

Historic and/or Architectural Advisory Board  
City of Cortland  
February 14, 2011

A regular meeting of the Historic District Commission was held on February 14, 2011 at 8:00 a.m. in the Mayor's Conference Room at City Hall.

Present: Chair Kline, Comm. Abbott, Delaney, Dineen and Wineburg

Staff Present: Zoning Officer Bruce Weber, Capt. William Knickerbocker and Cheryl Massmann, Deputy City Clerk

Item No. 2 - Minutes - December 13, 2010

Motion to approve the minutes of December 13, 2010.

Motion: Comm. Dineen

Seconded: Comm. Abbott

Motion passed.

Item No. 1 - 14 Clayton Ave. - (YWCA)(CB) - Rear Addition

Jeff Taw and Amy Simrell were present. Jeff Taw presented the project. He noted that these are the plans for a rear addition to the YWCA. He noted that these are the plans for a two story addition with a full basement. He stated that the first floor would be a multi-purpose area for exercise classes with the primary entrance on the west side open to the newly configured parking lot and on the east side would be a secondary and service entrance. He noted that the new elevator would link all floors of the existing building and to navigate through the new addition.

Mr. Taw further explained that the second floor would have a small gym with egress for the nursery and gym with a link to the existing second floor. There is a storage area and a mechanical space in the rear. The plan is to clean up the area near the playground which will have a connecting walk to the building so the children wouldn't have to go through the parking lot. He noted that the challenge of this project was that they had to accommodate physical requirements for the gym and the multi-purpose room.

He noted that this was like a big box and he had to break the scale down as it was connected to the existing building. He noted that the existing structure was 1890's era Italianate, with a 1920's addition designed by Carl Clark which houses the pool. He stated that Mr. Clark took a unique approach in blending the styles of Italianate with neo-classical. He noted that there had been an infill and in the 1990's there was an additional for an elevator tower. He noted that he had many architectural styles to work with. He stated that his approach was to take some of the elements of all of these styles and to utilize them in the plan.

He pointed out that there will be a concrete foundation that he was trying to tie in with the decorative CMU product. He noted that they had selected a color that is close to the existing limestone which is actually a cast stone product and relates to the existing concrete base. He explained the first level will be a brick veneer with a coal to put a durable product within the touching zone. They want a product that will last and stand up to the traffic. He noted that the bricks they were looking at more resembled the brick that Carl Clark had used to develop more of an anchor. He noted that Carl's brick choice blended well with the brick of the Italianate structure. He stated that the upper portion of the building would be clad with an effice applied over insulating material. The soldier course will blend with the flashing band and I'm trying to match that and having a decorative cornice to match the Italianate trim work. He's doing that to break down the volume of the box addition. He noted that the body of the building on the first floor will be brick. He explained that on the gym level he is still exploring options with faux windows with aluminum frames and above the gym he plans to use Kalwall, a translucent sandwich panel of fiberglass to bring in light to the upper portion of the gym. It has a high impact level.

Chair Kline asked what the caps above the windows would be made of. Mr. Taw explained that on the first level, the plan was to use a cast molded stone material in a color that will match. On the upper portions, it will be sculpted out of the EFIS material and an accent color will be used. He showed some color samples, but noted that they will have to work with the color choices as they react to lighting and weatherization. He noted that the plan was for a long lasting standing seam green metal roof which ties in with the color pallet installed two (2) years ago on the Italianate portion of the building. He noted that the north elevation faces the VFW parking lot. He noted that was where there was a small block of office space and storage. He noted that on the front (south) façade on Clayton Avenue with the profile of the building, the addition won't be noticed. He noted that he had tried to match the height of the existing building and tried to bring the scale of the addition down so it wouldn't be noticed from the front.

Chair Kline asked if the back portion of the existing home would still be exposed.

Mr. Taw noted that the plan was to take out the small shed, but will have an exit at the edge of the chimney. Chair Kline asked if the existing fire escape would remain. Mr. Taw noted that would remain the same.

Chair Kline indicated concern regarding the mass of the new addition, especially when coming down Clayton Avenue. She would like to see the reduction of the use of the effice material on the upper portion or at least a change to a darker color so that it would be less imposing. Mr. Taw noted that it was for form in detail in the cornice work to produce a smaller profile.

Mr. Taw noted that the originally intent was a rendering in brick, but the budget didn't support that. Chair Kline asked if the upper material could be painted. Mr. Taw noted that it could be, but it would be a maintenance issue as the color wasn't through and through and that red was a color that easily fades.

Comms. Wineburg and Abbott both indicated that they would like to see a darker colored stucco. Mr. Taw indicated that he would explore other color options.

Chair Kline wondered if the roof material on the canopy could match the roofing material that was on the flat roof. Comm. Abbott noted that she didn't care for the canopy roof material as presented. Comm. Wineburg noted that the canopy roof indicated in the plan was in stark contrast to the light building. Comm. Abbott asked if the standing seam roof was more or less expensive than other types of roofing. Mr. Taw noted that it was more expensive, but lasted much longer. He also noted that a residential type shingled roof was not appropriate for a building of this stature.

Amy Simrell noted that she felt that the metal roof was durable and that it matched the trim. She stated that what they were able to save on the building would go towards milk for the children.

Mr. Taw also indicated that snow stops will be put on the metal roof to stop any snow and ice from sliding off.

Comms. Wineburg and Dineen were still concerned about the color of the roof. Chair Kline noted that perhaps a different color of roof material could be used and that perhaps he could change the color of the banding.

Comm. Wineburg felt that the Commission might have to wait to see what color the effice was before changing the roofing color. Chair Kline thought perhaps another roofing color could be considered. She went on to note that it was difficult to

make a decision without knowing the exact colors. She further explained that as for the construction of the building, everything seemed to be fine; it was just concerns regarding colors. The Commissioners agreed.

Chair Kline asked Mr. Taw to go over the lighting. Mr. Taw noted that he was still working on the site lighting scheme. He stated that they are considering putting a fixture over each exit door and plans to light the canopy with down lights from underneath and will be a hidden source of light. He noted the VFW now has a high pressure sodium pole light that will have to come down during construction. He may consider giving the VFW more light back there to replace their pole light. He indicated a pole light was being considered for a portion of the parking lot and canopy lights. He noted that they planned wall mounted lights on the building, but they didn't want the light to bother the neighbors. It will be engineered fixture with reflectors and lenses that can help control where the lighting is directed.

Chair Kline asked if this Commission could review and light fixtures that are affixed to the building and also the types of doors. She asked if he planned to use steel doors without windows.

Mr. Taw indicated that was what he thought at this time and that he had brought a sample of aluminum framing that he planned to use for the windows and doors. He noted that all the other doors were strictly exit doors and they planned to use flush metal panel doors for them, but would consider raised panel doors if the Commission felt that was appropriate. He noted that stamped metal doors didn't look all that good. He also explained that the parking lot was tight and narrow and they had to be careful to choose a lighting fixture that allowed them to put the lighting where they wanted it. He felt that limited the type of fixture he would look at. He noted that he was inclined to choose a non-descript box fixture. He didn't think he could find a decorative fixture that could do what he wanted it to. He would like to make them as innocuous as possible.

Chair Kline noted thought that the Commission was unable to come up with a final decision on this project because of the lack of material colors, but that the design and footprint were acceptable.

Mr. Taw asked if he could tell the City Planning Commission that the Historic Board approved of this plan except for color.

A motion was made to approve the Site Plan as shown, but will need to meet again to discuss colors for both the roof line and the second floor.

Motion: Comm. Wineburg

