

MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2015
COUNCIL COMMITTEE ROOM

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

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Russell Colby, Planning Division Manager
Meagan Moreira, 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 seven members present. There was a quorum.

3. Approval of the agenda

No changes to the agenda.

4. Presentation of minutes of the October 7, 2015 meeting

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

5. COA: 318 S. 5th St. (building addition)

A motion was made by Mr. Norris and seconded by Mr. Withey with a unanimous voice vote to table item 5.

6. COA: 304 State Ave. (exterior renovations)

Mr. Kanute, applicant, went over the changes he made to his plans that were suggested and discussed at the previous meeting:

- West elevation shutters were eliminated.
- Added shutters to the front elevation only and they will be built to size.
- Stone on the front was reduced to 24" high on the transitional part between the house and the garage and raised to 4 ft. across the front of the garage.
- Added oversized freeze board between the house and the garage to encompass the two transom fascia windows.
- Eliminated east elevation windows.
- Cedar carriage doors with lights on the garage.

- Added three double-hung windows to the west elevation on the second floor.
- Separated the mulled double-hung windows on the east elevation.
- Solid wood black front door with 2-1/2 lit side lights.
- North side is sided, not brick, going up to the chimney gable.

Mr. Norris asked for clarification on the transitional part between the house and the garage on the front elevation because whatever is on the front should roll off to the side. Mr. Kanute said they will keep the stone at 24” and then will jump up to 48”. Mr. Smunt said from the northwest, you will see a high wall on the south and west, and then drop down to a low wall on the east. He said he knows the stone is not structural, but they are giving the image that it is, so he would think they would want to carry the stone around all the way at the same height, whatever it may be. Mr. Kanut said was agreeable to this, and asked if 24” is okay in the transitional area. Commissioners confirmed that the 24” stone looks much better underneath the windows.

Chairman Smunt said he thinks there should be a space below the transom windows to center them so the amount of space above and below are the same. Mr. Norris said there is a header, joist and rafter all hidden up there and if you raise them they will get into the structure. Commissioners suggested making the freeze board larger to balance it out. Mr. Kanute said they will use the same width as what is above the window.

Commissioners and Mr. Kanute agreed that a 2 over 2 panel solid wood door with a centered style would look best, and the door should be black to match the shutters.

A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Norris with a unanimous voice vote to approve the COA, contingent upon making the freeze board in the upper windows thicker below and matching the stone height on the east elevation and south elevation.

7. COA: 20 Illinois St. (First Street Parking Deck)

Mr. Colby said this is the parking deck for Phase III along the riverfront.

Mr. Rasmussen, applicant, said it’s a simple structure that doesn’t even reach to the top of the first floor of the buildings. They had to create openness in the deck to meet open parking deck requirements. He said they put bar railings to match the ones around town in green colored paint. The lights will match the city lights just on small poles. He noted that the only thing different from the original rendering is that the City has asked them to cover the stairs coming out of the garage and the handicapped ramp to keep them reasonably clean of snow, and those will match the roof which is a standing seam metal roof. He said there was also a third canopy, which will cover the stairs coming up onto the First St. parking ramp, but you won’t be able to see it because it’s tucked between the buildings. He said they have not made a final decision on the brick yet, but it will be fairly similar to Building 1. It will be either a tumbled oversized brick or that same brick in modular with either a cabernet blend or an orange blend. Each one of the buildings will be unique, and he could bring in brick samples once there is a selection made for Building 1. The Commission agreed that there should be some sympathy to it to have some colors match and carry over, but not identical. Mr. Rasmussen said 90% of the brick in that building is precast, so there is a little color limitation.

Mr. Pretz asked how they would make the parking garage a non-focal point. Mr. Rasmussen said the garage itself encompasses all of Building 1 and not even half of Building 2, and for that very reason he thinks the garage should blend with Building 1.

Mr. Norris suggested that one of the coverings be more rounded with heavier concrete columns to be a bit more sensitive to match the ones on the bridge. Mr. Colby said the shape on the tower will be similar to the east side deck. Chairman Smunt said it's far enough from the bridge and is a stand-alone structure and it doesn't need to match. Mr. Rasmussen said that would be hard to do and right now it's a steel truss posted roof. Ms. Malay said the rounded theme would be nice to have since it's all riverfront property. Chairman Smunt said those areas on the bridge are a pedestrian congregation area and he doesn't think they want to create that for a parking deck for that same purpose; and these covering are only to protect a walkway for safety reasons. Mr. Gibson said that if this is only 10 ft. above ground, that will really add a lot of mass close to the ground. Mr. Rasmussen said he doesn't think adding the round covers to a square parking garage will work. Chairman Smunt said he doesn't think they should be taking elements from the bridge to tie it to a parking deck and Commissioner agreed. Mr. Pretz said he has confidence in Mr. Rasmussen to deliver the right product. Mr. Rasmussen said it's about simplicity and keeping it low profile with a small pitch.

Mr. Colby said that if there are any more changes or additions to the deck, the changes would be brought back before Commission. Mr. Rasmussen said they are trying to get their basic permit to get the concrete going. He will be picking up the newest parking deck drawings. The Commission can take a look at them one more as he starts to select colors. He said he thinks they will occupy the deck by June.

A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Bobowiec with a unanimous voice vote to approve the COA as presented, with the contingency that any revisions be presented to the Commission.

8. Landmark Nomination for 215 N. 3rd Ave.

Mr. Pretz said the information gathered came from County records and the Heritage Center and there was no information available on the architect and builder.

Pat Pretz said the land shuffled around to Minard, Burchell, Burgees, Ryan and Munn. Munn sold the property to Amos Locke who lived a couple blocks away next to his wallpaper and paint shop. His daughter was Laura Locke, who married Marshall Eddie and she was the daughter from his first marriage where his wife died after childbirth. Amos then remarried and had a son, but Laura was his only daughter. The house is a Queen Anne home but the details are amazing for this type of Queen Anne. Mr. Marshall Eddie worked as a foreman for the mill condensing plant on the river. For someone who was a foreman, the details are impressive as he was not a man of great wealth. The Grandfather, Amos Locke, owned a woolen mill along the river and settled in St. Charles in 1837. He is known to have built the Moss home where the Norris funeral home is. He most likely sold this property to his son-in-law and daughter knowing that he could go on to help them with some of the details. They are descendants of one of the original families. They had two children, Dorothy and Bernard, who grew up in the home. Bernard grew

up and worked at Crown Electrical Company and Dorothy was single and died fairly young, before her mother.

She said the home is covered in siding but there is clad board underneath, but they did not have funds to remove the siding. The house has four steep gables with the original decorative shingles, original one-over-one sash windows, three beautiful stained glass windows, bay window, original attic window, original fireplace with blazed brick surround, detailed beaded crown molding, two sets of transom windows, two sets of pocket doors and corbels at the top of the bay window on the second floor, original front door and there was either an original or added on small wraparound porch on the front of the home, but it is now just concrete steps.

Laura Rice and Pat Roche were introduced as the owners.

Ms. Pretz noted that during the restoration of the kitchen they found a little time capsule/century box found in the wall. She passed those around to the Commission and stated that they were going to make a shadow box of the items.

Mr. Pretz said very early on it was probably all coal heating, but the areas that they did cut into they didn't find any gas piping. They have some concern that some of the piping that was cut may not have necessarily been for the broilers but they can't definitely say whether that would have been for gas light fixtures; but the piping was old, cut and gone. Chairman Smunt said the tubes might have been retrofitted later because they have sawed boards above the second floor where they cut parts of the floor to run the knob and tube and then put the board back on. You can tell that the boards have been cut and pried out to retrofit the electrical. Mr. Pretz said he doesn't think they saw evidence of that. Chairman Smunt said 1898 may have been pre-electric and he only asks because it's an interesting part of the country's utility history.

Mr. Pretz said they tried to preserve as much of the interior as possible, so it kind of prevented them from doing anymore exploration. Since Locke is the first family name to be associated with the construction of the house, and since they were well established in the community, the historical name for the nomination should be the Locke House, 1898. Ms. Pretz suggested Locke-Marshall Eddie. Ms. Malay suggested Marshall Eddie-Locke because Marshall Eddie was the first owner of the building itself. Ms. Pretz noted that Marshall Eddie had a checkered past in St. Charles and ended up in Canada, but Laura stayed so we may want to downplay the Marshall Eddie name because he was charged with rape in the 1900's. Commissioners agreed that Marshall Eddie-Locke should go on the property because it ties the two families together and that there is no need to put the word "house" on the plaque.

Chairman Smunt called attention to the fact that the house is sided with artificial siding which devalues the significance and they would then be setting a precedent. A landmark is a high significance rating, and with the criteria there are multiple reasons for significance. Ms. Malay noted that there was one that was not landmarked on Rt. 25. Chairman Smunt said that was done prior to the existence of the current ordinance, but what he doesn't want to see happen is everybody that has an old house starts nominating them and then side them over even though they are missing other areas of significance. He said we have to be careful to clearly establish the significance over and above architecture, and he feels all the qualifications need to be stated in the nomination.

Ms. Malay asked if a clause could be made upon approval stating synthetic materials will not be approved. Mr. Colby said he doesn't think the condition could be written in; it would be case by case. Mr. Pretz said you have to be careful outlawing synthetic, because synthetic siding is improving, and soon you will not be able to tell the difference between the two; so if you outlaw it today, that is going to be a problem.

Chairman Smunt said we want to preserve the components that make this unique. Mr. Colby said if it is highlighted in the application and the findings that the original siding is there and is suitable for preservation, the Commission is acknowledging that it's there as an element of the building. Chairman Smunt suggested making a note that the synthetic siding is not a significant part of the nomination; it's a noncontributing component of the structure and should be removed for proper restoration and preservation. Mr. Colby said that could be documented in the statement as part of the application and could probably be listed under the "suitable for preservation and restoration" finding. Commissioners agreed that it's just putting a guideline in as far as the nomination goes as to what the Commission would truly like to see moving forward.

A motion was made by Mr. Bobowiec and seconded by Ms. Malay with a unanimous voice vote to that there is adequate information to support a nomination and a public hearing date should be set. Mr. Pretz abstained.

Mr. Colby said November 18 will be the date of the public hearing.

Ms. Rice added that her home is next to this home and when they bought their home they thought it was landmarked but found it was not. Their intent is to landmark their home as well.

9. Additional Business

a. Discussion Regarding COA process

Mr. Colby said he has been updating the forms based on the Commission's discussion. There are two forms to improve the process; one is the form that is handed out in the Building Dept. when someone is inquiring about a permit or is submitting information for permit. He added additional information to the second page regarding what type of documentation is required. He said he knows the Commission had some concerns when a COA request is submitted and without sufficient information for the Commission to review. He said they are trying to use this as a resource because they realize that people come in and don't really understand what the Commission is reviewing for, whether it was explained to them or not, so this would be documentation to make sure people have this information.

Mr. Pretz said he liked that things were bolded to highlight that information, but he thinks there needs to be an additional way to highlight in order to give better separation.

Ms. Malay suggested a bullet point checklist. Commissioners agreed that the documentation information be in a checklist form. Ms. Malay said when she worked in the Building Dept. they

would go through the checklist and highlight for the applicant what was needed according to their project.

Chairman Smunt said he thinks “a photo of existing conditions” applies to every one of these, because the level of deterioration should be shown to require replacements. Ms. Malay agreed, and said that would come into play because you do not have to have it listed out under every single one of those; you can just highlight the ones needed. Mr. Pretz added that if for some reason a proposal gets to the Commission, it can still be talked about, but a motion doesn’t need to be made and it can be tabled, and the applicant can be told which items are needed for the next meeting.

Chairman Smunt noted that scaled drawings and elevations are terribly important. So often they are hand drawn and sometimes it’s just not adequate. Many times at the end of the meeting there are so many changes discussed, it cannot possibly be approved until it’s redrawn and scaled. Mr. Pretz agreed and added that at that point it becomes so difficult to understand due to all the changes that it needs to be tabled to allow the applicant to gather information and make changes to come back and make the next meeting simpler. At the front end with staff, if they do not have all their items checked they should not even go to the Commission meeting, unless the applicant just wants a concept review. Mr. Colby suggested having a cover summary page, a checklist page, and a review criteria page.

Mr. Norris asked if the guidelines were tied to this somehow. Mr. Colby suggested adding a link to look at those on the website.

Mr. Colby said the next piece is an update to the actual COA approval form. The updated form looks similar to the existing form except he modified the section where the Chairman’s signature is to clarify the language as to what’s being approved, and also the section where you check if something is being approved the way it’s presented, or if there are conditions being associated with it. He said he also expanded the conditions for the section with the applicant’s signature to keep better track of who was at the meeting and who signed the forms and what their roll is. Ms. Malay said she thinks there should be a clause or warning where they sign stating that any changes made require an immediate work stoppage with a phone call to the City. Mr. Colby said that information is on a separate sheet but it could be highlighted to make better reference. Mr. Gibson said to put a line in front of it to initial it in one of the conditions as part of the COA. Ms. Malay suggested it being on the signature page as well.

Commissioners talked about having a separate COA permit. Mr. Colby said he wasn’t sure how that would be addressed, and right now the COA form goes to the Building Dept. which is where they get signed. The intent would be to give the copy to the person who attends the meeting and have it signed there and then email them a copy. He suggested maybe a brightly colored separate notice be attached to the permit plans. Ms. Malay said she thinks they talked about applying those conditions to the back of the permit to have something in the inspector’s hands to verify. Mr. Colby said it goes into the permit system so if there are conditions associated with the approval those get printed onto the permit. The inspectors carry a copy of the permit information which is attached to the plan set, which is the plan set that is supposed to be on site and the one

that is maintained in the file. He said he thinks we can find a way to call more attention to the ones that have Historic Preservation review with some sort of notice or a separate card and he thinks this is more so for the contractors to see it.

Mr. Norris said the permit process usually has divisions of inspections and suggested adding a COA inspection. Mr. Colby said that can be included but they could still go off the plans and make some changes since the COA inspections wouldn't come until later. He said he thinks it's a good idea, but he's not sure if it would prevent issues.

Ms. Malay suggested an addendum to each inspection. Mr. Colby said that could be complicated. Adding the COA inspection will hold up the Certificate of Occupancy, but doesn't stop the contractor from going off track. There probably is not a clear inspection stage for the exterior. Mr. Norris suggested during the rough in inspection. Mr. Colby said he would think about what would make the most sense. Chairman Smunt suggested the framing stage.

Mr. Colby said he would take a look at the list of the typical inspections. He said he has enough information to make modifications.

Ms. Malay asked if it would help if they really got specific regarding materials and what needs to stay and what can be replaced. Chairman Smunt said at the framing point is where they would need to check for verification of the COA being compliant. Mr. Gibson said they have to be careful to not accomplish too much because at some level he sees this as being legal footwork, a foundation to take legal action against somebody trying to get away with doing something wrong, as opposed to actually preventing them from doing it. Mr. Colby said there is also some liability to the City by passing the Historic Preservation Inspection if nobody caught an issue. Mr. Gibson said if they signed something and an issue is caught at some point, it's still the contractor's expense. Chairman Smunt said it would clearly state that if the agreement is violated they will be held responsible for replacing lost material to the preconstruction condition at their cost and he thinks as long as it's very clear and up front, the Council will support it.

b. Landmarks research

No discussion.

10. Announcements: Historic Preservation Commission meeting Wednesday, November 4, 2015 at 7:00 P.M. in the Committee Room.

Mr. Colby said a Preservation Commission training camp has been announced for any member who would like to go; the city would pay. It is being held November 14 in Geneva.

11. Adjournment at 8:45 p.m.

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