

**City of Binghamton**  
**Commission on Architecture and Urban Design**  
**29 January 2013**  
**Minutes**

**APPROVED – 26 February 2013**

**Date:** 29 January 2013  
**Location:** Planning Department Conference Room  
**Present:** Ruth Levy – Commissioner, Chair  
Mike Haas – Commissioner  
Peter Klosky – Commissioner  
Jeff Smith – Commissioner  
Sean Massey – Commissioner  
Council President Rennia – 3<sup>rd</sup> District  
Councilman Berg – 7<sup>th</sup> District  
H. Peter L’Orange – Historic Preservation Planner  
Tarik Abdelazim – Director, Department of Planning, Housing and Community  
Development  
Joel Boyd – Economic Development  
Tom Costello – Building and Construction/Code Enforcement  
Lora Zier – Broome County Planning  
Julian Adams – CLG Coordinator, NYS

Ms. Levy called the meeting to order at approximately 12:00 PM.

Ms. Levy agreed to serve another term as Commission Chair; Mr. Massey agreed to serve as Vice-chair. Mr. Klosky made a motion to elect Ms. Levy as Commission Chair and Mr. Massey as Vice-chair; it was seconded by Mr. Smith. There was no further discussion. The motion was carried 5-0-0.

The minutes from the 18 December 2012 meeting were reviewed. Ms. Levy had some typos to be corrected. Mr. Massey made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected; it was seconded by Mr. Klosky. There was no further discussion. The motion was carried 5-0-0.

**Items Heard:**

**69 Court Street – Storefront:** The Applicant presented this application. The previous storefront has been severely damaged by a vehicle accident, and was beyond simple repair; the storefront required replacement. The Applicant stated that they had obtained a building permit for replacement, including the installation of an EFIS surround instead of the previous wooden one and that the work had been completed. The Applicant was not aware of the CAUD review requirement, and thought he was working under a valid permit; upon being informed that a CAUD review was supposed to have happened before the building permit was issued, the Applicant submitted the application. There was some general discussion of the new façade. Mr. Adams stated that in his opinion, since the previous storefront was not original and not in

keeping with the character of the building or district, that the new storefront might represent the loss of an opportunity to improve the building, but did not represent the loss of integrity for the building, and might be considered acceptable. There was some additional discussion of the storefront. Mr. Massey made a motion to accept the storefront as installed, based on Mr. Adams' comments; it was seconded by Mr. Klosky. There was no further discussion. The motion was carried 4-0-1, with Mr. Smith abstaining. The project was APPROVED.

**33 Court Street – Signage:** The Applicant presented this case. The Applicant proposed to install a new sign for an existing business at this location. There was a long discussion of what constitutes an “internally illuminated” sign, which is discouraged in the City of Binghamton’s Historic Design Guidelines. It was determined that channel letters do not necessarily constitute the specifically discouraged style of signage, and might be acceptable depending on the specific case. It was generally agreed that, in this case, due to design of the sign, the existing channel letter sign at the abutting store front, and design of the building, that this particular sign would be acceptable. Mr. Massey made a motion to approve the sign as proposed; it was seconded by Mr. Klosky. There was no further discussion. The motion was carried 5-0-0; the signage was APPROVED.

**37 Court Street – Signage:** The Applicants presented this case. Proposed to install one (1) window sign. The proposed sign was in compliance with the Zoning Code. Staff asked the Applicant about a proposed awning sign and if the Applicant wanted to have it reviewed at this time or withdrawn; the Applicant confirmed that they had withdrawn the application, but would like to discuss additional signage options with the Commission and get some guidance on the best way to move forward. Mr. Massey made a motion to approve the window sign as proposed; it was seconded by Mr. Klosky. There was no further discussion. The motion was carried 5-0-0; the window sign was APPROVED. There followed a long discussion of various sign options the Applicant might pursue [Councilman Berg left during this discussion]. The Applicant stated that they would be speaking with their designers and come back to the Commission for approval of additional signage at a later date.

### **Other Business**

- Discussion with Julian Adams. The Commission had a long discussion with Mr. Adams about some of the challenges and issues facing the Commission, and how these things might be addressed. There was a lot of discussion on the review process and how to improve the public perception of the Commission. [Mr. Abdelazim left during this discussion.]
- Administrative Certificate Appropriateness draft legislation. Staff presented some draft legislation to create an administrative (staff) review process to review and issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for certain minor modifications. The Commission briefly went over the draft legislation and provided some feedback; the Commission was supportive of the legislation. Staff asked that the Commission take the draft legislation, review it, and provide any final comments via email; Staff intends to bring the legislation before Council in February or March.
- Commercial Alley lighting concepts. Staff briefly presented some initial lighting concepts for Commercial Alley, and asked the Commission for some initial feedback. The Commission generally felt that the lighting should be a little more “commercial”

looking. Council President Rennia stated that she felt the City should bring the property owners into the discussion as early as possible. Staff stated that they would convey all of the comments to the Economic Development Department, who is heading up the project.

There was no further business.

Mr. Haas made a motion to adjourn the meeting; it was seconded by Mr. Massey. The motion carried 5-0-0. The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:00 PM.

The next meeting of the Commission on Architecture and Urban Design is scheduled for 26 February 2013.