



Approved

**MINUTES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR SESSION**

5:30 p.m.

Thursday, February 20, 2014
Room 223, Historic Federal Building

Commissioners Present: Chairperson Bob McDonell; Commissioners David Klavitter, Christina Monk, John Whalen, and Joseph Rapp.

Commissioners Excused: Commissioners Chris Olson, Otto Krueger, Mary Loney Bichell, and Julie Schlarman.

Staff Members Present: David Johnson and Eric Van Buskirk

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chairperson McDonell at 5:32 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, second by Klavitter, to approve the minutes of the January 16, 2014 meeting as written. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye: McDonell, Klavitter, Monk, Whalen, Rapp; Nay – none; Abstain – none.

DESIGN REVIEW: Application of David Harris with Community Housing Initiatives for a Demolition Permit for 395 East 16th Street, located in the Washington Neighborhood Conservation District. The applicant was not present. Staff Member Johnson addressed the commission about the project, noting the absence of the applicant from the meeting, and indicating that the applicant has requested action on the item. He outlined the architectural features of the house, research on the structure's historic significance and desire of the applicant to demolish the building because it is uninhabitable. He further outlined the role of the Commission in the review of demolitions in conservation districts and the ordinance requirements for determining whether or not to grant the request.

Commissioners discussed that the historic core of the structure was present, even though the features have been modified in good taste. Commissioners questioned whether the rehabilitation of the property would be difficult and were concerned that a replacement structure would not fit with the character of the neighborhood. Commissioners asked if the Historic Preservation Commission would have design review authority over the replacement home. Staff Member Johnson addressed these concerns, indicating that the interior is in very bad shape and would require a complete

gut of the interior. He explained that if public funds were used in a project, the recently adopted Architectural Guidelines would be used.

The Commission discussed that while the structure might not be significant because of the exterior modifications, the building is significant to the vernacular fabric of the Washington Neighborhood, citing article two and four of the ordinance to support this position. Commissioners noted that the structure could be made significant again by removing the exterior alterations that make it non-contributing, and felt that the structure was able to be repaired. Commissioners inquired about options for the applicant, which were outlined by Staff Member Johnson. Commissioners asked if it was possible to see pictures of the interior to get a better understanding of the conditions.

Motion by Whalen, seconded by Klavitter, to table the Application for Demolition in a Conservation District for 395 East 16th Street. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye - McDonell, Klavitter, Whalen, Rapp, and Monk; Nay - none; Abstain - none.

ITEMS FROM THE EDUCATION TASK FORCE:

Commissioner Klavitter outlined the role of the Task Force and the changing role of the Historic Preservation Commission from regulator to educator, then indicated that the Task Force needs to be dissolved. He also commended Task Force Member Benjamin Beard for his dedication and hard work on the Task Force, and asked the Commission to look for ways that Beard could be involved. Motion by Whalen, second by Monk, to immediately dissolve the Historic Preservation Education Task Force. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – McDonell, Monk, Whalen, Rapp, Klavitter; Nay – none; Abstain – none.

ITEMS FROM PUBLIC: There were no items from the public.

ITEMS FROM STAFF:

CLG Annual Report: Staff Member Johnson outlined the Certified Local Government Annual Report, which reports on the activities of the Commission over the past year, noting it was provided to the Commission for information only, and no action was required.

FY2015 Budget: Staff Member Johnson outlined the budget for FY2015, and the budget adjustments to the current Fiscal Year. He specified that matching funds are still available in the current year for the Historic Windows Workshop with the Four Mounds Foundation, and there are some funds available for the Old Town Survey and National Register Nomination.

Ken Kringle Award Nominations: Staff Member Johnson outlined the Ken Kringle Award eligibility criteria, process and provided some possible nominations. Commissioners asked if the properties at Loras and Bluff could be considered, as well as a recognition for the preservation work done by the Schlarms or Zimmers. The Commission additionally nominated 1101 Iowa, 350 West First Street, 5th and Bluff, and 394 East 16th Street. Motion by Whalen, second by Monk, to approve the nominations. Motion carried by the

following vote: Aye – Monk, McDonell, Klavitter, Whalen, Rapp; Nay – none; Abstain – none.

Enforcement Report: Staff Member Johnson outlined the updates to the Building Services Historic Preservation Enforcement Report Update, highlighting the Sheriff's Sale of 1163 Highland Avenue. He noted no information has been updated on new ownership.

ITEMS FROM COMMISSION:

Historic Preservation Ordinance Amendments: Staff Member Johnson outlined the revisions to the Historic Preservation Ordinance, highlighted the primary changes and the necessary process for adoption by the City Council moving forward. He highlighted the two part test for demolitions, and the difficulty in determining reasonable financial return. Commissioners stressed that the changes bring objectivity to the demolition process rather than relying on subjective opinions about financial returns and rehabilitation potential. Motion by Whalen, second by Klavitter, to recommend approval of the text amendment changes to the Historic Preservation Ordinance by the City Council. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Whalen, Monk, McDonell, Klavitter, Rapp; Nay – none; Abstain – none.

Historic Windows Workshop: Staff Member Johnson outlined the Historic Windows Workshop, highlighting the secured funding for the event through various grants. The Commission discussed some of the event details and indicated that they are looking forward to the event.

Annual Work Plan: Staff Member Johnson summarized the goal setting at the January meeting and highlighted the high priority work plan items identified by the Commission. He indicated that the Commission needed to begin setting timeframes for work completion and identifying potential barriers. Commissioners asked if it was possible to set up individual meetings to discuss the areas for which each commissioner is the champion to get a better understanding of the issues and needed resources. Staff Member Johnson indicated that this was possible, and might be a better way to develop the work plan, rather than working in the full Commission meeting. Chairperson McDonell offered to help Commissioner Klavitter with the ongoing education goal, Commissioner Klavitter offered to help with Commissioner Whalen's historic district analysis project, and Commissioner Rapp offered to help Commissioner Monk with the survey and registration project. Staff Member Johnson indicated that he would schedule meetings with the Commissioners.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 6:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,