

Old Pharmacy Building Plans Are Well-Received

BY BRIAN BOYLE

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Hinsdale Ave. Storefront



S. Washington St. Storefront

Hinsdale plan commissioners are so impressed with the two-story commercial building at 33-37 S. Washington St., they wish more people attended their January 12th meeting.

“I really want to say ‘Yippee!’ ” Commissioner Jan Grisemer said. “This is what people are doing with these old buildings.”

The plans show that developers can do good architecturally and still make money, commissioner Dennis Parsons said.

Commissioners unanimously recommended the plans, which go to village trustees on the zoning and public safety committee. The committee will meet at 7:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 24, at the Memorial Building, 19 E. Chicago Ave.

The project includes new storefronts, lighting, awnings and windows. It will not eliminate or mask the buildings distinguished architectural elements. In fact, the new owners propose to expose many features previously covered up or stripped down with a goal of making the building a little bit closer to what it was when it first went up, which was in 1900. They obtained Hinsdale Historical Society photographs to use as a basis for the restoration.

The historical society will keep some cabinet doors from the space that Barth Pharmacy occupied on the ground floor, said John Bell, one of the new owners and a Hinsdale resident.

And the new tenant, which will occupy both the pharmacy space and the Yankee Peddler, will keep some architectural detail from the pharmacy space, such as the original tin ceiling and the phone booth, Bell said.

Plan commissioners asked Bell about the new tenant, but he only said it was retail.

“If I told you the use, you’d know who it was,” he said.

Bell said the other ground floor tenant, Hinsdale Cleaners, will stay open during the construction. He also said the project will add a foyer with an elevator to the ground floor. About the second floor, he said the project will gut it and rehab it in the hopes of finding one or two commercial tenants.

Bell told plan commissioners that he and the other new owners are considering applying to landmark the building.

The building is located on a 3,850-square-foot lot at the southeast corner of Hinsdale Avenue and Washington Street. The site has about 70 feet of frontage along Hinsdale Avenue and 50 feet along Washington Street. The new owners do not propose expanding the building.

Since the new owners do not propose to expand the building or change the use, they probably will not have to provide any parking, although that will depend on the new tenants.

Drawings show three projected signs along Hinsdale Avenue. However, the village does not allow existing signs to be replaced with projecting signs.

Plan commissioners once recommended allowing projecting signs, but village trustees voted against it, Chairwomen Laura LaPlaca said.

New tenants will have to apply for sign permits individually.



Building Circa 1900