



September 3, 2015

Kathleen Bradley Colwell
City of Methuen
Planning Division Director
City Hall
41 Pleasant Street
Methuen, MA 01844
RE: John Hancock Lodge & Red Tavern Project

To the Planning Division Director:

i3 Architects, PLLC has reviewed the following documents and plans provided to the City of Methuen:

- John Hancock Lodge Submittal Set 8/4/21
- The Red Tavern Submittal Set 8/4/21
- John Hancock Landscape Concept Plan 8/24/21
- John Hancock Lighting Concept Plans 8/24/21
- Red Tavern Site Plan 8/5/21
- Email Response dated 8/10/21

The planning division for the city of Methuen has requested a review of the project submission regarding the renovation and redevelopment of the John Hancock Lodge and the Red Tavern located at the intersection of Broadway and Pleasant Street. Both are existing National Registered historic structures located in National Registered Historic Districts tied to local historic figures. The Red Tavern (Searle's, Edward Guesthouse) was constructed in 1900 by Edward F. Searles and his architect Henry Vaughan and it is assumed it was constructed by several existing structures that were relocated. The John Hancock Lodge also known as the Exchange Hotel was also designed by architect Henry Vaughan and was constructed in 1851. The historic structures provide an architectural proclamation at the intersection of Broadway and Pleasant Street of Methuen's past.

The following are my questions, concerns, observations, recommendations, and request for additional information in the review of the documents provided to the city of Methuen. I have broken them down by the buildings and the overall site.

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John Hancock Lodge (The Exchange Hotel):

- The drawings and any permitting should include the full name of its National Registered Name so that documentation is continuous throughout the life of the building.
- Sheet A1.0 Basement Plan: The common entrance that is being proposed with new stairs on the exterior and a rail/wall is a prominent elevation (Charles and Broadway intersection). It is also the elevation closest to the entranceway to the parking for the buildings. In reviewing the existing plans and elevations there appears to be an existing door that should and can remain to access the basement. Please consider not adding an entrance structure to access the basement units/ common areas and reuse the existing door and have a landing and stairs within the building if possible.
- Sheet A1.1 First Floor Plan: Unit 204 is the window well proposed also including a new window opening or are they just adding a window well for existing opening? Will the window well have a guardrail that will be seen and if so, what will that look like? Please submit details and specification sheets on that window well and guard rail system as applicable.
- Sheet A1.1 First Floor Plan The proposed new ADA ramp was found to be well thought out in its location. Please submit on details and specific materials that will be used for the railing and treatment of the ramp, ramp support walls, etc. and any landscaping/ lighting that will be designed and installed under the scope of this project.
- Sheet A1.1 First Floor Plan: The new exterior stairs from existing grade as shown on the plan leading down to the basement is concerning from a historic renovation perspective as this is the front and most prominent elevation. I am concerned that the excavated area for the new stair and guardrails will negatively impact the historic elevation. Again, submittals to review materials, height of railings and overall finish of landscaping and lighting should be reviewed and discussed. My recommendation is to look at other ways to access the units instead of that front elevation or have a common entrance/ access to eliminate a change to the front elevation. If this is proposed I think a perspective rendering should be included to review the impact to the historic elevation.
- A1.2 Second Floor Plan: Unit 301 there is a window in the stairwell: just confirming what the treatment will be for that window as its in a bedroom and a fire rated stairwell which also is a historic defining characteristic.
- A1.2 Second Floor Plan: Unit 303 it is assumed that some or most is a two-story ceiling height due to the atrium space above. What spaces will have that height? How will the walls be treated and has there been any thought to that unit acoustically? Also, there are vents/ windows above (3rd floor); can those vents be replaced with windows as it was historically constructed?
- A2.0 Front Elevation: Casement windows that are being replaced at third story should match existing in detail, trim, etc. Please submit window of existing compared to proposed.
- A.2.0 Front Elevation: Vent being proposed to be replaced with window should match existing window.
- A2.0 Front Elevation: Window well and egress window should be discussed further. Is there a way to not add a window and window well in the configuration of the plan? If not, then please provide further detail, elevations, and specifications on the window well and its requirements. The window should be scheduled, data and specification sheet should be provided for review.
- A2.0 Front Elevation: The proposed excavation, retaining wall (well) and stairs leading to the basement is not recommended as it permanently impacts the historic elevation and front façade of

the building. It is an important elevation both at the intersection of streets Pleasant/ Charles with Broadway as well in the area directly in front of the building for both tenants and visitors.

- A2.1 Right Elevation: Propose replacing all vents no longer required by the building systems to be replaced with windows in kind to promote historic restoration of the building to its original elevation in terms of glazing. (Tower and throughout other elevations)
- A2.1 Right Elevation: Existing CMU wall materials should be discussed and reviewed as this was an addition and should remain looking different in appearance from the original historic structure but may be treated different aesthetically so that it has a more residential and pleasing look for both the tenants and visitors. Please provide additional information and updated elevations.
- A2.1 Right Elevation: The proposed egress entrance to the proposed basement common area and units should be remain as is and if possible interior stairs should be provided as this is a prominent elevation. Please submit on replaced door and update plans accordingly or provide justification for the need for this new entrance.
- A2.2 Rear Elevation: Please consider changing the vents to replaced window units to restore the historic character of the building.
- A2.2 Rear Elevation: Removing vents that are unused on the façade and repairing the area in kind of the existing façade is positive for the historic character of the building as shown on the proposed rear elevation.
- A2.2 Rear Elevation: New façade penetrations for egress windows have been proposed. From the review of the site plan this elevation is not a prominent view however it does significantly impact that elevation. I think photos and possibly a site visit to review that elevation with the Historic Commission should be considered. Any windows that are proposed and treatment of the door should be discussed further, and specific window and door cut sheet should be provided. Overall treatment of façade materials should further be looked at regarding the treatment of the historic structure and its detailing.
- A2.3 Left Elevation: Why are the windows being proposed to be removed? Please provide written justification and I would propose looking at the Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties for further information. I would strongly recommend to not propose removing any existing windows on this building as it impacts the historic character of the building permanently.
- Project should require an assessment of damaged exterior façade, windows and doors and proposed replacement and or repair for review by the historic commission.
- All renovations should follow the Interior Standards for Historic Properties as it is a Nationally Registered building and within a district.
- A mock-up of exterior colors should be provided prior to installing on the building. However, based on the colors provided in the printed material it seems to be an acceptable match.

The Red Tavern (Searles, Edward Guesthouse):

- The drawings and any permitting should include the full name of its National Registered Name so that documentation is continuous throughout the life of the building.

- Limited architectural plans were submitted: Based on review of the documentation there is limited renovation within the building. No egress or significant façade changes are being proposed per the drawings submitted to the City of Methuen.
- As plans develop, they should be submitted to the commission for review with both local and state historic standards.
- Elevations should be provided for areas of the façade that are damaged and are requiring repair/ replacement and should include windows and doors. Treatment of window and door repair should be included and submitted for review.
- All renovations should follow the Interior Standards for Historic Properties as it is a Registered building and within a district.
- A mock-up of exterior colors should be provided prior to installing on the building. However, based on the colors provided it seems to be an acceptable match.

Landscape Concept Plan:

- Where existing chain link is being replaced there use to be a historic site wall. I would look at a site wall option if possible or a fencing material that is wood in appearance but perhaps is more durable due to the location near street and concerns with winter elements.
- Plantings that are being proposed should be slower growth so that the new growth doesn't block the prominent elevations and provide security concerns in the urban setting. A full landscape plan with specific plant options should be provided.
- All hardscape materials should be specified and provided to the historic commission for review.

Lighting Concept Plan:

- All lighting spec sheets should be provided for exterior lighting. If replacing or matching existing; a photo should be provided with the proposed lighting fixture cut sheet for historic commission review.
- Any proposed lighting on the building should be shown on elevations and reviewed by the historic commission.

Provided Information Product/ Visual:

- The Pella window cut sheet provided does not meet minimum standards for Interior Standards of historic properties. Pella does make a window that would be considered but the Lifestyle Series does not meet the profiles and properties of a historic window. Some other window option and considerations that have been used successfully that can be analyzed by the architect and provided for review can be Pella Architectural Series, Marvin Signature Series, and Andersen E-Series. Other options may be considered pending a full review. Recommend a mock-up window and a window elevation and details of existing profiles for review by the historic commission.
- PVC trim is acceptable however, a submittal on details to match existing trim should be provided.
- A mock-up of exterior colors should be provided prior to installing on the building. However, based on the colors provided it seems to be an acceptable replacement.

- All exterior materials for repair and/ or replacement should meet minimum requirements for Interior Standards of Historic Properties.

It is my recommendation that the Historic Commission requires further development and submittals prior to the Community Development Board approving this application.

Sincerely,



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