

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, JULY 6, 2016
COMMITTEE ROOM**

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

Members Absent: Withey, Pretz

Also Present: Ellen Johnson, Planner

1. Call to order

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

2. Roll call

Ms. Johnson called roll with four members present. There was a quorum. Dr. Smunt arrived at 7:04 p.m.

3. Approval of agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

4. Presentation of minutes of the June 15, 2016 meeting

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

5. COA: 416 Cedar Ave. (fence)

Ms. Johnson advised the proposal is for the replacement of 70 feet of fencing along the rear property line. The new fence will be a 6 ft. cedar, board-on-board fence with dog-eared ends to match the neighbor's fence along the common rear property line.

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

6. Additional Business from Commissioners or Staff

a. 314 Indiana Street - Chimney

Ms. Johnson said the homeowner is installing a new HVAC system which will no longer require use of the chimney for ventilation purposes. He is seeking feedback on removing/replacing the chimney.

Commissioners had no major concerns with removing the chimney as long as the siding and roof were covered up with similar materials to appear as if the chimney had never been there. However, if the homeowner decides to keep the chimney in place, it needs to be structurally sound.

Dr. Smunt suggested taking the chimney down to just below the roof eaves and leaving the rest of the structure. This would allow future use of the chimney if someone decides to reactivate it for another use.

Mr. Bobowiec said the homeowner should make sure his water heater isn't vented into the chimney.

b. Jones Law Office sign

Ms. Malay passed around a photo of the proposed sign. It will include some pictures and historical information. She said it is similar to other signs posted in parks around the city. The materials will be decided once the sign company knows the layout. However, she said it will most likely have a 4 x 4 cedar base.

Dr. Smunt asked if she compared the cost of this sign to the one posted at the History Museum. Ms. Malay said it was a \$2,000 difference. She said the stand may be temporary due to the possibility of having a universal sign style throughout Camp Kane in the future.

c. Landmarks research

Ms. Malay said she is waiting to hear back from the property owner of 514 Oak St. to see if she has any historical information on the house and if she agrees with having the property landmarked. She said the property does not have any historical significance; the significance findings will be based on the architecture of the structure.

Ms. Johnson noted the Darwin Millington Homestead historic landmark nomination will be presented at the Planning & Development Committee meeting on July 11.

d. 2016 Projects

i. Residential Design Guidelines update

Chairman Norris stated City staff is looking to keep the design guidelines fresh and updated. He asked if the Commissioners would like to review the guidelines to identify areas in need of improvement as one complete document or one chapter at a time.

Dr. Smunt suggested working on one chapter at a time. Ms. Malay asked if they could get a printed copy of each chapter versus reviewing them online. Chairman Norris felt they should let staff decide which chapters to work on first, and the Commissioners could then work off of the hard copies they provide.

Dr. Smunt felt a big improvement could be made by adding photos or graphics to go along with the text. Ms. Malay said they may also be able to take this opportunity to simplify the wording.

ii. Survey of Pottawatomie area

Ms. Johnson had copies of the most recent CLG matching grant application packet. She said applications will most likely be due in February of 2017. She said architectural surveys are an eligible grant project, and asked what requirements the state imposed with the last application that caused the Commission to deny the grant.

Ms. Malay said the restrictions were noted after the grant was received, not in the application. She said it had to do with the qualifications required of the person conducting the survey, which added significantly to the cost. Ms. Johnson noted they would need to check with IHPA before submitting the application to make sure they meet all requirements.

Dr. Smunt said he thinks the survey is a good idea for a project because it will not require the Commission's manpower. He said they can hire a contractor to do the work.

Chairman Norris suggested they all take the application home to review and come together at a future meeting to complete it as a group.

iii. City Council Tour

Ms. Malay felt this should be a top priority for this year. Chairman Norris asked if it should be the same tour they have been giving, or if it should be more unique for the City Council. Mr. Gibson said to keep their interest, it should be narrowed down to include the projects that the Historic Preservation Commission was involved in.

Ms. Malay said to save time they could talk about neighborhoods and areas instead of individual houses.

Chairman Norris suggested reviewing the map of landmarked properties to determine which ones should be included in the tour. Dr. Smunt noted it might be a good idea to give the Council a tour of the Pottawatomie area prior to doing the survey to educate them on the importance of the architecture in that area. He felt it might help the Commission gain their support if/when it came time to form a district in that area.

Mr. Gibson said he would like to include COA projects that were brought before the Commission to show the impact they have had.

The Commissioners decided the tour should be their first priority, followed by the survey, and then the design guidelines.

iv. Nantucket initiatives

Discussion on this item will take place when Mr. Pretz returns. The Commissioners felt these initiatives would involve intense research.

Mr. Gibson said as part of his involvement with the History Museum's Educational Committee, he is helping design signs for their "foodie" fundraiser. These signs will include the history of each business involved in the fundraiser. He asked if he could send the Commissioners a list of these businesses to see if they had any additional information that he could include. The Commissioners agreed to help.

7. Meeting Announcements: Historic Preservation Commission meeting Wednesday, July 20, 2016 at 7:00 P.M. in the Committee Room.

8. Public Comment

A member of the public asked for further information regarding the survey of the Pottawattamie area. She wanted to know what it involved and the purpose behind it. Ms. Malay showed a picture of what survey sheets look like. Ms. Malay explained an architect goes through the area and takes a survey. A picture and some history are provided for each structure. The architect then provides a significance rating based on the architectural style and history. A rating of non-contributing, contributing, or significant is assigned. If a historic district is created, the survey helps provide a guideline for the Commission as to how to review items brought before them.

Chairman Norris said a survey helps protect significant structures in the historic district. Dr. Smunt noted the survey provides an objective finding that helps keep the Commissions discussions on target.

9. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.