

ASPEN HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES FEBRUARY 23, 2011

Vice-chair, Ann Mullins called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.
Commissioners in attendance: Nora Berko, Jason Lasser, Jamie McLeod,
Jay Maytin, Brian McNellis and Willis Pember. Excused was Sarah
Broughton.

Staff present: Jim True, Special Counsel
 Amy Guthrie, Historic Preservation Officer
 Sara Adams, Historic Preservation Planner
 Kathy Strickland, Chief Deputy City Clerk

*MOTION: Jay moved to approve the minutes of February 9th, 2011; second
by Ann. All in favor, motion carried.*

*MOTION: Ann moved to approve the minutes of February 26th second by
Jamie. All in favor, motion carried.*

**610 E. Hyman – Landmark Designation, Major development and
Commercial Design Review, Ord. #48 negotiation**

*MOTION: Jay moved to continue the public hearing on 610 E. Hyman to
March 23rd, second by Nora. All in favor, motion carried.*

Disclosure:

Brian disclosed that Peter Fornell was a client of his when he worked for
Blue Green but he feels this in no way will influence his decision. Peter
agreed.

**518 W. Main – Conceptual Historic Review for Major Development,
Demolition, Relocation, Residential Design Standard Review, Parking
Reduction and Setback Variances – Public Hearing**

Exhibit I – proof of publication

Exhibit II – Sanborn maps

Site visit at NOON

Sara said the building is a modest 1880's miner's building located on Main
Street. About ten years ago there was an internal fire; however, the exterior
form did remain intact. The owner is interested in doing a total
rehabilitation of the historic home. Two non-historic additions would be
removed on the rear and the front porch would be opened back up. There is

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a late 1960's garage on the property that will be demolished. The historic home would be picked up and moved toward the east and Mesa building. A basement would be built underneath it and they would build two detached multi-family dwelling units, one behind the historic house and the other adjacent to it on Main Street. The project is 100% affordable housing; 12 deed restricted units and 8 on-site parking spaces. The project is just under the maximum FAR. There was a work session last fall on the project. There are six reviews before HPC tonight:

1. Major Development Conceptual review.
2. Demolition of the shed and rear addition to the historic home.
3. Relocation of the historic home.
4. Residential Design Standard variances for multi-family buildings.
5. Parking Reduction/Waiver for 4 parking spaces cash-in-lieu (8 are provided and 12 are required).
6. Setback variances for the front yard of the relocated historic home.

Site design and building alignment

Sara said all three units will be detached and there is no addition proposed to the historic resource. The lot is 7,500 square feet. In terms of setbacks the historic home is proposed to be moved five feet off the front lot line and ten is required. The new building will have a ten foot setback. Staggering the front yard setbacks does meet the design guidelines and in a good way pushes the development to the rear of the lot. The walkways should be addressed at final and should be straight to the front doors.

Building form, height mass and scale

Sara explained that the applicant is proposing a mix of gable, flat and shed forms for the new construction and we feel they do relate to the context and what is going on in the district. The exterior stairway helps break up the mass and helps fit in the context of the block.

Height

Sara said all three of the buildings are below the maximum height limit which is 28 feet. They are about 27.11 feet. The historic home is one story and the building beside it is two story and steps up to three. Staff feels the open space between the buildings is appropriate instead of having a linking element. All the buildings have sub-grade spaces. Overall we feel the height is appropriate and there is an appropriate trade-off having detached construction. The integrity of the historic district is preserved. The roof

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forms and mass work well in the district. Staff recommended 5 conditions for final. They are proposing to rehabilitate the front porch and bring the front doors back to normal.

Demolition

Sara said the 1960's constructed concrete garage is requested for demolition and the two rear additions.

Relocation

Sara said the historic resource is in its original location. We feel the criteria are met for relocation. The historic building is in a central location which makes it hard for any development which if not relocated would envelope the house. It is an important trade off for preservation to move the historic home forward on the lot so there is much more prominence and you can see it more and it helps move the development toward the rear. We find that the criteria for relocation are met.

Setback variances

Sara said there is a side yard variance requested closest to the Ullr that needs to be discussed at final for light wells. The front yard setback is requested for the historic resource. It is supposed to be ten and they are proposing five.

Parking waivers

Sara explained that HPC can reduce the required parking for a landmark site and also waive the cash-in-lieu. They are required to have one space per unit and they can only fit 8 spaces. The spaces are head in spaces at the rear of the lot. Finding four more spots on this site will have an adverse impact on the historic resource into the context of the site design. We feel it is appropriate for HPC to reduce the parking requirement and to grant the waiver since the applicant is doing so much rehabilitation to the home.

Design standards

Street oriented entrances

Sara said you are supposed to provide one street oriented entrance per four units. They are proposing 12 units so you need three street entrances and they have two. Staff feels it is appropriate to grant a variance. The other variance has to do with a one-story element. There is no one-story element proposed for the building directly behind the historic resource. Staff finds this is an appropriate trade off because it maximizes the unobstructed

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distance between the historic resource and new construction and it keeps the site as open as it can be by not having a porch or something like that.

Next steps

Growth management for affordable housing before Planning & Zoning, Council review for subdivision and then back to HPC for final review.

Peter Fornell said he is the applicant representing his brother-in-law for the project. We were instrumental in creating the affordable housing credit program where new development will be mitigated through the housing that we create now. There were three structures on the property at one time and we are almost bringing the project back to what it was. We are moving the cabin to the east and when I go down Main Street I would like to see the historic asset. The Mesa Store building is on the lot line. Peter said all 12 of the affordable housing units will have decks, on property storage and are quite a bit larger than what is required by the code. The units meet category 5 and 6 of the affordable housing guidelines and I am stipulating that the units be sold at the category 3 and 4 level because I am concerned about the future users as anyone is. 15 years ago I was the recipient of the housing lottery with my two daughters when they were young. If that product was not out there in the market I might not have had the opportunity to raise two kids here. I hold that close to me to make sure we make the units nice. We could have made the units smaller instead we are making sure the category drops so that it is a more affordable price. Inside the units are things like closets, washer/dryer/ dish washer. I am making these units extremely livable for the people coming in and once they get in making it affordable. There have been so many projects in the valley that have not considered the cost of ownership and those numbers have gotten blown out of proportion. The people who win them can hardly own them. I am keeping that directly in mind as we go forward. With regard to the parking we are underneath our allowable floor area ratio. We are allowed to have 7,500 square feet above grade and we have 7,125. We aren't looking to pack this lot up. I could change the mix of units and make them all three bedrooms. I could get the same number of FTE credits and the same number of sales dollars from the recipients but there would be less units and less of a parking requirement. I am trying to respond from a community standpoint to what is missing in inventory for affordable housing. Traditionally affordable housing has been built in the higher category and the larger bedroom types. We are loaded with three bedrooms and four bedrooms, categories six and seven. The Boomerang is predominantly one bedroom and studios. We reviewed our

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proposal with Housing and they liked the idea of two bedrooms. Twelve units is better than 8 for our overall community.

Willis mentioned that he thinks storage units are a requirement of the housing authority. Willis asked about the construction material.

Frank Reynolds, general contractor said the material has not yet been determined.

Sara said P&Z will review the configuration of the units as part of the growth management review.

Vice-chair Ann Mullins opened the public hearing.

Doug Allen said he has lived in Aspen for 38 years and is an attorney and has property on the other side of Main Street. His client Sistie Fischer has one of the most historically important houses in Aspen in the 400 Block of West Bleeker. I am troubled by the fact that everyone thinks the West End can absorb the parking that is not being provided by this project. People don't give up their cars and it is a problem at 7th and Main. The West End can't keep absorbing all the cars for projects that don't provide enough parking. There has to be an innovative way to solve the parking on this project and the applicant is putting the historic resource where it should be and separating it from the new building is great.

Molly McGuire, neighbor that lives at the Ullr Lodge. There are 27 units there and there are not 27 cars. At the Gant there are four units there and there are four cars for each unit. Not everyone who lives in employee housing has a car. I don't see this area as having a parking problem. It is a great project and I am supportive of it and there isn't enough affordable housing for people to apply that just move here. We need to keep having new projects. Most seasonal workers don't even bring a car. The Ullr has 8 spaces on 5th and in the back there are four parking spots.

Elizabeth Ferguson asked if the city has any plans to do with street parking? Anyone who had a unit could have a guaranteed place nearby. The city does rent parking spaces on Bleeker. The traffic and noise on Main Street is bad. The City needs to address and have a planned thought for parking and not just think that they can find a spot.

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Jay mentioned that this project has come so far from the work session. There is a lot less mass than the previous proposal. Jay suggested that each place have their own window well. The five foot setback on the historic house accomplishes its prominence and splitting the buildings up is an excellent idea and you can see through. Restoring the building is truly what preservation is about. You should be commended taking on a project of restoring the house after there was a fire and for that reason I feel the parking waivers should be granted. Parking offers residential stickers and possibly the other four units that are deed restricted aren't supposed to have cars and they wouldn't be allowed to get a residential permit. Maybe their place becomes a little cheaper not having a car.

Jamie said she disagrees about the individual window wells because bedroom A&B are the same units. I wouldn't recommend splitting them apart. Jay agreed.

Brian also said that would mean less cutting of the landscape in which he is in favor of.

Jason said the changes are in the right direction but he is still struggling to find the design guidelines that address the issues. I want more design and more creativity and a better looking building. We are asked to designate buildings and sacrifice open space and aesthetics of neighborhoods and to me the project needs to be exemplary. We are giving away millions of dollars every time we do a lot split and every time we do something like this. I get frustrated we only have a certain amount of standards to go by and design is a subjective thing. You are on the right track but you have a ways to go. Guideline 7.12 step down in scale. The building behind the historic resource needs to have that and be sensitive to the mass. Guideline 7.13 range in variation and guideline 7.14 similar in scale. The new building on Main Street could step down in scale and could have a one-story front porch to meet guideline 7.15. Jason commended the applicant for doing an affordable housing project. This is Aspen and if we are giving this stuff away we need to have great looking buildings and we might not have any standards for that.

Ann went over the conditions for final:

- A) Relocation of the kitchen counters
- B) Provide circulation diagram and hardscape materials.
- C) Provide front porch rehabilitation.

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- D) Provide material samples.
- E) Provide details of the front doors.

Ann added for final to have a landscape plan for the existing plant material, what is being removed and what is being retained specifically the lilacs. The plant materials are important to the historic site.

Nora said at one point HPC among themselves needs to discuss parking in general in Aspen.

Nora said her concern are the lilacs on the east side next to Mesa store.

Peter said those bushes are just about on the lot line.

Jay said those decisions for final are good but they should not affect conceptual.

Ann asked if everyone is in agreement of condition #1 for final. All agreed.

Nora said condition #3 for final should respect the lilacs.

Brian said the historic house should be brought up to a more prominence on the street. Ann agreed and having the buildings staggered across on Main Street is successful.

Jason mentioned 7.5 settlement patterns. I would rather see the reduction in the size of the units and have it pulled back and not ask for a variance.

Peter said he can do that and not affect the other elements of the project but the movement of the historic building forward was to benefit the building.

Brian said bringing it forward is a gesture to have more prominence on the historic building.

Jason said he prefers that everything else recede behind the historic house. Jason said historically he is not sure staggering patterns occurred.

Ann said the question is, is it OK to relocate the house on-site and allow sympathetic development.

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Brian said if we are lifting up the building and going to the effort to restore the historic resource let's bring it forward to give it prominence and attention.

Jason said there are not many places left in town with a lawn. I would keep it at 18 feet and keep everything else around it.

Willis said in general he agrees with Jason.

Amy pointed out that on the Sanborn map setbacks are different all over the city.

Ann asked for comments on the setback five foot vs. ten feet.

Jamie agreed on the 10 foot to give the yard more prominence. Jay disagreed and prefers the five foot setback. Jay said he would prefer to see the historic building coming up to the lot line. Jay pointed out that the house on the west is very large. With the five feet you get a little yard.

Jason said he prefers the 10 foot setback. You could put a porch on the new building to the west so the entire façade can be pulled back six feet so that the mass is perceived to be pulled back. We then get a little streetscape to add to our Main Street character. We have the opportunity to ask for a great design.

Brian said he is OK with the five foot setback.

Ann said she would prefer the ten foot because it would be difficult to do landscaping with five feet.

Nora and Willis preferred the ten foot setback.

Sara tallied – 5 for a ten foot setback and 2 for a five foot setback.

Parking:

Jay said the amount of bedrooms has nothing to do with the amount of cars that are parked there. He could reconfigure this and make 8 units with the same amount of density. Would should consider giving the waiver and that the deed restrictions for the four units are not allowed to have cars and they are not permitted residential permits.

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Sara also mentioned car share memberships.

Jay mentioned the electric car that they are using at Aspen Walk. The only issue is that you lose a spot because the car is in it. Possibly the applicant and housing authority can alleviate individuals from owning a car. Jay said it is one car per unit in this area. There is a deficiency in two bedroom units.

Peter said he can build a larger building and get more FTE credits and have less units and therefore satisfy the parking requirement but that is not the best community benefit for us. The best community benefit is to put inventory into the two bedroom category. It is not in the interest of the community to change this project. I am concerned about the livability for people. I am trying to be sensitive to the people coming into these units. All of the different remarks on mass make sense but we have to keep in context the scope of what we are doing.

Jason said he is keeping the community in context and we have heard from neighbors that parking is an issue and I am trying to be sensitive.

Nora said we need a discussion about the parking culture in town. Pushing parking in to the West End also changes the character of Bleeker street. Nora asked the applicant if he could go underground for parking.

Peter said not without great expense to the project. I have been in contact with the parking department, APCHA and discussed this notion of a discounted rate in our underutilized city parking garage for somebody who is willing to put their car there for a month and not move it. If I could put my car in the parking garage for \$75. a month I would do that. This would take interdepartmental discussion.

Brian asked how much a parking space is worth? Sara said \$30,000 each. The money is used for transportation.

Jamie said she is in favor of the parking waivers but have the four units tied somehow to the garage or the parking permit system that you can't get one if you live in one of the four units. The issue is how do you enforce people not having cars and parking is always going to be an issue. I am not in favor of waiving the cash-in-lieu. We need to start thinking about project and parking and possibly have a meeting with the parking department. What happens if the next project a block over wants to waive six spaces. We need to be careful as a board and think about how we address these concerns.

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Peter said if you pull in a parking space and it is full then you get a permit and park on the street. You can go to a lot of employee housing projects that had parking requirements placed on them and what you find is that they are not full.

Brian said the reality is that these are two bedrooms and possibly we will have two cars per unit. I also don't want to make the parking worse by having the overflow into the West End. I am in favor of the parking waiver and the cash-in-lieu request for \$120,000 could sink the project.

Nora said the cash-in-lieu goes to help solve the problem.

Willis asked if the applicant tried to get 12 spots on the site and if you do you don't have 12 units.

Peter said the only way to get 12 cars is to park underground. To do underground we would have to add a half million to the project. The only easy answer is to increase the size of the units to three bedrooms and reduce the number of units to 8. You would have four less owners but the number of people living there will be about the same. The size and massing will be about the same and the number of credits I get will be about the same. All we are doing is satisfying a concern that is a real unknow at the expense of the best product based on the current inventory.

Ann said this is a new type of housing development, these bankable employee units such as the Boomerang and now this one. We need to stick to what is required one to one. Maybe the unit number gets reduced. I think the idea about the parking garage is great. I cannot support the reduced parking and it is setting a precedent and this will snowball.

Peter said Benedict Commons is in the core downtown and they a parking garage and it is more than half empty. The City of Aspen owns 15 or 18 parking spaces and they are trying to rent them out for \$150 a month and can't get them rented. The parking issue is a false problem created by opponents of development.

Amy pointed out that surrounding home owner have no limitations on the amount of cars they can have.

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Willis asked about guest parking. Peter said there is no guest requirement.

Jay said the bottom line is that you are trying to control the amount of cars and by making him be within code you are increasing the density and with the three bedrooms you are probably going to have four people living there. The code fails us because it shouldn't be based on units it should be based on how many bedrooms there are. I feel that the parking spots should be deeded to the eight units.

Ann said the discussion is are we waiving four parking spots.

Nora, Jason, Ann and Willis are not in favor of waiving the parking spots.

Brian and Jamie are in favor of waiving the parking spots . Jamie is in favor of the cashe-in-lieu and Brian feels that some mitigation should occur but not the total, \$130,000.

Jay said he is in favor of waiving the parking spots and the cash-in-lieu.

Peter said he feels he has a great project for the community of Aspen and a great benefit for those who end up in the affordable housing. It would be a shame to see the project get changed over the type of inventory over a parking issue. I also feel it is too much to ask of an applicant to try to make everyone happy from a design standpoint. I don't necessarily like the employee housing on West Hopkins but other people seem to like it. When I did the project at 301 E. Hyman we drew it up, went to P&Z and they said change it, we looked at it again and they said change it, we looked at it again and I laid out three versions and there were six members on the board two liked the first design, two liked the second design and two liked the third. I believe there are too many available opinions about the architecture. We need to look at the historical asset. I am building within the setbacks and height limits and under the FAR . You need to think about the requirements that are imposed on me and judge those and not take me any further than that.

MOTION: Jason moved to continue the meeting until 7:30 p.m. second by Nora. All in favor, motion carried.

Ann pointed out that the board needs to give direction to the applicant.

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Jamie said we need to break down the issues and discuss them and give input.

Design comments:

Jamie addressed mass and scale. Jamie said her concern is the height of the three story building behind the historic building. Another concern is the deck next to the historic resource on Main Street. It seems like you are adding a deck just so everyone can have a deck. Another concern is the alley side with the three story exposed element; how does that building feel in the context of the alley. At final physical materials should be submitted and explain how they relate to the historic house. Another concern is the access to the site. Possibly there could be a little more room around the designated property.

Willis said the gable entry on the western front door element is smaller than anything on the historic resource. On the roof plans they are smaller than the historic resource and the piece behind the historic resource looks fussier than it needs to be. There are too many roof types on this architecture. A thought would be that the new construction come up to the face of the Ullr building in exchange for pushing back the historic resource. You could also entertain a flat or shed roof.

Peter said at the work session this summer it was recommended that the flat roof be removed.

Willis said the roof elements are fussier than the historic resource and somewhat distracting. They should be simple. The split down the middle and breezeway are great.

Nora said making the historic resource prominent is important. Keeping the lilacs is important and keeping the entry to the new building to the west and a little less prominent is important. Parking in the west end is important.

Jay said he listens to his fellow commissioners and I can't imagine how confused you are. I'm impressed with the mass and scale and the comments that were taken from the work session. Splitting the buildings into multiple buildings is good and bringing the historic building forward is a good idea. The sidewalk to the historic building should enter from the front. I like the fact that the FAR is below the allowable and you aren't asking for a 500 square foot bonus. I also like the fact that this is a private/public partnership

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with APCHA and the fact that the historic house is being renovated back to its original condition. I also support the parking and front yard variance and the cash-in-lieu and I hope the project stays 12 units.

Ann said she feels there are too many roof lines. The roof lines and the entire project needs simplified. There is also too much hard surface for circulation, i.e. paving. I am concerned about storm runoff. The height also works well.

Jason addressed guideline 7.12 step down in scale. The building behind the historic resource should be treated differently. On the west building there are two staircases and maybe there is a way to only have one. On the front façade of the west building it needs to be a product of its own time. I would be comfortable with pulling it forward to match the Ullr and the historic building pulled back. The overall perceived height can be reduced with slightly pitched roofs. Guideline 7.15 talks about breaking up the modules. There are a lot of inefficient staircases.

Brian said he is OK with mass and scale. The way it is drawn you won't see the roof lines from Main Street. On the new building on Main Street I would recommend looking at extending a front porch at street level.

Peter said he is going to make the changes but I don't know that each change is going to satisfy each of you to the same extent. I have been in the property management for over ten years and every property that had a flat roof leaked and had problems. I am thinking about the people that will have ownership.

Ann said she would like to see one parking space per unit.

Jay said we had a meeting about flat roofs and you clearly took our direction and made them gable and now we are here telling you to make them flat again. I am getting frustrated sitting on this commission. Brian said we are not saying to go a flat roof we are saying simplify the roof.

Peter said he thinks he can come up with a hybrid of the two. I am going to have the hardest time with the parking spaces. I will have ideas and new thoughts. The plans do look a little cookie cutter. The building behind the historic asset should not look the same as the building on the west side.

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MOTION: Jason moved to continue 518 W. Main until March 9th; second by Brian. All in favor, motion carried 6-1. Jay opposed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.


Kathleen J. Strickland, Chief Deputy Clerk