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Catholic Charities Wins Approval After Redesigned Tennis Pavilion Plans, Other Matters Addressed During STX Preservation Committee Meeting

St. Croix HPC officials scrutinize construction plans and signage proposals

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The Catholic Charities of the USVI St. Teresa of Calcutta House of Hope, in Christiansted, St. Croix. By. V.I. CONSORTIUM

The St. Croix Historical Preservation Committee meeting last week considered a number of applications, including paint color for a new hotel under construction, a porch reconstruction project for a historical home damaged by Hurricane Maria, and changes to signage to bring

businesses into compliance with regulations. However, a request for approval in principle of a new retail space had to be deferred until the correct individual makes the application.

While the boutique hotel being constructed on 7a Hospital Street was approved for the requested color selection, Sean Krigger, director of the State Historical Preservation Office, asked representative Marianne Zielke a question about a different project being undertaken by the Zielkes. He queried whether construction currently taking place at Hospital Street 19A and 19B included elements that had not been approved by the committee, but Ms. Zielke quickly reassured him otherwise. “I know that everything we’re doing was approved.” Pressed to provide documentation, she promised to submit her records at the beginning of this week.

Applicant Jay Golding said he is applying for grant funding for the reconstruction of a porch on a home located on 35/36 Queen Street in Frederiksted. HPC members approved the plans for reconstruction of the hurricane-damaged porch with the condition that the new latticework match existing historic lattice in the front porch.

The owners of 54 King Street must also remove signage belonging to a restaurant that has since moved out of the location. The remaining signs must be reconfigured into a “directory” type format, which lists all the businesses occupying that property in a cohesive manner.

Committee members then deliberated a signage application for an ice cream shop on 3 & 4 Strand Street, and approved door-leaf signs on the door shutters, with a reflective tint in the door and service window to keep out the harsh sun that hits the west face of the building.

Meanwhile, Catholic Charities returned to the committee with a redesigned layout for a [tennis pavilion](#) around existing historical ruins. Having seen that their feedback from the last meeting was incorporated into the new layout, committee members readily approved the new redesign, save for one last tweak to the pediment over the main entrance.

A home being constructed on 49 & 50 Fisher Street will now be constructed with concrete instead of as a container home as originally intended. HPC requirements in relation to the roof and other components would drive costs too high to be feasible for the container method, said the project representative.

Mathew Maselli, the would-be buyer, said that financing for the purchase was contingent on the committee writing a letter in support of his plans. “The project will not go through if I don’t have confirmation from you because the banks will not give me financing for something that’s not sure.”

However, Mr. Krigger said that the seller would have to be the one to properly approach the committee. “Let’s go ahead and establish a formal application so that the banking institution knows this is something that has been properly reviewed, approved by the committee,” he suggested, noting that such approvals would be valid for at least a year.

Upon receiving a written directive from the committee, Mr. Maselli said that he would immediately reach out to the vendor in hopes of obtaining their co-operation in the process.

Finally, the prospective purchaser of the building on 3 and 4 Strand Street wanted committee members to endorse his proposal for consolidating the ground floor into a single, open retail space. However, with the HPC only able to provide approvals to the property owner on record, this proved to be a sticking point.

Next, the committee dealt with several sign violations for businesses operating in the same King Street location. One sign, for Susan Mango boutique, offered a little less than the required 8-foot clearance, but committee member Phil Codrington offered an easy fix – simply shorten the chains until the bottom of the sign is eight feet from the sidewalk.

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