

MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 2016
COUNCIL COMMITTEE ROOM

Members Present: Chairman Smunt, Bobowiec, Malay, Norris, Pretz, Withey

Members Absent: Gibson

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

1. Call to order

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

2. Roll call

Chairman Smunt called roll with six members present. There was a quorum.

3. Approval of agenda

The following discussion items were added under Additional Business:

- (c) By Malay: Jones Law Office
- (d) By Pretz: Judd Mansion Open House
- (e) By Pretz: 2016 Projects Ideas
- (f) By Pretz: Officer Elections

A motion was made by Mr. Bobowiec and seconded by Ms. Malay with a unanimous voice vote to approve the changes to the agenda.

4. Presentation of minutes of the March 16, 2016 meeting

A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Bobowiec with a unanimous voice vote to approve the minutes. Mr. Pretz and Mr. Withey abstained.

5. COA: 151 S. 1st St. (awning)

Mr. Colby explained the proposal. He noted the applicant would like to recover an existing awning frame. A new logo will be printed on the fabric of the awning.

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

6. COA: 311 Walnut Ave. (shed)

Mr. Colby said a shed was relocated to the property without a permit. He displayed a photo showing where the shed has been installed. He noted it is only visible when directly aligned with the driveway.

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

7. COA: 312 W. Main St. (signs)

Tom Campana, representative from Quantum Sign Corporation, was present.

Mr. Colby stated the existing sign on the front elevation will be replaced with a similar sign having a different colored back panel. The current sign on the front of the building will be relocated to the rear of the building. Also being proposed is a new, internally illuminated projecting sign for the front of the building.

Mr. Campana explained the projecting sign will be attached behind the wood siding and mounted directly into the brick. He noted the sign is an aluminum panel with letters cut into it.

Mr. Norris said the Commission approved the wood siding only one year ago and it is already coming off the building. He expressed concern over the condition and maintenance. Chairman Smunt advised this would be a code enforcement issue. However, he noted they could include a stipulation for the owner to repair the wood in question in the area where the sign will be installed.

A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Norris with a unanimous voice vote to approve the COA, contingent upon the owner repairing the damaged area of the wood siding where the projecting sign will be installed.

8. COA: 101 S. 6th Ave. (sign)

Mr. Colby advised this is a sign request for St. Mark's Lutheran Church. He noted this is an internally illuminated sign that includes an electronic reader board. He said it is proposed for the corner of Illinois and 5th Avenues.

Chairman Smunt asked if this is a digital reader board controlled from the inside the building. Herman Gruebner, representative, confirmed that was correct.

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

9. Preliminary Review: 116 W. Main St. (Façade Improvement project)

Mr. Colby informed the Commission of the applicant's request to withdraw their proposal for a preliminary review at this time. He noted they are still revising their plans and would like to present their proposal at a later date.

Chairman Smunt said the Commission could still have a preliminary discussion, but nothing would be binding at this time. He noted one of the goals of the Commission is to preserve original building architecture/components. He said the applicant is proposing painting the brick. Chairman Smunt explained the building consists of a fire glazed brick which has a hard surface, and he felt strongly that it should never be painted. He said this is original high quality brick which contributes to the character of the building.

Mr. Pretz felt the logic behind painting the building may be to separate the business from the old town feel.

Ms. Malay noted the Commission may not have a say on issues concerning paint. Mr. Colby said if they apply for a Façade Grant, the Commission would have an opportunity to provide guidance as to what is appropriate.

Chairman Smunt suggested getting the owner of the building involved in this discussion.

Mr. Colby said he will communicate these concerns back to the applicant.

10. Additional Business from Commissioners or Staff

a. 619 W. Main St.

Mr. Colby said this property is currently for sale. He noted the City communicated with the previous brokers and informed them that the City is interested in seeing this house preserved, although it is not in the historic district. Mr. Colby said the brokers hinted in informational brochures that this site could be a redevelopment opportunity.

Mr. Bobowiec said there are three parcels on this lot. Mr. Pretz felt this may be a similar scenario as the Haines House. He said they preserved the home, but left the other two lots open to additional construction.

Mr. Colby advised the owner may not be cooperative in landmarking the house. He said City staff would speak with the broker to advise them that there is some concern regarding the ultimate fate of the main house.

b. Landmarks research

No updates.

c. Jones Law Office

Ms. Malay said a chair for the Jones Law Office needs to be reupholstered and asked if the Commission had any concerns about this. Mr. Pretz said they need to find someone who can obtain the correct material and do historic repair. The Commission did not have any objections to having the chair redone.

d. Judd Mansion Open House

Mr. Pretz said there will be an open house for the newly renovated Judd Mansion on April 24th. He distributed postcards with details on the event.

e. 2016 Project Ideas

Mr. Pretz suggested two projects for the Commission to consider taking on this year. The first being a project similar to what he saw done in another city. He said every few years that city identifies houses in their historic district that will be labeled historic. They do this without speaking to the homeowners. Mr. Pretz said the city provides a simple sign to put on these houses that states “this house dates from...”. He suggested the Commission review the historic district houses and provide a similar sign to the homeowner of any house built prior to 1900. Chairman Smunt asked if they would include non-contributing houses. Ms. Malay felt the intent was to keep it simple and spark the interest of homeowners. Mr. Pretz felt just noting a neighborhood had older homes, perhaps from a certain time in history, would be interesting to people.

Mr. Pretz’s second project idea was to find a way to publicly recognize improvement projects that have taken place on older homes in the historic district. He suggested doing this on a yearly basis through the City Council.

f. Officer Elections

Mr. Pretz and Chairman Smunt informed the Commission they had discussions about Chairman Smunt stepping down. Chairman Smunt said the role of the chairman also includes sitting on the Board of the Downtown Partnership, and he can no longer take on that responsibility. He said he would still continue to be part of the Commission. Mr. Pretz suggested Mr. Norris consider the position. Chairman Smunt advised he also mentioned his intent to step down to Mr. Gibson. He felt it was good for the Commission to have someone new in this role.

11. Meeting Announcements: Historic Preservation Commission meeting Wednesday, April 20, 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 8:20 p.m.