

**CITY OF BELVIDERE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES
September 27, 2016
5:30 pm
City Council Chambers**

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Becky Tobin, Chair
Kris Bryan, Vice Chair
Filitsa Platopoulos
David Kummerow
Lisa Irvine Kummerow
Anna Gill Pivoras

Staff Present:

Gina DelRose, Community Development Planner

Members Absent

Vacant

With a quorum present, Chair Becky Tobin called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

MINUTES: It was moved and seconded (Irvine Kummerow/Bryan) to approve the minutes from the August 23, 2016 meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

NEW BUSINESS: None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Certificate of Appropriateness for Demolition of 117 W. Hurlbut Avenue- Becky Tobin clarified that the request (motion) before the commission was to unlandmark the building, not to demolish the building.

Kris Bryan questioned if the Ida Public Library hired a realtor to assist them in selling the residence.

Debbie Bloom (representing the Ida Public Library) stated that they did not hire a realtor. Ms. Bloom stated that they listed the residence on multiple sites but most people that contacted the Library with interest did not want to pay the estimated \$20,000 in moving costs.

Kris Bryan questioned if the Library would rent the residence.

Debbie Bloom stated the Library has rented the property in the past and it was not a good experience. Ms. Bloom stated that the property needs a lot of work.

Debbie Bloom stated that the Library will contact salvagers to remove desirable pieces of the residence.

David Kummerow stated that he is concerned the property will continue to decline.

Filitsa Platapolous stated that it's a matter of pride in owning a historic property. When there is no pride, the property loses its value.

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David Kummerow questioned if the Commission has the ability to protect landmarks from falling into a state of disrepair.

Becky Tobin stated no.

Gina DelRose stated that the Commission has grants for landmark properties to help with small maintenance projects but they cannot force a property owner to maintain the property outside the standards of the City's Property Maintenance Code.

David Kummerow asked if there is any chance that the Library would fix up the residence.

Lisa Kummerow asked if there is any chance that the Library would continue to try to sell the property.

Debbie Bloom stated that the Library needs the land for their expansion.

Becky Tobin stated that she would prefer that the Library wait until they are absolutely positive they will be expanding and the space needed is necessary.

Kris Bryan stated that the residence is fixable; he would like to see the demolition delayed.

David Kummerow stated that he would like to postpone the vote until the Library knows that they are expanding.

Paul Ollman (architect) stated that the Library does not want to move forward unless they know for a fact that the Commission's vote is secured.

Debbie Bloom stated that once the house is torn down the Library Board will be more eager to move forward.

David Kummerow questioned if the house is not able to be torn down, would the Library move?

Debbie Bloom stated that the Library would like to stay in its current location.

Paul Ollman stated that the Library bought the surrounding properties so they could expand and not be required to move.

David Kummerow stated that the Commission's mission is to preserve the history of Belvidere.

Becky Tobin stated that residents have contacted her asking why the Library is demolishing a building if there is no immediate need for the space.

David Kummerow stated that the building is falling apart.

Becky Tobin stated that it is the Library's responsibility to maintain the structure.

Debbie Bloom stated that the Library Board does not want to spend money on maintaining a house that isn't going to be used.

Paul Ollman questioned what is spectacularly important about the house that it is worth stopping the progress of a historic library. Paul Ollman stated that the Boone County Historical Museum and the Belvidere YMCA had houses torn down for their expansions. The Library is requesting to be able to do the same thing.

Debbie Bloom stated that the Library is considering adding an 800 square-foot community room that is greatly needed.

Kris Bryan stated that the operation of the Library is more important than a residence. The Library is more of a community asset, especially if the residence is going to continue to be neglected.

Filitsa Platapolous agreed with Kris Bryan. Ms. Platapolous stated that if the property is not going to be maintained, then the Commission can only do so much.

David Kummerow stated he does not want to see another historic structure torn down to make room for a pharmacy or a gasoline station.

It was moved and seconded (Kummerow/Bryan) to withdraw 117 W. Hurlbut Avenue from the City's Local Landmark status. Motion carried with a 5-1 roll call vote. Lisa Irvine Kummerow voted no.

Becky Tobin stated that if the residence is demolished, then the garage must be demolished too.

Lisa Irvine Kummerow stated that she is worried about the Commission setting a precedent.

Work Plan

2017 Awards Program: There were no new nominations.

Promotional /Fund Raising Events: Becky Tobin stated that none of the residences responded to the request of having a fall house tour. Ms. Tobin stated that the Commission will need to think of a new fundraiser.

Phase II Survey: Becky Tobin stated that the consultant included old pictures from the museum this time which was a nice touch. Ms. Tobin stated that there are not as many historic properties in the survey.

Becky Tobin stated that the Commission should reach out to the owners of the contributing properties from the previous survey as well as the current survey.

Gina DelRose stated that she can invite them to the next neighbors night function.

Leath Warehouse Update: Gina DelRose stated that she spoke with Gary Anderson and he is very optimistic that the resubmittal his firm is preparing will be well received.

David Kummerow questioned if they are still looking for a developer.

Becky Tobin stated that they are looking for a developer and that Gary Anderson's firm will most likely prepare the Request For Proposals.

Gina DelRose stated that the State of Illinois has an incentive program that allows for 20% and 25% abatements. Another 25% abatement program is only offered for certain municipalities currently but if the program becomes statewide, then it will greatly help the redevelopment process.

Becky Tobin stated that this is why the City has lost potential projects; they have moved to the areas that have the additional program.

Maintenance Small Grant: Gina DelRose stated that there were pictures of the Pearl Place Apartments concrete repair work in the Commissioner's packets and that a motion is needed to approve the \$1,000 reimbursement.

Becky Tobin stated that it appears only patch work was done.

Lisa Irvine Kummerow stated that she would have liked to have seen them match the concrete color better.

David Kummerow stated that moving forward he would like to see new language in the grant application listing the Commissions' standard for work being done.

It was moved and seconded (Gill/Irvine Kummerow) to approve a \$1,000 reimbursement to the owners of Pearl Place Apartments per the small maintenance grant. Motion carried with a 6-0 roll call vote.

Expenditures: No updates

OTHER BUSINESS:

Images of American Belvidere and Boone County

Royalties: No updates

Book Sales: No updates

DISCUSSION:

Landmark homeowners' social event- Gina DelRose stated that the next event is scheduled for October 28, 2016.

Anna Gill Pivoras stated that the Boone County Historical Museum is reserved.

David Kummerow stated that the last event was a nice small group of very involved residents. Mr. Kummerow stated that he received much positive feedback and follow-up conversations from those who attended.

David Kummerow stated that he made a presentation to the Museum's Board of Directors and guests. There were 40-50 people in attendance and some people were also at the Commission's neighbor's night event.

David Kummerow stated that he got the impression that people liked knowing there was a place to go to talk and ask questions. Mr. Kummerow stated that the public wants the Mayor to attend the meetings.

Lisa Irvine Kummerow stated that at the Boone County Historical Museum's event a gentleman approached her and provided his business card. He stated that he was the only architectural salvager in the area and would like to attend more museum and historical preservation events.

David Kummerow stated that John Ahrens should be invited to the next neighbor's night event. Mr. Kummerow stated that there should also be a ghost themed night.

Becky Tobin stated that the ghost themed night would be good for the October meeting.

Anna Gill Pivoras stated that beyond the Historic Preservation Commission's part, the group of residents that attended the first neighbor's night had genuine interest and stayed a long time talking amongst themselves.

David Kummerow stated that Anna Gill Pivoras had research on historic homes ready for people to review.

Gina DelRose asked if the October 28th meeting should be ghost themed.

Lisa Irvine Kummerow stated yes.

The Commission thought that the mayor should be a presenter.

Becky Tobin asked if the event should be held at the Museum again.

David Kummerow stated yes.

Anna Gill Pivoras stated that she believed that George Thomas should present.

David Kummerow agreed that George Thomas and the mayor should present at the next meeting. Mr. Kummerow stated that attendees should be asked who they would like to be the next presenters.

Becky Tobin stated that she believed John Ahrens and Mulligan Restoration in Rockford would be good presenters.

David Kummerow stated that the newsletter should go out with the meeting announcement.

Lisa Irvine Kummerow questioned what kind of refreshments should be provided.

David Kummerow stated that the assortment at the first meeting was fine but the quantity was too much.

Lisa Irvine Kummerow stated that the Museum had a potluck at their meeting and she thought that was a great idea.

David Kummerow stated that would be welcomed in the future.

Becky Tobin stated that the Commission can help with the cost of refreshments.

Anna Gill Pivoras stated that the Museum can provide the beverages.

Underground Railroad in Boone County- No updates

Prohibition Era- No updates

Property Maintenance Assistance Program- Gina DelRose stated that she turned the grant application in to the Boone County Community Foundation.

Vacant Seat- Gina DelRose stated that she will contact people again before moving onto the next candidate.

Kris Bryan stated that he would like to see if the Commission members could judge the live windows for Hometown Christmas. Mr. Bryan stated that the Fire Department could help judge as well.

Gina DelRose stated that she would contact the Chamber of Commerce.

COMMUNICATIONS/PLANNING REPORTS:

Staff Report: Gina DelRose stated that she attended a tax credit workshop at the Indian Hill Manor in Rockford. Ms. DelRose stated that she was informed that the state will provide presentations to communities regarding historic preservation and tax programs. Ms. DelRose asked the Commission if they would like to schedule a presentation and invite neighboring commissions and residents.

The Commission agreed to request a presentation for January.

NEXT MEETING DATE: October 25, 2016

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 6:35 pm.

Recorded by



Gina DelRose, Community Development Planner