

**MINUTES  
CITY OF ST. CHARLES  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2017  
COMMITTEE ROOM**

**Members Present:** Chairman Norris, Pretz, Smunt, Krahenbuhl, Gibson, Kessler, Malay

**Members Absent:** None

**Also Present:** Russell Colby, Division Planning Manager

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**1. Call to order**

Chairman Norris called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2. Roll call**

Mr. Colby called roll with six members present. There was a quorum. Ms. Malay was present, but not in the room during roll call.

**3. Approval of Agenda**

The following items were added to the agenda.

- 10a. 218 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue
- 11c. Historical Footprint
- 11d. 217 Cedar Ave.

**4. Presentation of minutes of the November 1, 2017 meeting**

**A motion was made by Mr. Gibson and seconded by Mr. Kessler with a unanimous voice vote to approve the minutes of the November 1, 2017 meeting.**

**5. COA: 619 W. Main St. (doors)**

The proposal is for the installation of commercial style aluminum entry doors for the building behind 619 W. Main Street. Mr. Colby presented photos showing where the doors will be placed. One doors will replace an existing window and the other doors and windows will make up a new store front that replaces an existing garage door on the south elevation of the building.

This item was discussed at the last meeting and the proposal is the same as previously presented. Dr. Smunt noted they agreed the doors were appropriate for the building at the last meeting.

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

**6. COA: 215 E. Main St. (windows)**

A.J. Reineking, Public Works Manager for the City of St. Charles, was present.

Mr. Reineking noted the City owns the History Museum. The proposal is for the replacement of six windows at the museum. Four of these windows are on the south side of the building facing the parking deck. One is a west facing window on the upper level. The existing windows were last replaced in the 1970's. None of these are thought to be original. The City is proposing using a wood casement window that will be painted to match the existing trim. It will be a like-for-like replacement with no appearance changes. Dr. Smunt suggested adding screens as part of the approval.

**A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Krahenbuhl with a unanimous voice vote to approve the COA with the condition that screens be included for the operable windows.**

**7. COA: 5 S. 1<sup>st</sup> St. (sign)**

The proposal is for the replacement of an existing projecting banner sign for ZaZa's with an internally illuminated projecting sign. A photo was shown of a previous illuminated sign at this location for the Diamond Mart. The replacement sign will be similar in size and position.

Mr. Krahenbuhl asked if there are any limitations regarding lighting on Main Street. Mr. Colby said the only restriction is that the lighting cannot constitute a traffic hazard. The sign ordinance prohibits flashing or flickering bulbs. The building owner would need to determine if the proposed lighting presents any other issues to those occupying the upper floors.

**A motion was made by Mr. Krahenbuhl and seconded by Mr. Gibson with a unanimous voice vote to approve the COA as presented.**

**8. COA: 116 E. Main St. (signs)**

Vincent Campione Jr., from VC Signs and Lighting, and Chris Hoss and Doug Benavides, from Cross Country Mortgage, were present.

The proposal is for the replacement of a channel letter sign on the east wall of the building and an awning in the front along Main Street. The existing awning and frame will be removed. A new awning will be installed consisting of a one inch square tubing aluminum welded frame with black Sunbrella fabric. The graphics will be heat transferred onto the face of the awning material. The awning will be 6 ft. by 38 ft. with a 24 inch projection away from the wall.

The wall sign will consist of individual channel letters set on an aluminum raceway that will be painted the same color as the wall. The letters will be done in white plastic with white LED lighting. The wall sign reads “Cross Country....More than a Mortgage”. In addition to this verbiage, the owners have room to include their phone number and website in the area below their logo. They are considering installing an additional aluminum panel measuring 11 square feet that will consist of a white background with black letters (option 1) or displaying that same information using individual illuminated letters mounted on a raceway (option 2). The Commissioners preferred option 2.

Dr. Smunt said the previous awning used by Amlings was too contemporary for the Art Deco style of the building. He felt it was poorly designed and he would prefer something in a box style. The old awning clashed with the Downtown Design Guidelines, but it was permitted because it was grandfathered in before there was an historic district. Also, the awning should not extend above the storefront cornice line.

Mr. Kessler felt the wording on the lower part of the awning looked too busy. He noted the concern was similar to what the Commission expressed on another project down the street. The owners were open to reducing the terms.

The owner asked if there was a preference for the placement of the website and phone number on the east wall. He asked if it would look better centering the information right under the logo or lining it up along the left hand side. Dr. Smunt and Ms. Malay felt either option would work. Mr. Gibson suggested using the same size font and running the phone number and website together in one straight horizontal line.

**A motion was made by Dr. Smunt and seconded by Ms. Malay with a unanimous voice vote to approve the COA for the east elevation signage allowing for modification option 2 with the channel letters for the phone number and website in one longer horizontal line; and a box awning with the requirement that the top of the awning not extend beyond the storefront cornice and the wording along the lower edge of the awning be decreased to five words.**

**9. COA: 9 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> St. (shed)**

Michael Seaman, the owner, was present.

The proposal is for a cedar shed with a steel roof to be placed in the rear yard. The exact location where it will be placed in the yard has not yet been determined. There is an old foundation, a tree stump, and a big walnut tree in the yard. The stump and tree and would need to be removed to accommodate the shed. There is a possibility it will be located at the end of the driveway due to these obstacles in the other areas of the yard. Mr. Pretz said he preferred the shed be placed where it is not visible from the street. A suggestion was made to paint the shed the same color as the house if it does get put in a visible location.

Ms. Malay noted there was once a building in the rear and asked if the shed could be placed in that same location. Mr. Seaman said the area is too small for the size of the shed they are considering.

Mr. Gibson was concerned with it being perceived as a small garage when viewed from the street. He suggested painting or staining the shed to match the house, and putting a brown steel roof on it. He thought this would help make it less visible.

**A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Gibson with a unanimous voice vote to approve the COA contingent upon staining the shed to compliment the house and a brown roof.**

#### **10. COA: 225 W. Main St. (façade project)**

Brad Colby, from BCB Carpentry, and Ed Seaman, the building owner, were present.

Mr. B. Colby reviewed the proposed work based on the conditions outlined in their last approval. He said the stone kneewall is still going through and wrapping into the recesses of the new storefront. The biggest item they are working on is eliminating the EIFS. They are running out of time getting the project going and they would now like to use a different product due to the approaching temperature changes. All the same waterproofing will still be done, but they would like to put in sleepers to create a rain screen on two sides of the building, then side it or use a Hardie product.

Mr. B. Colby explained his plan for completing the project. The entire building will have a rain screen. He said cladding/siding is not watertight so the rain screen is a screen to stop the wind driven rain from getting behind it. The screen provides the opportunity for air to flow and dry the actual structure of the building. He said it is good for the structure. He explained this changes what they get to clad the building with. A Hardie fiber cement product is perfect for this. He intends to create recessed panels on the storefronts. The aluminum trim will be the darker color and the Hardie trim will be the lighter color. There will be panel, trim, and dimension added.

Chairman Norris asked if they considered signage, lighting or awnings. Mr. Seaman said he has not looked into any of that yet. Chairman Norris suggested planning ahead for electrical needs. Mr. Gibson said the prime location for new signage would be right above where the existing sign is now.

Dr. Smunt asked if they could center the single door with the side window. Mr. B. Colby said for ADA purposes, they do not have the room to change the design.

The Commission suggested they return with a scaled elevation of the south side with elements drawn in. The decision on continuing the freeze board on this elevation will be determined at the next meeting.

Mr. Pretz felt the change in the material and style will help the street immensely. Mr. Krahenbuhl liked the changes presented. Mr. Kessler was also in favor of the doors and trim, but said he preferred a product like versetta stone over the Hardie board. Mr. B. Colby said he would only use that on a small project.

**A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Pretz with a unanimous voice vote to approve the COA using Hardie board as the main siding contingent upon seeing a scaled drawing of the south elevation.**

**a. 218 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue**

Mr. Colby was approached by an architect who is working with the homeowner. The home is in the historic district, but they do not what style it is. The survey lists it as a ranch and the only architectural element they noticed were the frieze returns. The homeowner would like to add a porch and modify the exterior of the building in the Craftsman style. The garage will also be modified to match. They would like to know if this style would be acceptable given its existing architecture. Dr. Smunt said it is basically nondescript and liked what the homeowner is planning to do. The Commissioners were in favor of the changes and suggested the homeowner come in and present their plan.

**11. Additional Business and Observations from Commissioners or Staff**

**a. Downtown Partnership Update**

Mr. Gibson said the Downtown Partnership is re-doing the signs that were mentioned at a previous meeting. They will follow-up with the Commission when they have something new to present.

**b. Residential Façade Improvement Grant**

Mr. Colby advised the Commissioners to email him any feedback they have regarding the instruction sheet he created that explains how to apply for a grant. Mr. Krahenbuhl suggested including verbiage concerning timing issues to indicate how long the applicant has to complete a project in order to receive funding. Mr. Kessler said it should state “exterior only”. The Commissioners discussed whether or not to allow interior structural issues that impact the exterior. Mr. Colby advised they would have to consider this on a case-by-case basis. Since the program does not clearly allow for interior issues, the homeowner would need to prove the connection between the two. Ms. Malay did not want to rule it out altogether because the intent of the program is to preserve the longevity of these homes.

**c. Historical Footprint**

The item was tabled.

**d. 217 Cedar Ave.**

Chairman Norris said the City Council postponed a decision on this issue for 90 days. He said the Council has asked the Commission for assistance to work out a solution. Chairman Norris suggested the Commissioners meet on-site for a further review. Mr. Colby said he would need to advise the church what the Commission's purpose is for going into the building.

Mr. Colby said they can start looking at the building to gain a better understanding. However, they also need to start thinking about what the action is going to be. Is it going to be looking into the cost of moving it or the potential where it could be moved? Just looking at the condition of the building does not address the request from the church to have the building removed.

Mr. Pretz said the Commission doesn't have the background or resources to figure out the moving of the building. Mr. Gibson said the problem is due to a lack of understanding of the process. He said the aldermen are looking to the Commission to explain to them how this became the church's responsibility to restore the building. He said he told the alderman the church doesn't have to do anything; all they have to do is sell it to someone who will make those changes. The church said their only intention is to demolish the building and sell the property.

Mr. Pretz said if they are allowed in the building, they need someone to say it's a sound building and that it could be moved. The expert can advise if repairs can be made to save it and can it possibly be moved. He said once they answer that the Commission is done.

Ms. Malay thinks they are trying to form a subcommittee to see if the City funds having a structural engineer take a look at it. She thinks they are looking for a game plan as to how they are going to do that in the next 90 days. Chairman Norris said they could have a city inspector come in and conduct a Chapter 34 review. The inspector would be able to determine what it would take to have someone live there. Mr. Colby noted the church has not made claims the building is not structurally sound so that should not be the only focus.

Chairman Norris expressed concern that the building may deteriorate further and be compromised.

Mr. Pretz asked if there were documents showing the church's original intent in buying the property. Ms. Malay said the church did try to opt out of the historic district when the ordinance was upgraded in 1995, but they did not have the ability to do so. This would indicate they were aware of what they were aware of the regulations.

Mr. Gibson said the church was very clear with their intent to demolish the building. He suggested the Commission determine how much the property is worth with and without the building and then see if the City could help make up the difference in cost. He said this way they would be made whole with either plan. Mr. Gibson said there aren't that many more of these kinds of buildings left in the city and his only goal is to save this one.

Ms. Malay asked if it would be feasible to ask a developer to provide some assistance. Mr. Colby said they could, however the church has stated that they are not committed to selling the

property, at least not immediately. He noted the concern then is with who will maintain property in the meantime.

Mr. Gibson said it's possible a developer may say they won't touch the property because the house sits in a place that makes the property unusable. That could be keeping the church from being able to sell the property. He said this may be viewed as diminishing the return that they built up over time in hopes of helping their congregation.

Ms. Malay felt Alderman Stellato had various perspectives on this and suggested meeting with him within the next two weeks to get clearer direction as to what the Council is looking for. Mr. Gibson said they need to get in the building before meeting further to view the condition.

Mr. Kessler noted the Commissioners are volunteers adhering to the framework of the ordinance. He felt they have done their job. Mr. Gibson said there is also some education needed here. The Council had questions as to how people know they live in an historic home. Mr. Colby said this information comes up when a title search is done, but people may not pay attention to it, or know what it means.

**12. Meeting Announcements: Historic Preservation Commission meeting Wednesday, December 6, 2017 at 7:00 P.M. in the Committee Room.**

**13. Public Comment**

Ms. Malay said Camp Kane is officially open.

**14. Adjournment**

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.