

VILLAGE OF BALLSTON SPA
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
January 22, 2024

Present: Steve Springer, Carrie Chapman, Gary Stephenson, and John Cromie, also Marilyn Stephenson and Ann McDonough. By Zoom: Stefanie Bitters and Dave LaFountain.

Ann McDonough was introduced by Marilyn Stephenson. Ann has been a resident of the area for quite a few years, and her husband is related to the Davidson family of the former Davidson Namack Foundry. She has had an interest in architecture, which was increased while she worked for Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation. Ann decided to reach out to the Commission after attending the architectural talk last week. She would like to create several walking tours around Ballston Spa and thought the Commission could help. Gary provided her with Field Horne's, "In a Pleasant Situation." Gary, Marilyn, and John volunteered to assist her. John asked that Ann act as the lead and set a time for a meeting.

John and Marilyn prepared proposed modifications to sections 205-39 and 205-41 of the HDL, and an explanatory narrative for each. The proposals are intended to be supplied to the Zoning Review Committee to aid in its work.

John asked for Stefanie's opinion about the portion of proposed 205-41 which charges the Zoning Board to determine if the action appealed from was arbitrary, capricious and contrary to the HDL, and if it was, then the application is to be sent back to the HDC for a decision consistent with the Zoning Board's decision. She responded that she agreed with the procedure.

Gary noted the proposal allows any property owner in the HD to appeal. John reasoned the existing law implies that right, but the proposal makes it definite.

Steve felt a 30-day window to appeal was not enough, given the time it takes for people to collect information and turn out a response. Stefanie noted, elsewhere, applicants are given 62 days to appeal. It was the consensus to change 30 to 62 days.

In reference to 205-39, it was agreed that the HDC should have the last say on an application after the Zoning Board and Planning Board have reviewed and approved it. However, there was a strong feeling that the HDC should be aware of an application so it could insert itself in the Zoning and Planning process, if it felt HD concerns could be acted on by either board. Dave noted that Section 205-36 needs to be worked into the process, by clearly stating the 72-hour notice in 36 need not be connected to when the HDC acts. John will work of ensuring the two sections mesh without confusion.

It was felt a closer look of Article XV, Façade Review, is in order to determine if there should be a greater cross-over with the HDL.

There was a concern that more should be in the HDL concerning signs. It was countered that the guideline contained in Section 205-37 may be sufficient. The question will be explored.

There was a discussion about changes to properties that do not require a building permit but impact a building's appearance and historic integrity. Dave felt it could be handled by the building department if specific actions in the HD required a building permit even if they were not structural. Specific changes identified were removal of architectural elements, siding, parking lots, screening, skirting, or anything that changes the outward appearance. John will work on this concern.

Marilyn noted that she is a member of the Zoning Committee and that it meets the 1st and 2nd Thursday at CCE at 7 pm. Public are allowed to speak after the meetings.

John had to leave to make an appointment. The meeting was ended.

Next meeting February 19, 2024 at 9:15 AM at 90 E. High.