

MINUTES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING,
Thursday, August 11, 2016 @ 4:30 p.m.
Training Room, City Hall, 101 First Street SE

Members Present: Amanda McKnight-Grafton Chair
Bob Grafton
Ron Mussman
Tim Oberbroeckling
Sam Bergus
Caitlin Hartman
BJ Hobart

Members Absent: Todd McNall
Barb Westercamp
Mark Stoffer Hunter

City Staff: Jeff Hintz, Planner
Bill Micheel, Community Development Assistant Director
Seth Gunnerson, Planner
Nic Roberts, IT Director
Anne Kroll, Administrative Assistant

Call Meeting to Order

- Amanda McKnight Grafton called the meeting to order at 4:29 p.m.
- Seven (7) Commissioners were present with three (3) absent.

1. Public Comment

- There was no public comment.

2. Approve Meeting Minutes

- Tim Oberbroeckling made a motion to approve the minutes from July 14, 2016. Ron Mussman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Presentation and Update – ReZone Cedar Rapids

- Bill Micheel discussed the purpose of ReZone Cedar Rapids, the project overview, and the accomplishments to date. Seth Gunnerson discussed the zoning code analysis, community character analysis, character area map, and character area development classifications. Mr. Micheel discussed the Stakeholder Outreach Program. Mr. Gunnerson described how the Zoning Ordinance supports historic preservation as well as non-conformities and form-based codes.
- BJ Hobart asked if the vision for this will be communicated to people in the pocket areas and to the developers who complete the RFP process for redevelopment. Seth Gunnerson stated that it will and when the City disposes land through the RFP process there will be

less negotiation of the design of the building because standards will be in place. Staff will directly reach out to the neighborhoods.

- Amanda McKnight Grafton stated that 1st Avenue backs up to National Historic Districts, Local Historic Districts, and potential Historic Districts. In the 2nd and 3rd Local Historic District there were houses behind the district on 1st Avenue that were torn down and replaced by office buildings and large surface parking lots. The buildings are nice, but now there is no sound buffer and there are concerns with the landscaping requirements at that time. Is landscaping being looked at with focus groups and are residents being reached out to that live behind these potential developments? Seth Gunnerson stated that transitions between land uses are being looked at. Right now, the core area does not have strong design standards. One thing that has been proposed is within the zoning there would also be design standard areas established so that if you are in an urban area here is how you would transition from office to residential and here is how these things should be taken care of. Mr. Gunnerson stated that this is a great comment and something to keep in mind when working with the consultant.
- Amanda McKnight Grafton asked if there will be enforcement for the landscaping to make sure that people are conforming to the new Zoning Code. Seth Gunnerson stated that a lot of the enforcement is complaint driven and Building Services should be contacted with any concerns.
- Bob Grafton stated that there are concerns about off-street parking from existing shop owners in NewBo. Is this something that will be addressed in the new Zoning Code? Seth Gunnerson stated that parking requirements are being looked at. Parking requirements have been reduced in those areas and we will have to look at district wide parking planning in the future. There is still the requirement to have parking. Bill Micheel stated that staff has heard many parking concerns from business owners.
- Bob Grafton asked if a large lot is no longer useful will it be attractive to a developer to split the lot in two (2). Seth Gunnerson stated that is possible, but specifically with the Local Historic District, this Zoning Code does not touch the COA process for new construction. The HPC would work out how that is designed. Bill Micheel stated that we know that we want to preserve the Local Historic Districts so there will be less change than in other areas of the City that are urban and commercial. Form based codes will not work for all areas of the City.

4. Action Items

a) Demolition Applications

i. 714 Memorial Drive SE – Private Property

- Jeff Hintz stated that this property was built in 1912 and the area is not recommended for further study. Staff recommends immediate release. The owner plans to build new as renovation or rehabilitation is not economical. This property is in very poor condition per the City Assessor. Mr. Hintz reviewed historic significance and the demolition review process.
- Amanda McKnight asked how the other lots next to the property with the same owner are currently zoned. Jeff Hintz stated that the lot the house is on is residential along with another one and the third one is zoned commercial. The owners have not submitted any plans, but will seed the lot and let the grass grow until they decide what to do.
- Bob Grafton made a motion to approve the demolition at 714 Memorial Drive SE. Caitlin Hartman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

b) Historic Sites and Markers Project

- Jeff Hintz reviewed the guidance in the Preservation Plan and the heritage tourism components. On June 23, 2016 the HPC allocated \$6,500 towards the markers. The markers would be placed on or near to the site. The agenda packet has the historic sites list and Mr. Hintz shared maps of the sites from the list. Nic Roberts worked with Mark Stoffer Hunter to come up with the historic list. To get posts for all of the sites costs about \$12,500. Staff recently processed an amendment to the LOA contract for a community that did not allocate all of their funds, so staff accepted that money. An additional \$5,700 was received and the HPC can allocate that money to pay for all of the posts for this project, if they choose to. Staff recommends ordering the posts and finalizing the historic sites list. Mr. Hintz shared the next steps for this project.
- Amanda McKnight Grafton asked if the list is a mix of people, historic events, and architecture. Nic Roberts stated that it is a mix of those historic items.
- Tim Oberbroeckling asked about the extra \$5,700 and what the options are to spending it. Jeff Hintz stated that another community did not spend all of their money after the flood, so the State asked if Cedar Rapids could use that money towards educational opportunities. Staff accepted the money and the State really liked this project for the money to go towards.
- Amanda McKnight Grafton asked if there was still money saved for a workshop and bus tours. Jeff Hintz stated that there is money going towards bus tours, a workshop, and \$6500 going to the posts and signs for this project. There is still the \$5,700 left over that could go to this project. There are 123 sites and it will take a while to get all of the posts and markers up. If we use all the rest of the money for posts and signs then they could all be ordered and paid for before the end of November. The rest of the project can go on past that point.
- Bob Grafton asked if the Structure Reports are complete. Jeff Hintz stated that they are complete and in the budget. All of the bills have been paid except for Kirkwood, but staff generally knows how much it will be based on the previous semester. It is possible that is less and there is still money to spend. That will be sorted out soon.
- Caitlin Hartman stated that a lot of the properties on the list are private so what happens if they do not want a sign on their property? Jeff Hintz stated that it is not guaranteed that the owner will approve, so it may have to be taken off of the list.

Sam Bergus left the meeting at 5:31 p.m.

- Bob Grafton asked if there is potential funding through the State to perpetuate this further for maintenance. Jeff Hintz stated that the QR code links to a website that is connected to the City's website so that will always be there. Bob Grafton asked about the materials and if they could be stolen or damaged. Jeff Hintz stated that they are graffiti proof and the signs will be cemented into the ground. Bill Micheel stated that the funding for this is a patchwork of various funding sources, such as Linn There Done That and Neighborhood Associations, so there are other funding sources that can take care of the maintenance of this project.
- Tim Oberbroeckling made a motion to approve using the remaining \$5,700 to go to the historic sites and markers project. Ron Mussman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- Bob Grafton shared concerns that the kiosk behind the fire station has faded after only a few years and that it may not be ADA compliant and does not want to see that happen

with this project. Mr. Grafton also shared concerns with road salt getting on the signs and posts.

- Ron Mussman requested that the maps for this project be emailed to the Commission so that they can be printed out.

5. Discussion Items

a) MOA/LOA Project Updates

- Jeff Hintz stated that no historic sewers have been found so that MOA will be open until the work is done.
- Bob Grafton asked about the Structure Report for the White Elephant Building and if it will be utilized for the redevelopment and the new site. Jeff Hintz stated that it was provided as draft to the new building owners Beth and Tom DeBoom to use it for the tax credit application. All other reports were provided to the owners.

6. Announcements

- Jeff Hintz stated that the HPC has been invited to view the archeological site in conjunction with the Flood Control System by the African American Museum on August 16, 2016 at noon.

7. Adjournment

- Tim Oberbroeckling made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:54 p.m. BJ Hobart seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Anne Kroll, Administrative Assistant II
Community Development