

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

**ROLL CALL**

**Members Present:**

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

**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.

Kris Bryan stated that George Thomas would be interested in being on the Commission.

Gina DelRose stated that she would need to review the commission's bylaws to make sure he is eligible since he does not live in Belvidere.

David Kummerow questioned if the new owners of the Dunton house would be interested in serving on the commission.

**Minutes:** It was moved and seconded (Bryan/Irvine Kummerow) to approve the minutes from the March 22, 2016 meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**Work Plan**

**2016 Awards Program:** Becky Tobin stated that she felt the program went well and that Lisa Irvine Kummerow did a good job as the master of ceremonies.

Kris Bryan agreed.

Becky Tobin stated that it is time to start looking at other properties that should be awarded. Ms. Tobin suggested the blue house on North State Street near Noble's law office.

**Promotional /Fund Raising Events:** Becky Tobin stated that houses need to be contacted for the fall house tour along East Lincoln Avenue.

Kris Bryan stated that he may have Sophia's number.

Becky Tobin stated that Gary and Sherry Simon, Ed Marx, the owners of the teal house and the owners of the Dunton house should be contacted. Ms. Tobin stated that the tour will be sometime in October.

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Kris Bryan suggested mailing the homeowners a letter.

Lisa Irvine Kummerow stated that she would not be available on October 15, 2016.

Phase II Survey: Gina DelRose stated that she received an e-mail from the State of Illinois' Survey and National Register Specialist providing an update on the survey. Ms. DelRose stated that Hagerty Heritage Planning will be forwarding their updates to the State of Illinois and herself in the near future. The survey must be completed by September, 2016.

Leath Warehouse Update: Becky Tobin stated that she is meeting with a developer and one of the property owners on June 15, 2016 to continue discussions about the reuse of the building.

Maintenance Small Grant: Becky Tobin stated that the commission received an application from Pearl Place Apartments that meets the intent of the grant. They are repairing damaged bricks and concrete.

Kris Bryan stated that they appear to be getting the work done at a reasonable price.

It was moved and seconded (Kummerow/Bryan) to award Pearl Place Apartments \$1,000 for their repair work. The motion carried unanimously.

Expenditures: Becky Tobin stated that the invoices for the awards program (invitations, catering, awards, etc.) are being paid as they are received.

Blackhawk Bank Balance: Becky Tobin stated that the balance is \$3,583.33 as of April 29, 2016.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

**Images of America Belvidere and Boone County-** Becky Tobin stated that two books were sold at the awards program and a royalties check was received. Becky Tobin questioned where the books are sold that creates the royalties payment.

Anna Gill Pivoras stated that the museum and library received royalty checks for the same amount.

**NEW BUSINESS:** None.

**DISCUSSION:**

**Landmark homeowners' social event-** David Kummerow stated that after the awards program, people's interest in the history of their homes increased. Mr. Kummerow stated that he was going to provide Gina DelRose with verbage to send to owners of landmarked structures or properties within a landmarked district regarding the meeting. Mr. Kummerow stated that the first meeting could be at the museum or library. People may not know the library has historical research materials.

Lisa Irvine Kummerow questioned if the former post office would be available.

Becky Tobin stated that the city does not own the former post office building.

David Kummerow stated that he would prefer to not have the meeting at his house. He does not want to come across as intimidating and having it at his house makes it too personal. The meeting is for sharing common interests and people should bring pictures, stories and questions. Mr. Kummerow suggested the group meet every 2-3 months.

Becky Tobin stated that there could be speakers such as Kris Bryan who can talk to property owners about refinishing woodwork in their homes.

David Kummerow stated that he is replacing the copper dome on his residence. Mr. Kummerow found a local business to do the work.

David Kummerow requested that Anna Gill Pivoras determine when the museum is available for use and suggested that light refreshments be served.

Anna Gill Pivoras questioned if owners of properties that should be landmarked but are not (yet) be invited.

Becky Tobin stated that falls in line with a project she though the commission could organize. Ms. Tobin stated that she wants to make a registry of potential landmark properties. These owners should be invited to the meeting and they should be encouraged to pursue landmark status.

David Kummerow stated that next month's mayor's meeting and lunch will be at the Swift Residence.

David Kummerow stated that the park district bought another house by the YMCA and plan on tearing it down.

**Underground Railroad in Boone County-** Gina DelRose stated that the museum hosted a presentation regarding the Underground Railroad. Although there are no verified routes through Boone County, the presenter commented on a diary entry that was discovered that talked about a route through Boone County into Harvard. The names, locations and dates in the entry match landowner information on the 1870 Boone County map hanging in the planning department. Ms. DelRose stated that the presenter also mentioned that one of the first freed slaves settled in Belvidere and built a house across from the YMCA. Ms. DelRose was not sure if the commission wanted to pursue any of these statements.

David Kummerow stated that he thought it would be a good topic to pursue.

Becky Tobin stated that the city's summer intern could help.

Lisa Irvine Kummerow questioned the tunnels along the Kishwaukee River that lead to houses.

Anna Gill Pivoras stated that those tunnels were most likely used for smuggling alcohol during prohibition and moving ice during the winter.

Lisa Irvine Kummerow stated that there is a tunnel on the north side of the river that leads to Bob Moore's building.

Becky Tobin stated that local belief is that Al Capone used that tunnel.

Kris Bryan stated that when the river is low you can see the tunnels. Mr. Bryan stated that you can see the remnants of the tunnel in the basement of the gothic revival house along East Lincoln Avenue.

Kris Bryan stated that the local belief is that slaves were signaled from that house to let them know it was safe to enter.

Becky Tobin stated that every year the commission could approach one homeowner that they believe needs help, especially if there is a low response to the maintenance grant. Ms. Tobin stated that the commission could provide assistance in exchange for the homeowner land marking the building. Ms. Tobin suggested the white house across from Aldi's be researched.

Kris Bryan stated that the house has a huge entryway.

Anna Gill Pivoras stated that the house has to have a story.

Lisa Irvine Kummerow agreed.

Anna Gill Pivoras questioned if the commission could get in-kind donations to help with the maintenance work.

Becky Tobin stated that sign could be made that states "Restore Belvidere provided by xyz..." in order to acknowledge donations.

Becky Tobin stated that a letter could be written and the homeowner approached.

Anna Gill Pivoras stated that she can research the property first.

**COMMUNICATIONS/PLANNING REPORTS:**

Gina DelRose stated that Amy Hathaway with the State of Illinois has been a huge help during the transition. Ms. DelRose stated that she is finalizing the annual report to submit to the state.

Gina DelRose reminded the commission to take the required Open Meetings Act on-line training.

**NEXT MEETING DATE:** June 28, 2016

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 6:12 pm.

Recorded by

  
Gina DelRose, Community Development Planner