

**MINUTES  
CITY OF ST. CHARLES  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 2015  
COUNCIL COMMITTEE ROOM**

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

**Members Absent:** Gibson

**Also Present:** Russell Colby, Planning Division Manager  
Ellen Johnson, Planner  
Karla McCleary, Recording Secretary

---

**1. Call to order**

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

**2. Roll call**

Chairman Smunt called roll with five members present. There was a quorum. Norris arrived at 7:12 p.m.

**3. Approval of the agenda**

Chairman Smunt stated the agenda will stand as published.

**4. Presentation of minutes of the April 1, 2015 meeting**

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

**5. COA & Façade Improvement Grant: 11 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> St. (exterior improvements)**

Mr. Colby presented photos of the property and asked Mr. Grove to walk everyone through his proposal. Mr. Grove said there are five items to discuss. The first item is replacing all of the fascia boards and wood all around the building. Mr. Grove said the siding is aluminum but all the wood trim has rotted and is deteriorating. On all of the peaks or dormers, they are going to use a product called Alupalite, which is an aluminum plastic composite material that will last longer than a wood product. The second item is replacing 3 of the steel rear doors that are corroding. Mr. Grove stated that one of the major items to also replace is the roof. The building is 160 feet long and 60 feet wide. While looking at photos of the property, Mr. Grove stated they are going to replace the larger roof portion to the left, which is approximately half of the entire roof. The

last item is a sign located on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street side. Mr. Grove said the sign is made of wood and is delaminating and will be replaced with another aluminum type product but different than what will be used on the peaks. Mr. Grove stated the total is \$45,050 and they are applying for a \$20,000 grant.

Mr. Pretz asked if the completed look will be similar to what is there today, including the doors, and Mr. Grove replied that it would. Mr. Pretz confirmed with Mr. Grove that they will only be doing the larger portion of the roof. Mr. Pretz asked how close in color the new roof will be to the remaining, existing roof. Mr. Grove stated he did not know at this time as his wife will be handling the decorating component of the facade look. Mr. Grove stated that the entire roof will be one color at the completion of this project.

Ms. Malay confirmed with Mr. Grove that the improvements to be made to the sign mounts will incorporate the roof peaks in their entirety and the tenants will be responsible for the sign faces. The lighting will not be more than what is currently there.

Chairman Smunt stated that currently, there is a vertical wall that the signs are attached to. Mr. Grove confirmed that the plywood vertical wall will be removed and replaced with Alupalite or a similar product. This will take up the entire structural facing, with the sign panels going on the Alupalite or other aluminized product.

Chairman Smunt asked if the casing around the windows is made of plywood with aluminum that butts up against it. Mr. Grove stated he is not sure if they are wood. Ms. Johnson stated she took some photographs of the building and she does not think that they are wood casings. Chair Smunt said that when you change out and put in aluminum framed windows, sometimes they have aluminum casings as well. Mr. Grove stated that he is not sure what the new casings will be. Chair Smunt stated that you cannot tell that there is a vinyl window in place, unless you look from the inside because of the wood casings that are in place. Chairman Smunt said if aluminum is installed, it would be better to not put the wood back and just leave the aluminum casing in a bronze or dark color. Ms. Malay asked about the doors – Mr. Grove said they will be identical to what is in place, including the glass.

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

**A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Bobowiec with a unanimous voice vote to recommend to City Council approval of the Façade Improvement Grant.**

**6. COA & Façade Improvement Grant: 100 W. Main St. – Hotel Baker (window & fire escape painting)**

Mr. Colby stated that Hotel Baker does not have a representative present. The Commission will recall that the hotel received a grant last year to do the front windows and the river facing windows, which they have completed. Currently, they are applying for funding to complete the project which involves painting the windows and fire escape on the back and west side of the building. Mr. Colby said their proposal is the same as what the Commission had approved with the grant last year. Typically, buildings are limited to a maximum grant amount of \$20,000 during a 5-year period; however National Register properties can receive up to \$30,000 based on restoration of architecturally significant features. Mr. Colby stated that part of the consideration by the Commission would be to determine if the windows constitute an architecturally significant feature that would justify the increase in funding.

Chairman Smunt stated the windows in the back of the building are the same type of metal casement windows that are in the front of the hotel. Ms. Malay asked how visible the fire escape staircase is and Mr. Colby said it is not very visible because it is hidden around the back of the building.

Mr. Pretz said justification for another \$10,000 for windows and a fire escape that are located at the back of the building is difficult for him to award; this would pull \$10,000 from someone else who may apply. Ms. Malay and Mr. Bobowiec also expressed concern with funding the fire escape at the back of the building. Chairman Smunt stated that the windows are original and they need new glazing compound and window panes. Mr. Colby stated that based on the estimate there may not be enough funding to cover the entire proposal. Therefore, if the Commission wanted to say that funding will be used for some parts of the project and as a result that may impact their overall grant amount that they qualify for. Their last grant included some additional costs and was well in excess of their approved proposal. Mr. Colby confirmed the funds would be coming from the next fiscal year's budget.

Ms. Malay asked if there are other requests for funding at this time. Mr. Colby said there are not, however there is one project that was approved in 2013 that was rolled forward into this current year – 314 W. Main St. – the location just west of the new restaurant Shakou. Their grant funding will be running out at the end of this fiscal year and if they want to pursue completion of their project, they will need to apply for a new grant. Mr. Colby confirmed that the Hotel Baker grant would use the remaining funding for the entire new fiscal year.

Ms. Malay asked for an update on the grant awarded to the barber shop and Mr. Colby said since that was approved in the summer of 2014, they still have time to complete that project.

Mr. Pretz stated that there is importance with the Hotel Baker windows and the continued preservation to go along with what has already been granted. The fire escape is another building element that they have to maintain. Ms. Malay said they are still eligible for an additional \$5,000. Mr. Pretz asked Mr. Colby if the \$5,000 would still be applied to the current fiscal year. Mr. Colby stated that this would be a new grant and it would be approved in the new fiscal year – 15/16. To gain a clearer understanding, Mr. Pretz stated that the Hotel Baker has been given \$20,000 and they have used \$15,000 of it and they are eligible for \$5,000 if the City decides to give it to them. Mr. Colby said that their grant last year was not for the full \$20,000 – it was for \$15,000.

Chairman Smunt said if the Historic Preservation Commission would like to move forward and recommend to City Council that additional funding is worthy of their consideration - if they approve the funds, there will be no more funds for the next fiscal year. Mr. Colby confirmed that the Hotel can ask for an additional \$10,000, on top of the \$20,000 because of their National Register standing. Ms. Malay stated that as a Commission, they can take the position of declining the back staircase as being a part of this grant funding. Chairman Smunt stated that an exterior staircase is not considered architecturally significant, but the original windows are an architecturally significant element.

Mr. Colby noted this type of window repair does not require a permit unless something additional is required.

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

**A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Withey with a unanimous voice vote to recommend to City Council approval of the Façade Improvement Grant, to include work on the windows only and not the fire escape staircase, based upon the fact that the windows are historically significant and the fire escape staircase is not considered historically significant, nor is it visible from the public right-of-way.**

#### **7. COA: 9 S. 3rd St.**

Mr. Colby stated that there is no new information and the Commission's comments were provided to the applicant. The applicant did not provide any additional information other than to say that he is unable to provide the information for the relocation and is asking the Commission to take action on his request for the demolition.

Mr. Pretz asked if he is the official owner of the building. Mr. Colby stated that it is his understanding that he is only under contract to purchase the building. The City Code does not

require that a property owner be the individual requesting a permit or a COA. The COA does not give the requester the right to go on the property; rather it is the Commission saying that this change as proposed is appropriate or not. Thus the applicant may not have the actual right to go on to the property and demolish the building.

Ms. Malay asked if they can stipulate that as part of the reason why they voted no, because they were not provided with the information. Mr. Colby said that would be the appropriate thing to do because there was information that was requested and was not provided to support the request. Mr. Pretz asked how much work has been done on the building. Mr. Colby replied that there is a permit under review, but not yet issued, to have the interior refinished. Officials from the Building Department have been inside the building to survey damage from the water leak on the second floor. Everything under the second floor has been gutted out. Mr. Colby stated that they did not identify any structural issues with the building, only some deficiencies with the framing and that they will correct them as part of the finishing work. Ms. Malay stated as clarification that the deficiencies in framing are nothing that would cause a demolition. Mr. Colby agreed and added that the deficiencies are relatively minor such as adding joist hangers and headers in some of the doorways. Mr. Norris stated, for his understanding, the owners applied for a permit to repair the damage but the next door neighbor applied to demolish the house. Mr. Colby stated that a request like this can be made for consideration by the Commission. The City does not require that the owner sign off on the permit.

Mr. Pretz said this matter should not be tabled; the applicant has not provided the Commission with the information they need. If the vote is not in favor of the applicant, they will need to come back and reapply. Mr. Colby stated that they have the choice, based upon the language of the ordinance, to revise their proposal and come back before the Commission, or request the City Council consider their existing proposal. Mr. Pretz stated that there seems to be a conflict between two groups, the present owner with a permit currently under review, and the potential purchaser of the property who is applying to demolish the building. Mr. Pretz said he personally has to lean with the owner. Mr. Bobowiec asked if there is a reason why the permit for the repairs has not been issued and Mr. Colby replied that it is going through the review process and will be issued.

Ms. Malay asked that as far as the procedure goes, the Commission has to make a motion to approve the COA, and then have it voted down, followed by a recommendation to the Council. Chairman Smunt said they must make a recommendation to the City Council based upon their findings. Ms. Malay reiterated that they can put the motion out there for approval, and if it gets denied, then make a recommendation to City Council. Chairman Smunt agreed and stated they add their findings listed in the April 1, 2015, Historic Preservation Commission Meeting Minutes found on page 6, item #3.

**A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Withey to approve the COA for demolition of 9 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.**

**Roll Call:**

**Ayes: None**

**Nays: Smunt, Bobowiec, Malay, Norris, Pretz, Withey**

**Absent: Gibson**

**Motion Fails, 0-6**

**A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Bobowiec with a unanimous voice vote to recommend to City Council denial of the COA based on the findings as listed in the April 1, 2015, Historic Preservation Commission Meeting Minutes, page 6, item #3: Demolition of an architecturally contributing structure is in violation of Section 17.32.080.G.3, Items A, B and E.**

Chairman Smunt added that he spoke to Mr. Larsen and the Mayor regarding this property. Mr. Larsen is interested in moving the building to the southwest corner of 6<sup>th</sup> St. and Main St. Mr. Larsen owns the property in partnership with another gentleman and his partner is not interested in taking on this move. Until this gets resolved, this move is not going to happen. Chairman Smunt suggested promoting the idea that this house may be available to move to another location. Mr. Colby was in agreement with Ms. Malay that they should wait for direction from City Council. With improvements made to the building, there could be new negotiations and Mr. Larsen may no longer remain interested in the building. Chairman Smunt said the Mayor will defer to the Commission regarding the architectural significance of this building. The Mayor would like to see Mr. Shulzhenko succeed in getting his space rented out.

Ms. Malay added that there are several newer Council members so the Commission needs to be sure that they understand the process and what all of this means. Mr. Colby said typically this will go to the Planning & Development Committee first but it is possible that this could go directly to Council. Mr. Pretz stated that representation from the Historic Preservation Commission needs to be at the meeting to answer Council members' questions. Mr. Colby said the next Planning & Development Meeting will be May 11, 2015.

## **8. Additional Business**

### **a. Mobile Tour App Project**

Chairman Smunt referenced an email received from Mr. Gibson stating that he will provide examples of various applications that are already out there. Ms. Malay stated that Mr. Gibson told her of an app that is available and if you are within 120 ft. of a particular landmark, this app will provide details about that landmark.

**b. Landmarks Research**

Chairman Smunt had no additional information on this. Mr. Bobowiec spoke with the owner of the property he researched and gave him Mr. Colby's number to arrange a time to come in and talk with the Commission.

Chairman Smunt asked if the 8<sup>th</sup> Illinois Calvary is going to do something at Camp Kane this spring. Ms. Malay said on Saturday, May 9, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. there will be a training session on how to become a Calvary member.

**9. Announcements: Historic Preservation Commission meeting Wednesday, May 6, 2015 at 7:00 pm in the Council Committee Room.**

**10. Adjournment**

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.