

**Historic & Architectural Review Board**

 Meeting

April 21st, 2015 4:30 P.M.

Steve Gifford: Good evening, everyone. I’d like to call to order the City of Greensburg Historic and Architectural Review Board (HARB) for April 21st, 2015

**PRESENT:**

STEVE GIFFORD, CHAIRMAN

MARC SCURCI

BARBARA CIAMPINI

LYNN ARMBRUST

JACKIE JOHNS

LOU DEROSE, SOLICITOR

ABSENT:

LEE CALISTI, SECRETARY

BARBARA JONES, VICE CHAIRMAN

Steve Gifford: We have several items on the agenda tonight. Vicky, may I please have a roll call. The next item on the agenda is the approval of the March 23th, 2015 minutes.

Marc Scurci: I’ll make the motion to approve last month’s minutes

Lynn Armbrust: I second it.

Steve Gifford: All were in favor. Meeting minutes approved.

Steve Gifford: We have no old business. We have three new items on the agenda tonight. The first one is for 129 North Pennsylvania Ave.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **129 North Pennsylvania Avenue:** Owner - Westmoreland Bar Association – Applicant – Westmoreland Bar Association – Project-Facade
2. **626 North Main Street:** Owner – Premier Prop. Holdings LLC – Applicant – Premier Property Holdings LLC - Project – Façade
3. **121 West Pittsburgh Street: -**  Owner – Steve Thomas – Applicant – Sean Slane – Project - Signage

**Item #1**

**129 North Pennsylvania Avenue**

**Property Owner – Westmoreland Bar Association**

**Applicant – Westmoreland Bar Association**

**Project – Façade**

David DeRose: I am here with Barry Morris who is an architect. Peg Tremba, Esq. and John Noble.Esq., who are both from our *Westmoreland Bar Association*. I am here in my capacity for the last 24 plus years. I’ve been the chair of the building committee that the *Bar Association* has even before we had a building. I’ve been a member of our bar since 1976. Barry Morris has been instrumental in not only helping us achieve a bar headquarters back 24 years ago in 1990, he has also aided us in our search for a building and he is instrumental in the design of our building. Barry continues to be instrumental when we have projects that need to be done. Also with respect to our building just from a historical perspective and I realize that you have an application in the front of you. We have a proposal from *Cavcon Construction* for them to do some repair work to the façade. But our building again was purchased in 1990 as a foreclosure. The building in my opinion even though I was not the head of the committee it was a disaster at that time both interior and exterior. It needed total renovations of all 9,000 square feet of space, that’s all three floors. It needed work on the front end of Pennsylvania Avenue and of course on the back end. It took us a while but by 1991 or early 1992 we were in the building and using it. I guess what I want to tell you is that what I consider to be the front part of the building on Pennsylvania Avenue Barry took particular care that we try to preserve that look by using the existing window opening by cleaning the brick front and putting a little canopy on it and lighting it up. We had to ramp it from Pennsylvania Avenue. But that side of the building is sort of similar to what it used to be. The alley side of the building on the other hand and I have photos but they are not the best photos in the world. I can pass these around. When we started construction the alley side of the building really created challenges because to be frank it looked ugly; it looked like a disaster. We knew that we would have people who traversed Main Street being able to view our building and we had a parking lot there and we still have a parking lot there and obviously we wanted to display our name prominently. We wanted people to know that is the *Westmoreland Bar Association* which of course all of us are proud of. We wanted to make a statement, yet we were also cognizant of budgetary constraints in making that statement; so we came up with the idea that we would paint it and do an EIFS treatment sort of top and bottom and change the entrance way a bit and really clean up that front end. Since that time, thank goodness we’ve had very little problems with either façade either on Pennsylvania or the alley way. We’ve had a little bit of difficulty because on the fireman side of the property we had ivy growing up the building which encroached on some windows which helped destroy some mortar and we had to clean up that side. In the process last year of doing that we thought we need to touch up the alley side because quite frankly on the lower edge of the alley side we’ve had some things occur when people would bang into the buildings. The paint was scraped we had a little problem with the entrance way. So we have it painted and then we had somebody in who told us that we might have a water problem at the top of the building. Not exactly sure where it is emanating from but it’s causing what I call it the EIFS coating is pulling away from the structure. Our first concern is what kind of damage might we have under there and is there any possibility that the top end of the building could start to break apart and fall or worse yet, hit somebody. We immediately started to look for someone who could examine that and the challenge right away was we’ve got power lines there and we knew that *West Penn Power* would have to be involved. We also know that erecting scaffolding means taking up part of the alley and then that involves the City of Greensburg. As you start to look into one of these projects to be frank there aren’t that many contractors who are interested in what they consider to be a small job. We were fortunate enough to latch onto Cavcon who is a local contractor. They were willing to do the job but they basically said to us in doing it, we want to lift that façade off and determine was the damage is underneath and repair the damage and then we are going to put that back exactly how you see it here. This is really a repair job and it will not in any way in our estimation affect the way the building now looks. We want to put it back as it is now and repair what is there and want to get started as soon as possible. Again we are not sure of the damage. We’ve gone one step further, we have a flat roof and we don’t know if the roof is a contributing factor of the water problem. We’re in the middle of having a contractor come in and coat our roof and hopefully extern the life of the flat roof and plug up any holes or any problems that might exist. The building itself, I think our Bar which is 500 members is largely pleased with the way the alley side looks and I would also submit to you the look of the alley side was also pleasing to the City of Greensburg Fire Department, if you look at their building, because it is patterned after our building and it was done subsequent to it. I always say that is a tribute to Barry; even though they didn’t hire Barry to do it. Our intent is to ask you to approve us moving forward with this contract with Cavcon so that we can get in there and figure out what is wrong and preserve the look of this thing as it is now.

Steve Gifford: Thanks for describing the project. Any questions or comments?

Barbara Ciampini: I just want to make a comment. David the reason that you are before the HARB is that your contractor came in and wasn’t as explicit as you just were with your description of the project. I heard a variety of stories but none quite as thorough as yours. In my opinion this project is more maintenance than anything else

David DeRose: My apologies, too because quite frankly and I was just discussing this in an e-mail with Tremba, I did not realize that we had to come in to be frank on a repair issue and none of the contractors we had even mentioned that which I found strange because obviously they all work in the Greensburg area.

Barbara Ciampini: Well someone from the company you hired came to us and asked about the process. I will give him credit for that, but his ability to tell your story didn’t pan out.

David DeRose: Well, this is our intent. We’re just hoping there is not a whole lot of damage underneath and we can do this job and put it back the way it is.

Steve Gifford: Any other comments or questions? I think we understand the project.

Barbara Ciampini: The only question I have is that if you take that off and there is a brick façade, this photo looks like there is brick under here, I don’t know about the top.

David DeRose: I have to defer to Barry Morris.

Barry Morris: I am an architect on East Pittsburgh Street. The area that is covered with stucco material is all wood frames. If you look at the wording, *Westmoreland Bar* *Association* that is approximately where the gutter was and there was nothing above the top of that. There is no brick behind that.

Barbara Ciampini: Just below it?

Barry Morris: Just below it.

Barbara Ciampini: Wonder if you find out your water is leaking the whole way down would you consider trying to save the brick façade?

Barry Morris: I don’t think we would be able to support it, structurally we can’t support it. When we designed it we left the roof the way it was and we put roof drains in the two corners and they are piped down inside those two piers that come down. Those are actually masonry and then covered and then painted all the brick that was on the back of the building. Most of the brick that you see there was already there.

Barbara Ciampini: Okay, I just felt compelled to ask. I can’t remember the name of the bar that used to be there.

Barry Morris: *The Players Club*, and *The William Penn Club.*

Barbara Ciampini: That’s it. Thanks and thanks for your presentation. I am glad that you’re taking care of this and you are in the downtown district so your building is important to the City.

Steve Gifford: Any other questions or comments? Can I have a motion to approve the plan to remove and restore and renovate their façade?

Barbara Ciampini: I make that motion to recommend approval of this project to City Council.

Jackie Johns: I second the motion

All were in favor.

Barbara Ciampini: If you’re going to work with scaffolding in the alley you will have to communicate with our Chief of Police. Also we have a new procedural rule for public meetings that I should have talked about earlier. We will now have everyone that is speaking sign in and other than the presenters, people that come to speak have 5 minutes at the podium.

Lou DeRose: The five minute rule would not pertain to people who apply for a hearing; it would apply to the audience.

Barb Ciampini: Correct

**Item #2**

**Address – 626 North Main Street**

**Property Owner – Premier Property Holdings LLC**

**Applicant – Premier Property Holdings LLC**

**Project – Facade**

Diane Repasky: I am the owner of *Premier Property Holdings* and the building is located at 626 North Main Street. We are doing an interior renovation. We purchased the building 4 years ago and we’ve been utilizing it ever since but we always wanted to invest some money into the interior. The façade does not really have any change that is going to occur other than a window. The window in the front will be replaced for two reasons, one reason is that they are old and need to be replaced at this point, they are fifty years old and they show a lot of wear and also it will allow us to bring the building a little to the look were going to have inside which is more of a modern look then what you see right there. We have mirrored glass there right now which I think is odd for that type of building. It will be just a tempered glass with a tint to it, this picture shows that there are three panes and of course the window to the left is just a regular old window. It will be finished the same way.

Barbara Ciampini: You’re not going to have the muntins in there?

Diane Repasky: That is correct. With aluminum frame around the sections and around the front of the window.

Barbara Ciampini: That will be replaced with that?

Diane Repasky: Correct.

Diane Repasky: It’s stemming from our interior renovation and other than some signage changes and that will be presented at the next meeting the rest of the building will remain the same.

Steve Gifford: Any other questions or comments?

Barbara Ciampini: I think it will look so much better.

Diane Repasky: The mirrored glass is quite odd.

Steve Gifford: Any other questions or comments? Can we have a motion to approve the proposal for the replacement of the window?

Marc Scurci: I make that motion.

Lynn Armbrust: I second.

All were in favor.

Barbara Ciampini: You’re not changing the size of the window are you?

Diane Repasky: No it’s the same size.

Barbara Ciampini: You don’t need a permit for this work.

**Item # 3**

**121 West Pittsburgh Street**

**Property Owner – Steve Thomas**

**Applicant – Sean Slane**

**Project – Signage**

Bob Gonze: I am here for *UISVape*s. This is a new lounge and actually they are moving the lounge from the back of the building to a store front window.

Barbara Ciampini: So we already gave approval for this same business?

Bob Gonze: Well, no because it used to be called *Vapors Café* and now it’s franchising there is going to be one here and one in Somerset.

Barbara Ciampini: There won’t be two in this building?

Bob Gonze: No. This is going to be a lounge opposed to a retail store. One side will be more a retail store to buy your smokeless cigarettes. What they would like to do is have approval for three different signage areas, one there is a blacked out light box that they do not plan on lighting they just want to have a dibond alumina board over that face and it will be black just like this one with lettering on it and that will be facing out towards the street and they would like to do a projecting sign for traffic to find their location and it’s to the right of the light box and then some window decal at street level that is shown on the right. So they are asking for approval for three signs.

Barbara Ciampini: If they ever decided to light that box sign they can only light the white.

Bob Gonze: Correct. I don’t think there is any electricity in there anymore.

Steve Gifford: The metal bracket for the projecting sign, did you suggest that or did they pick that themselves?

Bob Gonze: Our gang presented it to them and they liked it. They really did not know much about the signage. They always wanted to do a projecting sign and they’ve seen some around town.

Steve Gifford: I have a comment and I am not changing the proposal but maybe a more modern contemporary bracket one that is maybe more colonial. Maybe something in keeping with the style and the nature of the business. I think a sleek pole would be in keeping with the style for the nature of the business but if that is the bracket they want.

Bob Gonze: I’ll propose that to them if you approve the bracket assembly and the round sign hanging from it will stay the same size perimeter? So we need to look at something more contemporary?

Steve Gifford: Just a thought. I think we understand the proposal so can I have a motion to approve the request?

Lynn Armbrust: I’ll make that motion.

Jackie Johns: I’ll second.

All were in favor.

Barbara Ciampini: I make a motion to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 5:00PM