

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2014
COUNCIL COMMITTEE ROOM**

Members Present: Chairman Smunt, Bobowiec, Gibson, Malay, Norris, Pretz, Withey (7:30)

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Russell Colby, Planning Division Manager

1. Call to order:

Chairman Smunt called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

2. Roll call:

Chairman Smunt called roll with six members present. There was a quorum.

3. Approval of the agenda:

Chairman Smunt added an item under additional business- 7b. Municipal Parking Lot Redesign.

A motion was made by Mr. Bobowiec and seconded by Ms. Malay with a unanimous voice vote to approve the addition to the agenda.

4. Presentation of minutes from January 22, 2014 meeting.

A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Bobowiec with a unanimous voice vote to approve the minutes as presented.

5. COA: 314 W. Main St. (façade improvement project)

A motion was made by Mr. Norris and seconded by Mr. Gibson to approve the COA.

Chairman Smunt asked for discussion on the motion.

Chairman Smunt noted this is a façade improvement project where the Commission had approved a design with flat roofs and the proposal now shows gable roofs. He referenced the Field Guide to American Houses section on Colonial Revival buildings and showed a page with photos of similar buildings in this architectural style. He said adding a triangle in the proposed gables adds another geometric design to what is a rectilinear design with an existing arch. He said in similar examples in the book, arches and rectangles are mixed, or triangles and rectangles

are mixed, but all three shapes are not typically used on a building. Ms. Malay and Mr. Bobowiec agreed.

Mr. Gibson said in reviewing the meeting minutes, there was a comment that the building was actually Beaux Arts style, not Colonial Revival, and therefore he thought the pediment was consistent with Beuax Arts style. Chairman Smunt said that buildings during this time period include many common elements, and a triangular shape could fit a building like this if it had a larger façade.

The Commission asked why the applicant decided to change the design. Mr. Colby said he is not sure, but he was expecting the applicant to attend to speak to this. The applicant did say he would attend the next meeting on March 5 if necessary. The Commission discussed that drainage of the flat roof could have been a concern, although it was noted an internal gutter system could be used.

Chairman Smunt called for a vote on the motion to approve the COA. There were no ayes and the motion failed.

A motion was made by Mr. Pretz and seconded by Mr. Norris with a unanimous voice vote to approve a COA for the original design dated 2/10/13. The applicant can appear before the Commission if they would like to pursue the proposal further.

7. 2014 Work Plan

The Commission reviewed a revised draft based on the discussion from 1/22/14.

Landmarking: There were no changes.

Public Education/Programs: The Commission discussed that they would prefer to focus on producing a phone app vs. developing a new printed map. Instead of a new printed map, provide more copies of the existing map in the City Hall atrium and other locations. The Commission discussed that the walking tour routes were not necessary for the phone app, and a user could simply follow their location on the map. The Commission discussed that the work plan should state that the Commission will disseminate historic district and landmark information through the Visitors Bureau, Downtown Partnership, and Chamber of Commerce. Regarding providing printed copies of the Residential Design Guidelines, the Commission discussed adding realtors in addition to architects/contractors.

Mail Order Homes Project: There were no changes.

8. Additional Business

a. Jones Law Office

Pat Pretz provided an update to the Commission on work she is doing to facilitate the relocation of the Law Office building. She presented a binder of information on the history of the building, including information on its original location and its move to the Dunham Hunt House site in 1987. Ms. Pretz said many in the community are not aware of its building or its history. She has been communicating with community members regarding the project including a number of alderman that sound supportive. She said Preservation Partners is will to assist similar to how they did with the Viking Ship project, where donations could be run through their 501C3 enabling anyone who donates to receive a tax deduction. She has also communicated with the Park District, including board member Nancy Cox, regarding the potential to relocate the building to Baker Park. She said the Board discussed the project twice and both times decided they were only interested in relocating it to Primrose Farm, but the discussions occurred in closed session so there is no further information available. She had communicated with John Collins of the Norris Foundation, which funds the maintenance of Baker Park, to try to secure their support and possible seek a grant. Ms. Pretz is also forming a “Friends of the Law Office” group and had a list of potential members from the community. She said however she is holding back on securing donations until it is known if the City and Park district officially support the project. She is meeting with City Administrator Mark Koenen next week to discuss further.

Ms. Malay said she has communicated with Holly Cabel, Director of the Park District, to provide more information about the history of the building and background on why there is interest in moving it to Baker Park vs. another location. She said the Park District has generally seen Baker Park as a passive park and they feel the building may be inconsistent with this concept. She said they are also concerned about long term maintenance and having a back up maintenance plan in place. Ms. Malay also communicated with Bob Vann in the Building Division and determined a trench foundation is not required and a that floating slab or piers could be used, depending on what the Park District prefers.

Ms. Pretz noted the existing building is not landmarked. Chairman Smunt said the Dunham Hunt property itself is landmarked, and the building is on the site, so it has the same protection as a landmark structure would, however, the law office itself is not a recognized landmark.

Chairman Smunt said at Baker Park, the building would more or less be a static object or artifact, vs. something that could be interactive at a location like Primrose. Ms. Pretz said Baker Park not only make sense from a historical perspective, but also is by far the cheapest and easiest

relocation option, since it does not involve using a state route or needing to move any overhead utility lines.

Chairman Smunt said it sounds like questions about the City's assistance and funding need to be answered and he asked for an update and the next meeting after Ms. Pretz and Ms. Malay meet with the City Administrator.

b. Municipal Parking Lot Redesign

Mr. Colby said the Commission was provided with a copy of a concept endorsed by the City Council back in 2010 for reconfiguring the parking lot to create a more usable green space along the river. He said his understanding is that at the Government Services Committee meeting on Feb. 24, the Committee will be asked to finalize the placement of different elements in the greenspace. He noted a water garden is planned to honor Jim Spear at the north end and instead of a fountain, a sculpture honoring the Hunt Family is planned at the south end of the greenspace.

The Commission discussed the potential locate the Shelby School bell tower here with the existing bell. Mr. Colby said the final location of the bell along the riverwalk has not been determined, but it may need to be relocated due to grading changes. Ms. Malay said she does not think the alderman are aware of the bell tower structure and it should be suggested that the tower and bell be combined somehow in a new display.

9. Announcements: Historic Preservation Commission meeting Wednesday, March 5, 2014 at 7:00pm in the Committee Room.

10. Adjournment:

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.