

**NEXT REGULAR MEETING: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17, 2002 AT 6:30 P.M.**

## **MINUTES OF THE RP HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

**MARCH 20, 2002**

Chairman Al Zaccone called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., it having been duly noted that this meeting is being held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq., notice of which was sent to The Record on the 30<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2001, and to the Jersey Journal on the 31st day of December, 2001. Roll call was taken. Commission members present were: Ed Holmberg and Robert Olson.

The minutes of the February 20, 2002, meeting were approved.

**Old Business:**

**New Business:** None could be conducted.

**Correspondence and Notes:** None received.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 6:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara DeLuca

cc: Carol Todd, Building Department

NEXT REGULAR MEETING: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17, 2002 AT 6:30 P.M.

## MINUTES OF THE RP HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

MARCH 27, 2002

Chairman Al Zaccone called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., it having been duly noted that this meeting is being held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq., notice of which was sent to The Record on the 30<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2001, and to the Jersey Journal on the 31st day of December, 2001. Roll call was taken. Commission members present were: Al Zaccone, Ed Holmberg and Robert Olson.

The minutes of the February 20, 2002, meeting were approved.

**Old Business: The Village Hardware**, (21 Mt. Vernon Street) was represented by business owner Michael Alberque. Mike Alberque would like to put a burgundy colored waterfall type awning from window to window wrapped around the building projecting 19 ft. x 7 ½ ft. x 10 ft. on the Lincoln Avenue side. It is 40" high, projecting out 24" and says Village Hardware on each side with "21" on the middle panel over the door. It will be aluminum framed. Al Zaccone informed the applicant that this is something that has not been approved by the Board in the past. The type of awning that is approved is a straight flap shed waterfall awning. The Commission informed the applicant that the waterfall awnings on Main Street were installed before the guidelines came into existence. The only new awning on Main Street had to be approved by a variance.

The Commission explained to the applicant that the professionals hired by the Village to come up with the standards for the guidelines had set a straight awning with a drop flap on it (such as was installed by the ice cream store). Mike Alberque explained that in his opinion this type of awning would not look good on his particular building. He has seen pictures and prefers the waterfall type awning. He does not plan to put any lighting on this awning.

Al Zaccone also explained that once lettering is put on the awning, unless it is just on the front flap part, it becomes a sign. The sign is then oversized for the property. The building is allowed only 50 sq. ft. for a sign. Since the building is located on two streets, two signs would be allowed. However, it is still too big for the building. The entire awning now becomes a sign. Based on the guidelines, if a straight awning with a flap was installed, then only the flap would be considered the sign. The applicant feels that he needs the awning because it dresses up the store better than a sign. He also feels he needs an awning as exposure for customers who are on Main Street to be able to see he has a business. Al Zaccone explained to the applicant that the only way to get this particular awning and sign approved was to go for a variance before the Board of Adjustment.

Mike Alberque finds it very difficult that businesses have to go through all this trouble every time they want to make improvements to their store. Al Zaccone asked the applicant what he felt about possibly installing a projecting sign instead of the awning. Mike Alberque said he feels an awning looks better than a sign protruding out of a building. Ed Holmberg said that he personally does not like protruding signs and once an exception is made, it will be hard to deny other applications. Al Zaccone explained that exceptions could be made for stores with locations such as this.

Ed Holmberg asked the applicant if he felt it might be more economical to install lights over a sign. The applicant feels the cost of hiring an electrician would cost too much. The applicant feels that he is already spending \$5,000.00 for an awning and does not want to incur the extra expenses of a sign and lights. He does not want a projecting sign and prefers the waterfall awning with lettering on it. Al Zaccone again explained that by putting the lettering on the awning, the entire awning now becomes a sign and it is too large to be allowed. The size of the lettering does not matter; the entire awning is considered the sign. The watershed, straight awning is acceptable because only the drop piece is considered the sign because it is in character with the original designs for buildings in the district.

The applicant feels that his store is different than those located on Main Street because people on Main Street can't see he is there unless he has an awning to attract attention. Al Zaccone explained that the Mayor and Commissioners hired a professional consultant to establish the guidelines and that is what the Commission uses when hearing applications. The Commission felt that his name still would not be seen from Main Street regardless of what type of awning is installed. The applicant feels a flat sign would not help his business and he does not like the style of the awning approved by the Commission.

The applicant asked if he could get approval at this meeting for a sloped awning. He would like to have this in place for his grand opening in April. Al Zaccone asked that if the applicant was looking to amend his application, that would be fine but personally, he does not think he should make the mistake of rushing through this application and make a decision tonight without carefully thinking of another alternative. The applicant amended his application to install a sloped watershed awning, not the waterfall type awning, with a loose drop leaf, eight inches high, projecting out 24 inches, Village Hardware will be on either side of the flaps with "21" in the middle, white lettering on a burgundy awning, the white lettering will be shadowed in black. Al Zaccone made a motion, which was seconded by Robert Olson, that the awning for the Village Hardware, be approved as amended; it will not be a waterfall type awning, it will have a sloped top projecting not more than 24 inches with a loose drop leaf of 8 inches, the Village Hardware is the lettering that is approved along with the number 21 over the front door; the lettering will be approximately 6 inches high on the front flap,

which is the drop leaf; the awning will not be lighted; there is no additional signage that is proposed for this building; the awning will be three-sided, 19 feet long against Mt. Vernon Street, 7 feet 6 inches long against the angled return over the front entrance and extending 10 feet back along Lincoln Avenue. The top of the awning will be just above the top of the existing window and will project down approximately 40 inches, including the drop panel in the front. All existing signs, lettering, projections, etc., will be removed in their entirety and surfaces patched to match existing surrounding surfaces. All were in favor of this motion.

Al Zaccone advised the applicant that the Commission would not approve this application with the knowledge that there will be a box from a previous sign staying in its place in a deteriorating condition. The applicant said that it would cost \$2,000.00 to remove the sign and repair the wall. He feels that he cannot afford to remove this sign and he does not own the building. The Commission feels that keeping this box up would be an unsafe condition. Past experience has shown approvals were granted; then old signs are left up and never removed. It will not approve applications without calling for the repair of existing conditions. The Commission will not allow an obsolete sign to remain on this building. The applicant feels that he should not be penalized because someone else did not do their job and have this sign removed when the prior tenant left.

Al Zaccone advised that when the Commission is aware that a tenant has vacated, it requests the Building Department to send a letter calling for the removal of the old signs by the building owner. Although it is the owner's obligation to remove these signs, it is the tenant that needs approval to have a sign installed. The Commission offered to send a letter to the building owner; however; the applicant requested that no letter be sent at this time, as he would prefer contacting the owner personally. Ed Holmberg feels it should not be the applicant's responsibility to remove this sign; however; Mike Alberque preferred to handle this himself.

The applicant questioned the open sides on the awning. Al Zaccone checked the guidelines after the meeting and found that side flaps are permitted. Al Zaccone suggested that before this is fabricated that the applicant carefully think this over and make sure that this is what he really wants to do. If the awning designer wants to discuss this application with Al Zaccone, Al Zaccone would be more than happy to discuss it with him. The Commission wants to make it clear that an awning is not what is preferred, but rather a possible solution to the applicant because that is what the applicant says he clearly prefers even though he feels this type of awning would not look. The Commission would prefer to see a sign and this is not the preferred solution. The Commission is only trying to find an awning that is acceptable since the applicant stressed he preferred an awning to any type of mounted sign on the building.

**Dollar Dreams**, 183-185 Main Street, was represented by Bharat Patel. This is a revision from what was submitted last month. The proposed sign is 2 ft. high x

16 ft. wide with four gooseneck lights over the sign in a forest green color. The sign itself is a forest green background metal sign with white lettering. If lights were installed, they would be forest green gooseneck style.

Al Zaccone suggested painting the front of the store a lighter color in order to be able to see the submitted sign better since the sign is a dark background and the store is currently a dark color. Al Zaccone said the applicant should submit his proposed colors to the Building Department and they will submit them directly to him for approval. There will be no neon in the windows. No neon is allowed in the window at all according to the ordinance. The bottom of the sign is 12 ft. 6 in. above the sidewalk. There is no signage to be placed in the window. There are 4 forest green gooseneck lights to possibly be placed above the sign. Nothing will be done with the storefront itself. The applicant questioned if he could put anything stenciled on the window. The Commission advised that the name of the store, the address and phone number could be stenciled in one of the windows, but not in each window.

Al Zaccone said his only concern with the sign is that it is a flat piece of metal that is just anchored in the corners right up against this uneven face. It tends to buckle. Al Zaccone said that the sign should have a frame around it to make the sign more substantial. The frame could be done in a white aluminum to make the sign more rigid. There is also a proposal to put two flagpoles with a light on the flags. The applicant withdrew the flags from his application. There is an American flag in red, white and blue in the center of Dollar Dreams (12 inch high letters), it also says toys, baby items, etc., across the bottom in 2 inch high letters.

Al Zaccone made a motion, which was seconded by Ed Holmberg, approving the application for a sign at Dollar Dreams, in a hunter green background with white lettering and a white aluminum frame surrounding the sign, which would be approximately one inch deep, modifying the design that had been submitted, which shows anchoring a flat metal panel to the building face, that the panel on the building where the sign is going to be installed is painted from its present dark brown to a light color, possibly beige background, as accepted by the Historic Commission, that the sign may be lighted by four gooseneck lights as submitted in a hunter green color and any conduit used in installing the sign is installed plumb and square to the building; the sign is 16 feet wide and 2 feet high; the white lettering is 12 inches high indicating Dollar Dreams and 2 inches high with lettering as indicated on the application; there will be no American flags or additional lights that are a part of this application; there is no signage proposed in the window except in one panel where Dollar Dreams will be repeated stenciled in the window with an address and possibly phone number; the bottom of the sign is 12 feet 6 inches above the sidewalk. All were in favor of this motion.

**New Business:** Bridge View Bank, 245 Main Street, was represented by Judd Davies of National Sign Company. The stanchion sign will be a retro fit sign and it will remain lighted. There is an existing post and panel sign along the stairs and it will be a retro fit as well. It is not lighted. The Commission does not feel this sign is necessary as there are too many signs being submitted. There is also a directional sign for the entrance, which is allowable. The colors are forest green with gold lettering.

Al Zaccone advised that the next meeting is April 17 and he would prefer to see a sample of the alternative signs since the lighted signs are not acceptable on the front of the building. There are too many signs submitted for the building and the secondary sign will not be acceptable. Al Zaccone advised that he would keep the application open until the next meeting.

**Correspondence and Notes:** None received.

Ed Holmberg had a comment that all of the signs being proposed are green and he would like to see some more variety. Robert Olson said that the Commission should look to see what surrounds each building to make sure there is a variety.

The Building Department will be asked to send a letter regarding the neon signs in the Limo Business located next to Lukas.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara DeLuca

cc: Carol Todd, Building Department  
 Martin Durkin, Esq.  
 Michael Alberque, The Village Hardware  
 Bharat Patel, Dollar Dreams  
 Bridge View Bank