

MINUTES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR SESSION
5:30 p.m.
Thursday, September 20, 2012
City Council Chamber, Historic Federal Building

Commissioners Present: Commissioners Chris Olson, John Whalen, Otto Krueger, Mary Loney Bichell, Christina Monk and Julie Schlarman.

Commissioners Excused: Chairperson David Klavitter and Commissioners Joseph Rapp and Bob McDonell.

Staff Members Present: Laura Carstens and David Johnson.

CALL TO ORDER: Commissioner Olson noted that Chairperson Klavitter and Commissioner McDonell are unable to attend the meeting, so she will serve as Chairperson Pro-Tem and called the meeting to order at 5:36 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 Whalen, seconded by Krueger, to approve the minutes of the August 16, 2012 as submitted. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Olson, Whalen, and Krueger; Nay – None; Abstain – Monk and Schlarman.

Commissioner Bichell entered the meeting at 5:38 p.m.

DESIGN REVIEW: Application of Timothy Greenfield, Greenfield Development, for a Certificate of Appropriateness to install a new storefront located at 185 Main Street in the Old Main Historic Preservation District.

Staff Member Johnson reviewed the staff report, noting the proposed alterations and drawings for the project. He explained the applicant presented the concept for the new storefront at the Commission's August 16, 2012 meeting for initial comment.

Timothy Greenfield, 801 Cedar Cross Road, was present. He noted he had nothing additional to add to the staff report.

The Commission discussed the project, noting the changes in the plans appear to reflect the discussion and comments provided at the August 16th meeting.

Motion by Whalen, seconded by Bichell, to approve the request as submitted. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Olson, Whalen, Krueger, Bichell, Monk and Schlarman; Nay – None.

DESIGN REVIEW: Application of Jerry & Janel Maro for a Certificate of Appropriateness to install vinyl fish scale siding located at 1075 Walnut Street in the W. 11th Street Historic District.

Staff Member Johnson explained the applicants Jerry and Janel Maro have submitted a letter requesting the application be removed from the agenda. He explained the letter states the applicants are pursuing other material alternatives other than vinyl.

Motion by Bichell, seconded by Whalen, to receive and file the request to withdraw the application and remove the application from the docket at the applicants' written request. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Olson, Whalen, Krueger, Bichell, Monk and Schlarman; Nay – None.

DESIGN REVIEW: Application of Susan Klopfenstein for a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a detached garage located at 1134 Langworthy Street in the Langworthy District.

Staff Member Johnson reviewed the staff report, noting the proposed construction details and drawings provided by the applicant. He explained the new garage is proposed in the same location as the existing garage, which appears to have been constructed around the same time as the home. Staff Member Carstens clarified the Certificate of Appropriateness would include approval to demolish the existing garage.

Staff Member Johnson reviewed the details of the proposed garage, noting many of the features will be similar to the features seen on the home. He explained the garage is proposed to be located one-foot from the east property line, and therefore the Zoning Board of Adjustment will review and need to approve a Special Exception to allow the setback. Staff Member Johnson instructed the Commission should they approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the garage, it should be contingent on the Zoning Board of Adjustment approving a special exception to allow the garage one-foot from the east property line.

Jeff Schmidt, Top Notch Construction, Inc., 2701 Rhomberg Ave., was present to review the proposal. He responded to questions about the gable design, noting the gable will use smooth cement board siding identical to the siding used on the home and remainder of the garage. Mr. Schmidt clarified the cement board siding will have a smooth texture for all aspects of the project.

The Commission discussed the proposal, noting the new garage will be much more serviceable than the existing garage, which is in poor condition.

Motion by Krueger, seconded by Whalen, to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness as submitted, with the condition that the Zoning Board of Adjustment approves a special exception to allow the garage one-foot from the east property line. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Olson, Whalen, Krueger, Bichell, Monk and Schlarman; Nay – None.

UPDATE ON THE PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH PROGRAM: Staff Member Carstens reviewed the minutes and discussion from the September 5th Education Task Force meeting. She explained the minutes from the Task Force meeting relate to another item on the agenda under the Education Task Force regarding taking historic preservation to the next level.

She explained Planning Services Staff along with the Commission officers and City Manager have begun investigating opportunities to take the City of Dubuque Historic Preservation Program to a new level. She explained the initial vision is to have the Historic Preservation Commission serve in a greater educational and outreach role for the community rather than the regulatory role that consumes much of its time. She explained the Historic Preservation Commission could serve in a similar fashion as the Zoning Board of Adjustment where appeals to design review would be considered by the Commission. Staff Member Carstens clarified the bulk of design review would be handled by the Planning Services Staff. She explained the Historic Preservation Program has experienced many successes over the last 10 years, including the adoption of design guidelines and increased support from both the public and City Council.

Staff Member Carstens reviewed challenges to the Historic Preservation Program and explained opportunities to further the preservation program through greater outreach. She explained the Commission's time is largely consumed by design review cases, which ultimately reach very few people. She elaborated those persons' exposure to the Historic Preservation Program and Commission is mostly regulatory and negative. She explained the Commission has an opportunity to reach more people in a more positive manner through education and outreach.

She noted many of the Certificate of Appropriateness applications can be handled by City staff allowing more time for the Historic Preservation Commission to focus their efforts on training opportunities, education, certification, programming and branding the City of Dubuque Historic Preservation Program. She noted recent disappointing projects that exemplified the need for greater education and training. She noted these are issues that can have a substantial impact on historic preservation within the city. She also explained energy efficiency and sustainability is coming to the forefront of historic preservation in many communities and those are a couple of issues that deserve greater time and consideration. She noted the design guidelines used in historic districts and in the downtown are in need of consolidation and an update, which would be another type of issue tackled by the Historic Preservation Commission.

Staff and the Commission discussed how the new role of the Commission would be funded. Staff Member Carstens explained existing Historic Preservation financial incentives could be re-allocated toward funding the activities of the Commission. The Commission and staff discussed existing preservation financial incentives and opportunities for shifting funding. Staff and the Commission also discussed allocating existing Historic Preservation funds toward a residential façade grant program to improve the outward appearance of historic buildings and neighborhoods. Staff Member Carstens reiterated an education and outreach role would allow the Commission an opportunity to reach many more people and garner more support and advocacy for the Historic Preservation Program, and it would also improve customer service.

The Commission discussed a process to certify contractors in an effort to promote quality construction. The Commission noted technical colleges as opportunities for partnerships. The Commission discussed opportunities to advocate for increased penalties for people who do work without permits or do not follow proper guidelines. The Commission discussed using social media or the City of Dubuque website as a vehicle of communication for promoting the Historic Preservation Program to get information out to the public.

Staff and the Commission discussed other communities which handle historic preservation in a similar fashion. Staff Member Carstens reviewed the National Alliance of Preservation Commission's Commission Assistance and Mentoring Program (CAMP) where a Commissioner from Raleigh, North Carolina explained they do very little design review and focused much of their time on other issues. The Commission noted a suggestion was made at that CAMP to establish committees, some of which conduct design review and others focus on education and training.

The Commission discussed defining the new role of the Commission. Commissioners acknowledged refocusing their efforts could be a more efficient and effective use of their time. Staff and the Commission discussed a need for the Historic Preservation Commission to take a more involved role in preservation programs and outreach. The Commission further discussed how historic preservation funds could be better used within the historic districts, and how those programs may be structured.

The Commission questioned the timeframe for discussing the restructure of Historic Preservation Program funding. Staff clarified there is an opportunity to revise the Capital Improvement Program requests for Fiscal Year 2013; however, the program may remain the same and further discussions can be held in anticipation of Fiscal Year 2014.

By consensus, the Commission agreed to continue discussions regarding restructuring the Historic Preservation Program.

ITEMS FROM PUBLIC: None.

ITEMS FROM COMMISSION: None.

ITEMS FROM STAFF:

Statewide Historic Preservation Plan Update: Staff explained the State Historic Preservation Office is updating the Statewide Historic Preservation Plan and draft goals and strategies are being presented to the Commission for comment.

The Commission discussed the draft goals and strategies.

Motion by Whalen, seconded by Krueger, to forward communication to the State Historic Preservation Office expressing support of the draft goals and objectives of the Statewide Historic Preservation Plan. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Olson, Whalen, Krueger, Bichell, Monk and Schlarman; Nay – None.

Electronic Agenda Packets: Staff Member Johnson explained the Commission has been considering electronic agenda packets in place of paper copies which have been traditionally forwarded. He noted the past meetings' agenda packets have been forwarded in both electronic and paper form in order to allow the Commission the opportunity to determine its effectiveness. Staff Member Johnson requested a decision from the Commission on the preferred means of forwarding agenda packets in the future.

The Commission noted based on past discussion and this month's agenda packet, Commissioners Klavitter, Olson, Krueger, Monk, Schlarman and McDonell prefer electronic copies, and Commissioners Bichell, Rapp and Whalen prefer paper copies.

Preservation Awards in Dubuque: Staff Member Johnson explained the Planning Services Department submitted four Preservation Iowa Preservation at its Best Awards on behalf of the Historic Preservation Commission. He explained the call for nominations were made after the August 16th Historic Preservation meeting and the deadline for submittal was September 4th, which did not allow the Commission to forward nominations as a group. He explained the Ken Kringle award recipients were used as the nominations for the Preservation Iowa awards. Staff Member Carstens explained an additional award was submitted to recognize Dubuque's commitment to Historic Preservation, noting the Historic Preservation Program has now been in existence for 35 years.

Staff explained the Preservation Iowa 2012 Preservation at its Best Awards Ceremony will be held in Dubuque the evening of October 3rd. Staff requested the Commission block out that time in their calendars to attend the ceremony since it will be held in Dubuque this year. The Commission agreed.


Staff Member Carstens requested the Commission provide support for the evening's events. She noted Preservation Iowa is requesting a judge to help evaluate award nominations as well as a co-chair to assist in planning the evening's events. Commissioner Schlarman stated she would be interested in serving as a judge. By consensus the Commission agreed Chairperson Klavitter would make an excellent co-chair for the awards ceremony. Commissioner Bichell stated she would like to assist in a supporting role.

Enforcement Report: Staff Member Johnson explained the updates to the Historic Preservation Enforcement Report are shown in bold.

Historic Preservation CIP Projects: Staff Member Carstens explained the item has been adequately addressed throughout the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Laura Carstens, Planning Services Manager

10-18-12

Adopted