

MINUTES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
Monday, May 11, 2015
City Hall, Room 210
4:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairperson Ald. Mark Steuer, Jacqueline Frank, Roger Retzlaff, Dave Boyce, Jeanine Mead, Dennis Doucette, Jason Flatt

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Susan Ley

ALSO PRESENT: Ald. Dave Nennig, Jim Sanderson, Ryan Swadley

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND AGENDA

- a. Approve April 13, 2015 Minutes

Motion made by R. Retzlaff to approve the April 13, 2015 Minutes, seconded by J. Mead. Six in favor, one abstention (J. Frank). Motion carried.

- b. Modify and adopt agenda

A motion to adopt the agenda moving item 6(a) before item 3(a) was made by Ald. Steuer, seconded by J. Frank. All in favor. Motion carried.

- 6(a) Review and approval of permit process to allow reconstruction of historical features in designated historical districts (Cheryl Renier-Wigg)

Cheryl is present to discuss a permit process regarding reconstruction of historical features in designated historic districts.

Cheryl appeared before the HPC last year to discuss replacing her porch to its original design on her home in the Astor Historic District. The HPC approved two designs -- one that meets the building code and one that does not.

Currently, in the city, if a person wants to replicate a front porch or other exterior features and it does not meet the current building code, it can't be done. Porches are now required to have 36 inch railings (28 inch are not allowed). In some past instances, the porch could not even be replaced. However, last year the ordinance was changed to allow construction of the porch, up to code, into the setback areas.

Currently there is a process everyone must go through in order to obtain a building permit for properties in historic districts. Cheryl would like to amend this process and met with Kim Flom, the City's Planning Director, to discuss it. Rather than having building

inspectors determine what is an appropriate historic restoration, the HPC would offer their input. Once the HPC approves it, inspection would then get involved.

The ordinance itself would not be changed. This would be an internal policy. Inspectors do not have historical backgrounds and would not be able to determine whether or not a porch meets historical criteria. The HPC would take on this role.

Technically speaking, houses built prior to 1978 or 1980, do not fall under the Uniform Dwelling Code, but the City of Green Bay adopted an ordinance which included all properties under that UDC.

J. Frank is in support of this change because it would allow the HPC to create and protect historic buildings. She agrees that inspection would need to be involved for the safety factor. The first step would be for the homeowner to come before the HPC with photos and diagrams like the current process is.

R. Retzlaff suggested the following language added to Cheryl's proposal:

The inspector will provide a detailed description of the exemption from the code requirement and how the proposed historical design does not meet that code requirement.

D. Doucette stated he is much more lenient for exemptions for personal property than he is for commercial property. He's had the same issue with the Northland Hotel regarding a rail that is supposed to be 36 but is 28 inches.

J. Flatt asked if the city would have any liability if this exemption is approved. Cheryl suggested having the homeowner sign a waiver. R. Retzlaff believes current law relieves the city and inspectors from any liability. The liability remains with the owner.

Motion made by J. Frank to approve the proposed permit process regarding historic properties, with the additional language requested by R. Retzlaff (above). Motion seconded by D. Doucette. All in favor. Motion carried.

2. **DESIGN REVIEWS:** None

3. **REPORTS**

- a. Report from Jason Flatt on his projects and findings for April 2015, including documentation of raze or repair structures in Green Bay and strategies for a completion of the inventory of pre-1936 non-historic buildings.

When the HPC receives notice of raze orders, Jason looks at the property and takes photographs. He will eventually put these photos on a jump drive. They are currently on his hard drive. Ald. Steuer suggested he put them on a spreadsheet for now to prevent privacy issues.

Ald. Steuer suggested Jason get in contact with Krista Baeten in inspection. They have records that go back to 2011. This is a follow up to the request by last month by Jayme Sellen, Government Affairs Director for the Greater Green Bay Chamber of Commerce, for an inventory of pre-1936 historic buildings to present to legislators regarding tax credit legislation.

K. Flom, using the GIS map, identified some 5,900 pre-1936 properties of which over 400 were already in historic districts. Jason stated the proposed elimination of historic tax credits for the state is to get rid of tax credits for pre-1936 buildings that are not certified or not on the national register or state register. His task is to find unlisted, pre-1936 income producing properties, non-residential.

Jason recently spoke with Joe De Rose and Joe indicated that several years ago, Green Bay's Ordinance was "good to go" and all he needed was someone to put a package together, including a letter from the Mayor, and it could have obtained CLG status. But then something happened with the ordinance.

J. Frank feels this needs priority over inventories and other things, as it would give the HPC more authority. She would like Jason to look at the current ordinance and tell them what they need.

Motion made and seconded to open the floor for comments. All in favor. Motion carried.

Bill Meindl – Bill spoke with Gene Hackbarth last week and he confirmed that in order to be eligible for CLG status, you have to have a mandatory ordinance. The City currently has an advisory ordinance. He does not believe Green Bay is currently eligible for CLG status. The first thing to be looked at is the ordinance.

Motion made and seconded to return to order. All in favor. Motion carried.

Motion made by D. Doucette to receive and place Jason Flatt's report on file, seconded by Ald. Steuer. All in favor. Motion carried.

4. **CORRESPONDENCE:** None.

5. **CONTINUING BUSINESS**

a. HPC awards ceremony updates and strategies for May 19, 2015

J. Flatt is putting together a PowerPoint presentation. Ald. Steuer will MC the ceremony. Each chairperson is asked to give a two minute talk about the award property. The reception will be at 6:15 p.m. J. Mead will pick up refreshments.

b. HPC strategic planning – preliminary discussions that will include plans on adding more historic districts to Green Bay, plans to add more content to the

City website on its HPC page, and looking at the feasibility of getting a citizen advocacy group to add more dynamic to the HPC

To save time, J. Frank asked everyone to fill out the questionnaire she prepared and send it back to her. She will compile their comments into one document. Ald. Steuer would like a major goal to be the HPC webpage. He would also suggest Navarino on the east side and the West Side Vernacular District on the west side as possible new historic districts.

D. Boyce would like to pursue creating a citizen advocacy group.

6. NEW BUSINESS

- b. Request by Jim Sanderson to declare the last remnant of the E.S.S. (East Side Shortline) Railroad that is positioned in the City right-of-way pavement in the 1000 and 1100 blocks of Cedar Street as a historic site.

J. Sanderson discussed what used to be called the “alley track” downtown. This is a trail that leads along Adams Street from the Mason Street Bridge over to the Fox River Trail. This track was constructed in the late 1880’s and it ran along the Fox River until it passed the original Main Street and curved over to run along Elm Street. At Monroe, it split – one half went to the paper mills half way out to the Bay and the other part of it followed along the East River over to Cedar Street, again crossing the East River by Roosevelt and then going behind the buildings in the 1200 block of Main Street, curving to the northeast back over to Cedar Street and ending just east of Grove Street.

This railroad was a significant supplier to the area businesses that were in existence before there were industrial parks. There isn’t much left to it except on city property on Cedar Street. The street was poured around the tracks and they are in good shape. There still exists a decommission switch running off of Clay.

Jim was made aware of this by someone’s comment on Facebook. He would like to see a sign of some kind erected at Webster and Cedar Streets giving reference to it.

R. Retzlaff suggested Jim fill out the nomination form on the website. The HPC will then make an assessment. It would be brought before City Council for a vote.

Motion made by Ald. Steuer to move item 6(g) up to this point in the agenda, seconded by J. Frank. All in favor. Motion carried.

- 6(g) Discussion on July 14, 2015 (7:00 p.m.) 45-minute HPC presentation about the Broadway District, followed by a walking tour of the area. This event will coincide with the Neville Public Museum’s exhibit, Building Our Community: Over 100 Years of Architecture and Design in Brown County. Potential guests include Tara Gokey (OBI Director) and Ryan Schwalbe (Neville Public Museum Research Technician)

Ryan Schwalbe from the Neville Museum spoke about a current exhibit called “Building Our Community.” This is a picture exhibit featuring the work of Berner Schober and Associates. There are a number of original blueprints as well as interactive areas. There is also a section called “Lost and Found” which are buildings that Berner Schober found in their archives but don’t know the addresses or if they are still standing. If folks come in and recognize a building, they can write it down.

Ald. Steuer has agreed to come in and be part of this series. He would like to include a walking tour of On Broadway. Anyone else who is interested in participating should let him know.

J. Frank takes over as chair at this point, as Ald. Steuer must attend another meeting.

- c. Request by Jim Sanderson to designate the quarry stone marker in the 400 block of N. Chestnut Avenue that is positioned within the City terrace on the east side of the street north of Kellogg Street as a historic asset

J. Sanderson stated that when the Fort Howard Hospital and surgeons’ quarters were on the corner of Chestnut and Kellogg Streets, before they were moved to Heritage Hill, the marker was positioned somewhere on the parkway and Jim believes it’s the oldest historical marker in Brown County. The problem with the stone is that it’s not in its original spot. When they moved the buildings to Heritage Hill, someone must have used a piece of heavy equipment and lifted it out of the spot so they could get the buildings out of there. It’s lying on top of the ground. The stone is cemented to an old piece of concrete.

Jim would like the marker moved to a house on north Maple because this house is the only Fort building still in the Green Bay city limits. No one knows this building is an original fort building because it’s now a residence made into a four plex.

The current monument is illegible. It says “hospital ward” and “built.” Everything else is worn off of it. This monument is well over 100 years old. Jim would like to see a new plate of some kind epoxied onto it that recognizes the historical significance of the building at 414 N. Maple. He understands Heritage Hill actually made a replica of it because the expense of moving it there was prohibitive.

This is privately owned property that is rented out and could get burned down at any time. Jim would like something done to preserve this house, even if it’s to have a sprinkler system put in it. It’s the oldest building in Green Bay right now.

Jim will fill out a nomination form for this property. J. Frank suggested Jim go to the Brown County Library and speak with Mary Jane Herber in the genealogy department to get more information. He could also speak to Cris Dunbar at the Brown County Historical Society, as they are working on locating all the markers in the area.

- d. Request by Jim Sanderson to designate the structure at 414 N. Maple Avenue as a historic building, as it is the last structure in the City’s borders to

have originated from Fort Howard's riverfront setting, making it the oldest building in the City of Green Bay

This was discussed above.

- e. Discussion on Sky-Lit Motel (Ashwaubenon) razing and sign alterations, and if there are potential ramifications for like properties in Green Bay

Motion made by R. Retzlaff and seconded by D. Doucette to table this item until the next meeting. All in favor. Motion carried.

- f. Discussion on a possible historic preservation story for *Voyageur Magazine* and the methodology to do it

Ald. Steuer is working on this and since he is absent at this time, a motion was made by J. Mead and seconded by D. Doucette to table this item until the next meeting. All in favor. Motion carried.

- h. Discussion regarding La Baye organization

R. Retzlaff would like more background information and specifics regarding the request.

Motion made by R. Retzlaff seconded by D. Doucette to table this item until the next meeting. All in favor. Motion carried.

- i. Review City Raze/Repair Orders and Demolitions

R. Retzlaff feels 927 N. Broadway is a distinct architectural residence. It is an authentic Dutch Colonial.

Motion made by R. Retzlaff to ask the Community Development Department to find whatever means possible to preserve this building and not have it razed should the owner decide not to do the work. Motion seconded by J. Frank. All in favor. Motion carried.

942 Cedarview was discussed. It may be worth saving because of the character of the house. However, it is in bad shape.

Motion made and seconded to receive and place on file. All in favor. Motion carried.

- j. Review April building activity report

Motion made and seconded to receive and place on file. All in favor. Motion carried.

7. OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NEWS

- a. Follow up on last month's discussion, led by Gene Hackbarth of the De Pere Historic Preservation Commission, on various state and local HPC initiatives, including the May 19, 2015 (2:30-4:00 p.m.) Wisconsin Trust for Historic Preservation spring conference on tax initiatives at St. Norbert College (Jason Flatt – participant) and the recently attended Association of Historic Preservation Commissions – Saturday, April 25, 2015 (Jason Flatt – participant)

J. Flatt will send the HPC members any information he receives.

R. Retzlaff mentioned the upcoming Mayor's State of the City address.

D. Boyce would like the HPC members to have business cards. J. Frank suggested he draft one up for discussion at the next meeting.

8. **NEXT MEETING DATE:** June 8, 2015 at 4:00 p.m.

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn made by R. Retzlaff, seconded by D. Boyce. All in Favor. Motion carried.