

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17, 2013
COUNCIL COMMITTEE ROOM**

Members Present: Chairman Smunt, Boboweic, Norris, Prestidge, Pretz, Withey, Weals

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Russell Colby, Planning Division Manager

1. Call to order:

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

2. Roll call:

Chairman Smunt called roll with all members present.

3. Approval of the agenda:

There were no changes.

4. Presentation of minutes from April 3, 2013 meeting:

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

5. Zoning Variation: 404 N. 5th Ave. (addition)

Mr. Colby stated that the Commission previously provided preliminary review comments on the project and the applicant has now formally applied for a zoning variance. Per the Zoning Ordinance, the Commission is asked to make a recommendation to the Zoning Board of Appeals addressing the impact of the variation on historic resources, particularly the historic district. Additionally, the applicant is seeking the Commission's endorsement for placing the addition at the rear of the house vs. either the north or south side.

Chairman Smunt suggested a recommendation that the addition at the rear will have the least amount of impact on the architecture of the house. Mr. Colby read a draft resolution stating this and the Commission agreed with the wording.

A motion was made by Mr. Pretz and seconded by Mr. Norris with a unanimous voice vote to recommend to the Zoning Board of Appeals approval of the zoning variance.

6. COA: 2 E. Main St.

Mr. Colby stated the Commission recommended approval of this project at the April 3 meeting, but with two conditions: 1) repair instead of total replacement of the Municipal Center east brick wall and 2) No use of metal coping as proposed on the upper roof of the marble portion of the Municipal Center. The applicants have returned to provide additional information on these two items. Based on the new information presented, the Commission can either amend the previously approved COA, or leave the conditional approval in place as approved on April 3.

Peter Suhr, Public Services Manager for the City, stated that the project is scheduled to be presented the Government Services Committee of the City Council on April 22. Since the last meeting with the Commission, the City has received bids on the project, which included more analysis of the two issues by bidders. He noted that the overall cost of the project came in under budget, and therefore all of the alternatives for including second story window replacement on Old City Hall and the Annex Building will be included in the project. He noted if the brick wall replacement was included, this would add an additional \$20,000 to the overall budget and would not affect including the alternatives. He introduced the consultants, Rob Ezerins and Steve Vasilion from Prairie Forge Group.

Mr. Ezerins presented a drawing of the east brick wall of the Municipal Center showing the potential amount of brick that may need to be replaced. He noted this includes both damaged brick (20%) and interstitial brick (20%) that will need to be replaced in connection with the repair work. Masons who have bid on the project and inspected the wall estimated up to 40 to 45% would require replacement.

Mr. Norris stated he would prefer to table the item and talk directly to the mason. He questioned the purpose of the sawcutting if the brick is already failing. Mr. Vasilion stated only a very small portion of the brick replacement is due to the sawcutting. He noted the mason has found that many of the bricks are soft, and that at least 20% have the potential for spalling. Mr. Norris stated he did not see any spalling on the wall. Mr. Vasilion said the masonry is soft behind the face. Mr. Ezerins stated it is common practice to add joints in new brick and it would be negligent to not follow common practice with the brick replacement. Mr. Vasilion noted that the original report by a masonry consultant and the project bidder both recommended replacement of the brick wall.

Mr. Withey questioned if it is the Commission's responsibility to challenge the engineering recommendations of the City. Chairman Smunt noted that the expansion joints themselves are an aesthetic issue.

Ms. Weals asked if replacement of the roof membrane will help stop the deterioration of the brick and if it was possible to determine what percentage of the deterioration is due to roof failure vs. water through the wall. Mr. Ezerins said that is difficult to determine, but the roof is contributing to the issues with the parapet wall.

Mr. Bobowiec questioned why the masonry contractor was not present to respond the questions as requested by the Commission. He said he didn't feel the applicants were adequately responding to the Commission's requests for information. Mr. Suhr responded that a study was completed a year ago that said the wall was failing, and the architect and project contractor are both saying the same thing. He said Prairie Forge is the firm hired by the City to explain the findings and that he and the consultants are qualified architects.

The Commission moved on to discuss the metal coping. Mr. Ezerins stated they are concerned with the potential of cracking the marble caps, which weigh around 800 lbs. He presented two possible metal caps, including one that extended down the entire face of the marble cap. He showed pictures of a segment of the metal cap on the building. He explained that the pieces can be fitted so that the vertical joints on the cap match the vertical joints in the marble.

Chairman Smunt stated the metal cap is more predictable for long-term maintenance. He stated the question for the Commission to consider is whether the flashing that matches the profile of the caps has a minimal or major impact on the architecture of the building. He noted there is some negative impact in that it is not original.

Mr. Pretz said that based on the pictures, it is not really visible, and will provide a greater benefit down the road in terms of preserving the wall. Ms. Weals noted there is also the risk of the caps cracking. Mr. Norris questioned why the mason couldn't lift the caps without cracking them, but he noted that with the metal cap, all we are doing is adding a stripe on the top of the building that is similar to the gutters that already exist on some lower roofs.

Chairman Smunt asked about the joints between the sections of metal cap. Mr. Vasilion said the sections attach into another metal piece that covers the joint.

The Commission agreed with the proposal to add the metal cap on the marble portion of the building and use of the cap that matched the profile of the marble caps and lined up with the existing joints in the marble. The Commission asked that the cap be painted to match the marble.

Chairman Smunt asked the Commission if they would like to make a motion. Regarding the brick wall, he noted the applicants have presented that up to 40% of the brick may require replacement, but it may be more or less.

Mr. Norris reiterated his concern with the control joints and questioned if they need to be in the locations shown. Mr. Suhr suggested waiting for the mason to determine the final locations. Mr. Vasilion said the plans show approximate locations for control joints, but the locations can be modified to minimize the negative visual impact, and this can be determined in the field.

Mr. Pretz said he supports repair, not replacement, of the brick wall and he supports suggesting modifications be made to place the expansion joints in optimal locations.

Ms. Weals said she supports total replacement of the brick wall, instead of piece by piece replacing lintels and sills.

Mr. Prestidge said 40% is enough to warrant total replacement of the brick as the repaired wall will not look great when the repair is complete. He supports total replacement if it will look exactly the same as the existing wall.

Mr. Withey said he supports total replacement of the brick wall.

Mr. Bobowiec said if in fact 40% requires replacement, he would support total replacement of the brick; however he would not support replacement if it was actually 20%. He said he wants to see reports and data from the contractors. He noted the masonry contractor is not present. He said there is too much up in the air for the Commission to make a decision. His opinion rests with Mr. Norris' opinion as the architect on the Commission.

Chairman Smunt noted that there are three in support of total replacement of the wall and three opposed, so it does not appear that there are enough votes to change the approved COA with respect to the brick wall replacement. He suggested making a motion addressing the metal coping and placement of the control joints.

Mr. Colby read a draft motion for the Commission to consider:

- Authorize use of metal capstone coping and fascia, wrap the capstones per the diagram provided, paint the surface to match the marble.
- Allow the mason to choose the optimum location for necessary control joints to minimize impact on architecture.

A motion was made by Mr. Pretz and seconded by Mr. Norris to amend the COA per the draft motion. Mr. Bobowiec, Mr. Prestidge, Mr. Pretz and Mr. Withey voted yes. Mr. Norris and Ms. Weals voted no. Motion carried.

The Commission decided to move to Item #8 before Item #7.

8. 117 W. Main St. (fence)

Mr. Dave Gary, applicant, stated the proposal is to install a screening fence around the utility boxes on the east wall facing the plaza and add a screening wall for the Szechwan second story outdoor balcony. Mr. Gary explained that the restaurant wanted to block the view of items stored on the balcony next door.

A motion was made by Mr. Norris and seconded by Mr. Prestidge with a unanimous voice vote to approve the COA.

Mr. Gary thanked the Commission and added that he appreciates all of their input and suggestions.

7. 14 N. Riverside Ave. (windows)

Mr. Colby noted the applicant, Frank Collingbourne, could not be present at the meeting, but he did speak with him regarding the possibility of a façade grant to replace all of the upper story windows. He indicated that Mr. Collingbourne is open to the idea but is looking for some direction in terms of what type and material to use for the windows.

Chairman Smunt provided a sketch of a concept to use pairs of double hung windows, which would better match surrounding buildings. The Commission discussed whether any elements of the existing window openings are structural, or if the vertical mullions could be removed. Chairman Smunt suggested an architect was needed to sketch something up for the Commission to consider. Mr. Colby will follow up with the applicant.

9. Election of Officers

A motion was made by Mr. Pretz and seconded by Mr. Bobowiec with a unanimous voice vote to nominate Chairman Smunt to continue as Chairman and to nominate Mr. Norris to continue as Vice Chairman.

10. Additional Business.

There was none.

11. Announcements: Historic Preservation Commission meeting Wednesday, May 1, 2013 at 7:00pm in the Committee Room.

12. Adjournment:

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

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 8:32 pm.

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Respectfully submitted,
Dr. Steven Smunt, Chairman
St. Charles Historic Preservation Commission

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