

MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, JULY 18, 2018
COMMITTEE ROOM

Members Present: Pretz, Malay, Krahenbuhl, Kessler, Smunt, Norris, Mann

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Russell Colby, Community Development Division Manager
Rachel Hitzemann, Planner

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

Mr. Pretz added 516 N. 3rd Avenue to Additional Business - Item #8 on the Agenda

A motion was made to modify the Agenda by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Krahenbuhl with a unanimous voice vote to approve the Agenda with this modification.

4. Presentation of minutes of the June 6, 2018 meeting

A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Dr. Smunt with a unanimous voice vote to approve the minutes of the June 6, 2018 meeting.

5. COA: 214 Walnut St. (Fence)

This proposal is for the installation of a fence for the courtyard at Lazarus House Women & Children's Center. Ms. Leanne Goodwin, representing the Lazarus House and architect, Ms. Rebecca Strader, from Prairie Forge Group, were present at the meeting.

Ms. Mann asked if they had considered a white fence instead of raven black. Ms. Goodwin stated that they felt that it did not blend well and took away from the attractiveness of the building. Dr. Smunt added that the black trim around the windows would work well with the black fence.

Mr. Colby confirmed if another composite company proposed another material, the Commission would take a look at that material and compare both products to determine the best fit for this application.

A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Dr. Smunt with a unanimous voice vote to approve the COA.

6. Grant Applications

a. 201 Chestnut Ave.

Mr. Colby stated that this request was for a residential Façade Grant. This grant was discussed and tabled at the 8/16/17 meeting. At that time, discussion began about what information is needed as well as what kind of project scope would be required for residential grants. Specifically for this property, the Commission requested more detail on the repair work to be done in conjunction with the siding and painting.

The applicant, Ms. Laura Rice was present at the meeting with more information.

Mr. Pretz sought clarification on the cost that was included with the Façade Improvement Grant Application. Ms. Rice explained that the price for the woodwork (materials) was \$3,102.50 and \$10,000 was the cost for the painting which did not include the detached garage.

The repair work on the back porch will include decking replacement around access steps as well as near the column with joists also being replaced that are located near the column.

The decking will be replaced entirely on the front porch and steps. Repair will be extended to the column that will include bottom trim replacement.

With regards to the wood siding and trim, four of the south facing windows need trim replacement and the wood siding will be replaced as needed. The majority of work will occur on the west and east facing sides of the home.

In addition, a permanent wood and glass storm window is being proposed to protect an existing leaded glass window that frequently experiences moisture seepage. This has created the window sill to warp and if left unaddressed, may cause the window to crack at some point.

The railing has been replaced on the upper decking of the home, however the railing caps have warped and are now in need of replacement.

Mr. Colby said this type of work may not require a permit as it is primarily replacement and maintenance work being done with COA consideration unnecessary. This would be a recommendation for approval to the City Council in the amount of \$5,000.

Dr. Smunt recommended applying an exterior grade deck stain on the front porch. For the back porch, he recommended removing the paint and also applying stain. Mr. Kessler suggested sealing all sides and ends of the boards prior to installing.

Mr. Colby directed the Commissioners to the program description page. With a residential grant, the repainting of the historic exterior surface is an eligible cost provided that there is extensive surface preparation and the issues that were observed are being corrected.

A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Krahenbuhl with a unanimous voice vote to recommend approval of the residential façade improvement project in the amount of \$5,000 with the condition that a premium quality stain for the porch be applied and to seal all sides and ends of the wood.

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

Mr. Colby said a draft of a new COA Application has been created and is currently in use. This process will include a standing item dedicated to preliminary reviews. Individuals do not have to be listed on the Agenda or provide information in advance. This will be for those who would like to present and receive Commission feedback that have not yet filed an application.

There was an existing informational handout that was provided to people that described the submittal process. Also, there was the COA Approval Form that had information about what the project is as well as a signature page for conditions. Both of these materials have been combined into one consolidated application form that also contains reference to Administrative Approvals. They will continue to require an application form be completed for Administrative applications to be sure the correct documentation has been received for review. This will provide better record keeping – building permit applications were looked at and signed off on without tracking the Administrative COA approvals. Mr. Colby sought feedback from the Commission with regards to the document check list. He asked for any elaboration of existing items listed or if there was anything that should be added to the list. Commissioners said they may decide to add something over time after they experience an incident or if they discover it is not as user-friendly as it was intended to be.

The Application Form is similar to the current COA approval with contact information providing a space for the owner to sign if the applicant is not the owner. The second page is the approval page and is utilized when it comes before the Commission. General Terms and Conditions of the commission developed a few years ago have also been included on this page. The last page consolidates the review criteria so it is available for reference purposes.

Mr. Kessler asked about demolition requests and stated that it would be a good idea to have the home owner present historic information. Ms. Malay asked if there is anything in the Ordinance requiring that. Dr. Smunt stated that they are not requiring the home owner to do research when they apply for a building permit – therefore he is in favor of not seeking proof of historical

significance from the home owner, as they have deemed their home to no longer of value with their plan to demolish it. The burden would be on the Commission to prove otherwise. Mr. Colby said the assumption would be that the house to be demolished has some history to it and this may or may not be the case in every situation. Ms. Malay added that in most situations where the Commission does not have a leg to stand on is when a house is designated non-contributing. This is often the case with most of the demolitions that they see. It is the Commission's document stating it is non-contributing so the burden falls on the Commission should they need to prove otherwise. An Ordinance Amendment may be needed if this is decided to be a requirement. Mr. Colby reminded them that they can table something until the next meeting or when the applicant returns with more information, if an item requires more research.

The issue that is being discussed is that there may not be information on all of these buildings. A statement, instead of a requirement could be added, explaining that the Commission may request historical information on the property as well as schedule a site visit.

8. Additional Business and Observations from Commissioners or Staff

a. 516 N. 3rd Ave.

Mr. Pretz said the homeowner at 516 N. 3rd Avenue, Ms. Judith Loof, is interested in land-marking their circa 1926 home. Dr. Smunt said the style of this home would be classified as English Cottage.

From 1941 through 1959, the home was owned by George E. Thompson, as it relates to the Thompson schools. The garage is a perfect match to the home and both are in excellent condition. This home falls outside of the historic district and several years ago all the windows were replaced. Dr. Smunt said if the current style of windows is the same as what was originally there, the newer windows should . The small addition that was added to the back of the home would not be considered as the significant elevation and should be viewed as a non-issue. This does not distract from the architecture, stated Dr. Smunt.

b. Camp Kane

Ms. Malay announced that Camp Kane has been given a donation of an identical replica of the First Shot Marker from Gettysburg. The National Park Service approved this and was donated by an individual whose great, great grandfather was the bugler. Dedication is scheduled for Saturday, August 11, 2018 at 2:00pm and will not be open to the public.

Mr. Colby introduced Ms. Rachel Hitzemann to the group stating that she will be assisting with Historic Preservation items and added that Ms. Ellen Johnson is working with the Plan Commission and on development projects at this time.

9. Meeting Announcements: Historic Preservation Commission meeting Wednesday, August 1, 2018 at 7:00pm in the Committee Room.

10. Public Comment

None.

11. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.