

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2014
COUNCIL COMMITTEE ROOM**

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

Members Absent: Withey

Also Present: Russell Colby, Planning Division Manager
Ellen Johnson, Planner

1. Call to order

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

2. Roll call

Chairman Smunt called roll with five members present. There was a quorum. Mr. Norris arrived at 7:05.

3. Approval of the agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

4. Presentation of minutes of the September 17, 2014 meeting

Chairman Smunt asked Ms. Malay to clarify whether she was referring to the Commission or City Council when she stated, "...if they approve grant funds for work that has already been completed they will set a precedent..." under item #9, page 4.

Ms. Malay said she was referring to both; she clarified she meant that if the grant was approved it would set a precedent, and the minutes should be amended to reflect that clarification.

A motion was made by Mr. Bobowiec and seconded by Ms. Malay with a unanimous voice vote to make the correction to the minutes.

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

5. COA: 423 S. 7th St. (shed)

The applicant was not present.

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

6. Historic Sign Designation: Kevin’s Auto Service, 201 S. 2nd St.

Mr. Gibson asked whether the sign has been replaced. Owner Kevin Davis was present and stated the structure itself is 50 years old and has never been changed. The plastic sign panel has been changed about five times.

Chairman Smunt said the sign appears to meet the criteria for Historic Sign Designation.

A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Norris with a unanimous voice vote to recommend approval.

7. Historic Sign Designation: Second Street Tavern/Old Style Sign, 221 S. 2nd St.

Mr. Bobowiec recused himself and stated he is the property owner. Mark Hoffman, tavern operator, was also present.

Chairman Smunt stated there is enough evidence supporting the sign meets the requirements for Historic Sign Designation.

A motion was made by Mr. Pretz and seconded by Ms. Malay with a unanimous voice vote to recommend approval. Mr. Bobowiec abstained.

8. COA: 407 Park Ave.

Chairman Smunt stated they will address the south (rear) elevation.

Marilyn Connelly, applicant, was present. She reported they have decided not to do the roof-top deck. However, she asked for the Commission’s opinion about installing a railing around the one-story roof for aesthetic purposes.

Chairman Smunt said a railing would have no functionality and is not an element typically used in Craftsman architecture.

Ms. Malay asked whether the Building Division would require the railing meet code. Mr. Colby did not believe so, since there is no door.

Commissioners agreed the railing would become a maintenance issue.

Mr. Pretz asked whether the original siding will be preserved. Ms. Connelly replied that vinyl siding will be used and siding work on the house will begin tomorrow.

Chairman Smunt asked about the siding used on the single-story addition to the west and whether it will be sided like the rest of the house. Ms. Connelly confirmed and said the existing siding will be covered. Ms. Malay suggested removing the existing siding before covering it if it is Masonite.

A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Bobowiec with a unanimous voice vote to approve the COA for the south (rear) elevation.

Ms. Connelly reported she has chosen a Craftsman style door with three lights and dentils, as suggested by the Commission.

Mr. Pretz stated the original siding that is now exposed changes the look of the house in a positive way.

9. Discussion regarding Landmark Nomination for Camp Kane & Jones Law Office

Ms. Malay reported at the dedication event last Saturday, Alderman Stellato expressed support for landmarking both the site and the building. She has filled out the nomination form.

Mr. Pretz said he believes the lawyer's name was Stevens S. Jones, not Steven S. Jones. Ms. Malay said she would look into that to confirm.

Mr. Colby explained the process: if the Commission finds the nomination acceptable, the City will sign the application as property owner and the public hearing will be scheduled. He suggested doing only one landmark nomination for the site itself and describing the site and the building separately. The site could include the woods up to the Public Works facility. The legal description from the Farnsworth Mansion special use application must be altered to at least remove the eastern portion that is now part of the Public Works facility. A Section line can form the north boundary of the site, approximately where the wooded area ends.

Ms. Malay said landmarking will make the site eligible for grants in the future.

The Commission discussed signage and that one landmark sign should be at the Law Office and one near the Camp Kane monument. Ms. Malay reported that an anonymous donor is donating the History in Plain View signage for the Law Office and Camp Kane.

10. Additional Business

Jones Law Office: Ms. Malay said she received positive feedback for the dedication event. She will meet with Peter Suhr tomorrow about necessary repairs to the Law Office. She has obtained donated painting services and is working on donated roofing services.

Ms. Malay asked Commissioners for their thoughts on an issue with the structure. There is potential for water damage to the bottom of the building due to the fact that the concrete pad is larger than the building and the rear grade. The siding comes down to the concrete. Mr.

Bobowiec made a suggestion to replace the bottom two boards with fiber cement. Chairman Smunt suggested a fiber cement skirt board instead, with a drip cap. He said skirt boards were typical of wood frame buildings, although they do not have evidence the Law Office ever had that feature. Mr. Pretz said it would protect the building and Commissioners agreed it would be acceptable.

Ms. Malay will talk to Peter Suhr about re-grading near the rear of the building.

Commissioners discussed the original location of the Law Office.

Discussion regarding Mobile Tour App: Mr. Colby said the Commission should prepare an outline for the project to provide with the budget proposal. He said the Commission may need to propose taking some funds out of the Façade Grant program to make up for the budget request.

The Commission discussed proposing the app only for the Commission at this point to ensure the proposal will be ready for the upcoming budget process. Other organizations can join later on.

Mr. Gibson said the cost if the Commission chooses the mobile app and inputs the content would be \$200 per month for the lite version and \$400 per month for the pro version. The budget request would be for one year. The one year period would be a proof-of-concept.

Chairman Smunt suggested exploring the native app option down the road when more funding from multiple sources is available and more organizations become involved.

Mr. Bobowiec brought up GoDaddy web hosting which allows the user to convert websites to a mobile site for very little money. He questioned whether the value of the On Cell service is worth the cost. Mr. Gibson said the differences between a GoDaddy site and On Cell's TourSphere offering are the widgets provided, tech support, the fact that the company is responsive to changes in technology and software, the templates, and the phone number component of the app. Commissioners discussed the pros and cons of TourSphere and GoDaddy.

Commissioner talked about the scope of content for the app. They decided that only City landmarks and historic districts should be included at this point. Content can later be expanded.

Mr. Gibson said he would put together the proposal with a description of the app, scope, cost, and potential for growth. He will also be able to create a prototype to show City Council.

Mr. Bobowiec brought up marketing of the app and whether that should be built into the budget. The Commission decided not to include advertising in the budget proposal. Mr. Bobowiec suggested cardboard table tents for hotels to promote the app. Commissioners also discussed small freestanding signs in front of each landmark.

Mr. Gibson said he will prepare the information for the next meeting.

Guest: Justin Bell from Troop 25 addressed the Commission. He said he is working on his Eagle Scout and he is interested in historic preservation. He would like to interview a Commissioner after the meeting.

COA: 423 S. 7th St. (shed)

The Commission returned to item #5.

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

The applicant still was not present and the Commission expressed a need to have more information, including detailed elevations and siding material, before making a determination.

Chairman Smunt said he would request four inch clapboard siding to match the house with either beveled corners or corner trim. Siding should be wood or hardy board.

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

11. Announcements: Historic Preservation Commission meeting Wednesday, October 15, 2014 at 7:00 pm in the Committee Room.

12. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 8:17 pm.