



Approved

**MINUTES**  
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**  
**REGULAR SESSION**  
5:30 p.m.  
Thursday, February 21, 2013  
City Council Chamber, Historic Federal Building

**Commissioners Present:** Chairperson David Klavitter; Commissioners Joseph Rapp, Mary Loney Bichell, Christina Monk, Otto Krueger and John Whalen.

**Commissioners Excused:** Commissioners Chris Olson, Julie Schlarman and Bob McDonell.

**Staff Members Present:** Laura Carstens, David Johnson and Rich Russell.

**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 Whalen, to approve the minutes of the January 17, 2013 meeting as submitted. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Klavitter, Whalen, Bichell, Monk and Krueger; Nay – None; Abstain – Rapp.

**DESIGN REVIEW:** Application of Brian J. Kane/Platinum Supplemental Insurance, Inc. for a permit to demolish the building located at 156 Main Street in the Old Main Historic District.

Staff Member Johnson reviewed the staff report, noting the property owner's desire to create adjacent parking for an increased number of employees. He noted the building is described as non-contributing, largely due to loss of its upper stories post 1950. He explained the criteria for the Commission's review and consideration of demolition requests in historic districts. He noted a variety of records provided for the property.

Brian Kane, agent for the property owner, introduced three other team members working with the property owner. He noted Platinum Supplemental Insurance, LLC is located in the restored Weber Paper building, and was involved with renovation of historic Star Brewery. He explained that many tenants are gone, as Platinum has expanded to all five floors of the Weber Paper building. He noted they are in agreement with the entire staff report.

Mr. Kane then addressed the criteria for consideration of the demolition request. He distributed a plan view of the existing building and adjacent parking lot, noting two-thirds of the site is already used for parking. He explained the proposal is to remove the structure and expand the existing parking lot. He indicated the brick and wrought iron screening would be extended. He noted the lack of parking for all of Platinum's employees. He explained that Platinum's business continues to grow, with good jobs. He noted the company wants to stay in the neighborhood, and be a good corporate citizen; however, the company also would like to remove the building occupying the remaining one-third of the site.

Mr. Kane reiterated that the building is small, non-historic, only one-third of the site, and lacks its upper story, so its removal will not have a detrimental effect on the surrounding buildings or the neighborhood.

Staff distributed copies of a letter expressing concerns from the neighboring building owners, Heath and Sara Hutchinson, for the Commission's consideration. Mr. Kane noted he has been in contact with the Hutchinson's about resolving their issues.

Commissioners asked about the City parking ramp's usage as it is only two blocks away. Mr. Kane reviewed the cost/benefit analysis noting demolition costs and parking lot construction costs of \$85,000 versus a substantially higher cost for long-term leased parking in a parking ramp.

Commissioners asked about the number of parking spaces gained. Mr. Kane reviewed there are 22 spaces now, and 12 more will be created with removal of the building.

Commissioners noted the existing building does fill the gaps along this block of Main Street and has an active business. Commissioners asked whether the demolition will have a substantial adverse effect on the aesthetic, historic or architectural significance and value of either property itself or the neighboring improvements in the district. Commissioners noted a parking lot does not add to the district aesthetically and the building is an established business in the downtown. Mr. Kane reiterated that their request is for the Commission to evaluate whether there is a substantial adverse historic effect. He explained the building may have value, but it has lost its historic and architectural value. He reiterated the loss of the building would not have a substantial adverse effect on the historic or architectural significance of the structure or neighborhood. Commissioners and staff reviewed previous uses in the building. Staff reviewed the process for demolition reviews in historic and conservation districts. Commissioners shared their views on the request.

Motion by Krueger, seconded by Whalen, to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness as presented, and receive and file the two communications for 156 Main Street. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Klavitter, Rapp, Monk, and Krueger; Nay – Whalen and Bichell.

**DESIGN REVIEW:** Application of John McAndrews for a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a front porch for property located at 350 W. 1<sup>st</sup> Street in the Cathedral Historic Preservation District.

Staff Member Johnson reviewed the staff report, noting the applicant would like to construct a front porch and re-roof with cedar shake shingles. He explained the miscommunication of whether a permit was needed. He noted the odd building shape and unique challenges of locating a porch at this location. He explained the revised design will be better proportioned and relate better to the building and front door. He reviewed the building materials and dimensions. Staff Member Johnson clarified the wood shake shingles will be installed on the roof of the house.

John McAndrews, 350 W. 1<sup>st</sup> Street, noted he is the third generation in this 160-year old structure. He reviewed some of the work he has done to the building, including tuckpointing and a new mahogany door. He clarified the copper will be on the roof, sides and flashing for the porch. He reviewed the porch dimensions and relation to the building.

Staff clarified no rail is needed by Code, and cedar shake shingles are historically appropriate.

Motion by Whalen, seconded by Krueger, to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness as presented. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Klavitter, Rapp, Monk, and Krueger, Whalen and Bichell; Nay – None.

**ADVISORY DESIGN REVIEW:** Request of the City of Dubuque/Ament Design for an advisory design review of the proposed public restroom facility to be located at the northwest corner of Bluff and West 5<sup>th</sup> Street in the Cathedral Historic Preservation District.

Heather Kakert, Ament Design, reviewed the proposed design for public restrooms to be built at 5<sup>th</sup> and Bluff Streets. She explained Ament Design has met with a Committee of City Staff to initially understand the needs of the facility as well as receive direction. She explained she is before the Commission requesting additional direction regarding the exterior design and location. She reviewed the community needs and goals for the project. She reviewed the design approach and the building proximity to businesses in the area. She reviewed the four design concepts being proposed.

Ms. Kakert explained the footprint occupies as little space as possible and leaves the 24-foot drive aisle. She reviewed the elevations for the various options noting sustainable features, the approach to natural light, rain water and bio swales and the necessary functional features of a public restroom facility.

Staff Member Johnson noted the Commission is advisory when reviewing public projects. He clarified the current design is only a concept and the Commission will have another opportunity for review. He explained the Historic District design guidelines do not provide much guidance for this specific type of facility. He reviewed the need for this facility, noting the building is intended to serve downtown business that would otherwise need to make substantial changes to historic buildings in order to accommodate restroom accessibility needs. He explained the design approach was to create a quality facility that complimented the historic neighborhood without attempting to appear historic.

Commissioners suggested less of an Arts and Crafts design and a design more in tune with the neighborhood's historic architecture. The Commission suggested a concept that was more like a carriage house than the train depot concept which is more tall and linear. The Commission expressed concern that the facility was a bit too tall. The Commission suggested using a redder brick more characteristic of Dubuque and surrounding buildings.

Ms. Kakert reviewed the location and elevation views with Commissioners. Commissioners suggested east side stairs to make the façade more pedestrian-friendly. Commissioners discussed overhangs and roof designs that were less Arts and Crafts style. Commissioners were in agreement with use of modern materials like glass block, but felt the materials and design of the building should blend more with surrounding architectural features and compliment buildings in the area. The Commission noted more architectural features are needed on the north elevation. Commissioners suggested a simple design similar to the brick building behind the Ryan House. Commissioners discussed height and felt glass block was a better choice than Kalwall. Commissioners recommended a limestone veneer on the exposed part of the foundation and ramp.

Building Services Manager Rich Russell clarified the public restrooms will be open year-round.

### **EDUCATION TASK FORCE**

Update on Public Outreach and Education Program: Chairperson Klavitter reviewed that Benjamin Beard has joined the Task Force. He noted the Task Force has been exploring various ways to improve outreach, education, and partnerships. He noted the Task Force selected a project for the Old House Enthusiasts group. He noted this will build on last year's workshop on researching historic properties done by Planning Staff, which will be repeated in 2013.

Chairperson Klavitter also noted the Task Force discussed bringing Donovan Rypkema to Dubuque. Staff reviewed Mr. Rypkema's background and his work on communicating the economic benefits of historic preservation and sustainability of

historic buildings. Chairperson Klavitter reviewed the City's three components of sustainability and that historic preservation hits all three.

Chairperson Klavitter also noted that the Task Force has discussed an educational or certification process for contractors, especially masonry contractors. Commissioners and staff discussed ways to identify contractors with historic preservation experience, skills, etc. as well as promoting artisans and craftsmanship. Staff Member Johnson suggested an inventory of contractors that have successfully participated in Historic Tax Credit projects. The Commission discussed giving awards to contractors and subcontractors and acknowledging recipients of those awards as a means to promote quality contractors.

Chairperson Klavitter reviewed the Task Force has discussed having freelance articles written, that later can be posted on-line and through social media to build awareness.

Minutes from Previous Meeting(s): Chairperson Klavitter noted the minutes of the January 3, 2013 and February 7, 2013 Education Task Force were included in the meeting packet.

Historic Preservation Commission Training Survey: Staff Member Johnson reviewed the training survey for the Commission and staff provided by Commissioner Schlarman. He asked Commissioners to complete the survey and return them to him or to Commissioner Schlarman.

**ITEMS FROM PUBLIC**: None.

### **ITEMS FROM COMMISSION**

Old House Enthusiasts 2013 Grant Program: Chairperson Klavitter reviewed the Task Force recommendation is for a \$1,500 Old House Enthusiasts grant application to scan City directories. Commissioner Rapp noted additional resources and suggested the 1856 Iowa Census be included in the scanning project. Staff Member Johnson noted the scanning will use optical character recognition so people will be able to use a key word search when researching their historic properties. He explained any person interested in the history of a property, person or business will be able to quickly find information. He reiterated it will be available to anyone with access to the City of Dubuque website.

Motion by Klavitter, seconded by Whalen, to apply for the Old House Enthusiasts Grant in the amount of \$1,500 to scan and digitize historic City directories with priority on the oldest directories. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Klavitter, Rapp, Monk, and Krueger, Whalen and Bichell; Nay – None.

Historic Preservation Ordinance Update: Staff Member Johnson reviewed the Historic Preservation Commission had identified the need to update the language, criteria, and

process for review of demolition requests in both historic and conservation districts. He noted Commissioner McDonnell has drafted uniform language for criteria and tested them with appraisers. He noted real estate agents will no longer be part of the process. He asked Commissioners to review and comment on the revised criteria and a combined/single process for demolition requests. Commissioners discussed the proposed criteria, and noted they are a substantial improvement.

Staff Member Johnson reviewed the proposed definition for Reasonable Economic Return He stated it is based on research from other communities but largely reflects the definition used and applied by attorney James Reap at the first NAPC CAMP.

Staff Member Johnson then reviewed the proposal to give the Commission an opportunity to comment on new and amended Conservation Districts. He explained this is the same process in place for Historic Districts.

Commissioners discussed if the definition for reasonable economic return would include the sale of the property. Staff felt it did, but will ask Legal staff to verify and attend the meeting when amendments are discussed for adoption.

Staff and Commissioners discussed the various criteria and processes for demolition review and the goals for creating a single set of criteria. The consensus of the Commission was to proceed with the amendments as proposed.

Carnegie-Stout Public Library Signs: Staff provided an update on the signs, and noted the Library has requested funds to replace the signs. Discussion followed.

#### **ITEMS FROM STAFF**

Design Guidelines Update: Staff Member Johnson provided a status report on the proposal to combine the Architectural Guidelines and Downtown Design Guidelines into one manual. He stated the update will also include adding sustainability guidelines and improving ADA guidelines. He noted the City has received a \$5,000 grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and has received five proposals. Staff Member Carstens noted the City Manager has concurred with the selection committee's recommendation and the contract will be going to City Council.

2012 CLG and NPS Annual Reports: Staff Member Johnson reviewed the CLG Annual Report, and explained the CLG Program, its benefits, and its requirements. Staff Member Carstens reviewed the CLG status also allows in-house Section 106 reviews of federally-funded housing rehab projects.

2012 Ken Kringle Award Nominations: Staff Member Johnson reviewed the awards program, the dates of Architectural Days, and the background, purpose, and criteria for the awards. He listed five projects recommended by staff. Commissioners agreed on the five recommended projects and suggested adding the Franklin School if it was

completed in 2012. Discussion followed on other possible projects, and including contractors in the nominations and recognition.

FY2014 Recommended Planning Services Department Budget: Staff Member Carstens reviewed the FY14 Recommended Planning Services Department budget. She reviewed the CIPs and noted improvement packages were not recommended for funding. She noted the HDPIP is no longer funded. She said there will be no funding in FY2016 for the Technical Assistance Program, but it is funded in the years following. She explained unused Technical Assistance Program funds will be used for the Design Guidelines update.

Building Services Historic Preservation Enforcement Report Update: Staff Member Johnson distributed the report for February 21, 2013, noting the additions are in bold type. Commissioners discussed 1589-1591 Bluff, and asked if the building's open windows on the second floor can be covered. Staff Member Johnson will ask Building Services to check on the property.

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

Respectfully submitted,

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Laura Carstens, Planning Services Manager

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Adopted