

*Minutes of the Boonton Historic Preservation  
Commission*

*Date: November 4, 2020*

*This meeting was held via GoToMeeting*

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm.

**OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS STATEMENT**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ROLL CALL:**

*Present*

Elliott Ruga - *Chair*

Jeff Smith – *Vice Chair*

Patricia Bujtas

Adrienne Eoga

Tamra Katcher

Faith Frankel – *Recording Secretary*

*Absent*

Mike Wade – *Board of Alderman Representative*

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes for meeting of October 7, 2020 were approved.

**APPLICATION FOR REVIEW**

Boonton Station Restaurant – Canopy Expansion to Cover Patio

Applicant: Michael Andalaft, Jass'R Holdings LLC

Mike Andalaft, owner, explained the project would expand the patio's existing roof line, which is currently 4.5 feet short of where the patio ends. The proposed roof expansion of ~ 4 feet would extend over the metal fence but would not extend beyond the patio. It would run the length of the patio, ~110 – 120 feet. It would be ~400 square foot expansion of the roof. The design would match the existing patio. An additional 6 posts are needed to support the roof line; these would exactly match the existing posts, and require 36-inch footings which would need permits. He would add motorized shades that would roll down 3-4 feet to work as a sunshade to protect diners from sun and rain in warm weather, and roll all the way down for warmth in the cold weather. When rolled up, the shade would look unobtrusive, like aluminum gutter. Remotely operated heaters would be mounted on the posts. The design looks like the existing structure, is historically accurate, and doesn't go beyond the parameters as they exist now. It would not be an intrusion but a benefit, and would not detract from the historical significance of the building or the beauty of the existing roofline. These alterations would allow the business to exist and survive in that space. JS said the standards for rehabilitation by the US Department of the Interior addresses this issue. JS provided the link to the relevant document, "Rehabilitation as a Treatment."

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/four->

[treatments/treatment-rehabilitation.htm](#) Quoting from the document, JS said that this project fits these standards exactly. The restaurant is one of the outstanding historical sites in town and we appreciate the work you've done and plan to do in restoring it and using it for a new purpose. ER said it's like the Boonton Opera House – we want to say this is someone who's done it right and we want to advertise that fact. ER asked when the project is expected to be completed. MA said as soon as Thanksgiving if possible. PB moved that the commission approve Michael Andalat's petition for the renovation as submitted. JS seconded. The motion was approved.

## **BOARD OF ALDERMAN REPORT**

None due to absence of Mike Wade

## **DISCUSSION**

Patti Bujtas reported on her Main Street walkthrough with Code Enforcement Officer Patrick Laverty

The walkthrough on November 3 covering both sides of Main Street took 45 minutes. Most violations appeared to involve greater than 30% coverage of store windows. In many cases it was 3 or 4 sections of the windows; in some cases it would be in compliance if you calculated the size compared to the whole storefront. Some specific locations include: Groovy Groomers (previously approved for their sign but now has a window sign covering almost the whole window); the dog spa (window completely covered); Walter Bauman Jewelers (sign exceeds 30%). Re: the

sewing machine shop sign, PL will ask the owner his intentions in regard to upgrading his sign.

Unfortunately we have more than the usual number of vacant storefronts, and the way those windows are being covered is very bad. Paper taped up, cardboard pieces laying against the window. Re the old Smoke and Deli store, PL will send a letter telling him to remove all the junk in the window.

There are two banners, one in front of the new bakery, the other in front of the mattress store. PL will address those right away and have them removed because they are not in compliance. It seems the mattress store is out of business.

PB talked with PL about the scaffolding on the "Flatiron" building; PL said when he approached them, they said they had come to BHPC and gotten approval. ER said his observation is they are just doing a cleaning and repointing. The Funtique store, which had been approved for signage, is now doing some major renovation. ER said he doesn't think it will look different from what they were originally approved for. In summary, the majority of the problems were window signs larger than 30% of the entire window. ER asked if the issue was businesses' main sign or temporary announcements. PB said for example, Egg's City had a huge banner inside their window. Walter Bauman Jewelers has a "We Buy Gold" sign that they sometimes put in front of the store. She also noted that the costume shop that was vacated is being

renovated and it's not clear what is going in that space.

There were a few property maintenance issues which PL will address. His method is to give warnings in the early spring, then expect the owners to fix the maintenance issues over the summer. PL will send ER a copy of the ordinance he wrote for the town of Dover, particularly how they addressed temporary coverage of empty storefronts, for BHPC to consider. PB will invite PL to attend the next BHPC meeting. ER thanked PB for doing the walkthrough and the report. PB suggested each commission member might do such a walkthrough with PL every few months, which PL is open to.

There is a question regarding what type of guidance should BHPC give PL?

TK noted there are several different issues here. The ordinance with regard to window signs is different from the signage that they're putting in the window. There is a distinction between a window sign versus marketing promotions. They can't put anything in the windows for marketing purposes; that is completely barred. "Window Signs" and the ordinance that deals with marketing are two different issues. TK asked if it is in BHPC's purview to interpret the ordinances or should the question go to the city attorney or the ordinance committee? We can give PL our thoughts on the matter, but my concern is, legally, is that the way to go? It would become an issue legally if it's inconsistent between locations or, if you cite someone and they go to

court. ER said a temporary sign is easily removed or has temporal meaning (something that will occur in 30 days). TK said the intention is relevant. ER noted Ordinance § 233-17 “Signs Permitted” states that in vacant storefront windows signs may exceed 33 1/3%.

<https://www.boonton.org/DocumentCenter/View/405/18-14-Final-PDF?bidId=>

“AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF BOONTON, IN THE COUNTY OF MORRIS AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY, TO AMEND THE CODE OF THE TOWN OF BOONTON BY AMENDING CHAPTER 233, “SIGNS”, ARTICLE VI, “MAIN STREET COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT SIGNS,” SECTION 233-17, “SIGNS PERMITTED” TO PERMIT THE ERECTION OF SIGNS IN STORE FRONT WINDOWS GREATER THAN 33 1/3% OF THE WINDOW SPACE FOR VACANT STORES ON MAIN STREET”

TK noted Ordinance 214 section 4 subsection D regarding building maintenance may be relevant.

<https://www.boonton.org/DocumentCenter/View/389/17-15-Property-Maintenance-Final-PDF?bidId=>

“Display windows of all nonresidential uses shall be maintained in a neat and orderly condition and shall comply with all requirements of the site plan approval for the site.

Such windows shall not be blocked

off by plywood, shakes, panels or other materials without Planning Board approval.”

ER said that is for the entire town.

PB suggested that, as was done in the past but needs to be revived, new business owners should be educated about their obligation to get approval from BHPC for signage before opening their doors. JS agreed that they should be informed that they are in a historic district and there are certain historic ordinances. PB

suggested perhaps PL could inform them about those requirements as part of his job. ER said that could prevent problems if it is done at the very beginning. TK recalled that PL had suggested when he attended the last BHPC meeting that would be part of his rotation. In Dover, he observed the historic district periodically to ensure compliance. PB said that PL remarked how much smaller Boonton is than Dover, and how much easier it would be to control it.

With no further business on the table, the meeting was adjourned at 8:39 pm.