



# Approved

MINUTES  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
REGULAR SESSION

5:30 p.m.

Thursday, October 15, 2015  
City Council Chamber, Historic Federal Building

**Commissioners Present:** Chairperson Christina Monk (Conference Call); Commissioners David Klavitter, Joseph Rapp, Bob McDonell, John McAndrews and Emily Hilgendorf (Conference Call).

**Commissioners Excused:** None

**Commissioners Unexcused:** Commissioner John Whalen.

**Staff Members Present:** Dave Johnson.

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chairperson Rapp at 5:34 p.m.

**AFFIDAVIT OF COMPLIANCE:** Staff presented an Affidavit of Compliance verifying the meeting was being held in compliance with the Iowa Open Meetings Law.

**MINUTES:** Motion by McDonell, seconded by Klavitter, to approve the minutes of the August 20, 2015 meeting as submitted. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Klavitter, McDonell, McAndrews, Rapp, and Monk; Nay – None; Abstain – Hilgendorf.

**DESIGN REVIEW:** Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to install new siding, trim and fascia for the property at 1090 Melrose Terrace in the Langworthy Historic District.

Staff Member Johnson reviewed the Staff report. Mary Messler, 1090 Melrose Terrace, presented the application. She explained the condition of the siding is poor and it is no longer feasible or practical to repair the existing siding. She stated she has evaluated LP SmartSiding, fiber cement board, and new cedar shake siding as replacement options. Ms. Messler stated the LP SmartSiding is approximately 50% less than the cedar alternative and the fiber-cement siding is approximately 25% less than cedar.

Ms. Messler reviewed LP SmartSiding, trim and fascia noting it is an engineered wood product that will look the same when finished. She stated environmentally safe compounds are added to make the product resistant to mold, mildew and termites. Ms. Messler noted because of the tree canopy along Melrose Terrace, mold and mildew is a

problem for some building exposures.

The Commission discussed the request. They reviewed the existing material noting it is in poor condition and the proposed LP SmartSiding can achieve a similar appearance as cedar. The Commission stated the request would be consistent with the guidelines for allowing alternative materials. The Commission requested Planning Services Staff maintain a list of properties which have installed alternative siding products so the Commission can evaluate how those materials have performed over time.

The Commission reviewed the building style noting the existing cedar shake on the entire exterior is unusual for a Dutch Colonial style home. The Commission and Staff reviewed a Dutch Colonial home would traditionally have shakes in the upper gables with lap siding on the bottom half of the building. Staff explained research could not confirm whether the existing siding is original noting the oldest record of the existing siding dates to 1969. Staff Member Johnson stated it is unlikely the current siding is original, but cannot confirm the original material or design.

Ms. Messler explained at one time she believed she saw a historic image of her home and believes the bottom part of the home did have lap siding. The Commission discussed the possibility of allowing a smooth LP SmartSide lap siding based on Staff verification through historic documentation.

Motion by McDonell, seconded by Klavitter, to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness as submitted with the option to install lap siding appropriately based on historic documentation and after verification by Planning Services Staff. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Klavitter, McDonell, McAndrews, Rapp, Hilgendorf and Monk; Nay – None; Abstain – None.

**ITEMS FROM PUBLIC:**

Dubuque County Office Building Courtesy Design Review: Commissioners Monk and Hilgendorf noted their firm is involved in the proposal and excused themselves from the meeting at 6:05 p.m.

Planning Services Staff provided a summary of the request and reviewed the Commission's role in the project. He clarified the request is for a courtesy design review.

Staff member Johnson explained the site is not located in a local historic preservation district or the Historic Millwork District PUD; therefore, design review by the Commission is not and will not be mandatory. He stated the site is located in the Downtown Design Guidelines Area which requires all public projects and private projects financed in whole or in part by public funds to be reviewed and approved by the Commission. He explained current information is that the building will be privately developed, financed and later leased and the intended lessee or potential future buyers are of no consequence in the design review process. He reiterated if the developer uses any

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source of local, State or Federal funding for the construction of the project such as the HPC will need to review and approve the design. If not, HPC review or approval will not be required. Staff recommended Commissioners use Chapters 2 and 3 of the City of Dubuque Architectural Guidelines for the courtesy design review.

Tom Kelzer, Platinum Realty and Al Urbain, Al Urbain Construction Management Inc. presented the project. Mr. Kelzer and Urbain reviewed the design and location, noting they are one of a number of development teams that will be responding to a Request for Proposal issued by Dubuque County to develop the new office building. They explained the Dubuque County Board of Supervisors requested the Commission review and comment on the preliminary design concept.

Mr. Kelzer and Mr. Urbain reviewed the building materials. They explained the primary materials are red brick and faux limestone which is intended to complement the courthouse and materials in the downtown. Mr. Kelzer and Mr. Urbain reviewed the location, setback, mass and scale of the building. They stated the building will be constructed to the property and will align with other buildings along the block and neighborhood. They reviewed the mass and scale of the project noting the three story building will occupy much of the south half of the existing parking lot immediately east of the courthouse.

The Commission reviewed the project noting the building materials and design appear to be in general conformance with the City of Dubuque Architectural Guidelines. The Commission suggested increasing the general size of the windows instead of using many smaller windows next to each other. The Commission also suggested considering windows which offer more of a storefront effect on the first floor. The Commission was complimentary that the proposed building does not attempt to be historic or offer a false sense of history, while still being complimentary to the courthouse and buildings in the neighborhood.

The Commission reviewed mass and setbacks of the project. The Commission stated the height, mass, scale and setback appear to be consistent with existing patterns in the neighborhood and downtown. The Commission was complimentary that the proposed building will be subordinate to the courthouse.

The Commission discussed the location of the proposed building. Mr. Kelzer and Mr. Urbain reviewed lease options for Dubuque County noting the Spahn and Rose site was another location under consideration. Mr. Kelzer and Mr. Urbain stated the courthouse location was the best fit for Dubuque County's needs. Commissioner McDonell suggested the building be located on the north half of the existing parking lot instead of the south so views of the back of the courthouse are not blocked. The Commission discussed the Spahn and Rose site noting it may be more ideal so rear views of the courthouse and Old Jail could be preserved.

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Mr. Kelzer and Mr. Urbain explained some of the functional needs of the building noting a walkable connection to and from the courthouse is preferred making close proximity to the courthouse important. Commissioner Klavitter noted as the downtown becomes more livable and walkable, a government building will not contribute significantly to the day and evening public and pedestrian environment, suggesting the courthouse location might therefore be more preferred. He explained the Spahn and Rose site could be put to a greater, more complimentary use as intended in the Historic Millwork District. He reviewed the negative effects of introducing office uses into areas intended to be cultural and entertainment districts.

The Commission thanked Mr. Kelzer and Mr. Urbain for their time and thoughtful proposal. The Commission also expressed their gratitude to the Dubuque County Board of Supervisors for considering the Historic Preservation Commission in their design planning.

Commissioners Monk and Hilgendorf rejoined the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

**ITEMS FROM STAFF:**

By-Laws Amendment: Staff Member Johnson reviewed the amendments reflect recent updates the City of Dubuque has made to all Boards and Commissions and there were no substantive changes.

Motion by Klavitter, seconded by McDonell, to adopt the By-Laws as presented. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Klavitter, McDonell, McAndrews, Rapp, Hilgendorf and Monk; Nay – None; Abstain – None.

Removal of Commissioner: Staff Member Johnson reviewed the letter forwarded to Commissioner Whalen regarding his attendance on the Commission and his intent in continuing to serve on the Commission. Staff noted the many contributions Commissioner Whalen has made to the Commission and preservation in the community, but unfortunately he has not attended a Commission meeting since October of 2014.

The Commission questioned whether Planning Services Staff received any communication from Commissioner Whalen in response to the letter. Staff Member Johnson stated no communication has been received.

The Commission discussed Commissioner Whalen's valued contributions to the Commission and community. The Commission noted the challenges Commissioner Whalen's absence has recently created in maintaining a quorum and the Commission's ability to conduct business. Commissioner McDonell stated he has spoken to Comissioner Whalen about his attendance, Commissioner Whalen's concerns, as well as the importance of contributing to the Commission. The Commission stated it will be with great difficulty they consider the need to recommend City Council remove Commissioner Whalen; however, there is little other choice. Commissioner Klavitter reiterated

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Commissioner Whale's service, passion and enthusiasm for historic preservation and historic architecture.

Motion by McDonell, seconded by Monk, to recommend City Council remove Commissioner Whalen from the Commission. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – McDonell, McAndrews, Rapp, Hilgendorf and Monk; Nay – Klavitter; Abstain – None.

Commissioners Monk and Hilgendorf left the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

Boards and Commissions Ordinance Update: Staff Member Johnson noted the updates were made to all Boards and Commissions for the City of Dubuque and there were no substantive changes. Staff Member Johnson reviewed the updates provide standard provisions for all Boards and Commission that are uniform and consistent. He explained there are no changes to the Commission's powers, role or duties. He stated no action is required.

Lot – 100 Main Street: Staff Member Johnson stated the letter from the City Clerk which communicates City Council's unanimous decision to uphold the Commission's decision on the front balconies has been provided for the commission and no action is required. Staff Member Johnson complimented the Commission on remaining focused on the Standards for Review throughout the design review process. The Commission noted the strict adherence to the process and guidelines was beneficial to Council's review of the appeal. The Commission expressed their gratitude to City Council for their support.

NRHP District Signs: Staff reviewed the memorandum and background of the historic district entry signs. He reviewed the parameters for co-locating National Register of Historic Places identification signs on street signage. Staff Member Johnson noted Planning Services Staff is recommending the Commission consider a simple, universal sign using the National Park Service color scheme. Staff requested the Commission provide clarification on their vision for the signs location and design in order to better estimate costs.

The Commission noted the project needs to be financially feasible. The Commission clarified they only desire to locate the identification signs on the perimeter or entrances to Dubuque's National Register of Historic Places Districts. The Commission also stated they would like the signs to have consistent colors. The Commission discussed the value of including specific district names instead of a general reference to historic district. The consensus of the Commission is to design a sign which reads "Historic District" above with the name of the historic district immediately below in smaller letters. Staff noted the Commission may need to evaluate a few of the National Register District names to shorten them and make them more relatable.

Building Services Historic Preservation Enforcement Report: Staff Member Johnson reviewed the report.

**ITEMS FROM COMMISSION:**

Work Plan Update: Staff Member Johnson provided updates for the Historic Preservation Commission Work Plan. He explained the City Manager has reviewed the initial recommendations of the Commission for a Historic Preservation Economic Impact Study, and was generally supportive of the idea. Staff Member Johnson explained the City Manager felt the examples provided by the Commission are more reflective of a planning document than an economic impact study. He reviewed the City Manager is recommending the commission consider a more in-depth study which addresses specific financial and incremental impacts which can later be used to inform a Historic Preservation Plan noting the completed Arts and Economic Prosperity Study as an example.

The Commission discussed the City manager's recommendations and supported the approach. The Commission discussed financing the project and potential partnerships. The Commission noted Heritage Works recently attended a Commission meeting and indicated an interest in partnering on the economic impact study, as well as other projects.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Motion by McDonell, seconded by McAndrews, to adjourn the meeting of October 15, 2015. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Klavitter, McDonell, McAndrews, and Rapp; Nay – None; Abstain – None. The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Laura Carstens, Planning Services Manager

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Adopted