City of Cedar Rapids
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Cedar Rapids, IA 52401
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MINUTES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING,
Thursday, April 9, 2015 @ 4:30 p.m.
Training Room, City Hall, 101 First Street SE

Members Present: Amanda McKnight-Grafton Chair
Bob Grafton
Ron Mussman
Tim Oberbroeckling
Mark Stoffer Hunter
Barbara Westercamp
Caitlin Hartman
Todd McNall
Pat Cargin

Members Absent: Sam Bergus
B.J. Hobart

City Staff: Jeff Hintz, Planner
Jennifer Pratt, Community Development Director
Anne Kroll, Administrative Assistant

Call Meeting to Order

- Amanda McKnight Grafton called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.
- Nine (9) Commissioners were present with two (2) absent.

1. Public Comment

No public comment.

2. Approve Meeting Minutes

- Mark Stoffer Hunter stated that for the 423 11th St. property it states that the Salvation Army building was the old Fillmore School, but it was not.
- Barb Westercamp made a motion to approve the minutes from March 26, 2015 with the amendment. Tim Oberbroeckling seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Action Items

a) Consideration of alternative properties for final Structure Report

- Jeff Hintz stated that there was some confusion about 605 G Avenue at the last meeting. That address shows a brick building and a white building, but the white building was intended for the report and we can still move forward with that. Staff would like a few back up properties in the event that the owner is not interested. The State IEDA stated that federal monies used in the rehab of this building could not be used for residential

uses. That would include tax credits. There is a HUD prevision about noise requirements. If the Commission would like to use another property because of this that would be an option. Staff would like the Commission to rank the following addresses for a Structure Report: 1010 3rd Street SE (White Elephant) and 307 12th Avenue SE (Chrome Horse). Owner consent is needed as well.

- Todd McNall stated that the White Elephant is probably under the most stress; however, it is unknown if the new owner would apply that report. They plan to move that building to the west, take off the back part, and use some infill for an outside beer garden.
- Bob Grafton stated that the Commission should take 605 G Avenue off of the list since it would not be a good use of resources and pick one of the other two.
- Mark Stoffer Hunter stated that they all have great historical value. The property at 605 G Avenue is already moving forward and is on track with a good plan. The White Elephant has been vacant since the flood and a lot of people are concerned about it.
- Todd McNall has had discussions with the owner of the White Elephant about possible plans of moving it or tearing part of it down and just leaving the façade. The definite plan is still unknown.
- Mark Stoffer Hunter talked about the fire damage at the Chrome Horse and that the Structure Report could really help the new owner.
- Jeff Hintz stated that the Structure Reports are not binding. Whether or not the property owners are going to do it and use it, doesn't necessarily need to be the sole deciding factor.
- Todd McNall stated that the property at 307 12th Avenue SE (Chrome Horse) should be ranked first and then 1010 3rd Street SE (White Elephant).
- Jeff Hintz stated that there is a sense of urgency since the other four properties are up for bid. It would be ideal to put all five under one contract. The reports need to be finished by this time next year. A review panel will go over the bids.
- The Commission discussed other possible properties as well. Mark Stoffer Hunter will come back to the Commission with a list of other possible properties in case these two properties fall through.
- Barb Westercamp made a motion to approve 307 12th Avenue SE as the first choice for a Structure Report and 1010 3rd Street SE as the second choice. Tim Oberbroeckling seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

b) Consideration of letter of support for projects

i. Citizen request: 1017 Rockford Road SW – Rezoning from Industrial to Residential

- Jeff Hintz stated that a realtor acquired the property and her client is looking to move in and use it as a residential property. Its current zoning does not allow residential uses. They are looking to see if the Commission would support a rezoning to a residential property and a letter of support to take to the City Planning Commission.
- Mark Stoffer Hunter stated that this is an old farmhouse that the City grew around and it got sucked into the industrial zoning over time. It was used as an office for many years. This would help them bring it back to its historical purpose.
- Barb Westercamp made a motion to approve a letter of support for the rezoning of 1017 Rockford Road SW from industrial to residential. Todd McNall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ii. Commission initiated: 1119 1st Ave SE – renovations to façade and building

- Amanda McKnight Grafton stated that this is a letter of support for the renovations being completed to the façade and building of 1119 1st Ave SE.

- Jeff Hintz stated that this letter is to recognize the work being done and to show appreciation from the Commission.
- Todd McNall made a motion to approve a letter of support for the renovations to the façade and building at 1119 1st Ave SE. Tim Oberbroeckling seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. New Business

a) Local Landmark Markers/Plaques

- Jeff Hintz stated that an approved template is needed for the local landmarks as more applications will come in. Some examples were displayed for the Commission to look at. The intent of the signage is to help people recognize the local landmarks. Staff recommends that the signage be similar. Staff can email the examples to the Commission since a decision does not need to be made at this meeting. Some features of signage to keep in mind are shape, elements (logo and text), content, and affordability since the owner will have to pay for it. There is no funding source to pay for the signage. The owner can add what they want, but there needs to be some consistency between all local landmarks. The owner is technically free to do what they want including not having signage at all.
- Amanda McKnight Grafton stated that it would be nice to have the template available with a cost so that the property owners know what is available to them. They can choose to do something else if they want.
- Tim Oberbroeckling stated that a lot of property owners will want signage on the front and the back. For the Ausadie Building, the front is covered in ivy and there is nowhere to hang a sign, so it will be on a post in front of the building. A sign will be attached on the back of the building as well.
- Pat Cargin stated that the proposed Preservation Plan suggested that the Commission look into the development of a formal Heritage Tourism Program. Not only will there be local landmark buildings, but how are we going to present our community as a whole? Do we want consistency with signage we, as a City, authorize and signs that are easily visible from the sidewalk for walking tours? People will be looking for an official sign that says that the building is actually historical. Consistency needs to be seen. Getting funding for official signage should be a goal.
- The Commission discussed other signage in the area such as plaques and sidewalk markers. Staff will take pictures of current signage for the Commission to look over. Staff will send out a survey so that the Commission can vote on what they like best.

Item 5b was considered next.

5. Old Business

b) Comments on draft Historic Preservation Plan

- Jeff Hintz stated that the draft Historic Preservation Plan is intended as a high level overview of preservation. It helps set the destination of where we want to go and answers the “what” questions. It helps to establish our goals, policies, and initiatives. The Plan is not intended as a step by step roadmap. It is not intended to prescribe what route to take to approve something. Staff is looking for what is missing and any corrections that need to be made.
- Amanda McKnight Grafton stated that the Commission has been waiting to get to the details for a long time. The Commission doesn’t want to see those items get lost or put off.

- Jeff stated that there is a table of initiatives in the Plan and that is where those details come in. It does not say all of the things that will be updated in Chapter 18. The plan is to recognize there are issues with Chapter 18 and the group is aware of what they are.
- Jennifer Pratt asked if it would be more logical to say "such as". The Commission agreed.
- Bob Grafton asked when this would be implemented into the work plan.
- Jeff Hintz stated that Winter & Company will be back sometime in August to present to the City Planning Commission. They will be back to present to the City Council in September.
- Bob Grafton thinks the work plan should be updated quarterly since so many things need to be addressed. If the work plan mirrors the Preservation Plan that would work well.
- Jennifer Pratt stated that the Commission is not tied to only the activities in the work plan. Council understands that the Commission is doing work on the Preservation Plan and if things come up in there that need to be worked on right away that can be done even though it is not in the work plan. The work plan is like a budget; it is the big overview for Council so they know the types of things the Commission works on throughout the year. They do not monitor that and the Commission is not restricted to that; however, Council needs to be kept up to date.
- Todd McNall stated that some of the organization names are incorrect and someone from the City needs to go through and make sure all of the names are vetted.
- Staff will send out the comments received by FEMA, SHPO, and other reviewing agencies. The Commission can still send staff comments via email.

c) Demolition Applications UNDER REVIEW

i. 423 11th Street NW – Private Property

- Bob Grafton stated that Habitat for Humanity has done salvage at this property.
- Mark Stoffer Hunter stated that documentation has been done and release of the property is recommended.
- Mark Stoffer Hunter made a motion to release the hold and approve demolition of 423 11th Street NW. Todd McNall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

a) Preservation Showcase Subcommittee Updates

- The Commission discussed advertising such as flyers, ads, and press releases. Parking, logistics, award nominations, and catering were also discussed.
- The Commission has requested that the Mayor or a City Council member say a few words to open the awards ceremony. Staff will check on that.
- Todd McNall has a scavenger hunt prepared if the Commission would like to include that in the showcase.

6. MOA/LOA Project Updates

- Jeff Hintz stated that there is an MOA amendment that will be brought to Council later on that is an extension of the MOA that included the GIS database. The extension is until February 4, 2016. The second item on the Council agenda is an MOA extension for historic sewers. None have been identified yet. This is a time extension to keep it going in case any are found.
- Bob Grafton asked if there was a way to amend the MOA and reroute those funds elsewhere. There is not at this time.

7. Good of the Group

- Mark Stoffer Hunter stated that the Hach building is having some major renovations to the brick on the fourth floor on the river side. It is a major change on a National Register property. Is this something we should have a preview of?
- Jeff Hintz stated that unless it becomes listed as a local landmark there is nothing tied to the permitting on it.
- Amanda McKnight Grafton stated that this is an example of why we need better wording in the ordinance about partial demolitions.
- Bob Grafton asked about the Fire Station. Jeff Hintz stated that the City is working with the property owner. There is a Development Agreement and staff is working on going through that so that the property owner is aware.
- Todd McNall recommended that the Commission take a look at EnvisionCR and read through the document.
- The Commission discussed how to start up a local historic district. The Commission would like staff to bring a map that shows potential districts to the next meeting.
- Pat Cargin recognized Todd McNall for being honored with the State Architecture Award.

8. Adjournment

- Barb Westercamp made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:09 p.m. Tim Oberbroeckling seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Anne Kroll, Administrative Assistant II
Community Development