

**TOWN OF GILMANTON
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
ACADEMY BUILDING
THURSDAY, MARCH 22, 2018 – 7 PM**

MINUTES

Present: Chair Ernie Hudziec, Marshall Bishop (Selectmen's Rep), Matt Grasberger, Betty Ann Abbott,

Also present: Annette Andreozzi (Land Use Admin.)

Absent: Roy Buttrick

Chair Hudziec opened the meeting at 7:00 PM with introductions.

General Public comments

none

New Business

Public Hearing - Case #1-2018, Robert & Rebecca Ronstadt, applicant, Pensco Trust Co., owner: Request to change name on present sign, construct a fence-like covering for grease tank, add canopies to the front & side of building, add door & window to north side of building, and add LED lights to interior of front windows. Property located at 518 Province Road in the Corners Historic District; Tax Map/Lot # 127/37.

Ms. Ronstadt explained what she felt it means to be a café: having an outdoor menu, writing specials on the window, selling beer & wine, extending into the traffic area, and elements of these.

Krista, the manager, clarified that food is being eaten in, and beer & wine will be taken out.

Ms. Ronstadt said beer & wine will be taken out, for now.

There was a discussion about what requests could be approved at this meeting. Mr. Hudziec said he would like the ZBA to review outdoor seating before the HDC makes any ruling.

Mr. Bishop said that as far as outdoor seating, the property is such a bad corner the town needs to get involved. They may need to talk to the highway department.

Ms. Ronstadt thought outdoor seating would be on Currier Hill Road, or on the left on the hill which is her property, so she said she didn't need any permission to place setting there. She said people can't tell that a restaurant is in the building. She wants to create a look that says restaurant without a big old sign.

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Mr. Hudziec said the problem with putting seating on the Route 140 side is that people will have to walk through parking into the front door.

Mr. Ronstadt said they need a barrier so people can't drive right by the door, and the outdoor seating would be temporary.

Ms. Abbott said that safety was not in the purview of the HDC. It is about the look being appropriate for an historic district.

Mr. Hudziec said the applicant needs to determine the look, layout and location of seating, then bring that to the HDC for approval.

Ms. Ronstadt wanted approval for all the looks in the picture that was with the application.

Mr. Hudziec felt a sandwich board attached to the building would be ok if it was not a permanent sign.

Ms. Abbott said that first the HDC wants something that comports with the historic district. The HDC wants the business to be successful, without being an impediment to it.

Mr. Hudziec asked for a description of canopies being requested.

Ms. Ronstadt handed something to Ms. Abbott. She said she was talking to a lighting specialist about what else could be done. That something is in the planning. The canopies would be more like awnings. There would be two attached to the large windows in front, striped or with words.

Mr. Hudziec said they would come out about 2' and be the length of each window. One all the way across would be better.

Ms. Ronstadt said one is more expensive than 2 smaller.

Mr. Hudziec said they would be the width of each of 2 windows and the door. That the color could be picked from the historical color chart. He didn't think the side of the former garage was visible, so he didn't think the replacement window & door needed to be wood. He asked about the LED lights.

Mr. Ronstadt gave a picture of a 22 ½" wide LED "OPEN" sign. He said it would not blink or flash, and would be turned off when the business was closed. There would be one in one window. In the other window they wanted on LED "beer & wine" sign.

Ms. Abbott asked if patrons could drink in the building.

Mr. Ronstadt said no.

Ms. Abbott said she thought that a sign saying "beer & wine" might cause a problem if one can't drink in the building.

Mr. Eisenmann said that a year and half ago he went through with the ZBA about the appropriateness of the change of use of the corner building, which might have alcohol. He had wanted to know how all the people would be handled, especially with bike week. That septic sits near his well. The traffic pattern is bad. It is a challenging spot to conduct business in the best of times. A pub in the Tavern could work, but not at the corner. The ZBA said

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there was to be no alcohol sales at the corner and no outdoor seating. An approved septic has not been demonstrated.

Ms. Ronstadt said it is a tough site.

Mr. Eisenmann said the former manager of the business made assurances that are now being changed, and the present vision may not be the same as the next owner. His concerns were the same as before: where will all the parking be, alcohol sales, and where people would sit outdoors. He doesn't want people sitting in the back without a hedge row between the corner and his property.

Mr. Hudziec said the HDC could require a hedge row if outdoor sitting was allowed. He said if the awning size got bigger the applicant would have to come back to the HDC. The property should have remained residential, but it didn't.

Mr. Eisenmann said replacing the window and the awnings are positive. The outdoor seating is iffy.

Mr. Hudziec asked that the ZBA and Planning Board be copied on Mr. Eisenmann's concerns.

Mr. Bishop said there is a business on the property, and certain things are not going away. He felt the property owners could get together and decide about bushes. He felt a way needed to be found to make it work. The former manager should not have not been able to operate without meeting the conditions defined by the ZBA.

The staff felt forced to remind him that the Selectmen were sent the notice to enforce the ZBA conditions, but they declined to act.

Ms. Abbott said she now thought that people would not be hanging out at the corner, but across at the tavern.

Motion:

Ms. Abbott moved to close the public hearing.

Seconded by Mr. Bishop

Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Hudziec said that in reviewing the requested project description #1 changing the wording on sign, he didn't see problem. It will be the same size as what is there.

Ms. Abbott said the new name is "Gilmanton Café".

Mr. Hudziec - #2 a fence like covering for the grease tank will be contingent on a possible change to the walk by the property owner. That will be put aside for now. It can be brought back when the rest of landscaping and walkways are designed.

Mr. Bishop said he would like something there temporarily.

Mr. Grasberger stated that the applicant needed to bring in a design for the fence.

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Mr. Hudziec - #3 awnings will be no bigger than 2' from the building. There can be 3 awnings, one over each of 2 windows and the door on the Province Road side. They will be attach beneath the 2nd floor windows.

Mr. Grasberger said the Commission needed a color scheme and design for the awnings.

Ms. Abbott said the HDC chair could approve the color if it was similar to the building's trim color.

Mr. Hudziec said the applicant should show the color sample to the staff to ok. If the staff has a concern she would contact the HDC chair.

Mr. Hudziec - #4 this is a commercial building. The regulations require wood windows and doors, but the building must meet fire safety code for a restaurant. That can be worked out between the applicant and the building inspector. That side is away from public view. Placement will be where the door and window were boarded up.

All members were ok with that.

Mr. Hudziec said he didn't think the HDC could address #5 because it would be inside the building.

There was a discussion about the HDC's regulation which states that signs "on the interior that are visible from the exterior...shall be reviewed by the HDC".

Mr. Hudziec said that there might be one LED Open sign of a low intensity rather than one that glares.

Ms. Abbott said she was ok with that.

Mr. Grasberger said it could only be on during working hours.

Motion:

Ms. Abbott moved to approve Case # 1-2018 Robert & Rebecca Ronstadt, applicant, Pensco Trust Co., owner requesting to make following changes per the submitted project description. Property located at 518 Province Road in the Corners Historic District; Tax Map/Lot # 127/37. In recognition that the request is for a non-period building with a commercial use some concessions have been made for this application only.

- 1. Change the present sign to read Gilmanton Café. The present sign will not change size or shape.**
- 2. Consideration of a grease tank covering will happen at a future meeting when a drawing of its design is available.**
- 3. Three awnings, covering the 2 large windows and the door at entrance, made of canvas in an historic color to comport with building will extends 2' from the building. Fabric selection will be submitted to the administrator for possible approval.**
- 4. Replace the door and window which were located on the north side with appropriate door and window for a commercial building.**

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5. **One low intensity LED lit sign, no larger than 23" x 14 1/4", per example submitted, can be hung in the interior of a widow on the entrance side. To be lit only during business hours.**
 6. **A sign frame may be attached to the building if it meets the sign regulation dimensions. Contents to be removed after business hours. Design to be reviewed by administrator.**
- Applicant may contact HDC chair for advice on moving forward with additional cosmetic features pertaining to this application as they arise. The Chair will then decide if there is a need to come before the Commission for further discussion.**

Seconded by Mr. Bishop

Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes - February 22, 2018

Motion by Mr. Bishop to accept the minutes. Seconded by Ms. Abbott.

Motion passed unanimously.

Other Business

The approval for 500 Province Road expired.

Mr. Vesey said he will sent paper work in the next couple weeks.

Consideration of Gilmanton Historic Districts

Mr. Hudziec followed up with the planning assistant on how the historic district petition warrant article came before the planning board. She didn't know. He asked her to ask the planning chair how he would feel if the HDC decided to support a major development in the town. The town has a problem recognizing what Boards do what, when.

Mr. Grasberger moved to adjourn. Second by Mr. Hudziec.

All in favor.

Adjourned at 8:45 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Annette Andreozzi
Land Use Administrator