

Village of Skaneateles  
Historical Landmarks Preservation Commission  
June 19, 2013

Present: Chad Rogers, Chairman, HLPC  
Dave Birchenough, Member  
Katherine Dyson, Member  
Ted Kinder, Member  
Lisa Riordan, Member

Dennis Dundon, Clerk to the Historical Commission

Robert Eggleston, Architect, on behalf of the Applicant

At 7:57 pm Chairman Rogers opened the Public Hearing in the matter of the application of Finger Lakes Luxury Homes, Inc. for modifications to the previously approved plan for 46 East Genesee Street. Mr. Eggleston introduced himself and presented, “The history of the project – two of you were on the Board when we did the original application – we got approval for doing an addition on the back of the building that was 26 or 28 feet; two levels and then some decks and that type of thing. This is a modification; he has rethought his program. He originally started going out full-bore; 4 stories, the whole way up. Make that every possible inch. Between the Planning Board and the Historic Commission comments he scaled it back significantly. This is a slight increase from what was approved. The main difference is that what he wants to do – not that it’s a significant issue that you need to concern yourself with – the original approval was that the first floor was entirely retail. The second, third and fourth floors were a single family dwelling, with a garage and storage in the basement. Now on the street level we have a 517 SF retail, and then we have added a single family dwelling with a bedroom and a den in it. So call it 1 or 2 bedroom. From this wall back is residential; that would stay commercial. So it is a change of use, it is a change of the actual configuration.”

Mr. Eggleston continued, “So what I’ll do is I will go through what is different from what got approved, but also give you an idea what the whole program is. Where we stand is that the Planning Board in one meeting, in 15 minutes, approved the modifications. And I think they realized that it was just a slight increase from what was approved. It was a *de minimus* difference. It was all allowed uses, having 2 dwellings and 1 retail. We have the parking that meets the Zoning, and our parking requirements are less than this remaining an office would be. What we have left to do is the Zoning Board of Appeals, which will be in about another week. The variances that we are asking for are frivolous variances – it’s the lot width and the lot size which every property on this row is non-compliant because you need 3000 SF per use and you need 30 feet of frontage for commercial and residential each. So we would need a 60 foot wide building; that’s 3 townhouses basically, and we’d need all that square footage just to have 2 uses. We had no problems getting the variances last time; we don’t expect any problems getting the variances this time. The last step will be, now that we have the site plan approved by the

Planning Board, we get the variances approved and the Historic Commission acceptance, we then go on to the Critical Impact Permit with the Village Board – since it is a change of use from what was approved prior – there are 2 residences vs. 1 residence.”

Mr. Eggleston continued, “As far as what’s happening with the building there are no changes on the north façade from what was approved at the beginning of this year. The changes that are occurring is that this entrance gets pushed back so we have 2 entrances; we’ll have a side door coming into the retail and a forward door coming into the residence – which is common for both residences. One of the things I worked out with this plan is that both dwellings can get direct access to Genesee Street and direct access to the parking lot without going through someone else’s building. So the building has all its circulation on-site. We do have an elevator in here which will serve the basement, first floor, second floor and third floor. It does not serve the 4<sup>th</sup> floor. The elevator does not stick up above the ridge line of the roofs. Back to the front façade – the only other change besides pushing this back – and exactly as proposed before – is that we have this shed dormer. This was the cause of a lot of conversation last time, and we had looked at 3 very distinct renditions. We ended up with the shed; it was the most subtle and there is a history of this type of treatment. About 1/3 of the buildings do have something up on the upper level. It will be a 7 foot inside shed with a series of 5 windows across the front.”

Mr. Eggleston continued, “We do have a perspective; this is actually looking from the parking lot at M&T Bank, looking down State Street from the edge of the District. This is what you would see. One of the issues that was talked about quite a bit last time was that we are proposing 2 skylights. They are relatively low to the roof. These cannot be seen from back in the parking lot of the M&T Bank. You would have to get further back and then you would need to get your binoculars out to look at it. You do know that there is this rather obvious roof hatch on it now. And no one sees it, but currently there is a roof hatch, there is also an air conditioner that is up on the roof there. These are things that you just don’t see. The air conditioner just sits up there. There is all sorts of stuff that is up on these roof tops. I don’t mean to play it down, but all we wanted to do was to get some light into the attic; into the center of the building, and there will be some very low-profile skylights. What was part of the condition, and again what we are asking for is a conceptual approval of the massing and we will come back with the specific colors, specific details and specifications – which we will do. We are not presenting that at this time, but we will be back with those details. This is just to make sure that the massing and the uses are acceptable, and then we will work on those details. In the last approval, they requested that we bring in the specific details of those skylights, which we will do. The skylights will not be visible from the street – they are visible from straight on in an elevation, but you would have to be a long ways away and have a very high-powered telescope to be able to see it. So that’s the front – it’s identical to what was approved before.”

Member Kinder asked, “Bob, this parapet that’s in front of the dormer, is that there now?” Mr. Eggleston, “That’s the existing parapet. What we’re doing is we are putting in the flat structure. One of the problems that Mike Worden has is that the water comes off just like a residential roof into a gutter, and if that gutter doesn’t catch it, it goes on the street. What we’re having is an interior drain, we actually have a real parapet, so the sloped roof comes down and the dormer is back of by 5 feet, so that can collect the water. It drains to an interior drain that doesn’t freeze and then flows into the storm system.” Member Riordan, “Will the parapet remain the same

color – kind of silvery now?” Mr. Eggleston said, “Correct. At this point we hadn’t gotten into color and the concept had been there is no need to change any of the colors. We liked what was done for the most part and we’ll probably be looking that a little tighter as we get the specific specifications put together. The back of the building – I think the easiest thing is to look at the sections. I have kind of *poche*’-ed the sections. The light gray is the profile. This is Julie Sharpe’s building. This is the profile and you can see dashed in. We are reasonable close. We have pulled in the roof line a little bit to make a more distinct parapet than what’s there now. We are reasonably following the roof line, maintaining the same height. This has a sloped roof, a flat roof and then it goes back down. So we’re following that, respecting the parapet. On the back; the east is a bad one to look at because switched the elevator and stairs that were on west side, we switched those to the east side. Eloise Luchsinger, when we talked to her, was delighted that we had made that switch. She felt it was less invasive on her side. So what we’re looking at, this is the elevator shaft that’s coming up serving the basement, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. Then the stairway is now an enclosed stairway from the basement, 1<sup>st</sup> floor to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor and then it is an exterior stairway from the second floor deck up to the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor deck. The stairway is behind the profile of Julie Sharpe’s building. The approved addition was 8 feet shorter than what we have, but we are going out so the 1<sup>st</sup> floor is even with Julie Sharpe’s building. That was part of the original concept. The garage sets back 3 feet from Julie Sharpe’s building. This sets flush with Julie Sharpe’s building; there is a porch 8 feet deep. Eloise’s building is about 1.5 or 2 feet behind Julie’s building. So this porch just turns the corner as you see on page 5. The bedroom is in line with Julie Sharpe’s building and the porch just is out about 1.5 feet, but Eloise’s deck actually comes out 4 feet beyond. So her deck still comes out a little further than our porch. So the only difference from what was approved is we are 34 feet instead of 26 feet; we come out 8 more feet.”

Mr. Eggleston continued, “The second floor is the same except that the original approval had this as a 12 foot porch with a deck coming out beyond. Now that 12 foot is an enclosed porch or sunroom, so that’s now enclosed. On drawing 8 looking west, before that was an open porch, now it is an enclosed sunroom. But it came out the same distance and it is still about 4 feet shy of Eloise’s building on this side. And there will be a 12 foot deck/porch for the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, and the 4<sup>th</sup> floor has a 9 foot deck. So it steps back as it comes down. On the section looking west you’ll see Eloise’s building. This happens to show the dormer. There is that piece of roof, the same as on Julie’s side up against the parapet, so the roof is in the same location. This shows the profile of the dormer coming out forward, not against her roof. All of the structure that we’re proposing is behind the face of her building. So we are recessed back behind, so we don’t interfere with her porch and decks at all. Now that the stairs don’t come up along here she can’t see heads bobbing up and down going up the stairs. When you are looking at this, this is 3 feet back from the forward-most; this plane is the forward-most – that’s 8 feet back. This is 22 feet back and this porch is 22 feet back, that’s another 12 feet back, and this is back from the original and that’s just 9 feet out. So things graduate out as you come forward, similar to what they were. The only difference is this is now an enclosed porch instead of an open porch and we just have the one outside stair, the rest of the stairs are actually enclosed.”

Chairman Rogers, “You did have an outside stair before, correct?” Mr. Eggleston, “yes we did. We had an outside stair. Similar configuration; it was technically an outside porch; it wasn’t conditioned space but it was so internal that it was protected. What I like about that is it’s a little

more secure; while it is a private area used in common by the property owners, it's not a public space. It is accessible to anyone who comes down the alley and I think it's a little more secure and it doesn't offer temptation for people to go up the stairway. As was appreciated in the first application, we maintain the formal front façade and the back tends to have a little more eclectic feeling. It has a montage of different architectural elements, which I think is characteristic of the south side of these buildings. What's different from what was being done 30 or 40 years ago, is they were putting up the cheapest materials – aluminum siding, vinyl windows and non-durable materials. With most of the newer improvements made in the back we are using a cement board clapboard siding, metal railings; we are using something a little more durable which just improves the quality of what's back here but it still has that informal composition. So that's really what the differences are and the changes of what we are doing. What we are asking for is a conceptual approval and we will be back to give final colors and final details. I can assure you 95% that we will be using aluminum clad Pella windows on the back, and I'll talk to him about whether we change and upgrade the front. As a former Village resident I am embarrassed by what's on the front. It's a vinyl replacement window."

Member Riordan asked, "Can you explain the entrance again?" Mr. Eggleston, "Right now, there is about a 2.5 foot inset. We are taking this door and we are pushing it back almost 4 feet. That way we still have the sloped stone. When we remodeled the front of this building back 20 -25 years ago. We actually took the limestone that was there and we carved it out to give the ramp, because it was so close. So this will be the slope that brings us up. This will be a 4 foot flat area, so we have the retail door swinging out and then we have swinging in the residential door. So we are just pushing it back." Member Riordan said, "So the door looks pretty much the way it is. You'll have a solid panel and still the window transom." Mr. Eggleston, "Correct. One of the things I have noticed in the last couple projects I've done, is I think the residential doors we put glass in to make them light but you lose a sense of privacy. I don't know if you agree with me, Ted, but whether we do frosted glass or something like that just to keep it a little more private from the general public." Member Kinder said, "Probably not a bad idea." Mr. Eggleston, "I'm thinking in those terms. The same thing with when we did Julie Sharpe's building. It's a ¾ glass, it's nice, it's a traditional look, but you are looking in at some stairs that are going up to a private residence -- a little hard to distinguish public versus private. We'll probably think of some way of treating that; that will be a finer detail that we will present to you next time."

Member Dyson asked, "Is the biggest difference the 8 feet?" Mr. Eggleston, "The 8 feet is the biggest difference and the enclosure of this porch. That's exactly where it was before, but it's enclosed. This came out 8 feet, this came out 5 feet. This is now enclosed but it is back where it was and this is identical to where it was before." Member Dyson, "So it's the bottom two levels have come out 8 feet." Member Kinder, "But in no case are you beyond the face of Julie Sharpe's." Mr. Eggleston, "Correct. We are not beyond Julie Sharpe's building at all." Member Riordan, "So this building had air rights to this space all along?" Mr. Eggleston, "No. They illegally put windows in that they had no right, by code, to do." Member Dyson, "I'm looking at the edge of the water. It's going to be; are you biting away at that room behind by going out that 8 feet?" Mr. Eggleston, "What we are doing is we are identical to Julie Sharpe and we are 1.5 foot than..." [Multiple conversations]

Member Riordan, "How will this look visually? It looks pretty cumbersome; but will it just be kind of a charming..." Mr. Eggleston, "I think that having the recess; the recess is for two reasons – to help the turn in for the garage. Julie doesn't have a garage, Eloise does. Eloise's garage is forward of ours. She gets in there but it can't be done by the general public because they are not familiar with it. It's done by people who understand how to get in there." Member Dyson, "Visually wouldn't it look a little bit better from the back to have it not flush but stepped back, even a foot or two?" Mr. Eggleston said, "Well I hear you. I think that again, that will happen right at eye level as you are walking back here, that will step back 3 feet. The fact that this is the same but then it's just a block and then it's recessed back, I think will maintain enough visual interest so it is unique. I don't think it will look like the front where everything is all lined up. Not at all." Member Kinder, "The back is quirky. The front has rhythm." Member Dyson, "I like the quirky back." Member Riordan, "This is going to be a nice improvement; absolutely." Mr. Eggleston, "Absolutely."

Chairman Rogers asked, "Any other questions or comments from the Board?" Member Dyson said, "And there will be nothing sticking up above the fire walls. Correct?" Mr. Eggleston, "Correct." Member Riordan, "The top of the elevator shaft – that is just air space right now?" Mr. Eggleston, "What happens, and if we look at page 6 – the deck can't come all the way over because we need a certain amount of space above the last floor for servicing. Now this is a residential, not a commercial elevator – but it comes up enough in section that we couldn't bring this down and just have the deck over it. So it's just almost like a huge table if you will. Just a flat roof; we're trying to minimize it. So sitting on this porch, they can look over it. It's lower than railing height." Member Riordan said, "You're trying to fit it into the step of the other profile." Mr. Eggleston, "Sure." Member Dyson, "Where is it on this?" Mr. Eggleston, "This elevator is right here." Member Dyson, "So that's coming out and that's flat on the top, and it's going to be how big?" Mr. Eggleston, "It's 5 by 5 in rough terms." Chairman Rogers, "Bob, the elevator is this plane right here. Are we missing a line on the trim there?" Mr. Eggleston, "I think we might be, yes." Chairman Rogers, "So the deck is out proud; the deck is in front." Mr. Eggleston, "The deck is actually in front of and this roof is hidden behind right here. This is what we are missing right here, the deck is out in front and we can carry that [unintelligible] right across."

Member Kinder asked, "What do you see material on the dormer – is that going to be rubber? You won't be able to see it. It's such a low pitch." Mr. Eggleston, "Exactly; it will be a membrane roof." Member Kinder, "What about the two sloped..." Mr. Eggleston, "We'll use an architect fiberglass shingle on that which I think is similar to what's up there now. You actually can't see it from down on the street."

Chairman Rogers opened the public comment portion of the hearing, asking if anyone wished to speak for or against the application. There was no one desiring to be heard. Mr. Eggleston noted that he had a letter from Julie Sharpe, the owner of the property adjacent to the east. Chairman Rogers read the letter for the record, "We the undersigned have no objection to this application. Signed by Julie Sharpe and dated May 24, 2013." Mr. Eggleston noted that he had given a similar letter to Eloise Luchsinger, the neighbor to the west, who seemed pleased with the changes but has not submitted the letter. Member Dyson asked, "How long a project do you expect this to be?" Mr. Eggleston, "It will take a year. Knowing that the Village needed more

time to finish its project, [Mr. Moscarito] won't start until spring, fall at the earliest." Member Riordan said, "I think it is wonderful that you are not doing an outside stair. That has a little fire escape look to it."

Chairman Rogers said, "I move to close the Public Hearing." Member Birchenough seconded the motion. Upon the unanimous vote of the members present in favor of the motion, Chairman Rogers declared the Public Hearing closed.

**Chairman Rogers said, "I move that we approve the amended application submitted by Finger Lakes Luxury Homes, Inc. based on the drawings dated the 24<sup>th</sup> of May 2013, and that this approval is contingent upon the applicant completing the submission of colors and samples of materials to be used, so that appropriateness may be determined in the use of the building. Further, that a Public Hearing shall be held before the Certificate of Approval could be granted and issued so that the public can be heard as to the appropriateness of those materials." Member Birchenough seconded the motion.**

In response to a question from Member Riordan, Mr. Eggleston said, "What I am looking for is the volume of the building; the mass -- and the uses and that type of thing. The final details will be the actual materials selections and colors that you would normally pay attention to. In all honesty, when you take a large project like this, it's appropriate to break it down that way, so you are not coming in with Ben Moore colors for an addition that no one wants done the way it is done.

Upon the unanimous vote of the members present in favor of the motion, Chairman Rogers declared the motion to be approved. Mr. Eggleston thanked the Commission.

This matter was concluded at 8:31 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis Dundon  
Clerk to the Historical Landmarks Preservation Commission