IN THE MATTER OF
THE APPLICATION OF
GREG BUSCH
FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL
TO MAKE EXTERIOR ALTERATIONS
AT 8472 HILL STREET
ELLIOTT CITY, MARYLAND

BEFORE THE
HOWARD COUNTY
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
COMMISSION
Case No. 22-17

DECISION AND ORDER

Pursuant to Title 16, Subtitle 6, of the Howard County Code, notice having been properly published, the Historic Preservation Commission ("Commission") convened a public hearing on May 5, 2022 to hear and consider the application of Greg Busch ("Applicant"), for a Certificate of Approval to make exterior alterations at 8472 Hill Street, Ellicott City, Maryland (the "Subject Property"). The Commission members present were Allan Shad, Erica Zoren, Julianne Danna and Ellen Flynn Giles. The following documents, incorporated into the record by reference, are applicable to this case: (1) the appropriate provisions of the Howard County Charter and the Howard County Code, including the Howard County Zoning Regulations; (2) the General Plan for Howard County; (3) the application for a Certificate of Approval and associated records on file with the Commission; (4) the Agenda for the May 5, 2022 Commission meeting; (5) the Ellicott City Historic District Design Guidelines, May, 1998 (the "Design Guidelines" or "Guidelines"); and (6) the general design guidelines listed in Rule 107 of the Commission’s Rules of Procedure.
Summary of Testimony

Ms. Samantha Holmes, Staff to the Commission, presented the application, identifying the work proposed by the Applicant for which approval is requested, and the Staff's recommendation and the basis for the recommendation. Copies of Staff’s recommendation and the application were provided to each Commission member and reviewed with the Commission by Ms. Holmes. The Applicant testified in support of the application.

Findings of Fact

Based upon the evidence, the Commission makes the following findings of fact:

A. The Subject Property

This property is located in the Ellicott City Historic District. According to SDAT, the building on the property dates to 1872.

B. Proposed Improvements

The Applicant proposes make the following alterations:

1) Replace two deteriorating parking pads, increasing the size of the right pad.

The pads are currently asphalt, concrete and gravel and will be paved and edged with granite cobblestones.

a. The left parking pad, closest to the house, will be 25 feet long by 11 feet wide.

b. A 3 feet wide landscape area will separate the two parking pads.

c. The right parking pad will be increased in size from approximately 9 feet wide by 12 feet long to be 16 feet wide by 19 feet long.
d. Small dry stacked stone retaining walls may be added to support the ends and corners of the pads. The walls will be approximately 1 to 2 feet in height, as needed.

2. Replace the concrete walkway on the left side of the front door with a red brick walkway and granite steps. Dry stacked stone retaining walls and a French drain may be added along the walkway to improve drainage.

C. Staff Report

Chapter 9.D: Landscape and Site Elements; Walls, Fences, Terraces, Walkways and Driveways

1) Chapter 9.D states:
   a. “Patios and walkways can be of a variety of materials. Brick and stone are common.”
   b. “Driveways are common on larger residential properties. On-street parking is used for most businesses and residences, although it is not uncommon for a driveway or parking space to be squeezed into a small front or side yard. Most residential driveways are one lane wide and constructed of gravel, asphalt or concrete. New driveways and off-street parking should be located to avoid major changes to topography, disturbance of mature trees, or other changes that alter the setting of historic buildings or streetscapes.”

2) Chapter 9.D recommends:
   a. “Construct new site features using materials compatible with the setting and with nearby historic structures, particularly for features visible from a public way.”
   b. “Construct new terraces or patios visible from a public way from brick, stone or concrete pavers designed to look like indigenous stone.”
   c. “Where needed, install new residential driveways that are narrow (one lane) and follow the contours of the site to minimize the need for clearing and grading. If possible, locate off-street parking spaces in side or rear yards.”

The proposed alterations will utilize historic building materials and materials common to the area and property, such as the granite cobble, brick walkways and stone dry stacked retaining walls.
The proposed use of the granite cobble as the paving material for the parking pad exceeds the typical materials of gravel, asphalt or concrete and will enhance the streetscape.

The second parking pad (proposed to be enlarged), will be larger than the narrow (one lane) driveways recommended by the Guidelines, however the topography of the site does not allow for a long narrow driveway, as the hillside behind this area slopes significantly away from Hill Street toward Merryman Street. Hill Street is a very narrow street, and parking pads and driveways tucked in off the street where possible are common.

The other site improvements, such as the brick walkways, granite steps and dry stacked retaining walls comply with the Guidelines and will enhance the appearance of the house and streetscape.

D. **Staff Recommendation**

Staff recommends the HPC approve the application as submitted. approval.

E. **Testimony**

Mr. Shad swore in Greg Busch. Mr. Busch did not have any additions or corrections to the staff report. The Commissioners agreed the proposed improvements and materials, such as the granite cobblestone, stacked stone and brick, were an improvement over the existing conditions and exceed the recommendations in the Guidelines.

F. **Motion**

Ms. Danna moved to approve the application as submitted. Ms. Flynn Giles seconded. The motion as unanimously approved. Mr. Reich was absent for this case.

**Conclusions of Law**

Based upon the foregoing Findings of Fact, the Commission concludes as follows:

A. **Standards of Review**
The standards for review of an application for a Certificate of Approval are set forth in Section 16.607 of the Howard County Code and require consideration of:

1. The historic, architectural, or archaeological value or significance of the structure and its relationship to the historic value of the surrounding area;
2. The relationship of the exterior architectural features of such structure to the remainder of the structure and to the surrounding area;
3. The general compatibility of exterior design, scale, proportion, arrangement, texture and materials proposed to be used; and
4. Any other factors, including aesthetic factors, which the Commission deems to be pertinent.

Section 16.607(c) of the Code further provides:

It is the intent of this subtitle that the Commission be strict in its judgment of plans for contributing structures. It is also the intent of this subtitle that the Commission shall be lenient in its judgment of plans for structures of little historic value or plans for new construction, except where such plans would seriously impair the historic or architectural value of surrounding structures or the surrounding area.

Section 16.607(d) authorizes the Commission to adopt guidelines for its review of applications based on the standards set forth in the Code. Pursuant to this authority, the Commission has adopted the Ellicott City Historic District Design Guidelines. Chapter 9 sets forth the relevant recommendations for Landscape and Site Elements in the Historic District, as detailed in the Findings of Fact, part C.

B. **Application of Standards**

Applying these standards and guidelines to the Subject Property, the Commission finds that it contributes to Ellicott City’s historic significance. Consequently, in reviewing the application, the Commission will be strict in its judgment. The Commission finds that the Applicant’s proposal would not impair the historic or architectural value of the surrounding area. The Commission finds that the proposal is consistent with the Guidelines. The evidence supports this conclusion.
The Applicant seeks approval to replace two deteriorating parking pads, increasing the size of the right pad, and to replace the concrete walkway on the left side of the front door with a red brick walkway and granite steps.

The proposed materials, brick and stone, are historic building materials and are recommended under the Guidelines. In fact, the use of granite cobble in lieu of asphalt or concrete, which are typically used, for the parking pads exceeds the recommendation and will enhance the streetscape. While the parking pad will be larger than a narrow driveway, as recommended, the topography is such that a narrow driveway is not possible. On this street, which is very narrow, parking pads tucked in off of the street are common. Accordingly, the proposed alterations are compatible with the area, in compliance with the Guidelines and will enhance the appearance of the house and streetscape.

For these reasons, and for the reasons identified in the Staff Report, and the reasons stated by the Commission, the Commission concludes that the proposed work will not impair the historic and architectural value of the surrounding area. The application complies with the Guidelines and standards applicable to the Ellicott City Historic District.
ORDER AND CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, by a vote of 4 to 0, it is this 2nd day of June, 2022, ORDERED, that the Applicant’s request for a Certificate of Approval to make exterior alterations at the Subject Property, is APPROVED.

HOWARD COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Allan Shad, Chair

Erica Zoren, Vice-Chair

Absent

Bruno Reich

Julianne Danna

Ellen Flynn Giles

APPROVED for Form and Legal Sufficiency:

HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF LAW

Kristen K. Haskins
Senior Assistant County Solicitor

ANY PERSON AGGRIEVED BY THIS DECISION AND ORDER/CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL MAY APPEAL THE DECISION TO THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR HOWARD COUNTY WITHIN THIRTY DAYS OF THE DATE OF THE DECISION.
IN THE MATTER OF
THE APPLICATION OF
EC 250, INC.

BEFORE THE
HOWARD COUNTY
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
COMMISSION
Case No. 22-18

DECISION AND ORDER

Pursuant to Title 16, Subtitle 6, of the Howard County Code, notice having been properly published, the Historic Preservation Commission ("Commission") convened a public hearing on May 5, 2022 to hear and consider the application of EC 250, Inc. ("Applicant"), for a Certificate of Approval to make exterior alterations at the corner of Fels Lane and Ellicott Mills Drive, in the vicinity of 3535 Ellicott Mills Drive and 3592 Fels Lane, Ellicott City, Maryland (the "Subject Property"). The Commission members present were Allan Shad, Erica Zoren, Bruno Reich, Julianne Danna and Ellen Flynn Giles.

The following documents, incorporated into the record by reference, are applicable to this case: (1) the appropriate provisions of the Howard County Charter and the Howard County Code, including the Howard County Zoning Regulations; (2) the General Plan for Howard County; (3) the application for a Certificate of Approval and associated records on file with the Commission; (4) the Agenda for the May 5, 2022 Commission meeting; (5) the Ellicott City Historic District Design Guidelines, May, 1998 (the "Design Guidelines" or "Guidelines"); and (6) the general design guidelines listed in Rule 107 of the Commission’s Rules of Procedure.
Summary of Testimony

Ms. Samantha Holmes, Staff to the Commission, presented the application, identifying the work proposed by the Applicant for which approval is requested, and the Staff's recommendation and the basis for the recommendation. Copies of Staff's recommendation and the application were provided to each Commission member and reviewed with the Commission by Ms. Holmes. The Applicant testified in support of the application.

Findings of Fact

Based upon the evidence, the Commission makes the following findings of fact:

A. The Subject Property

This property is located in the Ellicott City Historic District but does not contain any structures. This is the first parcel within the district at this location.

This application was posted as a Minor Alteration, MA-22-12, but was removed due to an objection.

B. Proposed Improvements

The Applicant proposes to install a gateway entrance sign at the corner of Fels Lane and Ellicott Mills Drive, as a main entry point to the historic district. The sign will match that previously approved in 1997, installed at Ellicott Mills and Main Street, near the Thomas Isaac Log Cabin. The sign will be routed wood, 3 feet high by 5 feet wide, mounted on wood posts. The sign will read "Welcome to Historic Ellicott City" and contain an image of Ellicott City above the text, which will consist of several colors.

C. Staff Report

Chapter 11.A: Signs; General Guidelines

1) Chapter 11.A recommends:
a. “Use simple, legible words and graphics.”
b. “Keep letters to a minimum and the message brief and to the point. In many cases, symbols or illustrations that communicate the nature of the business can be used.”
c. “Use a minimum number of colors, generally no more than three.”
d. “Use historically appropriate materials such as wood or iron for signs or supporting hardware.”

The sign generally complies with the above Guidelines as it will be a routed wood sign, with the simple phrase “Welcome to Historic Ellicott City” and the year of establishment. The sign will use more than three colors. However, the colors will only be used in the image of Ellicott City and otherwise the sign will read as black and natural wood color.

Chapter 11.B.5: Signs, Commercial Buildings, Freestanding Signs

2) Chapter 11.B.5 states, “The Howard County Sign Code permits freestanding signs on property with at least 40 lineal feet of lot frontage. The allowed size is based on the sign's setback from the public right-of-way. Most of Ellicott City's commercial structures are located adjacent to the sidewalk, leaving no room for a freestanding sign. Buildings that are set back from the sidewalk often do not have the minimum frontage required by the Sign Code for a freestanding sign. Therefore, freestanding signs are not common in the historic district. On property with sufficient frontage and setback, permanent freestanding signs that are scaled to be viewed by pedestrians may be appropriate.”

3) Chapter 11.B.5 recommends, “To respect the pedestrian scale, limit the size of a freestanding sign to four to six square feet in area.”

The above Guidelines are specifically geared toward freestanding commercial signs within the district. The proposed sign is gateway signage, to benefit the entire district and not just one specific business. Gateway signage is typically designed to be more visible from a vehicular scale.

Chapter 11.D: Signs; Traffic, Directional and Other Public Signage

4) Chapter 11.D recommends:

a. “Use directional and informational signs conservatively, in locations that will maximize their effectiveness. Limit the number of freestanding poles to minimize streetscape clutter.”

b. “Design signs of a particular type (e.g., all street name signs or all signs directing visitors to parking areas or public buildings) with a consistent
style, lettering, size, color and logo.”  

The gateway sign is proposed to match that previously approved for use at Main Street and Ellicott Mills Drive, which complies with the recommendation to design signs of a particular type, i.e. gateway signage, with a consistent style, lettering, size, color and logo.

**D. Staff Recommendation**

Staff recommends the HPC approve the application as submitted.

**E. Testimony**

Mr. Shad swore in Ed Lilley. Mr. Lilley did not have any additions or corrections to the staff report. Mr. Reich was in attendance for this case. The Commissioners agreed that the sign looked good, and that while there were more than three colors, the use was consistent with other approvals when the colors are used with a graphic and do not overwhelm the sign. The Commissioners found the sign complied with the Guidelines.

**F. Motion**

Ms. Flynn Giles moved to approve the application as submitted. Ms. Zoren seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Conclusions of Law**

Based upon the foregoing Findings of Fact, the Commission concludes as follows:

**A. Standards of Review**

The standards for review of an application for a Certificate of Approval are set forth in Section 16.607 of the Howard County Code and require consideration of:

1. The historic, architectural, or archaeological value or significance of the structure and its relationship to the historic value of the surrounding area;
(2) The relationship of the exterior architectural features of such structure to the remainder of the structure and to the surrounding area;
(3) The general compatibility of exterior design, scale, proportion, arrangement, texture and materials proposed to be used; and
(4) Any other factors, including aesthetic factors, which the Commission deems to be pertinent.

Section 16.607(c) of the Code further provides:

It is the intent of this subtitle that the Commission be strict in its judgment of plans for contributing structures. It is also the intent of this subtitle that the Commission shall be lenient in its judgment of plans for structures of little historic value or plans for new construction, except where such plans would seriously impair the historic or architectural value of surrounding structures or the surrounding area.

Section 16.607(d) authorizes the Commission to adopt guidelines for its review of applications based on the standards set forth in the Code. Pursuant to this authority, the Commission has adopted the Ellicott City Historic District Design Guidelines. Chapter 11 sets forth the relevant recommendations for Signs in the Historic District, as detailed in the Findings of Fact, part C.

B. Application of Standards

Applying these standards and guidelines to the Subject Property, the Commission finds that it contributes to Ellicott City’s historic significance. Consequently, in reviewing the application, the Commission will be strict in its judgment. The Commission finds that the Applicant’s proposal would not impair the historic or architectural value of the surrounding area. The Commission finds that the proposal is consistent with the Guidelines. The evidence supports this conclusion.

The Applicant seeks approval for the installation of a gateway entrance sign at the corner of Fels Lane and Ellicott Mills Drive, as a main entry point to the historic district. The sign will match that previously approved in 1997, installed at Ellicott Mills and Main Street, near the Thomas Isaac Log Cabin. The sign will be routed wood, 3 feet high by 5
feet wide, mounted on wood posts. The sign will read "Welcome to Historic Ellicott City" and contain an image of Ellicott City above the text, which will consist of several colors.

While the Guidelines are more focused on commercial signs, there are recommendations applicable to a gateway sign as proposed by the Applicant. The proposed sign will be routed wood, which is historically appropriate. While the sign does contain more than three colors, as recommended, the colors are limited to the image of Ellicott City. Otherwise, the sign is black and natural wood. The message contained thereon is simple and consistent in style, lettering, size, color and logo with that of a previously approved gateway signage. The proposed sign is in accord with the Guidelines.

For these reasons, and for the reasons identified in the Staff Report, and the reasons stated by the Commission, the Commission concludes that the proposed work will not impair the historic and architectural value of the surrounding area. The application complies with the Guidelines and standards applicable to the Ellicott City Historic District.
ORDER AND CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, by a vote of 5 to 0, it is this 2 day of June, 2022, ORDERED, that the Applicant’s request for a Certificate of Approval to make exterior alterations at the Subject Property, is APPROVED.

HOWARD COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Allan Shad, Chair

Erica Zoren, Vice-Chair

Bruno Reich

Julianne Danna

Ellen Flynn Giles

APPROVED for Form and Legal Sufficiency:

HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF LAW

Kristen K. Haskins
Senior Assistant County Solicitor

ANY PERSON AGGRIEVED BY THIS DECISION AND ORDER/CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL MAY APPEAL THE DECISION TO THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR HOWARD COUNTY WITHIN THIRTY DAYS OF THE DATE OF THE DECISION.
IN THE MATTER OF
THE APPLICATION OF
KIM CONLEY
* BEFORE THE
* HOWARD COUNTY
FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL
TO MAKE EXTERIOR ALTERATIONS
AT 8221-8225 MAIN STREET
ELLIOTT CITY, MARYLAND
* HISTORIC PRESERVATION
* COMMISSION
* Case No. 22-19

DECISION AND ORDER

Pursuant to Title 16, Subtitle 6, of the Howard County Code, notice having been
properly published, the Historic Preservation Commission ("Commission") convened a
public hearing on May 5, 2022 to hear and consider the application of Kim Conley
("Applicant"), for a Certificate of Approval to make exterior alterations at 8221-8225 Main
Street, Ellicott City, Maryland (the "Subject Property"). The Commission members
present were Allan Shad, Erica Zoren, Bruno Reich, Julianne Danna and Ellen Flynn Giles.
The following documents, incorporated into the record by reference, are applicable to this
case: (1) the appropriate provisions of the Howard County Charter and the Howard County
Code, including the Howard County Zoning Regulations; (2) the General Plan for Howard
County; (3) the application for a Certificate of Approval and associated records on file with
the Commission; (4) the Agenda for the May 5, 2022 Commission meeting; (5) the Ellicott
City Historic District Design Guidelines, May, 1998 (the "Design Guidelines" or
"Guidelines"); and (6) the general design guidelines listed in Rule 107 of the Commission’s
Rules of Procedure.
Summary of Testimony

Ms. Samantha Holmes, Staff to the Commission, presented the application, identifying the work proposed by the Applicant for which approval is requested, and the Staff's recommendation and the basis for the recommendation. Copies of Staff's recommendation and the application were provided to each Commission member and reviewed with the Commission by Ms. Holmes. The Applicant testified in support of the application.

Findings of Fact

Based upon the evidence, the Commission makes the following findings of fact:

A. The Subject Property

This property is located in the Ellicott City Historic District. According to SDAT, the building on the property dates to 1930. The Design Guidelines explain that this building design was influenced by the Art Deco style through the use of the glazed terra cotta panels, steel casement windows and curved storefront. The building was originally constructed as a movie theater, and over the years has also operated as a children's theater, performing arts space, photography studio, bookstore and retail space. The theater marquee sign still exists on the building but has been modified over the years.

The previously approved sign for Precious Gifts, was approved in 1997 (case HDC-97-36) to replace the Ellicott Theatre sign.

In March 2020, case HPC 20-07, the property owner received Advisory Comments from the Commission for the design of permanent signage on the buildings.
In April 2022, case HPC-22-13, the current Applicant received approval to install the projecting sign on the building and withdrew the request for the marquee signage, in order to look into alternative design options.

B. Proposed Improvements

The Applicant resubmitted the new design options for the marquee and proposes the following:

1) Retain the two existing panels that read “ELLICOTT”.

2) On each of the changeable copy marquee boards, install:
   a. The Crazy Mason milkshake bar with milkshake graphic.
   b. Using changeable copy below to read “Flavor of the Month” with the flavor listed below.

The application states, “Per the recommendation of the board, it was suggested to place channel letters above the marquee to give the appearance of the original design. Those suggested channel letters were removed a long time ago and have not been in place for several years while other tenants occupied the building. The tenant Robert Studer of The Crazy Mason is not the owner of the building and the suggested design of adding ELLICOTT in channel letters above the marquee would be cost prohibitive as he is trying to get his small business launched (The Crazy Mason). It is requested that the board accept the existing panel that is currently there now as a suitable solution.”

C. Staff Report

Chapter 11.A: Signs, General Guidelines
1) Chapter 11.A recommends:
   a. “Use simple, legible words and graphics.”
   b. “Keep letters to a minimum and the message brief and to the point. In many cases, symbols or illustrations that communicate the nature of the business can be used.”
c. "Use a minimum number of colors, generally no more than three. Coordinate sign colors with the colors used in the building façade."

The marquee sign will contain more than three colors; however, the additional colors will only be used within the milkshake graphic; which covers a small portion of the sign. Otherwise the text will be white with black outline on the marquee sign, black lettering for the changeable copy and red lettering for the term “milkshake bar.”

The panel reading “ELLICOTT” was installed without approval for the previous business use in the building. The “ELLICOTT” text appears to be gray with a black background. The Applicant proposes to retain the “ELLICOTT” panel. The Commission should determine if the sign colors appear coordinated with the existing colors of the building façade and the proposed marquee sign.

2) Chapter 11.A recommends, “Use historically appropriate materials such as wood or iron for signs and supporting hardware. Select hardware that blends with the style of the sign and is neither flimsy nor excessively bulky.”

The marquee sign involves the re-use of a historic sign on the building. The Applicant proposes to retain the existing panel reading “ELLICOTT,” as the suggestion to use channel letters to restore the original sign is cost prohibitive.

Chapter 11.B: Signs, Commercial Buildings

3) Chapter 11.B recommends, “incorporate the sign into the façade of the building. Sign should fit within the lines and panels of the façade as defined by the building frame and architectural details.”

4) For flat mounted signs, Chapter 11.B recommends, “In most cases, limit the area of signage to one-half square foot of sign area for each linear foot of primary street frontage, with a limit of eight square feet in area for any one sign. More sign area is appropriate for some of Ellicott City’s larger buildings, where these limits would result in signs that are ineffective or not in scale with the building.”

The marquee sign fits within the existing theater marquee, and as a result is larger than typically recommended for flat mounted signs. The proposed signage will fit within the changeable copy marquee area.
5) Chapter 11.A recommends, “Emphasize the identification of the establishment rather than an advertising message on the face of the sign.”

6) Chapter 11.A states the following is Routine Maintenance, “Restoring or repairing a sign with materials that exactly match the existing materials; changing only the text of a sign while all else remains the same.”

The marquee area will utilize 6” changeable letters in a serif style font, similar to what has previously been on the marquee. The business owner would be able to change out the message as routine maintenance per Chapter 11.A. While this is advertising and the Guidelines typically recommend against it, the proposal is consistent with the historical use of the theater marquee to advertise movies.

D. **Staff Recommendation**

Staff recommends the HPC determine if the application complies with the Guidelines and approve, modify or deny accordingly.

E. **Testimony**

Mr. Shad swore in Robert Studer and Luis Quintana. Mr. Studer explained they looked at the channel marquee signs at the recommendation of the Commission, but they were estimated to cost between $10,000 to $20,000. Mr. Studer would like to retain the current Ellicott sign panel and update the marquee with the Crazy Mason logo and changeable copy below. They took to heart the recommendation to restore the marquee to a 1930s style. The marquee would be restored to have LED lighting behind to appear like a lit sign from the 1930s.

The Commission discussed the proposed use of the “ELLICOTT” panel to determine if it complied with the Guidelines. Mr. Studer said his proposed alternative was to remove the current “ELLICOTT” over the cabinet, but keep the cabinet which has
historical value and is changeable copy that was previously there, and leave it like that without the “ELLICOTT” over it. Ms. Flynn Giles understands the concern that the ELLICOTT sign was not approved initially. She does not want ELLICOTT gone and thought it was important having the reference back.

Ms. Danna said the main marquee was a large improvement. She did not find that the Ellicott sign complied with the Guidelines based on the material and being backlit. Ms. Flynn Giles said the second marquee board is comparable to the HPC advice from April meeting and is comfortable with the sign.

Mr. Reich said the Applicant did a good job incorporating their comments and he found this to be a good compromise as leaving the “ELLICOTT” mimics what was there before. He said it does not take over Main Street just for one business sign and attempts to come close to the 1930s sign. Ms. Zoren said that in the absence of channel letters, this was their next best option to leave “ELLICOTT” there. She did not want to see changeable type or a metal panel there. The Commission hoped there could be a future opportunity for channel letters and that the building owner would undertake the project.

Mr. Reich confirmed the marquee sign below will be backlit with LED. Mr. Quintana said it is a Lexan face and there are currently old bulbs that will be retrofitted with LED. The changeable copy is on a track system, similar to how movie theaters used to change the sign. Mr. Reich asked how bright the LED will be. Mr. Reich said it should not be an intense spotlight. Mr. Quintana said a dimmer switch could be installed to bring down the lumens. Ms. Holmes asked if the bulb would be a soft white/yellow or a bright white/blue LED. Mr. Quintana said the light would be a brighter white. Ms. Zoren said the main marquee design is in line with what they suggested. She said they are not looking for
a bright neon glow, but are looking to mimic the old theater lights. She said it would not be appropriate for it to be a bright neon glow.

Mr. Studer said the dimmer switch was a good idea to include, he agreed with that recommendation.

Ms. Zoren asked when the light would come on. Mr. Quintana said it would be a timer where it would turn on at sundown and run for a few hours.

Mr. Shad agreed with the previous comments. He said the changes made in the marquee sign were in accord with the previous discussion. Mr. Shad agreed dimmer controlled lighting levels should be incorporated into the motion.

F. Motion

Ms. Flynn Giles moved to approve the application with the stipulation that the LED lighting behind the changeable copy be controlled with a dimmer and that a nighttime timer be included. Mr. Reich seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Conclusions of Law

Based upon the foregoing Findings of Fact, the Commission concludes as follows:

A. Standards of Review

The standards for review of an application for a Certificate of Approval are set forth in Section 16.607 of the Howard County Code and require consideration of:

(1) The historic, architectural, or archaeological value or significance of the structure and its relationship to the historic value of the surrounding area;
(2) The relationship of the exterior architectural features of such structure to the remainder of the structure and to the surrounding area;
(3) The general compatibility of exterior design, scale, proportion, arrangement, texture and materials proposed to be used; and
(4) Any other factors, including aesthetic factors, which the Commission deems to be pertinent.

Section 16.607(c) of the Code further provides:
It is the intent of this subtitle that the Commission be strict in its judgment of plans for contributing structures. It is also the intent of this subtitle that the Commission shall be lenient in its judgment of plans for structures of little historic value or plans for new construction, except where such plans would seriously impair the historic or architectural value of surrounding structures or the surrounding area.

Section 16.607(d) authorizes the Commission to adopt guidelines for its review of applications based on the standards set forth in the Code. Pursuant to this authority, the Commission has adopted the Ellicott City Historic District Design Guidelines. Chapter 11 sets forth the relevant recommendations for Signs in the Historic District, as detailed in the Findings of Fact, part C.

B. Application of Standards

Applying these standards and guidelines to the Subject Property, the Commission finds that it contributes to Ellicott City's historic significance. Consequently, in reviewing the application, the Commission will be strict in its judgment. The Commission finds that the Applicant's proposal would not impair the historic or architectural value of the surrounding area. The Commission finds that the proposal is consistent with the Guidelines. The evidence supports this conclusion.

The Applicant resubmitted the new design options for the marquee and proposes the following:

1) Retain the two existing panels that read "ELLICOTT".

2) On each of the changeable copy marquee boards, install:
   a. The Crazy Mason milkshake bar with milkshake graphic.
   b. Using changeable copy below to read "Flavor of the Month" with the flavor listed below.

While the Commission stated it would prefer to see a complete restoration, which would include the use of channel letters, it acknowledged that such restoration is costly.
Due to the cost, the applicant proposes to retain the two existing panels that read “ELLICOTT” ("Panels") as-is rather than install channel letters. However, the Panels were not previously approved. That being said, the Panels resemble the original from the 1930s. As such, the Panels add historical value to the building.

In addition to retaining the Panels, the applicant proposes to re-use the historic marquee. While it is larger in size than is recommended by the Guidelines and typically seen in the area, the proposed sign will fit within the existing historic marquee. The proposal includes more than three colors to be used on the signage; however, the additional colors will only be used in the milkshake graphic, which covers a small portion of the sign. The remainder of the text will be white with black outline on the marquee sign, black lettering for the changeable copy and red lettering for the term “milkshake bar.” While advertising is not generally recommended by the Guidelines, in this scenario, the proposed use is consistent with the historical use of the theater marquee, which originally advertised movies. The marquee will be backlit with retrofitted LED lighting. The light will be a brighter white. However, a dimmer will be installed to ensure the marque will be appropriate and mimic early historic lighting. A timer will also control the lighting. As such, the proposal is historically appropriate and in accord with the Guidelines.

For these reasons, and for the reasons identified in the Staff Report, and the reasons stated by the Commission, the Commission concludes that the proposed work will not impair the historic and architectural value of the surrounding area. The application complies with the Guidelines and standards applicable to the Ellicott City Historic District.
ORDER AND CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, by a vote of 5 to 0, it is this 2 day of June, 2022, ORDERED, that the Applicant’s request for a Certificate of Approval to make exterior alterations at the Subject Property, is APPROVED, as amended and detailed herein.

HOWARD COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Allan Shad, Chair

Erica Zoren, Vice-Chair

Bruno Reich

Julianne Danna

Ellen Flynn Giles

APPROVED for Form and Legal Sufficiency:

HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF LAW

Kristen K. Haskins
Senior Assistant County Solicitor

ANY PERSON AGGRIEVED BY THIS DECISION AND ORDER/CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL MAY APPEAL THE DECISION TO THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR HOWARD COUNTY WITHIN THIRTY DAYS OF THE DATE OF THE DECISION.
Pursuant to Title 16, Subtitle 6, of the Howard County Code, notice having been properly published, the Historic Preservation Commission ("Commission") convened a public hearing on May 5, 2022 to hear and consider the application of George Tolen ("Applicant"), for a Certificate of Approval to make exterior alterations at 3725 Main Street, Ellicott City, Maryland (the "Subject Property"). The Commission members present were Allan Shad, Erica Zoren, Bruno Reich, and Julianne Danna. The following documents, incorporated into the record by reference, are applicable to this case: (1) the appropriate provisions of the Howard County Charter and the Howard County Code, including the Howard County Zoning Regulations; (2) the General Plan for Howard County; (3) the application for a Certificate of Approval and associated records on file with the Commission; (4) the Agenda for the May 5, 2022 Commission meeting; (5) the Ellicott City Historic District Design Guidelines, May, 1998 (the "Design Guidelines" or "Guidelines"); and (6) the general design guidelines listed in Rule 107 of the Commission’s Rules of Procedure.
Summary of Testimony

Ms. Samantha Holmes, Staff to the Commission, presented the application, identifying the work proposed by the Applicant for which approval is requested, and the Staff’s recommendation and the basis for the recommendation. Copies of Staff’s recommendation and the application were provided to each Commission member and reviewed with the Commission by Ms. Holmes. The Applicant testified in support of the application.

Findings of Fact

Based upon the evidence, the Commission makes the following findings of fact:

A. The Subject Property

This building is located in the Ellicott City Historic District and is listed on the Howard County Historic Sites Inventory as HO-285, the Weir House/Ellicott’s Second School Building. The building dates circa 1812.

In April 2021, case HPC-21-13, the Applicant was approved to remove the addition of a roof extension over the rear porch (facing Court Avenue), the cedar shingle exterior walls and corresponding windows in order to expose the original façade, which contains a mansard roof and windows. The HPC approved the application, with the final finish work subject to HPC approval as more information was required by the Commission in order to make a determination.

B. Proposed Improvements

The Applicant seeks retroactive approval for the completion of the finish work that was not accessible or visible at the time of the initial application in HPC-21-13. This HPC-21-13 case to remove the sleeping porch in order to expose the mansard was approved, but
the finish work and other non-visible work to join the two rooflines together was left subject to a future approval.

The application states:

"Under a previous application the Howard County Historical Society was granted approval to remove a sleeping porch built over the lower porch on the south side of 3725 Park Avenue. At the time of this application, we were unable to provide details of how we proposed to finish the corners where the front sloped roof would meet the stone sidewalk as this had been enclosed when the porch was constructed.

Subsequent demolition shows that the stone side wall terminates at the same angle as the roof and that the original roof sheathing extends to cover the end of the stone wall."

The application explains that photo 3 from the application "shows the final closure at the end of the roof and how it is attached to the existing horizontal frieze board at the bottom of the cedar siding. It also shows a 5" ogee moulding at the soffit that was milled to match a short piece found during the demolition. All trim is shown in white primer but will be painted off white to match what is currently on the balance of the building. A 5" half round gutter will be installed on the exposed soffit."

C. Staff Report

Chapter 6.J: Rehabilitation and Maintenance of Existing Buildings; Cornices and Ornamentation
1) Chapter 6.J recommends:
   a. "Replace missing original features that can be documented by physical evidence, photographs or other means."
   b. "Uncover original details obscured by later additions."
2) Chapter 6.J recommends against, "decorating a building by adding trim that did not exist on it historically."

The Commission wanted to see the proposed construction solution to joining the two rooflines together and what the trim/finish detail would look like. The Applicant
submitted an application in January 2022, but Staff requested additional information to complete the application. The Applicant withdrew and submitted an application after the work was completed. Chapter 6.J offers some recommendations for trim/cornice detailing, as shown above.

D. **Staff Recommendation**

Staff recommends the HPC determine if the alterations comply with the Guidelines and approve, modify or deny accordingly.

E. **Testimony**

Ms. Flynn Giles recused herself from the case. Mr. Shad swore in George Tolen. Mr. Tolen did not have anything to add or correct to the staff report.

Mr. Reich said the building looked beautiful and the building has regained its original grandeur. Mr. Reich thought the application should be approved. Ms. Zoren understood the reason for the retroactive approval need, as it was unknown conditions and they had Advisory Comments to move forward with. The Commissioners agreed the application and project looked good. Mr. Shad agreed with the previous comments and applauded their efforts to uncover the building.

F. **Motion**

Mr. Reich moved to approve the application as submitted. Ms. Danna seconded.

The motion was unanimously approved.

**Conclusions of Law**

Based upon the foregoing Findings of Fact, the Commission concludes as follows:

A. **Standards of Review**
The standards for review of an application for a Certificate of Approval are set forth in Section 16.607 of the Howard County Code and require consideration of:

1. The historic, architectural, or archaeological value or significance of the structure and its relationship to the historic value of the surrounding area;
2. The relationship of the exterior architectural features of such structure to the remainder of the structure and to the surrounding area;
3. The general compatibility of exterior design, scale, proportion, arrangement, texture and materials proposed to be used; and
4. Any other factors, including aesthetic factors, which the Commission deems to be pertinent.

Section 16.607(c) of the Code further provides:

It is the intent of this subtitle that the Commission be strict in its judgment of plans for contributing structures. It is also the intent of this subtitle that the Commission shall be lenient in its judgment of plans for structures of little historic value or plans for new construction, except where such plans would seriously impair the historic or architectural value of surrounding structures or the surrounding area.

Section 16.607(d) authorizes the Commission to adopt guidelines for its review of applications based on the standards set forth in the Code. Pursuant to this authority, the Commission has adopted the Ellicott City Historic District Design Guidelines. Chapter 6 sets forth the relevant recommendations for Rehabilitation and Maintenance of Existing Buildings in the Historic District, as detailed in the Findings of Fact, part C.

B. **Application of Standards**

Applying these standards and guidelines to the Subject Property, the Commission finds that it contributes to Ellicott City’s historic significance. Consequently, in reviewing the application, the Commission will be strict in its judgment. The Commission finds that the Applicant’s proposal would not impair the historic or architectural value of the surrounding area. The Commission finds that the proposal is consistent with the Guidelines. The evidence supports this conclusion.
The Applicant seeks retroactive approval for the completion of the finish work that was not accessible or visible at the time of the initial application in HPC-21-13. This HPC-21-13 case to remove the sleeping porch in order to expose the mansard was approved, but the finish work and other non-visible work to join the two rooflines together was left subject to a future approval.

The finish work includes a 5” ogee moulding at the soffit that was milled to match a short piece found during the demolition. The trim will be painted off white to match what is currently on the building. Additionally, a 5” half round gutter will be installed on the exposed soffit. The finish work, including the use of a material found during demolition, is historically appropriate. Painting the trim off white is historically appropriate and compatible with the building and surroundings.

For these reasons, and for the reasons identified in the Staff Report, and the reasons stated by the Commission, the Commission concludes that the proposed work will not impair the historic and architectural value of the surrounding area. The application complies with the Guidelines and standards applicable to the Ellicott City Historic District.
ORDER AND CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, by a vote of 4 to 0, it is this 2 day of June, 2022, ORDERED, that the Applicant’s request for a Certificate of Approval to make exterior alterations at the Subject Property, is APPROVED.

HOWARD COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Allan Shad, Chair

Erica Zoren, Vice-Chair

Bruno Reich

Julianne Danna

Recused
Ellen Flynn Giles

APPROVED for Form and Legal Sufficiency:

HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF LAW

Kristen K. Haskins
Senior Assistant County Solicitor

ANY PERSON AGGRIEVED BY THIS DECISION AND ORDER/CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL MAY APPEAL THE DECISION TO THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR HOWARD COUNTY WITHIN THIRTY DAYS OF THE DATE OF THE DECISION.