

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2016
COMMITTEE ROOM**

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

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Russell Colby, Planning Division Manager
Ellen Johnson, 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 six members present. There was a quorum.

3. Approval of agenda

Mr. Pretz added item 11b. Observations from Nantucket trip.

4. Presentation of minutes of the August 17, 2016 meeting

A motion was made by Mr. Bobowiec and seconded by Vice Chairman Gibson with a unanimous voice vote to approve the minutes as presented. Ms. Malay abstained.

PUBLIC HEARING

5. Eligibility of Property for Landmark Designation: 514 Oak St., Charles Hunt House

Chairman Norris opened the hearing and asked Ms. Malay to present the nomination.

Ms. Malay stated the house was reviewed and found to be close to its original condition. The only exceptions are the aluminum storm door and the wrought iron railings. She said the house deserves the landmark nomination based on its architectural style and recommended approval of the nomination.

Mr. Colby asked if any members of the public would like to make a statement. Ms. Carol Scholl, the homeowner, said she is hoping the nomination will be approved.

(A motion was made to approve the Landmark Designation. It was noted that the motion was not valid as the public hearing was ongoing and needed to be closed before the Commission could take any formal action.)

Chairman Norris asked if there were any other comments. Dr. Smunt asked the homeowner about the historical naming of the house. He explained the original owner's name is typically incorporated into the naming of the structure. Ms. Scholl said the only previous owners she knew of were the Siercks. She found out about the other owners from the research presented during this process. Ms. Scholl supported using the original homeowner's name.

A motion was made by Mr. Bobowiec and seconded by Ms. Malay with a unanimous voice vote to close the public hearing.

MEETING

6. Eligibility of Property for Landmark Designation: 514 Oak St., Charles Hunt House

Dr. Smunt asked to amend this nomination form to list the property name as the "Charles Hunt Home" versus listing it with the street address. He also noted the "Significant Date" on page 4 is Circa 1923.

A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Bobowiec with unanimous voice vote to recommend approval to the City Council for landmark status of 514 Oak Street, Charles Hunt House, with a change to the name on the first page of application to read "Charles Hunt House".

7. COA: 628 N. 2nd Ave. (fence)

Mr. Colby said the request is for two sections of fencing. One is a privacy fence along the rear and side property lines, and the other is an aluminum fence along from the back corner of the house to the side lot line (facing 2nd Ave.)

There were no other comments.

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

8. COA: 214 S. 1st St. (canopy)

Mr. Colby noted the Commission discussed this as a Preliminary Review. He said they do not have a representative present to give a more detailed proposal. Therefore, it would be appropriate to table the item.

A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Vice Chairman Gibson with a unanimous voice vote to table discussion of the COA.

9. COA: 10 Illinois Street (First Street Building #3)

Bob Rasmussen, the developer with First Street Development II, LLC, was present.

Mr. Rasmussen noted there have been no changes made to the building since the Preliminary Review. He said Dan Marshall, the architect, incorporated several different types of brick and custom stone pieces. He also mixed up the architecture to make it appear as if a few multiple buildings had been blended together. Curved balconies have been incorporated on the south exposure giving it a more modern element.

Dr. Smunt noted the Commission previously requested changing the casement windows to double hung windows in the third section of the building from the north. Dr. Smunt said the double hung windows would be more consistent in keeping with the residential flavor of the structure. Mr. Rasmussen advised he would check with Mr. Marshall on this.

A motion was made by Dr. Smunt and seconded by Mr. Pretz with a unanimous voice vote to approve the COA with an amendment to change the casement windows to double hung windows on the east elevation residential units.

10. Discussion Item: 214 Walnut St.

Mr. Colby stated that representatives of Lazarus House are interested in purchasing this structure and would like feedback on its historical significance and preservation potential.

Bob McDowell introduced himself, along with Betsy Penny and Liz Eakins, representing Lazarus House.

He said Lazarus House is in discussions with the St. Charles Free Methodist Church. Lazarus House is adjacent to the church and they lease property from the church. That lease will end within five years. The Lazarus House Board has expressed an interest in buying the property. However, they would have no use for the church. Mr. McDowell asked if the steeple could ever be removed if it's no longer a church.

Chairman Norris said an addition was put on about 10 years ago and asked for clarification as to which structures Lazarus House currently occupies. Mr. McDowell said they utilize three structures, but they would sell two of them to offset costs. They would not need the sanctuary so they are concerned with the potential cost of doing repairs in the future.

Mr. Pretz indicated there would need to be some research done to determine if there was a steeple in place prior to the current one that was put in place in the 1980's. Ms. Malay said she would not be able to support tearing it down.

Chairman Norris said the structure is considered architecturally significant. His preference would be to find a way for the Commission to help them find a program to make use of the inside so that it would allow for the outside to retain its scale, proportion and historical factor.

Dr. Smunt suggested using the sanctuary as a rental hall available to the public for civic focused meetings. Mr. Gibson noted the inside could be used to generate funds by renting out office space.

Ms. Malay asked about the possibility of qualifying for a facade improvement grant. Mr. Colby advised not-for-profit organizations do not qualify. Ms. Malay asked if they qualify if some their space was used for a retail thrift shop to help generate funds. Mr. Colby said that is a possibility.

Mr. McDowell noted Lazarus House is not in a position to remodel the church.

Mr. Pretz said they understand the limitations on not-for-profit funds available to make changes to the structure. He noted the Commission is there to help Lazarus House achieve its goals while also helping to preserve St. Charles' heritage.

Ms. Malay stated there may be an option for tax credits if there is some commercial component involved in the new plan.

The Commissioners invited the representatives to return if they had any further questions or ideas.

11. Additional Business from Commissioners or Staff

a. 2016 Projects

i. City Council Tour

Mr. Colby reviewed what was previously discussed. He noted the group decided to include a map and some summary information to indicate why they are conducting this tour. He said the Commission hoped it would lead to getting City Council's support of doing a survey, and to show the changes that have happened both within and outside the district. Mr. Colby said they could also include the potential tour route on the map. He was also looking into including pictures of the houses that have been demolished. The Commissioners discussed some of these houses.

Mr. Pretz suggested they refrain from overwhelming the Council with too much information and stay focused on the Commission's purpose. Ms. Malay said they should show at least one example of a badly scaled house outside of the district to show how bad it can be. Mr. Gibson suggested they go through the list of houses and determine which ones would be included as stops on the Council Tour. He noted the tour should include no more than 12-15 stops. Mr. Pretz said they could point out the landmarked homes as they pass them to show the Council how they have helped protect neighborhoods.

Chairman Norris said they should get the Council's feedback before they take the next steps in asking for a survey. Ms. Malay noted they need to think about what the Commission's expectation is and make it clear to the Council as to what type of feedback they will be expected to provide. Mr. Colby stated it would be beneficial to provide information on the value of doing the survey.

The Commissioners mentioned some areas to be included in a potential survey, and discussed the possibility of including the Pottawatomie Park property.

ii. Survey of Pottawatomie Area

Discussion on this topic was held within item i.

iii. Residential Design Guidelines update

The Commission discussed how to approach this project. Ms. Malay suggested discussing a chapter at a time amongst the group. Dr. Smunt the first chapter may only need a few edits, but the following chapter is quite boring and in need of graphics. Ms. Malay requested getting paper copies that they could mark up before the meetings and bring with ready to discuss.

The Commissioners decided to begin with section 2.1.

b. Observations from Nantucket

Mr. Pretz provided his observations from his recent trip to Nantucket. He said the Nantucket Preservation Trust oversees approximately 850 buildings that are pre-1850 and about 200 dated before 1800. They apply the same rules to new construction as they do to historic structures.

He recently noticed they are allowing the use of a natural product on the flooring of decks and on stairs. The product is a composite which must contain some wood. Mr. Pretz felt it was interesting that they have now moved into that era. However, he noted the colors are still tightly regulated. Nantucket's Trust only uses wood or wood replacement windows, but they are now allowing aluminum storm protection for their windows. Only one style is permitted.

He felt these observations were interesting because of how tightly Nantucket regulates their footprint on the historic district.

12. Meeting Announcements: Historic Preservation Commission meeting Wednesday, September 21, 2016 at 7:00 P.M. in the Committee Room.

13. Public Comment

None.

14. Adjournment

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With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 8:39 p.m.