



Approved

MINUTES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR SESSION

5:30 p.m., Thursday, October 22, 2009
City Council Chamber, Historic Federal Building

Commissioners Present: Commissioners Chris Olson, David Klavitter, Mary Loney Bichell, Joseph Rapp, Peggy Stover and Bob McDonell.

Commissioners Excused: Chairperson Michael Knight and Commissioners John Whalen and Chris Wand.

Staff Members Present: Laura Carstens and David Johnson.

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

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairperson Bichell at 5:30 p.m.

The Commission welcomed new Commissioner David Klavitter.

MINUTES: The minutes of the September 17, 2009 meeting were reviewed. Commissioner Rapp noted he arrived after the vote on the Certificate of Appropriateness for 221 St. Mary's Street at approximately 5:45 p.m.

Motion by Olson, seconded by Stover, to approve the minutes as amended. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Olson, Bichell, Rapp, Stover and McDonell; Nay – None; Abstain - Klavitter.

DESIGN REVIEW: Application of Tony Pfahl, HJD Landlord LLC for a Certificate of Appropriateness to install a new sign located at 200 Main Street in the Old Main Historic Preservation District.

Commissioner Olson stated she will abstain from discussion and voting because the Pfahls have been donors to the Four Mounds Foundation.

Tony Pfahl, Hotel Julien, 200 Main Street, explained he is applying for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a sign for Caroline's Restaurant.

Staff Member Johnson presented the staff report. He stated the proposed sign will be located perpendicular to 2nd Street and projection mounted on the southeast corner of the

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building. The proposed sign will be extruded aluminum with an internally illuminated cabinet and white acrylic faces overlaid with blockout film. The proposed sign is 10'-1½" x 4'-0".

Staff Member Johnson explained the Zoning Board of Adjustment approved an application for a variance at their October 22, 2009 meeting. He explained if the proposed sign is approved by the HPC, zoning regulations would require the existing internally illuminated canopy mounted sign be removed. If the proposed sign is denied by the HPC, the applicant would be allowed to maintain the existing canopy mounted sign since changing the sign panel would result in no material change in effect.

Staff referenced drawings in the packet. He noted that the Hotel Julien is a tax credit project, and consistent with the agreement between the City and State, the sign application has been forwarded to the State Historic Preservation Office for their review. Staff Member Johnson stated the State Historic Preservation Office can consult directly with the applicant if they so choose.

In response to questions from the Commission, Mr. Pfohl explained the sign will be lit internally by use of black-out film. Rick Droleske, Lange Sign, explained the sign illumination, construction and reduced lighting. Mr. Pfohl explained the proposed sign will have less illuminated area than the existing sign.

In response to a question from Vice Chairperson Bichell, Mr. Droleske explained the lighting on the existing sign could be reduced. He noted that the new sign is smaller. Mr. Pfohl explained the new sign would be aesthetically better.

Commissioner Stover questioned the design guidelines for this new sign and the old sign. Mr. Pfohl explained the existing sign is grandfathered and can be re-used with different lettering and replacement panels. He was not sure what portions of the sign would be blacked out for the existing sign.

Commissioner Stover questioned what other options had been looked at. Mr. Pfohl explained they looked at a lot of sign options for materials, placement, and lighting. Commissioner Stover referenced the sign example in the design guidelines for the Mandolin Inn, which was small but used a spot light. Mr. Pfohl thought the building scale warranted a larger sign. Mr. Droleske explained the larger internally lit sign is intended to capture attention from the highway. Mr. Pfohl mentioned that project architect Jeff Morton suggested the sign design.

Commissioner Rapp favored the current size and placement of the existing sign over the new sign. Mr. Pfohl reviewed why he felt the replacement sign is a better option. Mr. Droleske reviewed the logo and advertising for Caroline's Restaurant, and its impact on the sign design.

Commissioner McDonell stated he preferred the existing sign but could accept the new

sign. Commissioner Stover felt a different design could be considered, but could approve the new sign. Commissioner Klavitter asked about the shape and dimensions of the restaurant logo and signs. Mr. Pfohl reviewed the sign size and logo shape.

Motion by Stover, seconded by Bichell, to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness as submitted. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Bichell, Klavitter, McDonell, and Stover; Nay – Rapp; Abstain - Olson.

ADVISORY DESIGN REVIEW: Application of the City of Dubuque for an Advisory Design Review to construct a parking ramp located at 555 Bluff Street, the northwest corner of 5th and Bluff Streets, in the Cathedral Historic Preservation District.

Marty Johnson and Justin McCarthy, Straka Johnson Architects, presented the application. Marty Johnson presented a PowerPoint of Concept C of the parking ramp design. He reviewed the design process and history and context of the site. He reviewed the existing topographical conditions as well as the ground level, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth and roof plans. Marty Johnson provided examples of the proposed building materials: window glazing, brick, stone accent, aluminum storefront window frames and awning fabric.

Staff Member Johnson noted the Commission's role is to serve as an advisory design review body to the City Council for a public works project that has implications for the Cathedral Historic District. He noted the *Architectural Guidelines for Historic Structures in the City of Dubuque* and the *Downtown Design Guidelines* provide standards for review of the project. Staff Member Johnson noted the Downtown Design Guidelines specifically address parking ramps.

The Commission supported the active use of the street front noting the street level storefront, storefront awnings, restrooms, retail, and bicycle storage. The Commission recognized the City's downtown parking needs, but felt the mass of structure impacts the vista of and from the bluffs. The Commission stated they would prefer the ramp not exceed six stories in height to reduce the ramp's visual impact and be lower than St. Raphael's Cathedral.

Commissioner Olson noted the use of vertical fenestration is similar to surroundings. She asked if the stair towers are heated. Marty Johnson said the towers will be climate controlled. He stated geothermal is being considered and will require the use of insulated glass in the towers. Commissioner Olson stated the insulated glass has a slight reflective quality that is undesirable, but noted its benefits in heating the towers in the winter and cooling them in the summer.

Commissioner Olson felt materials proposed are good, but did not like the variety of brick. She suggested using a more uniform color without the dark colors or "clinkers". Commissioner Olson noted the proposed brick is not a typical style found in Dubuque. She suggested a slightly more red brick. Marty Johnson discussed how the brick was selected.

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Vice Chairperson Bichell asked if these will be brick veneer or real bricks. Marty Johnson said the brick will be 8" modular size with either a full or reduced thickness. The brick paneled veneer attaches to a precast concrete panel that is applied to the parking structure.

Commissioner Olson asked about the materials and color of the firewall on the north side of the ramp. Marty Johnson explained the firewall will be a cast in place concrete with a limestone or buff surface color. Commissioner Olson recommended the firewall be a Portland grey color or color similar to the Indiana limestone used on the Federal Building instead of a Dubuque limestone color.

Commissioner Olson liked the street level retail use. She stated she did not like the proposed multiple building façade treatment. She stated it has an artificial appearance and gives a false sense of history. Commissioner Olson explained the proposed ramp should be more representative of the use behind it.

The Commission suggested a façade treatment that gives the appearance of one building with vertical and horizontal design elements to add interest and help break up the overall scale of the building. The Commission explained surrounding buildings would support a single façade ramp.

Commissioner Stover asked about lighting. Marty Johnson explained this is being explored and fixtures have not been determined. He said the focus is on lighting that is sympathetic to adjacent uses.

Chairperson Bichell felt the mass and scale would be better with one less story, and noted the design guidelines speak to building heights. Marty Johnson said over 80 designs were considered and the one presented is the culmination of the design process. He noted there are competing design and building criteria.

Commissioner Olson questioned the height of the stair towers. Marty Johnson explained the north tower has to accommodate elevator mechanical equipment and the other stair tower is slightly lower because it has no elevator.

Vice Chairperson Bichell said she likes the street level storefronts and canopies, and these tie into the walkable neighborhood.

Commissioner McDonell commented on the facades of other larger surrounding buildings and felt they would support a single façade for the ramp. He stated the contemporary stair towers do not mix well with the attempted historic building design.

Commissioner Stover suggested the stair towers could be made of stone or brick with a turret on top. She felt the proposed design is mixing too many styles. She felt that the

glass structures could incorporate brick. She felt the storefronts give the structure warmth but could be more complimentary to its surroundings.

Commissioners Stover and McDonell agreed that seven stories are too much, and six would be better in relation to the Mary of the Angels building.

Commissioner Rapp asked how high the ramp is in comparison to 5th Street and the bluff. Marty Johnson said the bluff is 150 feet, so the ramp would be about half that height. Commissioners and Marty Johnson reviewed images of the ramp in relation to the site context and view shed from 5th Street looking east.

Commissioner Olson reiterated the ramp would be better with six stories. Marty Johnson said the ramp has 110-115 stalls per floor, so that many stalls would be lost. Commissioners discussed the increased use of bicycles for commuting and increased downtown housing would help mitigate the loss of parking stalls. The Commission noted the architect does not determine the size of the ramp, but a six story ramp would be preferred instead of a seven story ramp.

Commissioner Klavitter asked about setback along the street in comparison to Mary of the Angels building. Marty Johnson said it is about 21 feet, and reviewed the ground floor plan. He explained glass was chosen for the tower because it would be the softest and most visually transparent material in proximity to Mary of the Angels. He noted a 12-foot easement is needed on the north side.

Commissioner Rapp asked about the retaining wall on the west side of the site. Marty Johnson said the ramp will avoid the retaining wall by three feet, and this side of the ramp will be open to meet building requirements. Commissioners asked if the three-foot area will be adequate for maintenance purposes. Marty Johnson clarified that the wall will be reinforced prior to construction of the ramp.

Commissioner Klavitter asked if underground parking was considered. Marty Johnson explained it would double the cost of the ramp and potentially undermine adjacent structures and the bluff.

Tim Horsfield, Parking Division Supervisor, explained the necessity and rationale for the glass stair towers. He stated the towers were designed to be glass primarily for safety purposes and to promote their use. He said the clear towers are form following function. Commissioner McDonell asked about safety in the rest of the ramp. Mr. Horsfield explained the ramp will have video links to the Law Enforcement Center.

Commissioners Rapp and McDonell said a single, uniform façade works better with glass towers.

Commissioner Klavitter asked how many stalls would be lost if the seven story ramp was

setback 21 feet to match Mary of the Angels setback. Marty Johnson said approximately 125 parking spaces would be lost.

Commissioners reviewed their discussion points, and identified points of agreement.

Motion by Olson, seconded by McDonell, to forward the following recommendation to City Council:

- 1) The parking ramp should not exceed six stories in height. The proposed seven story ramp obstructs the view of the bluffs as well as the view from the bluffs. A shorter ramp would be more consistent with the scale and height of surrounding buildings. The height of the proposed ramp should be incidental to the height of St. Raphael's Cathedral.
- 2) The HPC supports the proposed setback of the ramp. The proposed setback is consistent with buildings located in the downtown and promotes an active street front.
- 3) The Commission supports the street level storefront, storefront awnings, restrooms, retail, and bicycle storage. The street level uses enhance pedestrian activity and are compatible with a walkable neighborhood.
- 4) The proposed multiple building façade treatment appears artificial and gives a false sense of architecture. The façade treatment should give the appearance of one building with vertical and horizontal design elements to add interest and help break up the overall scale of the building. Surrounding buildings of similar length provide sufficient context to support a single façade ramp. The use of glass stair towers is more compatible with a single, uniform façade.

Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Bichell, Klavitter, Rapp, McDonell, Olson and Stover; Nay – None.

ITEMS FROM PUBLIC: None

Commissioner Stover left the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

ITEMS FROM COMMISSION:

550 Arlington Street: Commissioner Rapp excused himself from discussion. Staff Member Johnson explained that at the September Historic Preservation Commission meeting, the Commission requested information and discussed potential construction issues with the properties at 550 and 570 Arlington. He noted that the Commission had agreed not to pursue potential enforcement at 570 Arlington, since the project has been finished and sold to new property owners.

The Commission noted that the property at 550 Arlington Street has not been completed. The Commission noted there is an opportunity to complete the project in conformance with

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the approved COA. Staff explained the Commission directed staff to invite the property owners to the next Commission meeting to discuss the issues with the project. Staff explained that the property owners agreed to attend the November Commission meeting, and requested the Commission discuss and communicate their exact concerns with the property to allow them time to better prepare a response. Staff requested the Commission identify all potential construction issues and their expectations for appropriate repairs with regard to 550 Arlington Street.

Commissioner Olson noted that the approved Certificate of Appropriateness is different from what was constructed at 550 and 570 Arlington Street. The Commission discussed the project at 550 Arlington. The Commission noted the primary issue is the metal flashing that extends outward between the upper clapboard portion of the building and the lower limestone veneer portion of the building.

Commissioner Olson identified two concerns. The first concern relates to aesthetics, and that the project was not completed in compliance with the approved COA. The second concern is the potential for water to infiltrate and cause problems for a future resident. The Commission noted the lower limestone portion and upper clapboard portion should have been flush similar to the appearance of 590 Arlington and 1295 Highland, and what was proposed in the COA. The Commission noted limitations with the building and that there is not an easy solution to the problem. The Commission noted one option might be to build-out the walls and windows on the upper portion so it will be vertically aligned with the limestone veneer foundation.

The Commission and staff discussed essentially three alternatives: 1) The top portion of the building can be modified; 2) the lower portion of the building can be modified; or 3) the outward extending metal flashing can be modified.

Staff Member Johnson noted several historic buildings in the Jackson Park Historic District that have angled stone banding which projects outward. The Commission felt a similar approach could be an appropriate compromise to the appearance of the metal flashing currently used.

Motion by McDonell, seconded by Olson, to forward the discussion to the property owner in anticipation of the November Historic Preservation Commission meeting. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Olson, Klavitter, Bichell, and McDonell; Nay – None; Abstain – Rapp.

Boarded-Up Windows and Doors Ordinance: Staff Member Johnson explained the Commission has been working on developing a boarded-up windows and doors ordinance that would prohibit the blighting influence of boarded-up windows and doors on the front or street side of a property. He explained that he and Staff Member Carstens approached the Dubuque Main Street Board for the second time with regard to the proposed ordinance. He explained in January 2008, City staff attended the Dubuque Main Street Board Meeting and

discussed the ordinance. He explained the Dubuque Main Street Board supported the ordinance in concept, but expressed concerns. He explained since that time, City staff and the Commission have been working to address those concerns. He explained the revised ordinance was presented again to the Dubuque Main Street Board on October 7th. He explained the Dubuque Main Street Board expressed concerns that the proposed ordinance would create an undesirable financial hardship for businesses and property owners in the downtown, especially given the current economy. He explained the Board noted how recent investment in the downtown has removed many of the boarded-up windows and doors that existed when this process started. He stated the Dubuque Main Street Board suggested instead of additional regulation, strengthen existing financial programs that provide incentives for removing boarded-up windows and doors in the downtown. He explained the Board suggested providing incentives and programs which address the whole façade and not just windows and doors. He stated their final suggestion was to provide tax abatement for property owners who remove the boarded-up windows and doors.

Staff and the Commission reviewed existing financial programs that can be utilized by property owners that have boarded-up windows and doors. Staff reiterated the ordinance is designed to address those boarded-up windows and doors that have existed for long periods of time, and not those properties that have experienced recent vandalism or disaster. Staff explained that the City Building and Housing Departments currently have policies in place which establish timeframes for property owners to repair windows and doors that have suffered from vandalism, fire or other disaster.

The Commission discussed the concerns of the Dubuque Main Street Board, and noted the best option may be to hold off on the draft ordinance until the economy improves or a greater need is identified.

Motion by Rapp, seconded by Klavitter, to table the discussion of the draft Boarded-Up Windows and Doors Ordinance to the next meeting, when more Commission Members are present. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Olson, Klavitter, Bichell, Rapp, and McDonell; Nay – None.

ITEMS FROM STAFF:

Violation Reporting/Referral Procedure: Staff Member Johnson reviewed the staff memo. Staff noted in the past, by consensus, the Commission agreed that the Historic Preservation Enforcement Report will continue to be provided to the Commission; however, compliance and enforcement will be made by Commissioners as individuals directly to the Building Services Department in person, by phone, fax or through the City's website. Staff noted that since that time, the Historic Preservation Commission has continued to discuss enforcement cases, and expressed interest as making referrals as a Commission. Staff noted the Historic Preservation Ordinance allows such discussion and referrals; however, future referrals made by the Commission must be done in the form of a motion that is

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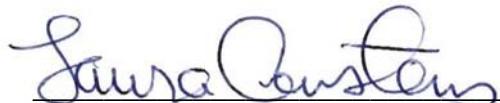
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seconded and voted upon. Staff noted the Historic Preservation Commission may still make referrals as individuals directly to the Building Services Department.

Enforcement Report Update: Staff Member Johnson noted the past format of the Historic Preservation Report has been well received by the Commission. He noted those cases with updates are indicated in bold. Staff Member Johnson reviewed the updates to the Historic Preservation Enforcement Report.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Laura Carstens, Planning Services Manager

Adopted—November 19, 2009

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