

**MINUTES**  
**KNOXVILLE HISTORIC ZONING COMMISSION**  
**KNOX COUNTY HISTORIC ZONING COMMISSION**  
**MEETING DECEMBER 19, 2013**

**City HZC Present**

Sean Bolen  
Scott Busby  
Faris Eid  
Sandra Martin  
Melissa McAdams  
Andie Ray  
Melynda Whetsel  
Jason Woodle

**County HZC Present**

Bill Belser  
David Butler  
Bart Carey  
Mike Crowder  
Carol Montgomery

**Others Present**

George Berardi  
Hollie Cook  
Dimitri Damascus  
Daniel McGehee  
Jim Odle  
Arthur Seymour

**City HZC Absent**

Lorie Matthews (Excused)

**County HZC Absent**

None

**Staff Present**

Christa Cuccaro  
Kaye Graybeal  
Robert Moyers  
Melvin Wright

Comm. Chair Busby called the meeting to order and noted there was a quorum. Roll call was taken. He stated that the meeting was being televised and recorded. He also asked that speakers limit their presentations to 5 minutes and to sign in when they reached the podium. He also noted that any decisions can be taken to Chancery Court if appealed within 60 days. Comm. Chair Busby then swore in all visitors and Applicants that planned to speak on any Agenda item.

Comm. Chair Busby announced that Comm. Melynda will be terming off the Commission. Comm. Whetsel was thanked for her time and commitment to the Commission throughout her many years of service. Comm. Whetsel was presented with a commemorative certificate of appreciation.

**Action: Comm. Eid moved to approve the November 21, 2013 Minutes. The Motion was seconded by Comm. McAdams. The Motion carried unanimously.**

Reports to Commission: Chair and Vice Chairs, Lisa Hatfield, Melvin Wright. There were no reports to the Commission.

Staff Reports: Kaye Graybeal, MPC Historic Preservation Planner reviewed the Level 1 Certificates approved administratively by staff this month.

**CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS**

**Old Mechanicsville 12-C-13-HZ**

220 Carrick Street -Former Moses School—demolish gymnasium and construct addition

**Discussion:** Owner representative George Berardi note the intent is to develop 78 elderly independent dwelling units, purely independent and not in a health care environment. He noted the existing building adapts itself quite well to the intent of inserting units into the building. AHEPA wants to add a section to the east end of the property for 30 of the proposed 78 units. He noted the critical piece of the adaptive reuse of the existing building is that it has much more space than they need in general for socialization and psycho-social spaces that they would typically include in this type of development. Therefore, the best solution was to demolish the gymnasium. He noted that it was not an original structure, being added in 1916, though also noting it was older than 50 years. They don't want to maintain it as they don't need it. They would prefer to use it as a private courtyard space for the residents. He also noted the auditorium can be used for socialization purposes which could involve the general community for its use as well and this will be restored. He noted they will follow the Secretary of Interior Standards through NPS in terms of restoring the exterior of the building as well when restoring public spaces inside the building (lobbies, stairwells and other public spaces).

He noted the addition portion of the building was moved farther to the east, after discussion with staff, in order to reduce the impact the addition would have on the existing building. He also noted after discussions with City Engineering they will eliminate the proposed additional curb cut seen on the drawing and keep the existing one. In concert with Engineering they have identified that they will not be creating any traffic issues with these additional 78 units. Mr. Berardi touched on additional details of the proposal, describing the exterior components.

Ms. Graybeal clarified that the HZC is reviewing the demolition, the parking lot and the addition only for its physical impacts on the district and the streetscape and won't be getting into more technical aspects of the site plan. She noted that as the Applicant goes through the technical review process with this project there will be tweaks to their proposal. Depending on what those changes are the Applicant may need to come back before the Commission. Also, she noted the HZC's approval of the design does not constitute approval of the use. She also clarified the construction dates of the structure and its modifications. She noted the gym appears to be concurrent with the 1927 addition. Ms. Graybeal also noted the architect met with the neighborhood last night to answer questions. They also met with neighbors after the Planning Commission meeting and also took questions from concerned parties by email prior to the meeting. Rita McKinnon, neighborhood representative for Old Mechanicsville, forwarded an introductory email to the neighborhood. Finally, there is another meeting was going to be held next month in the neighborhood. Mr. Berardi stated he understood what was on the table to day was the demolition of the gymnasium and the addition. He clarified that they cannot apply for historic tax credits if they demolish the gymnasium as they would be removing part of the building fabric that is older than 50 years. He also noted they have not explored in detail whether or not the historic tax credits were enough of an incentive to maintain the gym but further noted they really want the space for a private space for their residents.

Ms. Graybeal clarified that AHEPA is the buyer, Mr. Berardi is the architect for the developer, and the Boys and Girls Club is the current owner. Arthur Seymour further clarified that AHEPA is under contract with the Boys and Girls Club to purchase the property. Mr. Berardi noted he has successfully adapted other schools for this exact purpose and hence is very familiar with the process.

Neighborhood representative Daniel McGehee noted he resides in and owns other property in the neighborhood, one directly across from the school. He stated it is his understanding the proposal before the Commission today is for approval of the new building and the potential demolition of the gymnasium and asked if that was correct. Comm. Chair busby noted he was correct. Mr. McGehee stated he was adamantly opposed to the project as were other residents of the neighborhood. He stated the neighborhood is an area with gingerbread and Victorian houses and contains homes that have been preserved for many years. He spoke about the history of the neighborhood and many of its houses. He credited the HZC with its vision to preserve the neighborhood years ago. He noted the Moses School is a spectacular property the grounds of which are used by the community members for outdoor activities. He stated the proposed new building will block a particularly pretty view of the building and further, that it does not reflect what should be in an historic neighborhood. He noted this would double the amount of residents in the neighborhood. The neighborhood is sorry the Boys and Girls Club are relocating from this facility as there are underserved youth in the neighborhood that will be displaced from their services. Further there is concern about increased traffic due to the limited ways in and out of the neighborhood. He is asking that the HZC not approve this new building or to tear down the building. He stated he was a member of the OMNI Board but was not at the meeting last night. Mr. McGehee clarified he was representing himself today and not the neighborhood as a whole.

Jim Odle, representing the OMNI group noted he was at the meeting last night, was also a property owner there and has a business with offices in the district as well. The new owner and architect were there at the meeting which was open to the public. He stated there were folks there that were basically undecided. There was no one present at the meeting that has established that they are opposed to the project which was disappointing. Mr. Ogle stated he felt the meeting was productive as they gathered a better understanding of who/what AHEPA is and did not realize they were basically a philanthropic organization. They learned AHEPA does not do assisted living or nursing facilities. This is an independent living project targeted for seniors, interesting given the aging demographics of Old Mechanicsville. A local judge, head of the local AHEPA chapter in Knoxville, initiated this project idea about 5 years ago. Mr. Ogle stated attendees felt comfortable with the developer and felt he would create a quality facility. He stated they learned that AHEPA is always invited into a city and currently offer housing to 5000 seniors nationwide. Mr. Ogle, when discussing "low income" and its bad connotation, noted in reality, most persons over 62 are have lower income, especially some widowed and/or living on retirement/social security income only. Comm. Ray noted the Commission does not review use and asked if they discussed demolishing the gym at their meeting. Mr. Ogle noted there were some concerns about the site plan such as the relationship of the building to the street and how much lawn would be lost. They also had some concern about the site lines to the building. He stated he thought splitting the parking would be a good thing to consider. He noted the character of the addition must meet the character guidelines of Old Mechanicsville and the National Park Service. He also noted he is an architect with experience in similar buildings for elder care as well as with historic renovations and was therefore familiar with the strategies the developer and architect were discussing. Mr. Ogle stated he felt they had taken the appropriate parameters into consideration in their overall design. He noted the intent of the NPS was that the new construction looks different than any existing structure and does not feel the project will destroy the school. Regarding demolition of the gym, he stated he felt it was not a visible element and its demolition would not be detrimental to the school. In review, the attendees at the OMNI meeting, including those who came undecided, left feeling impressed and having voted to support the demolition and the new building at the HZC meeting today. Mr. Ogle noted he was asked to come and present that to the HZC today.

Dimitri Damascus, Director of Development for AHEPA (American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association) reiterated that over the years the organization has become more philanthropic and wants to give back to the community. He clarified that from a business standpoint, the project does need the addition. Mr. Damascus also noted the possible expense of total abatement of asbestos, lead and whatever else they find. Discussion ensued about how the existing gym might be utilized as opposed to demolition and a new building. Mr. Berardi noted it was too large for their purposes. There was decision surrounding whether or not certain tax credit programs would be an effective way to stop a demolition. Discussion further ensued regarding there is potential for many other entities to come into this property with potentially less desirable uses per the current zoning. Hollie Cook, representing Knox Heritage, noted they deem the gym to be a contributing part of the overall structure and it is on the National Register. She noted the interior of the gym has many great details from gyms of the 1920's. They commend AHEPA for coming into the area and agree the project has great potential. She further noted they do not support demolition of the gym and noted several other developments in the area that have utilized existing gyms in their redevelopments. She offered the support of Knox Heritage to the developer in researching all alternatives and tax credits. She noted they would like to see at minimum a delay on the demolition to give Knox Heritage time to meet with the AHEPA representatives to explore those alternatives.

Comm. Chair Busby suggested the Commission shift the discussion to the proposed addition. Referencing the newer Old Mechanicsville neighborhood guidelines, Comm. Bolen noted he has concerns about the new addition. He noted the addition as proposed will "kill" the entire streetscape from Arthur Street which is clearly spoken against in the neighborhood guidelines as well as the Secretary of Interior Standards. He also commended AHEPA for their project however noted he felt there needed to be changes made to the overall site plan. He suggested moving the proposed addition back mid-front flush with the exterior of the building it would be compatible infill, which would require demolition of the storage room from a much later addition. The lot placement would then be consistent with all applicable guidelines and standards. Ms. Graybeal noted the Applicant did look into that specific possibility which did not work but had noted there may be leeway as to moving the placement of addition to preserve the site lines. Comm. Bolen noted the demolition of the smaller storage space would need to be brought to the HZC. Mr. Berardi clarified that they currently propose to lose about 12-15 feet of lawn. Comm. McAdams noted that the proposed south-facing courtyard in the summer in Knoxville will get quite hot, reducing its usefulness. Mr. Berardi noted they would be landscaping the south edge as well as installing pergolas. Comm. Chair Busby noted the specific materials for the proposed addition still need to be identified and submitted for approval and also noted that it needs to be stylistically different than the existing structure.

**Action: Comm. Eid moved that the portion of the application for the addition submitted for 220 Carrick Street be denied without prejudice giving the Applicant an opportunity to come back and resubmit a revised site plan and floor plan, noting the Applicant should look at pushing the building south so as to not block the view to the front of the building and also noting that relocation would create the potential for an additional courtyard, therefore Comm. Eid further moved that the second part of the application for 220 Carrick Street requesting demolition of the gymnasium be denied without prejudice in order to explore the opportunity to build a 1 or 2 story structure of 5-6 units, reducing the footprint of any addition and producing the same amount of units; Additionally the proposed addition will need to have simplified design features that meet the guidelines and ensure the features are not duplicates of the existing ones, with the entire exterior design and materials to be reviewed at the next meeting with their revised submission.**

**Further Discussion:** Arthur Seymour, acting on behalf of the Applicant, asked for clarification on the deadline for submission of revised materials, as well as the level of detail necessary, for the January meeting as he is charged with keeping them on deadline for the tax credit application process. It was clarified the Applicant would need a site plan and elevations, similar in detail to initial application being reviewed to day. It was clarified that the deadline for submission for the January meeting would be December 30th. Mr. Seymour noted they are also running this project concurrently through the MPC for Use On Review on January 9<sup>th</sup> as this requires dual approval. Mr. Seymour requested postponement until the January 16, 2014 meeting where they would also submit an application for demolition of the smaller structure.

**Action: Comm. Eid, based on the Applicant's request for postponement, rescinded his Motion.**

**Further Discussion:** Mr. Berardi stated he was not sure the Applicant will want to pursue the project without approval of demolition of the gymnasium. Comm. Chair Busby clarified that a full denial of the demolition of the gymnasium would require the Applicant to wait one year before coming back to the HZC.

**Action: Comm. Woodle moved that the [entire] application submitted for 220 Carrick Street be postponed until the January 2014 meeting based on the Applicant's request. The Motion was seconded by Comm. Chair Busby. The Motion carried unanimously. Review of the Application was postponed until the January 2014 meeting.**

**Scenic Drive and Sequoyah Hills Neighborhood NC-1 12-F-13-HZ**  
515 Scenic Drive – Demolition of blighted residential structure

**Discussion:** Ms. Graybeal stated this house is an example of demolition by neglect. There was a potential buyer who declined to pursue the property due to the extent of its disrepair. Ms. Graybeal also noted that this house is a contributing structure in the NC-1 overlay and that it has been without utilities for several years. The wooden parts of the house have collapsed including the floors. She noted she had tried to get a structural engineer involved but has not been able to do so to date. Staff's recommendation was to recommend delay to obtain further assessments and for Knox Heritage to find a buyer. Safety of the structure is an immediate issue.

Robert Moyers noted the rear portion of the building collapsed in September. It was an addition that collapsed however it took with it a portion of the load bearing west wall of the original structure. He noted collapse of the building is imminent and that it is a dangerous structure. The building is not secured nor is it securable given its condition. He noted the owner is willing to let Knox Heritage to remove any interior portions that may be saved. The owner has only recently been able to get the property through probate. He noted that the property has not been officially blighted; however, an emergency application for demolition has been initiated by the City. Mr. Moyers noted several contractors have deemed the property too damaged to rehabilitate cost effectively.

Comm. Woodle noted that the safety concern is significant. Mr. Moyers noted that elementary children are let off from the bus at the corner and walk by it every day. Hollie Cook stated they had been to the building and it is clearly badly damaged at this point. She noted they discussed multiple options with the owner. From their perspective they would like to see demolition delayed at least one month to explore other avenues. Mr. Moyer recommended the HZC approve this today as they need permission to proceed should the condition deteriorate further. He stated

they have a demolition queue and it would be at least February before they got to this structure. Some discussion ensued regarding the pros/cons of a delay in approval.

**Action: Comm. Woodle moved that the application for 515 Scenic Drive to demolish the building be approved acknowledging that the demolition project would have a built-in delay in the City's established demolition queue allowing for Knox Heritage and/or others to explore alternative options, yet also allowing for immediate demolition by the City should it deteriorate even further and become an even more immediate issue regarding public safety. Comm. McAdams seconded the Motion.** It was clarified that the guidelines necessitate a structural engineer or architect assess the property before approval demolition. **Comm. McAdams rescinded her second. The Motion died with no second.**

**Action: Comm. Ray moved that the application for 515 Scenic Drive be denied without prejudice for 30 days based on the evidence submitted, the information provided in the staff report and the information discussed at the meeting today, further that per the guidelines an assessment of the structure be performed by a licensed structural engineer. The Motion was seconded by Comm. McAdams. The Motion carried with Comm. Woodle voting no.**

## NOMINATION REVIEWS

### H-1 Overlay Nomination

2110 Chapman Highway - Kerns Bakery

**Discussion:** Hollie Cook stated Knox Heritage had completed the Nomination application at the request of Nick Pavlis, City of Knoxville. The design guidelines would be blanket Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation. She noted the nomination also included attaching guidelines to the sign. The sign guidelines were then attached to a preservation brief put out by the National Park Service about rehabbing and restoring historic signs. Comm. Chair Busby clarified that the Commission is being asked to recommend this Nomination to the Metropolitan Planning Commission, who makes a recommendation to City Council. Ms. Graybeal noted they have notified who they believe to be the owner by Certified Mail which was returned. Staff has identified another probable owner and has prepared a letter to send to them to let them know this property is going through this process. She noted owner consent is not explicitly required. Lisa Hatfield clarified that the application was prepared at the request of City Council via a vote on a Resolution, not by Mr. Pavlis individually. Comm. Bolen expressed concern that any action be taken without the owner's consent. Comm. Chair Busby clarified we are only identifying the property as H-1 eligible or not. The nomination review by HZC was as advertised in the newspaper as well as in the published agenda for the City Council meeting, in addition to being posted on the MPC website.

**Action: Comm. Martin moved to recommend approval of the H-1 Historic Zoning Overlay Nomination for the individual property located at 2110 Chapman Highway - Kerns Bakery to include the Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation guidelines to the Metropolitan Planning Commission. The Motion was seconded by Comm. McAdams. The Motion carried with Comm. Bolen voting no.**

### National Register Nomination Reviews

Happy Holler - 1200 block of N. Central Street and part of Anderson Avenue  
Mead Marble Quarry – Ijams Park

Ross Marble Quarry – Ijams Park

**Discussion:** Ms. Graybeal noted there is a Public Meeting being held by the Tennessee Historical Commission to discuss the Quarry’s Nominations on January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at Ijams Nature Center, 2915 Island Home Avenue. Comm. Chair Busby suggested the above listed National Register Nominations be approved at one time by consent vote.

**Action: Comm. Whetsel moved that the above listed National Register Nominations (Happy Holler - 1200 block of N. Central Street and part of Anderson Avenue, Mead Marble Quarry – Ijams Park and Ross Marble Quarry – Ijams Park) be approved based on the evidence submitted. The Motion was seconded by Comm. Ray. The Motion carried unanimously.**

#### **DEMOLITION REVIEW DISCUSSION**

##### **Edgewood Park City National Register Historic District**

2826 E. 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue – demolition of blighted residential structure

**Discussion:** Ms. Graybeal noted this item was placed on the Agenda by request to heighten awareness that we have a potential demolition in the National Register district over which the HZC has no purview over; however, Mr. Moyers has asked for our assistance in Mr. Moyers noted that this property is not as deteriorated as the one on Scenic Drive and could be rehabbed. He also noted they have had many neighbor complaints.

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned.