

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2014
COUNCIL COMMITTEE ROOM**

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

Members Absent: None

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

1. Call to order

Chairman Smunt called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

2. Roll call

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

3. Approval of the agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

4. Presentation of minutes of the October 1, 2014 meeting

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

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

Fred Mosier, applicant, was present. He stated he plans to cover the shed with plywood panels because that was the material used on the previous shed. Commissioners agreed that using clapboard to match the house instead of plywood panels would improve the shed's appearance. Mr. Mosier was agreeable to using clapboard.

Chairman Smunt asked whether corner boards would be used and Mr. Mosier confirmed.

Mr. Norris said the scale and proportion of the clapboard should be the same as the house.

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

6. COA: 1 W. Illinois St. (sign)

Applicant Mike Hoffer with Aubrey Signs was present. He stated the proposed wall sign is for the new Top Table restaurant. It will be a light box on the east elevation, facing the river.

Chairman Smunt asked if the restaurant changes ownership, whether the new restaurant could change out the panel. The applicant confirmed and said there are two existing light boxes on the north and west sides of the building which Top Table does not plan to use.

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

7. COA: 209 N. 3rd Ave. (enclose garage)

Chairman Smunt asked whether the garage door will be removed. A representative was not present. Mr. Colby explained the proposal is to remove the garage door and pour a foundation wall where the garage door is now due to drainage problems into the basement. A concrete patio will be constructed at the level of the existing stairwell landing to the far edge of the foundation wall.

Mr. Pretz stated concern that the owner has not followed through with other approved improvements in the past and that he is leery to grant the owner permission to construct the wall with the promise of a patio.

Mr. Colby said that if the patio is part of the COA request, the Commission can ensure that he is not able to final out the project without installing a patio.

Mr. Withey asked what grounds the Commission would have for denying the request. Chairman Smunt said the Commission would need valid reasons for doing so.

Mr. Pretz said the owner should be present so the Commission can speak to him.

Chairman Smunt asked whether the proposal will negatively impact the building's architecture or the neighborhood's historic character, which would be reasons to oppose. Mr. Pretz said it impacts the house next door.

Commissioners noted there are no architectural drawings or details concerning wall width. Chairman Smunt said that information would probably not make a difference regarding the architectural impact of the project. He would recommend approval because it is a noncontributing structure and the project will not be in view from the public right-of-way.

A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Gibson with a 6-1 voice vote to approve the COA, with a condition that the entire project must be completed, including the concrete wall, removal of the door, and concrete patio. Mr. Pretz was opposed.

8. COA: 117 N. 6th Ave. (siding)

Mike Schramer, applicant and contractor, was present. He stated the existing aluminum siding is 25 years old and is in disrepair. The soffit fascia and gutter material will remain. The windows will be re-wrapped with aluminum, similar to existing. Double four inch vinyl siding will be used. The existing siding is six inch. Four inch by four inch vinyl corner boards will be used.

Chairman Smunt said he would recommend a fascia board under the soffits and under the eave in the gable. The applicant said it would be a matter of whether the owner would be willing to incur the additional cost.

Mr. Schramer brought up improvements to the porch that the owner has planned for next spring. The Commission advised they will need to review that project as a separate COA in the future.

Chairman Smunt suggested the shutters on the front picture window be removed.

Mr. Pretz said this is an opportunity to enhance the architecture of the building by installing the frieze board.

Chairman Smunt suggested installing the frieze board only in the gables to reduce cost and avoid conflict with side and rear windows. Mr. Schramer pointed out there might be an issue with the gable vent at the peak. Also, the existing white aluminum soffit material might clash with the new aluminum frieze board.

A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Pretz with a unanimous voice vote to approve the COA as proposed, including four inch corner boards, with a recommendation that frieze board be installed at the owner's discretion.

9. COA: 117 E. Main St. (sign)

The applicant was not present. Mr. Colby said the applicant is looking for options to increase visibility.

Mr. Norris said the proposed projecting sign is not in the spirit of the type of projecting signs the City wants to allow. It looks flimsy. An interchangeable banner sign would be better.

Ms. Malay asked whether the sign would be allowed and Mr. Colby confirmed, as long as it meets size requirements.

Commissioners agreed the look is too minimal and needs to have more character. They would like to discuss options with the applicant.

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

10. COA & Façade Improvement Grant: 111-113 W. Main St.

Applicant Frank Ferraro was present. He said that he rebuilt the rear deck fourteen years ago and he is proposing a similar project as what was approved by the Commission at that time. The decking will be fire retardant lumber, which was used last time, but has rotted badly. The stairs will be rebuilt and railings will be repaired. He stated that the Steel Beam Theatre is interested in enclosing the deck area in the future.

Jordan Jones, contractor, said the fire retardant lumber they will use this time is wolmanized, which is an improvement compared to the product used fourteen years ago.

Chairman Smunt recommended a synthetic product for the decking that looks like wood and is more durable than the proposed fire retardant lumber.

Mr. Ferraro said when the area is enclosed in the future the decking will be removed anyway. Enclosure of the deck may occur within the next two years.

Mr. Norris pointed out that the Façade Improvement Grant requires projects be maintained for a minimum number of years. Mr. Colby said the requirement is five years, unless the applicant requests the City modify the agreement.

Mr. Smunt said he would be inclined not to request grant money for the deck since it may be removed in a few years, which is not a good use of taxpayer dollars. He stated anything that will not be impacted by the future enclosure can be eligible for the grant. This includes all the elements besides the decking, not including the stairs, and railing system around the deck.

Ms. Malay said she believes the grant prohibits more than one request for the same area from being made within five years. This means the future enclosure might not be eligible for a grant. Mr. Colby said the limit on the amount of grants any property can receive over a five year period is \$20,000. The restriction on a grant for the same area may be for the same timeframe.

Mr. Colby said all that is left in the grant budget for this year is \$10,500. Ms. Malay said the applicant may receive the same amount of grant funds regardless of whether the items Chairman Smunt indicated are disqualified or not.

A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Norris 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, with the exception of the upper decking and railing surrounding the deck.

11. Recommendation regarding Landmark Nomination for Camp Kane & Jones Law Office

Mr. Colby said he spoke to City Administrator Mark Koenen about the boundaries. Mr. Koenen suggested the Commission come up with a proposal for the area they would like to see landmarked. The proposal will be presented to Planning and Development Committee, which will then authorize the City to file the landmark application.

Mr. Colby showed the existing parcel which was the parcel identified for the Farnsworth Mansion Special Use. He asked for the Commission's opinion about the appropriate landmark boundaries, within which any improvements would require a COA.

Commissioners agreed it would be best to follow the existing fence line along the Public Works facility to the edge of the woods for the eastern border, then straight west to Riverside Ave. for the northern border. The current south and west parcel lines should be used for the south and west borders.

12. Mobile Tour App Project

Mr. Gibson stated he has no updates and that the item should be included on the next meeting's agenda.

13. Additional Business

Jones Law Office – Ms. Malay said she met with Peter Suhr from Public Works about the site grading. He said there are plates underneath so the building is off the ground. Public Works has studied the site and it appears water should not be an issue. If there is, the City will deal with it. Mr. Suhr was open to the idea of a fiber cement skirt board as was discussed at the last meeting. Ms. Malay reported that Mr. Suhr wants the Commission to approve the existing paint colors for when the building is repainted.

A motion was made by Mr. Withey and seconded by Mr. Norris with a unanimous voice vote to make a recommendation to approve the existing paint colors. Ms. Malay abstained.

14. Announcements: Historic Preservation Commission meeting Wednesday, November 5, 2014 at 7:00 pm in the Committee Room.

Chairman Smunt announced Rhythm on the River, a Jazz – Swing concert with 1930s music on October 19th at Arcada Theater from 3:30 to 6:00 p.m. It is a fundraiser for St. Charles Rotary and River Corridor Foundation. Tickets cost \$30 or \$25 for seniors and students and can be purchased at Blue Goose.

15. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.