

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15, 2023 – 7:00 P.M.**

Members Present: Rice, Smunt, Kessler, Pretz, Kramer, Malay

Members Absent: Dickerson

Also Present: Rachel Hitzemann, Planner
Cindy Kaleta, Administrative Assistant

1. Call to Order

Chairman Malay called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

2. Roll Call

Ms. Hitzemann called roll with six members present. There was a quorum.

3. Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Mr. Kessler and seconded by Ms. Rice, with a unanimous voice vote to approve the agenda.

4. Presentation of minutes of the March 1st, 2023 meeting

A motion was made by Mr. Pretz and seconded by Mr. Kessler, with a voice vote to approve the Minutes of March 1, 2023.

5. Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) applications

a. 11 N 3rd St. Suite D

Caelan Hayes, I Brand Visual, presented proposal to install a single face illuminated sign.

Ms. Kramer asked for confirmation the backing shown as white in the picture will match the building color. Mr. Hayes confirmed it will match the building color.

A motion was made by Mr. Kessler and seconded by Ms. Rice with a unanimous voice vote to approve the COA as submitted.

b. 303 N 3rd Ave.

Mr. Matt Sweeney, Property Owner, presented proposal to remove the current detached garage and front addition and construct a new addition and new detached garage. The original structure will remain as part of the project.

Ms. Hitzmann advised new plans were posted changing the 2 windows on the north side second floor to be egress windows.

The Commission discussed the symmetry of the windows on the building, suggesting ideas to add more symmetry to the building and garage. Adding a false window to the garage next to the garage door. On the south elevation, a third window on the 2nd floor

and shifting the bay to the west so bay would be inline between the mud room and the kitchen and add to the symmetry of that elevation. On the west side of the house it was suggested the living room window be centered with the hip roof. Commission would also like to see a wider molding around the garage door, to match what is around the windows.

Mr. Pretz expressed concern the breezeway may not meet the requirement of being a breezeway without a zoning change and does not want the burden come back to the Commission going forward on future breezeways.

Ms. Hitzmann responded City Staff has done their due diligence and has determined it will be interpreted as a breezeway.

Neighbors voiced concern about drainage after changing the contour of the land with the new construction. Neighbors also voiced concern on safety of pulling out of the garage on to 3rd Ave., the driveway is hidden by the hill on the bridge.

Ms. Malay pointed out the Historic Commission does not have any say on drainage and safety. Ms. Hitzmann added the Engineering Department would be looking at the drainage and the City will look at the safety concerns with the driveway.

A motion was made by Mr. Kessler and seconded by Ms. Kramer to table until applicant can return with changes on the drawings.

Roll was called:

Ayes: Rice, Smunt, Kessler, Pretz, Kramer, Malay

Absent: Dickerson

Abstain:

Nays:

Motion passed 6-0

6. Grant Applications

None

7. Landmark Applications

None

8. Preliminary Reviews- Open forum for questions or presentation of preliminary concepts to the Commission for feedback

9. Other Commission Business

a. Variance for 218 Indiana St.

Brad Sailings, BDS Architecture, presented Variance request for 218 Indiana Street.

Dr. Smunt questioned the setbacks on the west, 3rd Street and the east for the property. Mr. Sailings responded it is a 5-foot setback on the west and 24-foot setback on the east.

Dr. Smunt asked what the plan was for the yard on the east. Mr. Sailings answered it is being considered for parking due to the office they are required to have 2 additional

parking spaces. They are looking to put in water permeable pavers. The goal would be to try and get 3 spaces in the space. The only access will be on Indiana Street.

Neighbor down the block had concern that the roof top deck could hold up to 30 people, where would guests park, and noise level could have a negative impact on the neighborhood. Mr. Sailings stated the roof deck estimate states 15-20 people. Dr. Smunt stated the rooftop deck is not a reason to be pro or con from the Historic Commission, it is not an architectural component and does not contribute to the style of the structure, and is not visible from the public right of way.

The neighbor also had concern about the height of the building, even though it meets the requirement he feels it's dominating the neighborhood. Dr. Smunt pointed out the neighbors building is close to 3 stories when considering the top of the gabled roof, so there is one building on the block that is similar in height.

Ms. Malay added the letter is also talking size, which is what the variance is for. When it comes to size and scale and the impact on surrounding properties in the Historic District, that is where the Historic Commission does have to look at it because it impacts the district. In this case you're asking for the variance to expand and go over and beyond what you can for the lot coverage. In the case of the other property we were discussing, it met all the requirements without a variance.

Ms. Rice added the rooftop deck is outside of the Historic Commissions scope.

Mr. Kessler stated this is a pretty good proposal for the property. This is an urban neighborhood, and there is noise there. There is a little Victorian farmhouse that will get pinched from the other buildings. Kessler stated he is generally in favor. There will be a curb cut on Indiana to allow for parking, which will lose some parking on Indiana. Based on what could be built without going for the variance versus what is being proposed, is a 9.7% difference.

Ms. Malay added she is a little concerned about the size of the building. I'm a little on the side of not being in favor of it. Even though it is a nice building, I don't want it to be the keystone of the area, I don't want to lose those buildings next to this one. Our whole effort is to preserve, and those buildings are in decent shape. The only reason this house is going down is because it is in really bad shape. I don't want this to be precedent of that neighborhood.

Mr. Pretz stated if the lot was actually 5000 sq would they need a variance? Ms. Hitzmann responded yes, they would still need a variance for the lot coverage.

A recommendation was made by Dr. Smunt to permit a non-residential use on a lot that is 4,620sf which is 92% of the minimum required of 5,000sf and allow 49.7% of building coverage which is 9.7% over the maximum allowed of 40% for an additional 448sf. The Historic Preservation Commission recommends for a zoning variance for the following reasons; the architecture of the structure being Greek Revival is an appealing design and matches some of the earlier buildings originally built in St. Charles, the building meets the zoning height requirement, and the roof deck does not contribute to architectural style and is not visible from the public right of way. Therefore, this proposed construction fits into a mixed use redevelopment of the proposed property and will have a positive impact on the neighborhood. Seconded by Mr. Pretz.

Roll was called:

Ayes: Rice, Smunt, Kramer

Absent: Dickerson

Abstain: Chair does not vote.

Nays: Kessler because of size and scale, Pretz because of size and scale

Motion passed 3-2

b. Pottawattamie Survey Review

Due to time, Pottawattamie Survey was tabled to the next meeting.

A motion was made to table the Pottawattamie Survey Review. Seconded by Mr. Pretz with a unanimous voice vote to table.

10. Public Comment

None.

11. Additional Business and Observations from Commissioners or Staff

None.

12. Meeting Announcements: Historic Preservation Commission meeting Wednesday, April 5th, 2023 at 7:00 P.M.

13. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 9:03 P.M.