

CHATHAM BOROUGH HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

November 21, 2023

7:30 p.m.

Chairman James Greener called this Regular Meeting of the Chatham Borough Historic Preservation Commission to order at 7:30 p.m. This meeting was held in the Council Chambers, Upper Level, Chatham Municipal Building. All legal notices have been posted for this meeting.

Names	Present	Absent
James Greener, Chrmn.	X	
Council Member Dempsey	X	
Council Member Frank Truilo	recused	
Lynn Magrane	X	
Karen Franklin	X	
H.H. Montague		X
Justin Strickland	Present by a Zoom call	
Brigid McMenamin	Abstained in the beginning of the meeting	
Derrick Bell	X	
Liz Holler, Recording Secretary	X	

Motion to Adopt Meeting Minutes

Mrs. Franklin made a motion to adopt the minutes of the October 17, 2023 meeting as submitted. A voice vote was taken. Council Member Dempsey seconded the motion. The minutes of October 17, 2023 were approved as submitted.

Danny Realty, LLC

185 Main Street (Exxon)

Application # ZB 23-016

This is the third presentation of this application to the HPC.

These witnesses were in attendance for tonight's presentation:

James J. Turtletaub, Esq., attorney for Danny Realty

Kamlesh M. Shah, architect for Danny Realty

Waseem Chaudry, owner of Danny Realty LLC

Attorney Turtletaub gave an opening statement. He noted that revised plans have now been submitted, including lighting plans. Attorney Turtletaub put a photo of the proposed building on the easel.

Mr. Shah submitted his professional credentials to the Commission.

Chrmn. Greener asked Mr. Shah to review the revisions now made to the plans.

Mr. Shah recalled that the earlier plans had proposed fiber cement for the exterior. The HPC suggested that real brick be used. HPC also wanted fabric for the awnings. Mr. Shaw distributed photos of the colored brick that will now be used for the exterior. HPC had asked that clear divided panels of glass be used for the windows.

Mr. Shah showed an image he had printed out for the Commission, showing the type of brick that will be used. Genuine brick will be used, but it will be thin.

Mr. Shah also pointed out the natural limestone band, measuring about 4 inches high. It will be at the bottom of the building.

Mr. Shah explained that the windows will be true divided lights. Each glass pane will be separated by metal molded muntins. Sconces will be added to the light fixtures.

Mr. Shah stated that the front sign will be illuminated with goose-neck light fixtures.

Mr. Greener brought up the east side elevation. The proponents of the gable seem to shift to the left of the gable's peak. This is on the pedestrian level. Is this really needed?

Mr. Shah explained that this arrangement is because of the interior lay-out of the building, specifically the location of the proposed bathroom.

After further discussion, Mr. Shah said that the entrance could be shifted over. He felt the entrance could be made symmetrical.

Mr. Greener complimented Mr. Shah on the revised plans, which he felt had come a long way from the original plans.

Council Member Dempsey and Mr. Shah discussed the proposed screening on the property.

Mr. Bell recalled there had been concerns about the proposed signage (free-standing) becoming broader. Some HPC members had expressed concerns about sight lines. Is there any more information on that?

Mr. Shah stated that the plans now show the sight triangles and their relationship to Main Street.

Mr. Greener confirmed with Mr. Shah that the dimensions of the monument sign have not changed.

Mr. Shah explained why the sign has to be this particular size. The price sign will be internally lit, like the price signs of other gas stations in town.

Mr. Greener asked if any changes have been made to the landscaping of the site.

Attorney Turteltaub reviewed the most recent landscaping plans with Chrmn. Greener. He pointed out that most of the trees and plantings shown on the plans are already existing. Attorney

Turtletaub stated that the applicant would be willing to install more plantings on the left side of the property.

Attorney Turtletaub assured Chrmn. Greener that a landscaping plan will be submitted to the Zoning Bd. of Adjustment.

Attorney Turtletaub asked Chrmn. Greener if there was an area that the HPC felt landscaping is needed.

Chrmn. Greener explained that the HPC does take a look at landscaping when evaluating an application. He pointed out that the applicant has a clip of land on the northeast corner of the property, plus a small area by Liberty Drug.

Attorney Turtletaub felt the applicant could fill in the area by his Hillside Avenue driveway with landscaping. Perhaps low plantings could be installed at the base of the monument sign.

Attorney Turtletaub agreed that the northeast corner belongs to the Borough; however, it is part of the visual appearance for his client's business. Danny Realty will work with the Borough on the maintenance and plantings for this corner.

Chrmn. Greener asked Mr. Strickland if he had any questions or comments on this application.

Mr. Strickland felt that Danny Realty has done a good job working with the HPC to make this an acceptable addition to Chatham's Historic District. He asked if the pricing sign will not be digital. Will the prices be changed out manually?

Attorney Turtletaub answered that the applicant will remove his digital sign proposal. LED lighting will not be used.

Mr. Strickland felt that change was much appreciated.

Mr. Strickland asked what would be the lumens for the lighting.

Chrmn. Greener referred Mr. Strickland to the re-submitted plans. At the perimeter of the building it is between a 5.3 footcandles and 2.0. It is relatively modest. At the canopy, it is 13, which is a needed amount. The lighting at the curb line has been very much reduced, 2 footcandles or 3.

Chrmn. Greener felt the applicant has followed what the HPC had requested for foot candle lighting.

Mr. Strickland had no further questions.

Council Member Dempsey and Attorney Turtletaub discussed the landscaping.

Attorney Turtletaub stated that the applicant is willing to work with the town if they are not happy with what is being proposed for landscaping.

Chrmn. Greener asked if the public had any questions or comments.

Brigid McMEnamin, Center Ave. stated that she is happy that progress has been made on this application. She asked how the lighting of the new convenience store would compare with the lighting of the outside gas pump.

Mr. Shah answered that the lighting will be what is typically permitted in these type projects. As a person or vehicle departs from the convenience store itself, the lighting will get lighter and lighter.

Mrs. McMEnamin asked if the convenience store will be more brightly lit than what is currently exists for lighting at local gas pumps.

Mr. Shah couldn't answer that question because he was not sure what lighting numbers existed at other area pumps.

Mrs. McMEnamin asked how the lighting of the convenience store will compare with the lighting at Liberty Drug and the bank across the street on Hillside Avenue. Mrs. McMEnamin had concerns about how this store will fit into the neighborhood.

Mrs. McMEnamin also asked if this convenience store will have lighting as bright as or brighter than the neighboring businesses.

Mr. Shah answered that he didn't know the lighting calculations of the neighboring businesses; however, the applicant will follow certain energy codes which are very sensitive to making businesses not shine too brightly.

Mrs. McMEnamin asked if those lighting figures could be researched.

Mr. Shah answered that if the application was approved, the applicant can state that he will meet the local code standards on lighting.

Mrs. McMEnamin stated that she is just concerned how this proposed building will fit into the Historic District.

Mr. Greener felt that the candle lightings on the ground look reasonable. However, is any upward light being proposed? He just wanted to make sure that there would be no lighting sensationalizing the building at night.

Mr. Shah answered that his client is not proposing to up light the building. The sconces being proposed will just be decorative and will enhance the look of the building.

Attorney Turtletaub believed there would be no place to install the upward lighting.

Chrmn. Greener complimented Danny Realty on achieving such an acceptable set of plans in keeping with Main Street, Chatham. He felt the front gable is a good proposal.

Chrmn. Greener asked if the gable will be painted a certain color.

Mr. Shah answered that the gable will come pre-finished.

Chrmn. Greener asked that the applicant, before going before the Zoning Board, to correct or adjust the north elevation facing Hillside Avenue. Some symmetry is needed.

Mr. Shah acknowledged that suggestion.

Chrmn. Greener asked that if the Zoning Board approved their application, would Danny Realty please consider returning to the HPC with their color choices.

Mr. Shah didn't believe the applicant will be digressing any further from what has already been agreed upon. However, they can present a color board to the HPC.

Chrmn. Greener stated that the HPC would be willing to meet the applicant and his professionals on the site to discuss colors. This does not have to be done at a regular meeting at Borough Hall.

Mr. Shaw stated that he and the applicant can set up color samples for the contractors to make sure a match will be made.

Chrmn. Greener asked for a motion on the building itself, not anything else on the property.

Mrs. Magrane made a motion that the HPC accept the proposed plans, with the symmetry asked for the Hillside Avenue side of the building, and asking that the applicant return with color samples. Council Member Dempsey seconded the motion.

Chrmn. Greener asked for another motion on the sign.

Council Member Dempsey made a motion that the pricing sign be internally illuminated.

Chrmn. Greener believed the sign was too tall. It also had too much mass. Mrs. Franklin agreed with that point.

Attorney Turteltaub answered that some foliage could be planted around the base of the sign. That would break up some of the mass appearance.

Chrmn. Greener and some other Commissioners questioned whether a sign that size is really needed. The proposed height, 9 ft. 4 in., seems excessive for that particular corner. No other business signs locally have a height above 5 feet.

Mr. Strickland asked how tall the proposed sign in the original submission was. No one could recall at the moment.

Attorney Turtleaub reported that he had just spoken with Mr. Chaudry. The sign will be reduced to 7 ½ feet. This new proposed height will be presented to the Zoning Bd. of Adjustment.

Chrmn. Greener will mention this reduction in his report to the Zoning Board.

Chrmn. Greener was still concerned about the mass of the sign. It will be 10 feet wide.

Attorney Turtleaub explained that the sign has to be able to contain all the necessary information of the business.

Chrmn. Greener felt that there is another way to design that sign. He asked the other Commissioners to give their views.

Council Member Dempsey asked if the originally proposed sign had been smaller.

Chrmn. Greener said he would check on that.

Council Member Dempsey said she would like to see the sign made smaller.

Mr. Bell said he understood why businesses need that information on their sign. He wasn't sure if the sign could be made smaller.

Chrmn. Greener suggested maybe the enclosure or recapulation of the sign could be revisited or recreated.

Attorney Turtleaub answered that this situation could be revisited to see if the sign could be made smaller; however he felt that the sign's info was essential.

Chrmn. Greener brought up landscaping. Is there anything new for the Board to look at tonight? The HPC will have to defer to the Zoning Board on that matter.

Council Member Dempsey noted that there had been a submission of landscaping plans included in the original plans.

Chrmn. Greener asked if, based on the HPC's earlier comments, will there be any revisions made to the landscaping plans.

Attorney Turtleaub answered none at this time, except for plantings or smaller trees around the Liberty Drug sign. Plantings are also being proposed around the base of the sign as shown on the originally submitted plans.

Chrmn. Greener then concluded that there have been revisions made to the original plans. The northeast and northwest corners of the property will be addressed.

Mr. Strickland informed Chrmn. Greener that the original plans showed the proposed sign to be 7 ½ feet wide.

Chrmn. Greener thanked Mr. Shah and Attorney Turtletaub for their hard work on revising these plans and listening to the concerns of the HPC.

The Danny Realty representatives left the meeting.

It was 8:20 p.m. Mrs. McMenamin rejoined her fellow Commissioners at the podium.

#### The Stanley Center

Chrmn. Greener reported that he had the pleasure of attending the grand opening of The Stanley Center on October 29. Chrmn. Greener has something in mind for the Center. The Commissioners are aware of this idea.

#### The HPC Flag Award

Chrmn. Greener reported that the HPC now has their flags. Mr. Dempsey has created both a large scale flag and a small flag. He had photos of the flags.

Council Member Dempsey suggested the Flag be awarded to Ms. Khawand at closing time as opposed to regular business hours.

Chrmn. Greener said he will visit Ms. Kawand at Fleur de Sel and see what date would be convenient to present the Flag. He will email the presentation date and time to Commissioners. Chrmn. Greener encouraged Commissioners to please attend.

The meeting adjourned.

The next Chatham Borough Historic Preservation Commission Meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 19, 2023, 7:30 p.m., Room 301, Chatham Municipal Building.

The meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted:

Liz Holler  
Recording Secretary

