Architectural Advisor had any comments on this application. Mr. Fischer said he did not have any issues with this. Ms. Howell said she does not have any issues with removing the fence. She said it looks out of place since it is the only fence in front of a building within the downtown. She said she appreciates the work Mr. Fallieres has done to fix up this building. Ms. Howell said she believes the building would look better without the fence.

Mr. Coolidge said the fence was installed to replace a production-grade fence the previous owner had poorly installed. He said it should never have been put in. Mr. Coolidge said they approved VillageScape and they believed they would be able to review items that people put in. He said soon all of these things were installed. Mr. Coolidge said the fence is too tall and is out of place. He said the only area with fence is by the barber shop where it was installed to hide the parking. He said it should not be up close to the street and he agrees it should be removed.

Chairman Coffey said he agrees with the other comments and his only qualm is that it should be replaced completely and all holes filled. Ms. Smith said their plan is to cut it down as far as they can and fill it with top soil until it can be seeded. Mr. Fischer said Staff may have an issue with that but they will handle that from the Building Department. Chairman Coffey said they do not want stumps visible. Mr. Fischer said the City will supervise removal of the fence. Mr. Coolidge said it may be set in concrete so they will have to chip the concrete down below ground level. Mr. Fischer said they will review a removal plan with the applicant. Ms. Bennett said she prefers to see the fence gone as it will open up the area to the building and the business. She said they do have pictures of the street from long ago that show a picket fence on some sites. She said fencing was not installed consistently but also not unheard of. She said she believes it will be better without the fence. Chairman Coffey said it may be ok if it was not so tall because some of the homes did have fences. Mr. Fusch had no comments.

MOTION: Mr. Coolidge moved to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for Cute as a Button to remove the fence in front of 38 W. Olentangy Street. Ms. Howell seconded the motion.

VOTE: Y = 5 N = 0

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Applicant: George Stefanidis with Easy Street Cafe.
Location: 5 South Liberty
Zoning: DB, Downtown Business District; HD, Historic District Overlay
Request: Approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness to allow for a new wall sign at the front of the building.

Ashley Ortiz, General Manager, Easy Street Café, 5 South Liberty, said she is asking for approval of the sign that was approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission last week.

Chairman Coffey asked for clarification about the color of the signage. Ms. Ortiz said the sign is black and gold and matches the design on the restaurant windows.

Mr. Fischer said the applicant has an approved sign package on the building that has the same look. Ms. Ortiz said everything matches. Mr. Fischer said the applicant came to the Planning & Zoning Commission for a request for an increase in square footage for this sign. He said they asked to increase the size to make the sign more architecturally appropriate with the front face of the building. He said the 12 sq. ft. size limitation did not look appropriate on the façade. Mr. Fischer said the members of the Commission debated over a 25 sq. ft. or 40 sq. ft. sign (Exhibit B) and came to an agreement that they preferred a 25 sq. ft. sign because it matches the size of the sign approved across the street at 8 N. Liberty Street. Mr. Fischer said Staff is fine with that decision because it meets code criteria and is appropriate within the downtown district.

Chairman Coffey opened this item to public comment. Hearing none, he closed the public comment session.

Chairman Coffey asked if the Architectural Advisor had comments on this application. Mr. Fischer said Mr. Meyers stated he prefers the 40 sq. ft. sign and is fine with the design of the sign.

Mr. Coolidge opened this item to public comment. Hearing none, he closed the public comment session.

Chairman Coffey said it is like a big billboard and will not be appropriate if it is not located in the lower third and tied in aesthetically. He said if it is centered it will be lost in the façade. He said they will want to specify where the sign is located. Mr. Fischer said Mr. Stefanidis asked that the sign be moved up a few inches. Chairman Coffey asked from where the photograph was taken. Mr. Fischer said it looks like it was taken from the edge of the street but he is not sure. Mr. Fusch said it may have been taken from the

opposite corner. Chairman Coffey said if the sign is located too low, it cannot be seen from the steps. Ms. Ortiz said the owner does not want it centered because of the lighting. Mr. Coolidge said it does not need to be seen from the steps and is signage for traffic. He said this is an excellent sign and he thinks the 25 sq. ft. is best. Ms. Howell asked Mr. Fusch for comments from the Planning & Zoning Commission.

Mr. Fusch said the vote was six to one and he was the only vote against the sign. He said he voted no because the 40 sq. ft. sign is architecturally more appropriate for the big façade. Mr. Fischer said they polled the members of the Commission and the 25 sq. ft. sign was preferred by four to three members over the 40 sq. ft. sign. Mr. Fusch said he appreciates both the letter and spirit of the sign ordinance but this is the biggest façade in the city and it needs a sign upon it that is appropriate to the size of the façade so it does not look like a tiny marquee. He said he argued that the bigger sign is more architecturally appropriate for the size of the façade. Mr. Fusch said his colleagues on the Commission felt they should not overrule the sign ordinance and he appreciates that. He said the sign itself is very nicely done and he thinks the location as noted by Chairman Coffey is appropriate. Mr. Fusch said he just thinks the 25 sq. ft. sign is architecturally disproportionate to the size of the façade and that is why he voted against it, not because he was opposed to the 25 sq. ft. size or the design of the sign.

Mr. Coolidge asked for clarification of the width of the sign. Chairman Coffey said it is 12'7". Mr. Fischer stated the building façade is 30' wide. Mr. Coolidge asked about the size of the letters. Mr. Fischer said they are approximately 11" in height. Mr. Coolidge said the 25 sq. ft. sign is good and if they go over that size the next person will say they should have that size signage. Mr. Fischer said that was the concern of the Commission members who decided against the 40 sq. ft. sign.

Ms. Bennett said she likes the larger sign. She asked if this is the only signage on the building. Mr. Fischer said the restaurant has several smaller 2' x 2' signs on the sides of the building. Ms. Bennett said if someone is not familiar with Powell they might not see the signage. The members of the Commission commented on the appropriateness of the color choices for the building. Mr. Coolidge said once they install the sidewalk patio that will be signage in itself. Ms. Bennett agreed. Chairman Coffey said he approves as long as the placement is not too high on the building. Ms. Howell said she is fine with the request and feels this is a nice looking sign. She said she does agree that the larger 40 sq. ft. sign looks better on the façade but that is not their issue.

MOTION: Mr. Coolidge moved to approve the 25 sq. ft. sign on the front elevation at Easy Street Café at 5 South Liberty Street, with the bottom of the sign to be located no more than three rows above the porch. Ms. Howell seconded the motion.

VOTE: Y = 5 N = 0

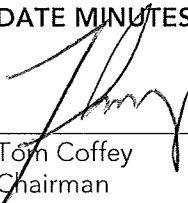
OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.


ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

DATE MINUTES APPROVED: FEBRUARY 17, 2011



Tom Coffey
Chairman



Date

