

**MINUTES  
CITY OF ST. CHARLES IL  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2011  
COUNCIL COMMITTEE ROOM**

**Members Present:** Chairman Smunt, Bobowiec, Withey, Pretz, Prestidge, Norris

**Members Absent:** Weals

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

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**1. Call to order.**

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

**2. Approval of agenda.**

Mr. Pretz requested the following be added under Additional Business:

9a) Dunham Hunt House

**A motion was made by Mr. Pretz with a unanimous voice vote to approve the agenda as amended.**

**3. Presentation of minutes of the January 19, 2011 meeting.**

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

**4. CAO: 14 N Riverside Avenue (roof and skylights).**

Mr. Colby explained that the proposal is to replace a portion of the roof. Mr. Colby presented an aerial picture of the lot showing where the building is located, with the area where the work would be done highlighted and a picture showing where the work would be visible.

Mike Johnson, general contractor, was present for the meeting as a representative and explained that the repairs are being done because of a design flaw that causes roof leaks. The existing roof would be removed and replaced with a new raised flat roof with (2) skylights, creating an 8-foot ceiling inside the building. Mr. Colby noted that drawings are included with the meeting packet.

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Mr. Johnson explained that the current ceiling height inside the building is 6'6". The work will resolve the leaking problem and also create the 8-foot ceiling. Chairman Smunt confirmed that the air conditioning units would be relocated to the north end of the building. The air conditioning units will also be behind the parapet wall, decreasing visibility.

Mr. Colby stated that there were no staff comments. Mr. Prestidge questioned the roof slope and how the water would drain. Mr. Johnson explained how the water would drain with the new roof pitch.

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

**5. National Register Nomination for 304 N 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue (Joel H. Hubbard House)(Ferson-Butler-Satterlee House).**

Mike Dixon was present for the meeting as representative for the owners. Dean Bemis, owner, could not be present due to an out of town business meeting.

Mr. Dixon referenced the National Register Nomination included with the meeting packet and noted that the State Coordinator would like to call the house the "Joel H. Hubbard House." Joel H. Hubbard was the builder and owner for at least 1-year. The local designation is Ferson-Butler-Satterlee, which the Coordinator feels is too long of a name. Mr. Dixon explained that the information about the history of St. Charles and the families that lived there is still included with the application. Mr. Dixon referenced page (5) of the application for criteria, items "b" (property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past) and "c" (architecture). Mr. Dixon commented that with such a strong case for architecture, it should not be confused with a weaker case for the history of the persons who lived there, however, the history information is still included with the application. Mr. Dixon stated that he would email all pictures to Mr. Colby.

Mr. Dixon stated that the application would go before the Illinois Historic Sites Advisory Council on March 4, 2011. Once approved it would then go to Washington for final approval, which could take a few months.

Mr. Dixon wanted to clarify the name issue with the Commission and noted that he added the local designation to the application. If the name needed to be simplified, Chairman Smunt suggested the name be the "Ferson House" because the "Hubbard" name is virtually unknown locally. Mr. Dixon stated that Hubbard built the house and lived there for at least 1-year, which contributes to the case for the architecture. There was discussion regarding the historic name of a building that does not relate to the builder. The Hotel Baker was given as an example, but Mr. Dixon noted that the Hotel Baker is a commercial property, not residential. Mr. Dixon again stated that architecture is emphasized as the criteria, which relates to the Hubbard name. The people that lived there are still emphasized, but the principal reason for the house being there is because of

Hubbard. Mr. Pretz noted that Ferson is a founding family of St. Charles. Mr. Dixon explained that the local designation can remain the “Ferson-Butler-Satterlee” house, but he cannot argue with the State Coordinator on the way they would like to see the application presented. Chairman Smunt stated that the name of the house was decided upon based on the research done by the owners and the Hubbard name was not mentioned. Mr. Dixon explained that some research was done on Hubbard and where he came from and was included in the binder put together by the owners. Chairman Smunt questioned what the homeowner wishes are and Mr. Dixon responded that they would like to follow what the State suggests. However, it was clarified that the local designation can remain “Ferson-Butler-Satterlee.” Mr. Dixon also commented that when searching the database for the National Register, the names of the founding families could be crossed referenced.

Mr. Dixon questioned the letter waiving the 60-day waiting period approved at the previous meeting and Mr. Colby acknowledged that the letter is complete, but is not signed by the Mayor. Mr. Dixon stated that the letter must get to Springfield, Illinois by March 4<sup>th</sup>.

#### **6. Discussion of 309 S 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Judd Mansion).**

Jim Coleman was present for the meeting. He was contacted by the Home State Bank of Crystal Lake to market the property. Mr. Coleman explained that the property was approved as a PUD approximately (5) years ago to build (10) townhouse units and divide the mansion into (2) units. After the project was approved, (2) townhouses were built, but were not able to be sold. Eventually those properties were transferred to the excavator for past due balances, so they are not part of the property. Now the property consists of the mansion and (4) building pads that can support (2) townhouse units each. Mr. Coleman explained that rehabbing the mansion and dividing it into (2) units would cost around \$800,000, which would make the unit price unmarketable. Dan Marshal has been contacted to come up with some ideas on what can be done with the property to preserve the mansion, which is historic, and still develop the property.

Dan Marshal was also present for the meeting and explained that the mansion is in very bad shape and getting worse. Mr. Marshall stated that they believe that the project would move forward with more units to bring the price down. The original plan was for the same duplex on all the lots, which Mr. Marshall believes does not look natural. Mr. Marshall stressed that the idea has not been presented to anyone yet and they are still at the beginning stages. Mr. Marshal did present a preliminary drawing.

Mr. Norris confirmed that the property is a PUD, Planned Unit Development. Mr. Norris questioned what the property zoning currently allows and what are the proposed changes. Mr. Colby explained that the property is zoned for (5) buildings, each with (2) units, in addition to (2) units in the mansion. Mr. Colby explained that any changes to the PUD would need approval. Mr. Norris questioned parking requirements and Mr. Colby explained that the current plan meets the requirements because of the garages. Mr.

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Marshall stated that they would like to increase the number of units to approximately 17-19, depending on the mansion and a building proposed for behind the mansion. The drawing presented showed garages with units above built straight off the back of the mansion. Mr. Marshall stressed that this proposal is in the very early stages and has not been analyzed yet. Mr. Marshall explained that his goal was to see how many units would fit. The original plan showed a horseshoe driveway, which would be straightened to have a fire access gate to Route 25. Mr. Marshall presented pictures of another development in Wheaton, where 3-unit townhouses were developed that would fit on these lots. The 3-unit townhouse would be slightly different because the garage would not face the street; instead, there would be a porch element that would face the street. Mr. Marshall explained that the buildings would be siding with either a brick or stone element. Mr. Marshall explained that the units need to be affordable and noted the great downtown location. The mansion would be divided into small apartments or condominiums similar to what was done with the Heritage Square project across the street.

Mr. Pretz questioned if the materials would match or if it would be challenging to pull everything together. Mr. Marshall stated that the way to solve the problem would be to add variety and have each unit look a little different. Mr. Marshall explained that variety would downplay the disconnect in materials. Mr. Norris confirmed that the center building would have the density of an apartment building.

Mr. Colby stated that the purpose of the discussion was not to review the zoning issues, but instead review the development concept and the impact to the mansion. Mr. Pretz stated that the mansion should be saved, but recognized that there is a problem with the property. Mr. Pretz noted that the property would only get worse. Improving the property in today's environment while saving the house makes sense. Mr. Withey commented that the Commission was once informed that the house was originally a wood frame house and the brick and stone façade was placed over the wood, which has caused the foundation to start slipping. Chairman Smunt agreed that the house was originally a wood frame house and the brick and stone was later added, but could not confirm if the foundation is slipping. Mr. Marshall stated that there is substantial cracking in the brick and it is not in good shape. There was brief discussion on the attic window being open to the elements and it was advised that the bank has contacted a company to board up the house. There was also discussion on what has been left inside the house and Mr. Marshall responded that some fireplace fronts are left.

Mr. Marshall commented that even if the changes were approved, there would be no guarantee that it would be successful. The construction needs to be basic and would work best with a variety of looks. Chairman Smunt questioned if there are any elements from the existing house that can be carried over to the addition. Mr. Marshall responded that he would not want to try mimicking the look, but instead make it look somewhat like a coach house to pull it together. Mr. Marshall also noted that they would like to keep the brick piers and add gates to the driveway entrances, also with brick piers. Chairman Smunt agreed that more variety would fit with the neighborhood better. Mr. Marshall

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added that they would not want to match the (2) existing units, but the proposed would be the same concept in height and mass size.

Mr. Marshal explained that there is still a lot more work to be done. He will follow up with discussions with the Planning Division and Fire Department. The Commission agreed that the idea was appropriate because it is an improvement from the original plan and the project will move forward.

It was clarified that the property is a local landmark; Mr. Colby agreed to forward that information to Mr. Coleman.

**7. COA: 211 N 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue (siding).**

Eric Jens and Bob Habes, owners of the property, were both present for the meeting. Mr. Jens provided a brief history of the property. Mr. Jens explained that both he and Mr. Habes are residents of the neighborhood and purchased the rental property as an investment. The property has fallen into some disrepair and they would like to improve the property so it is more in line with the surrounding neighborhood.

Mr. Jens explained that the proposal is for new siding. Mr. Norris clarified that the new siding would be placed over the existing wood siding on only (3) of the sides; one side was replaced a few years ago. Mr. Jens presented photos of the building showing where the wood is damaged. Mr. Prestidge confirmed that the soffit, fascia and trim would also be replaced to look exactly as they exist, but wrapped with metal. Mr. Withey questioned if there was consideration for wood siding or a hardy board material. Mr. Habes responded that it would be considerably more costly, but that the corners would be repaired and replaced with wood. Mr. Habes noted that the neighboring property to the north has aluminum siding and the proposal is for vinyl siding, which would have an architectural look.

Mr. Prestidge questioned if the application was submitted for COA approval and Mr. Colby stated that it is on the agenda for COA approval, but the Commission must decide if there is enough information. Mr. Prestidge explained that he would like the opportunity to visit the site and assess the extent of the damage. There was discussion on neighboring properties being high-end historic homes. Mr. Bobowiec noted that using vinyl siding would be hiding the damage that could continue unknowingly. Mr. Bobowiec would prefer the property salvaged with wood or hardy board material to match the neighborhood. Mr. Bobowiec noted that the architectural survey from 2003 listed the property in excellent condition. Mr. Withey confirmed that the existing siding is cedar and suggested replacing only the boards that are damaged. Mr. Jens acknowledged the neighborhood, being a resident himself, and explained that the idea was to improve the look of the property. Chairman Smunt explained that the property is contributing to the historic district in that area and the vinyl siding would de-value the significance of the block. Mr. Jens noted that the addition has already decreased the contributing significance.

Chairman Smunt and Mr. Prestidge both advised that moisture damage would continue with vinyl siding covering the damaged wood siding. Mr. Habes explained that paint might only last a few years and would not be as cost effective. Mr. Norris stated that he has never approved of vinyl siding to cover original wood siding. Mr. Norris referenced the Secretary of Interior Standards, items A, B, D, and E. Based on these standards, Mr. Norris explained that he does not feel this proposal is on the right track and the existing siding should be salvaged. If the work were done properly, the siding would last another 100-years.

Chairman Smunt quoted the Design Guidelines regarding synthetic siding and trim. The section explained that siding that is deteriorated beyond repair and salvage, should be replaced by new material that accurately duplicates the original in appearance, shape and texture. New wood is the accepted standard; high-tech wood substitutes would be considered on a case-by-case basis and determined to be appropriate for specific applications. Also, Chairman Smunt explained that when wood substitutes are considered appropriate, it is not applied over the existing siding. Chairman Smunt explained that he could not support covering the original siding with synthetic siding. Mr. Prestidge agreed. There was brief discussion regarding permit requirements.

Chairman Smunt suggested that the Commission meet on site to discuss the project.

**A motion was made by Mr. Norris and seconded by Mr. Bobowiec with a unanimous voice vote to table approval of a COA.**

**9. Additional Business.**

**a) Dunham Hunt House**

Mr. Pretz advised that the city plans to move forward with the sale of the property. A list would be compiled of what a potential buyer would have to fix or preserve. Mr. Colby explained that the city has decided to request proposals for purchasers of the house, which would include a list of items that the city would like to see addressed in a timely manner. The list is based on the assessment report that the Commission has already reviewed. Mr. Pretz questioned if assistance is needed from the Commission. Mr. Colby explained that only cosmetic items from the report were removed, all other items the Commission endorsed will be part of the list of repairs.

**b) Design Guidelines**

Mr. Colby advised that the guidelines are scheduled for review on the March 14, 2011 meeting of the Planning and Development Committee at 7:00 pm.

**10. Adjournment.**

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

Nothing further was discussed and the meeting ended at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dr. Smunt, Chairman  
Historic Preservation Commission

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