

**MINUTES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR SESSION**

5:30 p.m., Thursday, June 18, 2009
City Council Chamber, Historic Federal Building
350 W. 6th St., Dubuque

Commissioners Present: Chairperson Michael Knight; Commissioners Chris Olson, Mary Loney Bichell, Joseph Rapp, Chris Wand, and Bob McDonell.

Commissioners Excused: Commissioners John Whalen, Eli Licht, and Matthew Lundh.

Staff Members Present: Dave Johnson and Laura Carstens.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Knight at 5:30 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: In reference to the minutes of the May 21, 2009 meeting, Commissioner Wand noted he had stated at the meeting that although he is a Durrant employee, he had no involvement in the Carnegie-Stout Library Entry Plaza project and had no conflict of interest. He noted that it was Dr. Whalen who had traveled to Boston. He requested that the statement about bike racks include "as it may not be perceived as a bike rack, and therefore, be utilized." Commissioner Olson noted on Page 4, paragraph 3, the word "correct" should be replaced with the word "covered."

Motion by Wand, seconded by Olson, to approve the minutes of the May 21, 2009 with the noted corrections. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Olson, Knight, Bichell, Rapp, Wand and McDonell; Nay - None.

DESIGN REVIEW: Application of Matt Weimerskirch/MW Construction for a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a 2nd story deck and stairs for property located at 1105 Walnut Street in the W. 11th Street Historic Preservation District.

Staff Member Johnson presented the staff report. He explained the applicant would like to construct a second story deck and stairs. The deck will measure 12 feet by 10 feet and will be elevated 10 feet off the ground. He stated the applicant is requesting the deck to be located on the north side of the house and be constructed around the 3-foot by 8-foot side bay. He stated the applicant would like to remove the center window in the side bay and replace it with a new door to provide access to and from the upper level of the building. He

explained the existing stairs and landing built in 1984 on the south side of the building will be removed due to their poor condition. Staff referred the Commission to the drawings provided by the applicant. Staff noted the rail design will mimic the separate rail design enclosed with the application and not the standard rail design depicted with the elevation view of the deck and stairs. He stated the applicant is requesting the option of not using a molding piece in the rail design.

The applicant, Matt Weimerskirch, MW Construction, noted he wants to leave the landing on the south side of the house and remove the stairs only. He explained the landing would serve as a new balcony. The Commission questioned the rail design. The applicant explained he can build the railing to match the provided rail design or whatever the Commission would like to see.

Commissioner Bichell questioned the side bay. Mr. Weimerskirch said he wanted to put a door in the center of that bay on the second story. Commissioner Bichell referred to the design guidelines and felt the bay is a character-defining feature and should not be altered as proposed.

The Commission clarified the orientation of the house and bay window in relation to the streets. Commissioner Olson asked what the motivation was for the project. Mr. Weimerskirch explained the owner, Steve Cook, wanted to make these changes to reduce the stair length by moving the stairs and also to create deck space. Mr. Weimerskirch also noted the stairs on the south side of the building are in poor condition.

Commissioner Wand asked what rooms the stairs would access if they were moved to the northwest corner of the house. Mr. Weimerskirch said he believes these stairs serve the master bedroom. Commissioner Olson discussed the idea to create outdoor space for the upper floor with a deck. She stated the deck would change the appearance of the home and agreed with Commissioner Bichell that the bay window is a character-defining feature.

Commissioner Olson noted there is an approved handrail design and the trim piece would be required. Mr. Weimerskirch stated he would use the approved handrail design.

Commissioner Wand suggested if the deck were to be approved, the short fascia board on the stairs should be moved to the front of the spindles and not behind as shown in the Menard's sketch and typically found on west end decks.

Commissioner Rapp asked about the number of units on the upper floor. Mr. Weimerskirch stated he believes there is one unit.

Commissioner Olson noted the door design and material is not specified and should be. She also noted the deck will have to be painted or covered with an opaque stain. Mr. Weimerskirch stated he did not have a preference for a specific door design and would install any door the Commission approves.

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The Commission discussed alternative options for the placement of a deck and stairs. The Commission discussed with Mr. Weimerskirch the possibility of constructing the steps for the south side stairway in the opposite direction as what currently exists to lead onto a deck to be located at the rear of the property. Commissioner Bichell asked about moving the stairs to the rear of the building. Commissioner Wand stated this won't work due to the stairs accessing the master bedroom. Commissioner Wand added the top landing could be extended longer along the house and a little wider. Commissioner Olson felt the Historic Preservation Commission was split on supporting the proposal and that having the owner present would be helpful. She suggested having the owner come back in 30 days.

Staff Member Johnson confirmed for the benefit of the applicant that the location of the existing stairs as proposed was not acceptable, and the consensus of the Commission was to locate a deck towards the rear of the property. Commissioner Wand reiterated options he was comfortable with for the deck. The Commission noted the design and materials for the door should be specified. The consensus of the Commission was that a steel door with lights would be acceptable. The Commission discussed further options for locating and reconfiguring the stairs and possible deck locations and configurations on the rear of the home.

Commissioners asked Mr. Weimerskirch whether he would like to table the request to next month's meeting so the owner could be present to discuss the Historic Preservation Commission's recommendations. Mr. Weimerskirch asked to table the request.

Motion by Wand, seconded by Bichell, to table the application per the applicant's request. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Olson, Knight, Bichell, Rapp, Wand and McDonell; Nay - None.

DESIGN REVIEW: Application of Mike Muench for a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a detached garage located at 322 Jones Street in the Cathedral Historic Preservation District.

Staff Member Johnson reviewed the staff report and additional email information provided by Mr. Muench. Staff explained the applicant would like to construct a 14-foot by 28-foot detached garage to be located on the west side of the house. Staff referred the Commission to the enclosed site plan.

Staff Member Johnson stated the applicant has explained a need for the garage and due to site limitations, he is unable to locate the garage in the rear of the property. Staff explained the applicant proposes to set the garage back from the primary façade to help minimize its visual impact. Staff stated the garage roof pitch and trim will match the cross gable on the front of the building. Staff stated that similar to the house, the garage eaves will also project beyond the end walls. The roof will have asphalt shingles to match the existing house shingles and metal box-style gutters will be attached. Staff explained the applicant is requesting cement board siding with a 4-inch or 5-inch lap width to be applied horizontally

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to the garage. Staff stated small slider windows will be located on the rear and east side of the garage. He explained the carriage-style overhead garage door will have 16 divided lights and vertical and horizontal elements to add architectural interest. Staff explained the windows on the garage will be vinyl and measure approximately 2 feet by 3 feet on the side and back, and 2 feet by 2 feet on the front. Staff stated that the overhead door would be wood or composite, and the service door will be wood. Staff stated the applicant recently received a special exception to build a detached garage 0 feet from the west side property line with the condition that the Historic Preservation Commission approves the building design.

Commissioner Olson noted that the application was missing the project description form. Staff Member Johnson explained in order to better accommodate the applicant, much of the correspondence was done via email. Commissioner Olson asked Mr. Muench about the type of shingles. Mr. Muench stated he is planning to match the existing shingles on the house. Mr. Muench stated he is buying the other half of the house and plans to redo the entire house roof with an architectural shingle style. He reiterated the garage roof will match that.

Commissioner Bichell asked about the door design. Mr. Muench explained it will be as close as possible to the picture shown.

The Commission discussed the garage setback. The Commission discussed whether the garage should be located in the rear corner of the property consistent with what the architectural guidelines would suggest. The Commission noted there aren't any actual site limitations with the exception of a garden that would prohibit the garage from being located in the rear of the property. The Commission did note that locating the garage in the rear of the property would impact the applicant's ability to enjoy and use a good portion of the rear yard.

Commissioner Wand stated he was satisfied with the photo sketch. He explained he supported the proposed cement board siding with a 4" or 5" inch lap width. He stated he appreciated the thought to setback the garage from the primary façade of the house to minimize the visual impact of the garage, although he felt it would be best set back an additional 12-14 feet.

The Commission again discussed the garage location and noted the lot size would not allow the garage to be set back much further without impacting the applicant's view and use of the rear yard.

Chairperson Knight asked if there was any exterior lighting proposed on the garage. Mr. Muench said there are none.

The Commission discussed that the design of the service door is not shown, but should reflect the design of the garage door.

Commissioner Rapp questioned the cost of constructing a brick garage. Mr. Muench said the cost of a brick garage would be substantial, and he had talked to staff about the possibility of using a brick front façade. The Commission felt the garage design was appropriate as proposed.

The Commission discussed the merits of the garage setback as proposed and if it was set back further. Staff Member Carstens reviewed the zoning regulations for the district.

Motion by Olson, seconded by Bichell, to approve the project as presented by the applicant in accordance with the special exception granted by the Zoning Board of Adjustment with the following conditions: (1) All wood be painted; and (2) Follow the proposed design of the overhead garage door as closely as possible and use a similar design for the service door. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Olson, Knight, Bichell, Rapp, and McDonell; Nay – Wand; Abstain – None.

ITEMS FROM PUBLIC: None.

ITEMS FROM COMMISSION:

Boarded Up Windows and Doors Ordinance: Staff Member Johnson explained this item was placed on the regular meeting agenda as an opportunity to further discuss, provide direction, or take action on the draft Boarded-up Windows and Doors Ordinance. Staff reviewed the discussion from the work session. Staff explained the direction from the work session was to remove the vacant and abandoned buildings portion of the proposed Ordinance and replace with “and appearance.” He stated the revised section of the Ordinance would read, “Exterior security and appearance in historic and conservation districts...”

Motion by Wand, seconded by Olson, to direct Planning staff to work with Legal staff to update the revised language, bring it back to the Commission for final review, and work with the Building Department on mapping the number of commercial buildings with boarded-up windows and doors in historic districts and conservation districts. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Olson, Knight, Bichell, Rapp, Wand and McDonell; Nay - None.

Demolition by Neglect in Conservation Districts: The Commission discussed the proposed revised language for Demolition by Neglect in Conservation Districts. Staff Member Johnson noted the proposed revision to defer the determination of defects to the building official rather than the City’s designated enforcement officer is an effort to eliminate interpretation issues encountered in the enforcement process. Staff reviewed the other discussed changes. The Commission supported applying the same demolition by neglect standards in conservation districts as is applied to historic districts in an effort to improve enforcement efforts for neglected buildings in conservation districts.

Motion by Wand, seconded by Olson, to direct Planning staff to work with Legal staff to incorporate the suggested added language, applying the demolition by neglect standards

for historic districts to conservation districts, and support the procedural enforcement recommendations by the legal staff. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Olson, Knight, Bichell, Rapp, Wand and McDonell; Nay - None.

ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSION:

Library Steps: Commissioner Olson reported that after the May meeting, she had viewed the Library steps and found the work was correctly done. She noted her concerns at the May meeting were based on a site visit during construction.

Enforcement Report: Commissioners noted that Legal staff had clarified at the work session today that the Historic Preservation Commission can discuss the enforcement report, but continue to report possible violations directly to the Building Services Department on an individual basis.

This Place Matters: Commissioner Rapp asked about the status of the “This Place Matters” project. Staff Member Johnson reported that the images have been downloaded to the “This Place Matters” National Trust for Historic Preservation website. He explained the National Trust for Historic Preservation was so impressed with the participation of Dubuque’s elected and appointed officials they decided to highlight Dubuque’s efforts in a slide show presentation. Staff Member Johnson explained he is sorting out the logistical details of the project. Once that is completed the National Trust for Historic Preservation will advertise the efforts. He stated if Commissioners would like to, the draft slide show and National Trust write-up is available to be viewed on the National Trust for Historic Preservation website.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



David Johnson, Assistant Planner

Adopted—July 16, 2009