

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES IL
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2011**

Members Present: Chairman Smunt, Bobowiec, Weals, Pretz, Prestidge, Withey

Members Absent: Norris

Also Present: Russell Colby, Planner
Michelle Taubensee, Recording Secretary

1. Call to order.

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

2. Approval of agenda.

No additional items were added to the agenda.

3. Presentation of minutes of the December 15, 2010 meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Prestidge and seconded by Mr. Pretz with a unanimous voice vote to approve the minutes as presented.

4. COA: 101 E Main Street (wall signs).

Mr. Colby noted that this was discussed as a preliminary review at the previous meeting and there were a couple of options for the signs. Mr. Colby advised that the applicant has chosen to move forward with the channel letter sign, but there will be only (1) sign facing Main Street. The applicant was asked to look into a projecting sign, but the restrictions with the shape of the sign and logo would have made it difficult.

Michael Vitali, CEO and owner of ImIn.com, was present for the meeting and provided a color picture of the proposed sign. Mr. Vitali noted that there would be (1) sign that is proposed for Main Street. Mr. Vitali addressed that the projecting sign made it difficult to fit the logo within the requirements, so that option did not work. Mr. Vitali advised that the Copeland Dance projecting sign would be removed when the new sign is installed. Also, Mr. Vitali addressed the concern regarding holes in the building that was discussed at the previous meeting. Mr. Vitali stated that any anchors that go into the building would be installed in the mortar between the bricks. If the sign were ever removed, the mortar could be repaired and there would be no damage to any of the bricks.

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

Chairman Smunt commented that the sign is appropriate and compatible with the existing signs; all the signage blends nicely.

5. 2011 Work Plan.

Mr. Colby prepared notes based on the discussion from the previous meeting. Mr. Colby briefly reviewed the notes:

- Newsletter articles – topics need to be identified; some listed are carried over from the previous year.
- Landmark Properties – Mr. Colby listed (3) properties that the homeowners have expressed interest in having their home landmarked.
- Public education – discussed the possibility of a seminar.
- Display Windows – Mr. Colby checked into availability; the Atrium (lobby) window is available in March and the Main Street window is available in July.
- Mail Order Homes
- Design Guidelines – date for approval
- Website – Mr. Colby stated that the Library had the information loaded and ready, but the new version of their website was not ready.

Chairman Smunt questioned the city website redesign and Mr. Colby responded that it is on going. Information added should be time critical because the time spent adding to the existing website takes away from working on the new website. Mr. Pretz questioned what the target date is for the new website. Mr. Colby was unsure, but would find out; the consultant has caused delays.

Mr. Bobowiec questioned what criteria must be met before the Design Guidelines is considered complete. Chairman Smunt commented that there was a discussion about amending the Historic Preservation section of the Zoning Ordinance to incorporate the Design Guidelines. Mr. Colby added that it was brought before City Council with other amendments, but was not approved, so the document was put on hold to be approved together with the zoning amendment. Mr. Bobowiec expressed frustration with the approval process for the Design Guidelines and questioned why it seems to be taking so long. Mr. Colby responded that it has taken him longer than expected to work on the format of the document. Mr. Colby would like to bring the document in its current format before the Commission for approval because some things have been rearranged. Chairman Smunt suggested that the Commission review the draft at the next meeting and then present both the 2011 Work Plan along with the Design Guidelines to the Council. Chairman Smunt noted that the current ordinance already allows for the Commission to create guidelines. Mr. Bobowiec stated that the work plan should be changed to reflect presenting the current draft of the Design Guidelines rather than “complete.” The

Commission would like the guidelines to be available on the website. Mr. Colby stated he would forward the updated copy to all the Commissioners prior to the next meeting.

Chairman Smunt suggested that each newsletter article feature a landmark that has been adopted. The Commission discussed possibly removing the Heritage Center/Garden Club plaque programs from the list of articles. It is unknown what criteria were used for the plaques and the properties are not protected by city ordinance. Ms. Weals volunteered to research the criteria for the Garden Club; Chairman Smunt stated he has a copy of the criteria for the Heritage Center plaques. It was also noted that there is not a list of properties that were given plaques by each organization.

Mr. Bobowiec suggested distributing a brochure with all the landmark properties and a brief description of each to public venues such as the library and community center. Mr. Colby stated he would look into the cost for a brochure; it could possibly be done in-house.

There was brief discussion on landmark properties that are outside of city limits; Kane County is responsible for those properties.

Chairman Smunt noted that the brochure would fall under the public education section of the Work Plan. Mr. Bobowiec stated that it should be published and available at public places. Chairman Smunt stated that the Downtown Partnership is responsible for keeping the kiosks stocked. Ms. Weals suggested a list be made of locations where the brochure should be available.

Chairman Smunt stated he was aware of (2) more owners that have expressed interest in landmarking their property; Eric Larson, owner of 605 W Main Street, and Sue and Bob McDowell, owners of 521 W Main Street.

Chairman Smunt suggested that Mail Order Homes be the subject of the display windows. Ms. Weals suggested “windows” be the subject and a sample could be displayed, such as the vendor that was found at the building show. Ms. Weals noted that the inside Atrium window has more foot traffic versus the Main Street window that is car traffic. Commissioners approved of Mail Order Homes being the subject of the display windows, however, Ms. Weals noted that it should be confirmed as a Mail Order home before it is advertised in the display window.

Discussion segued into item (6) on the agenda.

6. Mail Order/Kit Homes Project.

Pat Pretz was also present for the meeting and discussion on this project.

Mr. Bobowiec suggested putting pictures in the display window of things that would identify a mail order home, such as numbers on beams in an attic or a shipping label. Ms.

Weals stated that Rebecca Hunter would have that information. Ms. Weals suggested enlarging the photos and mounting them. Mr. Colby stated that they can be done on 11"x17" paper.

Mr. Colby referenced copies of all the handouts that were provided by Rebecca Hunter. Some describe how to do internet research and how to look through plat books for grantee/grantor names that had a mortgage listed under a company such as Sears. Mr. Colby also referenced the list of homes that Rebecca Hunter provided, which has properties highlighted that she verified, but there is not a lot of information. Mr. Bobowiec asked if it would be beneficial to have Rebecca Hunter help with phase two of this project and use the display window to promote that. Mr. Colby responded that the Commission has enough information to do the work based on the information that she provided. Mr. Colby added that she would have to be asked to do some of the work for the Commission and be paid.

Chairman Smunt asked if there are pictures of the homes. There was discussion on purchasing a catalog book, however, there are many books available. Ms. Pretz suggested utilizing the library, which has books available that can be checked out. Ms. Pretz also stated that some homes are difficult to identify because they have been altered significantly.

Mr. Bobowiec questioned if homeowners have been contacted. Mr. Colby responded that letters were mailed and a few homeowners responded, some of which were identified on Rebecca Hunter's list.

The Commission researched the following addresses during the meeting:

717 South Avenue – Sears Starlight model
1508 Riverside Avenue – Sears Starlight model
910 South Avenue – Sears Sunlight model
408 S 11th Avenue – Sears Van Dorn model
1012 Indiana Avenue – Sears Starlight model

The Commission utilized the Kane County Recorder and St. Charles Assessor websites to conduct research. The Kane County Recorder's website was used to research trackm records showing mortgages, deeds, etc. The Assessor's website was used to view pictures and identify the subdivision and lot number.

Chairman Smunt commented that each home identified should have a picture of the current home with the catalog picture and a brief description, so that everything is well documented. The Commission would like to start with identifying (5) homes and continue working from that point.

- 7. Announcement: Historic Preservation Commission meeting Wednesday, January 19, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the Committee Room.**

8. Additional Business.

Mr. Pretz stated that he would not be present for the next meeting.

9. Adjournment.

A motion was made by Mr. Prestidge and seconded by Mr. Bobowiec with a unanimous voice vote to adjourn the meeting.

Nothing further was discussed and the meeting ended at 8:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Dr. Smunt, Chairman
Historic Preservation Commission

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