



Approved

MINUTES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR SESSION
5:30 p.m.
Thursday, July 19, 2012
City Council Chamber, Historic Federal Building

Commissioners Present: Chairperson David Klavitter; Commissioners Otto Krueger, Mary Loney Bichell, Joseph Rapp, and Bob McDonell.

Commissioners Excused: Commissioners Chris Olson, John Whalen, Chris Wand, and Mitzi Krey.

Staff Members Present: Laura Carstens and David Johnson.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Klavitter 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: Motion by Krueger, seconded by Bichell, to approve the minutes of the June 21, 2012 meeting as submitted. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Klavitter, Krueger, Bichell, Rapp, and McDonell; Nay – None.

DESIGN REVIEW: Application of Ronald Conrad / KC Investment Team LLC for a Certificate of Appropriateness to install new windows and overhead door located at 898 Jackson Street in the Historic Millwork District.

Staff Member Carstens stated Planning Services staff received a request from the property owner, Ronald Conrad, to table the application to the next meeting.

Motion by McDonell, seconded by Bichell, to table the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 898 Jackson Street to the August 17, 2012 meeting as requested by the applicant. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Klavitter, Krueger, Bichell, Rapp, and McDonell; Nay – None.

DESIGN REVIEW: Application of Robert Johnson for a Certificate of Appropriateness to rehab property located at 1079 Elm Street in the Historic Millwork District.

Staff Member Johnson reviewed the staff report. He noted the applicant has provided detailed elevation and floor plan drawings as well as a windows schedule for the project. He explained the project is a Federal Historic Tax Credit Project, and the approved Part 2 Tax Credit Application and Certification is enclosed for the Commission's review.

Robert Johnson noted the project has been in the planning stages for several years. He explained the goal is to restore the façade of the building to its original appearance. He said Angela Scherer of the National Park Service and Jack Porter of the State Historic Preservation Office have toured the building and have approved replacement windows that are almost identical to the original windows. He noted all of the original windows were evaluated and could not be salvaged. He explained they will continue to work closely with the National Park Service and State Historic Preservation Office through the construction phase of the project.

The Commission discussed the project. The Commission questioned the bridge between buildings located over Washington Street. Robert Johnson explained the goal is to retain the bridge in some form. He noted they have considered a number of treatment approaches, including simply removing the asbestos siding and exposing the iron framing. He noted they have been unsuccessful in finding a historic photograph of the bridge to date, so there is no evidence of what was on the bridge before the cladding was applied. He welcomed suggestions from the Commission and noted the bridge will be addressed in a later phase of the project. The Commission suggested Mr. Johnson consider using glass if the bridge structure were to be enclosed. Upon questioning, Robert Johnson confirmed that all the windows will be replaced and the small metal addition on the building will be removed.

Motion by Bichell, seconded by McDonell, to approve the application as submitted. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Klavitter, Krueger, Bichell, Rapp, and McDonell; Nay – None.

EDUCATION TASK FORCE

Update on Public Outreach and Education Program: Chairperson Klavitter and Commissioner McDonell explained since Commissioner Krey's departure from the Commission, no new progress has been made on the grant applications.

ITEMS FROM PUBLIC: None.

ITEMS FROM COMMISSION:

Economic Guidelines and Review Criteria: Chairperson Klavitter stated he requested the item be placed on the agenda. The Commission reviewed the demolition permit application at 1760 Jackson Street. Commissioner McDonell expressed concern over the potential conflict for an applicant hiring a realtor or appraiser to evaluate the condition of the building and a building's market value in its current condition, and the value of that building after it was repaired. The Commission agreed a better process is needed to assure more accurate and fair appraisals are provided for demolition permit requests. The Commission suggested a process which mirrors the process the mortgage industry uses for appraisals. Commissioner McDonell noted the mortgage industry selects from a list of prequalified appraisers to evaluate a property. He noted neither the bank or loan applicant controls who

is chosen; rather, it is random. The Commission discussed the importance of using real estate agents and appraisers with experience with historic properties.

The Commission discussed how properties like 1760 Jackson Street fall into such disrepair. Staff noted that the property at 1760 Jackson was unique in that it was not so much demolition by neglect as much as it was a failed rehabilitation project. The Commission discussed the challenges of applying demolition by neglect when there is no exterior evidence of neglect when the interior is suffering from neglect.

The Commission discussed whether the sale of a property can be considered a criterion for consideration when determining whether a reasonable economic return can be earned from the property. Staff Member Carstens noted the Historic Preservation Commission cannot require someone to sell their property. Staff Member Johnson noted in the case of 1760 Jackson, the real estate agent hired to assess the value of the property determined the building was not worth anything, and the lot was the only component of the property that had value. He noted in some instances, a person could argue that a lot may be considered more valuable if a building were removed, sparing a prospective buyer the cost of demolition.

The Commission discussed how to prevent interior neglect when such conditions are not visible from the outside. Staff agreed to meet with the Building, Housing, Health and Fire Departments to gain a better understanding of how such conditions might be addressed. Staff agreed to look into whether the sale of a property, regardless of its value, would constitute a reasonable economic return.

The Commission discussed the property at 1760 Jackson, noting the demolition of that property actually began well prior to Ted Stackis removal of the roof. They noted demolition of that property began as soon as the failed rehabilitation project was abandoned and the interior remained gutted and susceptible to the water damage.

The Commission discussed the Dubuque Bank & Trust buildings recently demolished on White Street. Staff Member Carstens clarified the Historic Preservation Commission was not circumvented in terms of reviewing a demolition permit for those properties. She explained the ordinance was amended during the process of expanding the Washington Neighborhood Conservation District. She explained that the request was made by Dubuque Bank & Trust to exclude that half-block containing their buildings after the Historic Preservation Commission held its public meeting.

The Commission and staff discussed approaches to assure the Historic Preservation Commission has opportunities to fulfill its duties in protecting and enhancing historic buildings in the City of Dubuque. The Commission discussed a policy or ordinance that would allow the Commission an opportunity to advise in response to a request to amend a proposed ordinance that will affect historic properties.

Electronic Agenda Packets: The Commission discussed electronic agenda packets. The Commission agreed there are advantages to both paper packets and electronic packets. The Commission noted the electronic packets are more sustainable; however, their role in design review often requires they have larger size paper and color images that allow them to clearly review plans and projects.

The Commission suggested an approach to allow some Commissioners to have electronic packets and some Commissioners to continue to receive paper copies. Staff explained that the City Council Chambers do not have internet access and therefore those Commissioners who would like electronic packets emailed to them would have to download the information on their individual laptops and bring them to Commission meetings. Staff explained the Planning Services Department will not be making paper copies the day of meetings. Commissioners would be required to share packets if they do not have theirs the day of the meeting.

By consensus the Commission agreed to have everyone receive paper packets for the next Commission meeting, but also be sent electronic packets via the City's FTP site as a trial.

ITEMS FROM STAFF:


Election of Officers: Staff Member Johnson reviewed the powers and duties of the officers. He explained all Commissioners are eligible to serve in either officer position. He noted David Klavitter is eligible to serve as chairperson for one more term, and Commissioner McDonell is eligible to serve two consecutive terms as Vice-Chairperson since he is currently fulfilling the unexpired term of Michael Knight.

Motion by McDonell, seconded by Rapp, to nominate Commissioner David Klavitter as Chairperson. Commissioner Klavitter accepted the nomination. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Klavitter, Krueger, Bichell, Rapp, and McDonell; Nay – None.

Motion by Bichell, seconded by Rapp, to nominate Commissioner Bob McDonell as Vice Chairperson. Commissioner McDonell accepted the nomination. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Klavitter, Krueger, Bichell, Rapp, and McDonell; Nay – None.

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

Respectfully submitted,



Laura Carstens, Planning Services Manager

Adopted—July 19, 2012