

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2017
COMMITTEE ROOM**

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

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Russell Colby, Division Planning Manager

1. Call to order

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

2. Roll call

Mr. Colby called roll with seven members present. There was a quorum.

3. Approval of Agenda

Items 13 and 14a were tabled.

4. Presentation of minutes of the December 6, 2017 and December 9, 2017 meetings

A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Kessler with a unanimous voice vote to approve the minutes of the December 6, 2017 meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Krahenbuhl and seconded by Mr. Gibson with a unanimous voice vote to approve the minutes of the December 9, 2017 meeting. Ms. Malay abstained.

5. Discussion: 217 Cedar Ave. site visit

The Commission conducted a site visit of the building on December 9th. Six of the Commissioners attended. Dan Otto was also present to assess the structure and provide feedback on his findings.

Dr. Smunt said the inside was messy and neglected, but structurally, the building is very sound. He felt there was future potential for the structure in any redevelopment of the property.

Mr. Pretz said Dan Otto conducted a follow-up visit and also felt it was a sound structure. Mr. Otto provided a written document with more detailed findings. Mr. Pretz reviewed some of these findings. Chairman Norris entered the document as Exhibit 1, dated 12/20/17.

Mr. Kessler felt the building was in pretty good condition and Mr. Gibson thought it was in the proper condition to be saved. Mr. Krahenbuhl said the house should not be demolished until there is a plan for what to do with it.

Peter Vargulich was present on behalf of Baker Church and referenced the third paragraph in Mr. Otto's letter. It says the floors on the first floor are level and smooth with no signs of instability. However, Mr. Vargulich said he missed a significant warping of the floor in the front room. Mr. Otto also stated moving the house was not feasible. Mr. Vargulich asked for an explanation as to why he came to that conclusion. Mr. Pretz thought he didn't say it could not be moved; just that it may not make sense based on the stone and the type of structure it is. It may be too overwhelming. Mr. Gibson suggested they get further information from Mr. Otto concerning his comments. Dr. Smunt said they could also get an opinion from a moving company with experience moving these types of structures. Mr. Vargulich felt that was fair.

6. Zoning Variation: 314 Indiana St.

John Cebrzynski, from John Henry Homes, and Dan Marshall, the architect, was present.

The house on this property suffered a fire and was recently demolished. The new house being constructed requires a variance for a reduced rear yard set-back from 30 feet to 20 feet, and an increase to the percentage of the lot that can be covered by buildings. The request is for an additional 141 square feet of additional building area. The Zoning Board of Appeals will be reviewing the request at their upcoming meeting. The proposed house is in the historic district and would require a COA prior to construction. The information is being presented to the Commission for their support in granting the variance; and for preliminary review comments on the proposed design.

Mr. Cebrzynski said the proposed house will be going from 17 feet to 20 feet in the rear yard. The front will match the house on the right when viewed from the street. Everything else will remain the same. He said the design fits in well with the area. Mr. Krahenbuhl asked if it was possible to stay within the permitted square footage. Mr. Marshall said they could, but the rooms will be very compact and will become a marketability issue.

The Commissioners discussed the front set back and felt the proposal did not have a negative impact on the district.

A motion was made by Dr. Smunt and seconded by Ms. Malay with a unanimous voice vote to recommend that the Zoning Board of Appeals grant a variance to allow for an economically feasible residential redevelopment of the property. The concept architectural plan will contribute to the existing adjacent architecture and streetscape in the historic

district. It is the belief that these variances do not have a negative impact on the historic architectural resources and district.

Mr. Marshall said they are looking into using a smooth version of a product called LP Smartside. Mr. Cebrzynski explained how it is being used more often than cedar. The Commissioners were open to reviewing use of this type of product.

Dr. Smunt would like to see them review the architectural styles in the district and incorporate the dominant style into their design. He would also prefer to see more height on the windows by using a vertical versus a horizontal style.

Mr. Marshall asked if they would be permitted to use a premium vinyl window material. There was a discussion on various window products. Mr. Marshall said he would return with a brochure and a sample, if possible, of the final choice when they return for the COA.

7. COA: 142 S. 1st St. (sign)

Andy Gentner, franchisee for Club Pilates, was present.

The proposal is for a wall sign for Club Pilates consisting of channel letters that are illuminated through the letters and from behind.

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

8. COA: 225 W. Main St. (south elevation)

A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Kessler with a unanimous voice vote to table the item.

9. COA: 323 Illinois St. (front porch)

Erika Przbylinski, the homeowner, and Tim Nelson, the architect, were present.

Mr. Nelson explained the current porch has some structural and foundation issues that they would like to correct. The existing roof structure seems to be fine and would remain. The intent is to remove everything from the roof down. This includes the columns, deck, stairs and railings. These would be replaced with all new wood and cedar construction. The differences would be in the height of the railings and hand rail to meet the current code. Everything else will look just as it does now.

Dr. Smunt felt the new height of the railings will overpower the look of the porch and suggested keeping it at 30 inches and running a separate, detached, hand rail above it between the two columns. Mr. Kessler said he preferred to see the railing set at the required height.

The Commissioners discussed whether square columns would look better than round ones. There was no strong preference for either one. It was decided to stay with round ones, with the option to use a synthetic material.

A motion was made by Dr. Smunt and seconded by Ms. Malay with a unanimous voice vote to approve the COA with new round columns using fiberglass, FRP or any synthetic material and a 36 inch handrail as proposed.

10. COA: 619 W. Main St. (signs)

Connie Flores, the petitioner, and Eric Larson, the owner, were present.

The proposal is for a wall sign for Marquee Youth Stage made out of MDO plywood cutouts to give a three dimensional look. The best placement is on the carriage house. Current zoning only allows one freestanding sign on the street side and there is one already there. Ms. Flores said there are doors on both sides of the carriage house and if they put their sign above one of the garage doors it may be confusing as to where their entrance is. She said they may also need to include a directional arrow sign to point to the correct door with something to show it is also the handicap accessible door. Dr. Smunt suggested having an arrow pointing towards the entrance.

Ms. Malay suggested having a half glass door and putting in a window sign. This would not count towards their sign allotment. Mr. Colby noted the only limitation with window signs is that it cannot cover more than 50% of the window frame that it is in.

Mr. Krahenbuhl said the proposed sign does not fit in with the wood on the building. Ms. Flores said she might use metallic paint to give the sign a more vintage flair. She also mentioned using goose neck lighting above it. She said she considered removing the image of the spotlight from the design of the sign and adding a three dimensional spotlight to the side of the building.

Mr. Larson felt the proposed design was a bit too “cartoony” for a historic building. Ms. Flores said people who are familiar with them know this logo and would be looking for it this way. Mr. Kessler said if that is their logo, putting it on a flat sign and then mounting it on the side of the building would be the simplest way of doing this. Dr. Smunt agreed and said this would make it easier to relocate the sign when the property undergoes future redevelopment.

The Commissioners advised they need to see drawings of the proposed suggestions before making a decision.

A motion was made by Dr. Smunt and seconded by Mr. Krahenbuhl with a unanimous voice vote to table the item to the January 3, 2018 meeting.

11. COA: 619 W. Main St. (door)

Eric Larson, the owner, was present.

A COA was previously approved for the installation of an aluminum storefront door. The new proposal is for the use of a full glass out-swing door on a temporary basis. Mr. Larson plans to return in the spring with additional plans for the facade.

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

12. Preliminary Review: 21 S. 4th St.

Chairman Norris asked Vice Chairman Gibson to oversee this discussion due to a potential conflict of interest.

Zach Derrico, from Derrico Builders, was present.

Mr. Derrico would like to rehab the property. He intends to save parts of the foundation, first and second decks, and first floor walls. The proposal is for it to have a simplistic farmhouse look.

Dr. Smunt said the building has some Queen Anne elements from its past, but it does not have any original exterior architecture left. He said the house does not contribute to the surrounding architecture. The proposal is for a home in the National style.

Mr. Derrico said the proposed 4th Street side would closely resemble what is there now. He is also planning on adding a two car garage set back on the 4th Street side. Mr. Colby said that the project would require a zoning review.

Mr. Derrico will return with further details/drawings of the elevations.

13. Preliminary Review: 214 Chestnut Ave.

This item was tabled.

14. Additional Business and Observations from Commissioners or Staff

a. Plaque Program

This item was tabled.

b. Downtown Partnership Update

There were no updates. Mr. Gibson suggested having someone take over his role with the Partnership in preparation of his upcoming departure from the Commission. Ms. Malay volunteered.

15. Meeting Announcements: Historic Preservation Commission meeting Wednesday, January 3, 2018 at 7:00 P.M. in the Committee Room.

16. Public Comment

Pat Pretz said the Questers organization is hosting an event on January 11th with Anthony Rubano, project designer with the Illinois State Historic Preservation office.

17. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.