

MINUTES
TOWN OF FORT MILL
HISTORIC REVIEW BOARD
September 14th, 2021
112 Confederate Street
4:30 PM

Present: Chairman Louis Roman, David Booth, Megan Brinton, Scott Couchenour, Elizabeth Leventis, Samantha Nifong, Planning Director Penelope Karagounis, Senior Planner Alex Moore

Guests: Sean Gorman, Tracey Roman, Kathryn McDowell

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Louis Roman called the meeting to order at 4:33 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Louis Roman entertained a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Couchenour made a motion to approve the minutes from the July 13th, 2021, meeting as presented. David Booth seconded the motion to approve the minutes. The minutes were then approved by a vote of 6-0.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Request for Certificate of Appropriateness (COA)

The first item on the agenda included a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) submitted by Kuester Commercial Real Estate to perform external improvements at 219 & 221 Main Street.

Senior Planner Alex Moore gave an overview of the application and associated materials for this COA application. He noted that 219 & 221 Main Street are located within the Historic Preservation District and listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

Moore stated that the facades of both buildings currently consist of original brick along with augmented elements as noted within the staff report.

At 219 Main Street, Moore stated that the applicant proposes to refurbish and then repaint the brick. He indicated that the upper story windows at 219 Main Street would be replaced with clad, wood windows. Further, the full aluminum storefront would be removed and replaced with materials which match the historic façade with an additional door installed along the right façade.

Additionally, Moore stated that a new thermoplastic polyolefin roof would be added to 219 Main Street. He then noted that the rear elevation would receive brick restoration as well as the inclusion of a new roof-top deck and stairs.

Senior Planner Moore then presented the slated exterior improvements at 221 Main Street. These would include the refurbishment and re-painting of the façade brick along with the replacement of the upper story windows with clad, wood windows. The existing metal panels and steel windows on the storefront would undergo restoration as well. He noted that the applicant intended to restore the awning hood and have it reinstalled with a new retractable awning. The rear elevation would undergo brick restoration along with the installation of clad, wood windows. Finally, a new thermoplastic polyolefin roof would be added to 221 Main Street.

Senior Planner Moore then noted the historic district guidelines review as presented on pages 8 and 9 of the HRB agenda packet. He corrected historic guideline finding number 7 as presented within the packet by noting that it should state: *“It is not anticipated that sandblasting will be used for this project. All surface cleaning must be done in a manner that is conducive to preservation.”*

Moore then pointed out the color renderings within the HRB packet as provided by the applicant. These renderings illustrated the improvements proposed at 219 and 221 Main Street.

There were then two points of clarification that Senior Planner Moore wanted to receive from the Kuester team. First, he asked if there would be an awning at 219 Main Street. Second, he asked if the additional door at 219 Main Street, to the right of the principal entrance, would be a faux door.

Sean Gorman with Kuester Commercial responded that there would not be an awning at 219 Main Street. Additionally, Mr. Gorman indicated that the door in question at 219 Main Street would not be faux, but rather, it would be operational.

Senior Planner Moore then asked Mr. Gorman to speak to the proposed color of the buildings and any other items he deemed pertinent.

Mr. Gorman then stated that the color of each respective building would be as indicated on the current color renderings.

Mr. Gorman then also noted that the project would entail retail downstairs and office upstairs within both buildings. Additionally, he indicated that Kuester would attempt to use as much of the existing historic materials as possible.

Chairman Roman then asked HRB members if there were any questions about any of the information presented.

Megan Brinton asked if the color renderings provided an accurate depiction of the windows that would be installed within this project.

Mr. Gorman responded affirmatively.

David Booth asked about the color as depicted in the renderings. He noted that there were two different shades of green shown on the facades of 219 and 221 respectively, but that the rear elevation renderings indicated that there would be a single shade of green. He asked if it was the intent to provide the same color divergence on the rear elevations?

Kathryn McDowell, representing the project architectural firm, responded that the color renderings did indeed show the colors as Mr. Booth had described, with two shades of green on the facades and one uniform color on the rear elevations.

Mr. Gorman interjected that he imagined that the colors would be uniform on both facades and both rear elevations.

Mr. Booth then asked if it was the intent on the rear to maintain the brick, as shown on demising wall in the renderings, in its natural color, or would these areas be painted over?

Mr. Gorman responded that they would likely paint the demising wall.

Ms. Brinton asked if any original, unpainted brick was present on either of the buildings.

Ms. McDowell responded that the brick as present on the demising wall is the only original, unpainted brick present.

Ms. Brinton also asked if they would plan on leaving this brick as is.

Mr. Gorman responded that the plan was to paint the demising wall brick unless the board would rather see it remain as is.

Chairman Roman stated that the consensus of the board was for the brick demising wall to remain unpainted.

Mr. Booth then asked if the TPO roof would be implemented on the rear porch area of 219 Main Street as well as the upper roof area.

Mr. Gorman responded that the rear porch would consist of reinforced decking with the upper sections of 219 Main Street consisting of TPO roofing. He also noted that the entirety of the roof areas of 221 Main Street would consist of TPO roofing.

Chairman Roman then asked if any of the areas of either building would ever include housing.

Mr. Gorman responded that both buildings would consist of only office and retail with no housing components.

Scott Couchenour then asked about the handrails as shown on the rendering for 219 Main Street. He noted that the handrailing on the rear elevations for the Spratt Building and the Local Dish building were matched. He observed that the railing as proposed within the project renderings did not match these other buildings.

Mr. Booth interjected that it appeared the Kuester project proposed metal handrailing with stainless-steel cable.

Mr. Couchenour then asked if this was cable or glass.

Ms. McDowell clarified that it consisted of glass as proposed for the decking handrails but that the stairs did not contain any glass as part of the handrailing design.

Mr. Couchenour then asked for clarification on the handrailing as shown on the rear elevation of 221 Main Street.

Ms. McDowell responded that the handrailing as shown on the rendering was the current railing as it currently exists. She also noted that this handrailing could be tweaked to match that of 219 Main Street.

Mr. Booth noted that he presumed that the building code would require that handrailing be placed on the dock area at the rear of 219 Main Street.

Ms. McDowell concurred with this.

Mr. Booth then asked what material would be used for the decking at 219 Main Street.

Ms. McDowell indicated that the current architectural drawings indicated that pressed concrete pavers would be used. She also noted that this portion of the roof at 219 Main Street would consist of a complete reconstruction to accommodate patrons.

Mr. Booth then inquired regarding the drainage of this roof area at 219 Main Street.

Ms. McDowell responded that the current drawings were incomplete in this regard, but final drawings would account for the drainage.

Senior Planner Moore then asked Ms. McDowell to clarify if all handrails on the rear elevations of 219 and 221 Main Street would match.

Ms. McDowell indicated that the design of the handrails would involve a uniform approach except that the handrail on the deck area of 219 Main Street would incorporate glass.

Chairman Roman then asked Mr. Couchenour if he had in fact recommended via his previous comments that this deck handrailing be more ornamental in nature.

Mr. Couchenour responded that his intention was to ask if the board would rather that the handrailing as proposed within the current Kuester project be more consistent with the handrailing that was implemented at the rear of the Spratt Building as well as with the Local Dish building. He did indicate that he was not a fan of the glass handrailing within the town's historic district.

Chairman Roman and Mr. Booth concurred with this sentiment.

Ms. Brinton expressed that 219 Main Street is located directly next to the Local Dish building which has a more traditional type handrailing on the rear elevation.

Mr. Couchenour restated that the railing at the Local Dish was similar to that of the Spratt Building. He then indicated that he would like all of the railing on the rear elevations of 219 and 221 Main Street to be similar to that of the Spratt Building and the Local Dish.

Elizabeth Leventis asked if there were any historic images of the rear of 219 and 221 Main Street.

Senior Planner Moore indicated that unfortunately only historic pictures of the front elevations were available.

Ms. Leventis stated that the reason she asked this question was to determine what the historic use was beyond the antique or rug store. Her point was that buildings within historic districts are not always completely uniform regarding design components such as handrailing.

Mr. Gorman indicated that 219 Main Street was historically Ardrey's Drug Store and 221 Main Street was Mill's Mercantile.

Ms. Leventis then stated that perhaps the railing did not have to be exactly the same as the other buildings but rather period appropriate to these historic uses.

Chairman Roman then asked if there were any other comments or questions.

Mr. Booth asked about the wall signage as rendered had been sized per town requirements. He noted that reduced wall signage may not be congruent with the metal panel as designed.

Senior Planner Moore replied that a wall sign could comprise up to 15% of the wall area to which it is attached and that it did not appear that this signage exceeded this measure. He also noted that future tenants of these buildings would need to come back before HRB for sign review and approval.

Ms. Brinton then segued by asking Mr. Gorman if Kuester had any prospective tenants.

Mr. Gorman replied that they did have potential tenants but that he did not want to release specifics since they were still in negotiation.

Chairman Roman then summed up the findings of the board to indicate that there should be conditions, as previously discussed, added to any motion to approve. These conditions would be that glass not be included in any handrail design and that Kuester install a more traditional style using as inspiration the handrailing at the rear of the Spratt Building (215 Main Street) and the Local Dish building (217 Main Street). He stated that the railing did not have to be an exact replica of the railing at these locations but something more period appropriate than glass. This would include all railing and pickets on both buildings.

Chairman Roman asked the HRB if there was anything else.

Samantha Nifong noted that the board had discussed requiring that the original brick on the demising wall between 219 and 221 Main Street should be left unpainted.

Chairman Roman concurred with this statement from Ms. Nifong. He then asked if the board had any other comments or questions.

There being none, Chairman Roman entertained a motion.

Ms. Brinton made a motion to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for 219 and 221 Main Street with the following conditions:

- (1) Glass shall not be incorporated into the design of any handrailing at the rear of 219 or 221 Main Street.
- (2) All handrailing shall be modeled after, but not necessarily an exact replica of, the handrailing currently in existence at the rear of the Spratt Building (215 Main Street) and the Local Dish building (217 Main Street).
- (3) The original brick of the demising wall between 219 and 221 Main Street shall remain unpainted.

Ms. Nifong seconded the motion.

Then, with a vote of 6-0 the HRB voted to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for 219 and 221 Main Street with the three conditions as noted above.

2. Request for Preliminary Bailey Bill Certification

The second item on the agenda included a request for preliminary Bailey Bill certification for the Kuester project at 219 and 221 Main Street.

Senior Planner Alex Moore gave an overview of the application and associated materials. He noted that the goal for the Bailey Bill within the Town of Fort Mill is to encourage the rehabilitation of historic properties, promote community development and redevelopment, encourage sound community planning, and to promote the general health, safety, and welfare of the community.

To be eligible for the Bailey Bill special tax assessment, historic properties must receive both preliminary and final certification. For commercial properties, the minimum investment is 20% of Fair Market Value (FMV). For this application, the FMV of \$1.15 million has been determined via the contract of sale. This contract of sale is found on page 48 of the packet.

Additionally, historic properties must be listed on the NRHP, or the property must be located within the historic district and be at least 50 years old. The following work will be reviewed: Repairs and alterations to the exterior of the designated building, Alterations to the interior, and any remaining work where the expenditures for such work are being used to satisfy the minimum expenditures for rehabilitation, including but not limited to, alternations made to mechanical, plumbing, and electrical systems.

The standards for the historic rehabilitation are noted on page 26 of the packet. The application indicates that the anticipated project cost is \$2.7 million which greatly exceeds the FMV as provided via the contract of sale.

Senior Planner Moore noted that the exterior improvements had been extensively covered within the COA portion of this meeting. He asked board members if they had any further questions about the exterior improvements as submitted. There being none, he asked the Kuester team to discuss the proposed interior improvements at 219 and 221 Main Street.

Sean Gorman then gave a brief overview of the proposed interior improvements. He noted that the most important thing was to bring both buildings back to structural integrity. Thus, a lot of the work would involve reinforcement.

Mr. Gorman stated that there would be common area restrooms added to each building in both the upstairs and downstairs sections. The upstairs offices in both buildings would also include common break areas.

Mr. Gorman indicated that brand new plumbing, electrical, and mechanical would be installed throughout both buildings. He also noted the new TPO roofs that would be installed.

Chairman Roman then asked if there had been any historical elements or features internal to the buildings that impressed the design team enough to try and restore or save.

Mr. Gorman responded that within the 219 Main Street building, original hardwood was discovered beneath a more recent floor installation. He stated that they were going to do everything possible to save these.

Chairman Roman then asked if there were any other comments or questions regarding the preliminary Bailey Bill application.

There being none, Chairman Roman noted that it appeared that the minimum preliminary Bailey Bill certification requirements had been met via the application.

Chairman Roman then entertained a motion on the application.

Scott Couchenour made a motion to approve.

Megan Brinton seconded the motion.

Then, with a vote of 6-0 the HRB voted to approve the Bailey Bill preliminary certification application for 219 and 221 Main Street as presented.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 5:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Alex J. Moore, AICP

Senior Planner

September 30th, 2021