

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2014
COUNCIL COMMITTEE ROOM**

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

Members Absent: Withey

Also Present: Russell Colby, Planning Division Manager

1. Call to order:

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

2. Roll call:

Chairman Smunt called roll with six members present. There was a quorum.

3. Approval of the agenda:

Two items were added for discussion under additional business: a) On-Cell Technology and b) Sign ordinance changes.

4. Presentation of minutes of the August 20, 2014 meeting.

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

5. COA: 201 S. 2nd St. (canopy fascia)

Owner Kevin Davis and contractor Frank Sirinani were present. Mr. Davis said the proposal is to recover the existing canopy fascia with a new metal panel that is the same color and has a vertical groove pattern. He said the existing panels had been covered with multiple decals over time and the fascia no longer holds paint for very long. He said the same red color would be used and the Commission agreed this was a good choice.

Mr. Siriani described the proposed aluminum fascia material, which will have a factory coated finish with a 20 year guarantee. Chairman Smunt asked how the material will be installed. Mr. Siriani said the canopy has a slight 10 degree bevel. He said a wide j-channel would be used on the bottom and at the corners and a coping with a gutter will be installed on top. He provided detail sheets for the j-channel and coping.

Mr. Davis said he has spent a significant amount of money on upkeep of the building because he believes it helps his business. Ms. Malay suggested the canopy fascia improvements could qualify for a façade improvement grant. Mr. Colby confirmed the property is eligible and that at a \$5,000 total cost, the grant would cover 50% up to \$2,500. The Commission discussed the timeline for the grant approval. Mr. Colby noted the Commission cannot formally recommend on the grant tonight, but can make a recommendation that would then be ratified at the next meeting.

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

A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Gibson with a unanimous voice vote to recommend to the City Council approval of the Façade Improvement Grant. Mr. Colby said this recommendation will be forwarded to the P&D Committee on Monday, Sept. 8 and the Commission would need to ratify the resolution at the next meeting.

6. COA & Façade Improvement Grant: 411 S. 1st St. (front porch repair)

Mr. Colby stated the applicant was unable to attend tonight and plans to attend on Oct. 1, but the item is on the agenda so the Commission can provide feedback and ask questions.

Chairman Smunt said his observation is that the work has been 90% completed. He said the material is appropriate and has durability for a commercial use. Mr. Bobowiec said he saw the porch first hand and did not realize the decking boards had already been replaced. Mr. Colby said Ms. Malay contacted him about there being a past grant for the porch. He confirmed there was a grant for the porch repairs and decking from 1999, which included the installation of tongue-in-groove decking that has now been removed.

Chairman Smunt said the railings and balusters are repairable and noted the only issue is a newel post, which can be repaired. The Commission discussed that the porch foundation doesn't appear to be pulling away from the building, as it seems like it was sloped for drainage. They discussed that additional photo evidence would be helpful to understand if there is an issue.

The Commission discussed that this work had been done without a permit and prior to applying for the Façade Improvement Grant. Ms. Malay suggested that the completed work should not be eligible for a grant, but perhaps the other repair work could be. The Commission would like to discuss this with the applicant.

A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Norris with a unanimous voice vote to table the item.

7. Additional Business

a. On-Cell Technology

Mr. Gibson said he has communicated with a company called On-Cell Technology, a mobile tours company that provides cell call in service, website/geobased maps, and apps. He said for a mobile enabled/responsive website, which is similar to what the Commission has been talking about, the service costs \$199/month. He said there is no limit to the stops or tours, but there can only be a single website. A pro version costs \$399/month. He said a representative of the business is willing to demonstrate the product to the Commission.

The Commission discussed the website vs. the app. Mr. Gibson said they will create the app, but the cost is higher, up to \$6,000, plus there monthly fee for service is \$399. He suggested that maybe that is more of a long term goal that is citywide, once the website version is successful.

Chairman Smunt said the City is engaging in a branding initiative right now, so it would make sense to wait until that process is concluded before trying to launch a citywide initiative.

Ms. Malay mentioned the potential to apply for a CLG grant. Mr. Colby stated the grant applications are typically due in November for the following year.

The Commission decided to plan for a demonstration by On-Cell at the next meeting.

b. Sign Ordinance Changes

Mr. Pretz said that the Plan Commission reviewed a zoning amendment to change the regulations for Historic Sign designations, which currently set a date of 1966 to qualify. The Plan Commission reviewed a proposal to change the date to 1976, which would match the 40 year timeframe from when the Ordinance was adopted. The Plan Commission recommended instead using a rolling 40 year window so that more contemporary signs could be considered historic at a future date without the ordinance needing to be changed again.

The Commission discussed that this recommendation made sense. There was discussion regarding whether a sign could also be landmarked. Mr. Colby stated that it could, however, the standards are much higher than is required for the Historic Sign designation. He noted that the Historic Sign designation merely allows the sign to remain up; it does not require the sign be protected or preserved.

8. Announcements: Historic Preservation Commission meeting Wednesday, September 17, 2014 at 7:00 pm in the Committee Room.

9. Adjournment:

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 8:19 pm.