

**MINUTES**  
**CITY OF ST. CHARLES**  
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**  
**WEDNESDAY, MAY 18, 2016**  
**COUNCIL COMMITTEE ROOM**

**Members Present:** Chairman Norris, Bobowiec, Gibson, Pretz, Withey

**Members Absent:** Smunt, Malay

**Also Present:** Russell Colby, Planning Division Manager  
Ellen Johnson, Planner

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**1. Call to order**

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

**2. Roll call**

Ms. Johnson called roll with five members present. There was a quorum.

**3. Approval of agenda**

Mr. Pretz added two items under Additional Business.

- d. Literature from the Nantucket Preservation Trust
- e. Façade Grant requirements

**4. Presentation of minutes of the May 4, 2016 meeting**

**A motion was made by Mr. Bobowiec and seconded by Mr. Gibson with a unanimous voice vote to approve the minutes.**

**5. COA: 550-570-590 Ohio Ave. (new townhome)**

Bob Rasmussen, the developer, was present.

Mr. Rasmussen stated this is the third townhome to be constructed in Heritage Square, and is nearly identical to the first building that was approved. He made some slight modifications to the second building to break up the look a bit.

Mr. Pretz asked if the buildings might look too mundane without some additional differences between them. Mr. Rasmussen said he used different colored brick and siding to differentiate them; and the landscaping is also helping make a difference in the appearance of the buildings. Buildings 1 and 3 are also on opposite sides of the block.

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

**6. COA: 201 S. 2rd St. (sign)**

Brian McCarthy, petitioner, was present.

Mr. McCarthy said his business is located in the rear section of the building near the warehouse door. He would like to install a 9 ft. by 2 ½ ft. sign above the garage door that would read “BMW Service & Repair” along with their phone number. His plan is to attach a vinyl banner to plywood and encase it in plexiglass. Since he is renting the space, he is trying to do this in the most economical way possible.

Chairman Norris noted plywood is a porous material and might break down over time. Mr. McCarthy is hoping the vinyl encased in plexiglass will prevent that from happening. Mr. Bobowiec asked if they could have their sign painted directly onto the plexiglass. Mr. McCarthy wasn't aware that was an option, but he thought it was a great idea.

Mr. Gibson said there might be some problems with moisture getting inside if the banner is enclosed as proposed. Mr. Pretz did not like the use of the materials presented and suggested using something more solid. Mr. Bobowiec mentioned a product called Alumilite and suggested Mr. McCarthy compare the cost of that with the cost of the plexiglass.

**A motion was made by Mr. Bobowiec and seconded by Mr. Gibson with a unanimous voice vote to approve the COA contingent upon the use of plexiglass or Alumilite for the sign.**

**7. COA & Façade Improvement Grant: 221 W. Main St.**

Darius Grigaliunas, property owner, was present

Mr. Grigaliunas said the entire façade needs to be cleaned up. He is planning on making the following improvements:

1. Removing the awning over the front entryway and capping off the electric
2. Removing the three awnings over the windows on the second floor
3. Cleaning up all the old paint off the front of the building
4. Doing some light brick work
5. Tuck pointing and filling the holes on the brick
6. Caulking and fixing the trim on the windows
7. Priming all areas to be painted, and painting

Mr. Grigaliunas mentioned there are glass blocks under the panel on the front of the building. He plans to keep these in place, but he will not know what condition they are in until he begins working on the building.

Chairman Norris asked about the procedure being used to get the building ready for painting. Mr. Grigaliunas said they would be doing some minor sandblasting around the edges of the

windows and then power washing the area. Chairman Norris expressed concern over sandblasting the brick. He noted brick has a surface on it that melts away when sandblasted. He was reluctant to approve the use of sandblasting. Mr. Girgaliunas said they could scrape the paint around the windows by hand, instead.

Mr. Gibson asked if there were any plans to work on the door on the left. Mr. Grigaliunas stated he had no immediate plans to do anything at this time. Mr. Bobowiec asked if he would consider painting that door. Mr. Grigaliunas said he might be able to get the contractor to include it as part of his bid.

**A motion was made by Mr. Bobowiec and seconded by Mr. Gibson with a unanimous voice vote to approve the COA contingent upon not sandblasting the brick, and keeping the original glass blocks in place.**

**A motion was made by Mr. Bobowiec and seconded by Mr. Gibson with a unanimous voice vote to recommend to City Council approval of the Façade Improvement Grant for 221 W. Main Street.**

#### **8. Façade Improvement Grant: 311 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> St.**

Amber Grove McKee, representative for Terry Grove, petitioner, was present.

Mr. Colby stated this property is located outside of the historic district, but falls within the Special Service Area, making it eligible for the grant.

Ms. McKee outlined the following improvements included in the grant request:

1. Replace damaged wood paneling at storefront 109 including caulking and priming.
2. Scrape, sand, spot prime and caulk all wood paneling and trim around storefronts. Paint all with one coat of latex, low luster paint. Caulk around all windows and frames and between sidewalk and wood.
3. Hand clean ceiling and signage above storefronts that has become discolored due to dirt build up.
4. Repair soffit edge in three locations that are sagging below signage.
5. Cleaning of masonry on front elevations of building including east and side ends visible from the public street. Remove dirt and stains and power wash all masonry and apply SureKlean Restoration Cleaner in areas of staining and rinse with a light power wash.
6. Tuckpointing and caulking on front elevations. Spot tuckpoint open, fractured and unsound mortar joints. Mortar joints to be cut back a minimum of 5/8" and cleaned of dust and loose material prior to pointing. Tuckpoint all coping stone joints. Infill holes from old signage.
7. Remove and replace 6 pieces of soffit that are damaged on the walkway ceiling.
8. Sawcut concrete entryway on both sides of curb in front of VFW that has deteriorated and replace.
9. Removal of all signs prior to cleaning and sealing the building. Reinstallation of the signs.

Chairman Norris questioned if item 8, replacement of a concrete entryway, falls within the permitted improvements allowed for the grant. Mr. Colby noted the program excludes the replacement of private sidewalks, but it does include walkways which are described as sidewalks, pavers, plazas, and other permanent improvements designed primarily for pedestrian use, only in conjunction with rear entrance improvements. He said the walkway is attached to the front of the building, and as long as the work being done is limited to the covered portion, it would be permitted.

Mr. Gibson expressed concern over the caulk between the concrete and wood not holding up for any length of time. Ms. McKee said the area is covered so it does not get direct exposure to the elements.

**A motion was made by Mr. Withey and seconded by Mr. Gibson with a unanimous voice vote to recommend to City Council approval of the Façade Improvement Grant for 311 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.**

#### **9. COA & Façade Improvement Grant: 225 W. Main St.**

Edward Seaman, petitioner, was present.

Mr. Seaman is proposing removing and replacing the dryvit with a “Senergy” stucco system over the west and south elevations. He is also proposing installing a 3 ft. stone base along the bottom of the west elevation.

Chairman Norris stated one asset to having the dryvit was to help insulate the building. He expressed concern over how the building will be insulated with the new material, and whether it will permit the wall to breath. Mr. Seaman said according to the spec sheet, the material is appropriate for this area.

Mr. Pretz asked for details regarding the look of the proposed 3 ft. stone wall. Chairman Norris suggested keeping the height even with the ledge height on the front elevation. Mr. Bobowiec said that is higher than the area under the windows on the west elevation. Mr. Pretz felt it would present a more balanced appearance if there was a consistent line between the two areas. Commissioners agreed the stone base should be the same height as the existing window ledges on the west elevation. Mr. Seaman said this is the first step in his project. He may have to make aesthetically pleasing changes at a later time.

Mr. Colby said if the Commission would like additional information regarding the COA, they could ask Mr. Seaman to return with more information.

**A motion was made by Mr. Bobowiec and seconded by Chairman Norris with a unanimous voice vote to table the COA.**

**A motion was made by Mr. Gibson and seconded by Mr. Bobowiec with a unanimous voice vote to recommend to City Council approval of the Façade Improvement Grant for 221 W. Main Street.**

## **10. Additional Business from Commissioners or Staff**

### **a. Attendance at Downtown Partnership Board meetings**

In follow-up to a question raised at the last Historic Preservation Commission meeting, Mr. Colby checked with the Downtown Partnership regarding the Commission's attendance at their Board meetings. He stated the Partnership would prefer having someone from the Commission attend on a regular basis, but it does not need to be the chairman. They said the Commission could designate another person as the attendee, or handle it on a rotational basis. Chairman Norris said he would attend the meetings to start things off. Vice Chairman Gibson stated he would also help attend, as needed.

### **b. Jones Law Office**

Mr. Pretz suggested the City add signage to identify the Jones Law Office, along with some narrative regarding its significance.

The Commissioners discussed whether a landmark plaque would be an efficient use of funds, or if only a freestanding interpretive sign would be more appropriate. Mr. Pretz and Mr. Gibson felt the landmark status could be included in the narrative on the freestanding sign. Mr. Colby stated he would check to see if there have been any other discussions between Public Works and the Camp Kane group regarding signage at this location.

### **c. Landmarks research**

No updates.

### **d. Literature from the Nantucket Preservation Trust**

Mr. Pretz presented some literature on a program run by the Nantucket Preservation Trust (NPT). They look up the history of a home and provide a single page narrative to homeowners interested in finding out more about their home. He noted this can be done for a fee. Mr. Pretz thought the Commission could review homes in the historic district and provide something similar to homeowners who are planning on doing work on their homes, or for those who are just interested in learning more about their home.

Chairman Norris asked if this was something Mr. Pretz wanted to add to the already established design guidelines. Mr. Pretz noted his intent was to do this for specific homes. Mr. Bobowiec felt this was better suited for the History Museum, and viewed it as something the museum could do as a fundraising item. Mr. Pretz said it requires more research than what the History Museum would provide. Mr. Bobowiec said the Commission is not a volunteer organization with resources to do research on all these homes. Mr. Gibson felt it was a good idea and would definitely define the historic district, but it would involve numerous hours of research.

Mr. Pretz asked to have the literature he provided printed and distributed for possible further discussion at the next meeting.

**e. Façade Grant requirements**

Mr. Pretz discussed Elgin's grant program. He said they include more than just the façade. He noted if they see some other issues that need to be repaired, they try to include those as a condition for receiving the grant. As an example, Mr. Pretz said if a building owner applies for a grant to update the side of their building and their Commission sees some work that needs to be done on the front of the building, they will make approval of the grant money contingent upon the owner repairing those additional items.

Chairman Norris said the City already has people that enforce codes on properties that are rented out. Mr. Colby said the Building Division goes out and checks buildings and then notifies the owners of any issues they find. He said they encourage the owners to apply for façade grants as a way to incentivize the owners to make the repairs. Mr. Colby said they could ask people to take care of some other related issues when they apply for a façade improvement grant. Mr. Bobowiec felt that would work against the Commission by making it seem more difficult to do business with.

Going forward, Chairman Norris suggested the Commissioners do a walk-through of the property before the meeting and be prepared to discuss any concerns they find.

**11. Meeting Announcements: Historic Preservation Commission meeting Wednesday, June 1, 2016 at 7:00 P.M. in the Committee Room.**

**12. Public Comment**

**13. Adjournment**

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.