

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2022 – 7:00 P.M.**

Members Present: Rice, Smunt, Kessler, Pretz, Dickerson, Kramer, Malay

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Rachel Hitzemann, Planner

1. Call to Order

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

2. Roll Call

Ms. Hitzemann called roll with seven members present. There was a quorum.

3. Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Mr. Kessler and seconded by Dr. Smunt, with a unanimous voice vote to approve the agenda.

4. Presentation of minutes of the November 16th, 2022 meeting

A motion was made by Mr. Kessler and seconded by Ms. Rice, with a voice vote to approve the Minutes of November 16, 2022. Ms. Dickerson and Ms. Kramer abstained.

5. Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) applications

a. 117 N. 6th Ave.

Mr. Jeff Siblik, Property Owner, presented proposal to replace 2nd floor windows with vinyl replacement windows.

Dr. Smunt questioned if the 2nd floor windows would match the 1st floor windows with a one over one style.

Mr. Siblik confirmed they would match and would stay the same size as current windows.

Mr. Kessler asked if these would be replacement windows?

Mr. Siblik confirmed they would be replacement windows, replacing any rotted wood with new wood. 2nd floor currently has aluminum wrap on the windows, new windows will have the same.

Mr. Pretz asked for confirmation the 1st floor was swapped out in 1994.

Mr. Siblik confirmed it was 1994 or 1995.

A motion was made by Ms. Dickerson and seconded by Dr. Smunt with a unanimous voice vote to approve the COA as submitted.

b. 214 Walnut St.

Ms. Hitzemann presented proposal to replace upper windows with fiberglass windows to match lower windows that were replaced with the same window type in 2021.

A motion was made by Dr. Smunt and seconded by Mr. Pretz with a unanimous voice vote to approve the COA as submitted.

6. Grant Applications

a. 17 N 2nd Ave.

Dave Knapp presented grant request for proposed siding and trim, exterior painting, and repair of damaged and rotten wooden windows.

Committee discussed the items that would be considered as restoration work that would qualify for grant. It was decided roofing work, fence or sign would be disqualified.

A motion was made by Dr. Smunt and seconded by Mr. Pretz with a unanimous voice vote to recommend to the Planning and Development Committee for approval not including Item 4-roof, 8-fence, 9-exterior light fixtures, and 10-sign.

7. Landmark Applications

a. 201 Cedar Ave.

Mr. Pretz presented the nomination to designate 201 Cedar Avenue as a Landmark property, giving the history of the building.

A motion was made by Ms. Kramer and seconded by Dr. Dickerson to recommend 201 Cedar Avenue for Landmark Status to the Planning and Development Committee to be known as the Thomas H. Collins House. Mr. Pretz abstained.

8. Preliminary Reviews- Open forum for questions or presentation of preliminary concepts to the Commission for feedback
None.

9. Other Commission Business

a. First Street PUD Preliminary Plan

Mr. Russell Colby, Director of Community Development, presented the history on the First Street Plaza Improvements.

Mr. Pete Suhr, Director of Public Works, presented an overview of future improvements on the First Street Plaza Improvements highlighting solar panels, ramp to fishing platform, trellis, brickwork, special event areas. If project is approved would like to go out to bid in January, 2023.

Mr. Pretz asked about the budget needing an additional 2.6 million dollars, does that take into consideration the escalation of the costs? If bid comes back higher is there a plan B?

Mr. Suhr responded the costs are up to date, it has increased \$800,000 since last review. We are prepared for the worst but it will be a decision point and the council will have to make the decision if they want to proceed if bids are high.

Mr. Pretz asked if First Street will basically be a sidewalk which will allow for additional dining?

Mr. Suhr responded the walkway will be what is currently the street. The walkway system will be open.

Mr. Pretz asked will the solar panels be visible? Are the removals shown sub-structure items, curbs, removing trees?

Mr. Suhr said you won't be looking at the solar panels straight on, if you are right underneath them you will see them. Yes, curbs and material down the street will be removed to build the new project. Will not affect any of the buildings.

Chair Malay asked how this will affect the parking garage.

Mr. Suhr stated it will not affect the parking garage, the entrances will be the same as they are today. Street parking from Walnut south will remain the same.

Mr. Kessler asked about the intersection, Main Street and First Street. Will there be moving of traffic lights, cross walks?

Mr. Suhr responded the traffic signals and right of way are IDOTs. We have started to work with IDOT and we can take your comments to them. The walk will probably stay at the same location.

Mr. Kessler brought up the Bike and Pedestrian Plan could be included with this project.

Mr. Kessler asked about pedestrian flow coming from the south at the far end, the pedestrian walking bridge should be improved.

Dr. Smunt likes the ideas suggested, it is pedestrian friendly, inviting place to go. Moving forward another important part is consistency of design elements, tying the whole downtown together. A lot of thought went into streetlight design. The design shows a streetlight system but not the teardrop design farther to the south.

Mr. Suhr stated if the light system is different they can take a look at it. In the Public Works system we like to keep things consistent.

Ms. Malay added that although this is the new area of downtown she would like to keep the key elements of the downtown area in the new area.

Dr. Smunt stated The Downtown Partnership signs are metal posts with the sign and area for information. Now you are introducing way finder signs constructed of brick and are digital. Why can't we have the digital screen framed by the metal posts for consistency?

Mr. Suhr added the Downtown Partnership will be in control of the signs. Maybe this design will become standard as we modernize things.

Mr. Kessler added on the top of the way finder signs there is a glowing light, why not make a shape like the top of the city hall.

Mr. Suhr added we will have the technology to sync the lights on the sign to the City tower.

Ms. Malay added it's important that the design elements of downtown should carry thru to the plaza to tie the two sides together. The architecture in the plaza fell short to fitting into downtown in comparison to everything else we have done downtown. It's more modern but these elements need to blend more.

Ms. Rice added we don't want to mimic but we want to compliment, to have features that compliment what we have.

Dr. Smunt added First Street and Route 64 intersection, I don't see any pull off or drop off point. Someone heading eastbound and want to drop someone off a safe pull off to allow someone to be able to stop their car and enter the plaza. Delivery trucks have nowhere to go. Between certain hours of the day could we have a delivery zone rather than blocking traffic on Illinois Street.

Mr. Suhr and Mr. Marty Serena, architect, noted that they looked into a drop off idea, but there was not enough room to do that safely for both pedestrians and cars, so it is not feasible.

Mr. Pretz added possibly changing some of the parking spaces on the bridge to be drop off spaces.

Ms. Rice added when coming south out of Pottawatomie Park this is a nice transition to the other side of town.

Dr. Smunt asked if there would be any provisions for people to park their bikes? There should be an accommodation in your plan to address bikes.

Ms. Rice asked if the bike parking could be on the other side of the plaza, near the parking garage rather than in the plaza.

Dr. Smunt made a motion to recommend to the Plan Commission, seconded by Ms. Rice with a unanimous voice vote approval of the preliminary plan for First Street with concerns to be addressed; the lack of consistency with the historic downtown light posts with the proposed poles for the string lights, way finding signs with mounting posts, bicycle accommodations, and delivery vehicle parking.

b. Endangered Buildings List

Ms. Malay added 1224 E Main Street and 1434 E Main to the Endangered Building List.

Dr. Smunt list is west side of 4th Street, between Oak and Prairie Street.

Mr. Pretz made a motion to table discussion on Endangered Building List, seconded by Mr. Kessler with a unanimous vote to table.

10. Public Comment

None.

11. Additional Business and Observations from Commissioners or Staff

Mr. Pretz shared he had gone by the Judge Berry house and noticed the garage door was gone and they have a new front door. Ms. Hitzemann advised she will look into it.

Mr. Suhr gave an update on Camp Kane.

Dr. Smunt asked about the old police station proposals and the Historic Commission being proactive in scaling back the proposed plans.

Mr. Colby responded the topic is still being discussed at the Planning and Development level. No action has been taken to advance either of the proposed plans. If one of the developers was accepted a Concept Plan would be submitted to the Historic Commission to review and comment.

12. Meeting Announcements: Historic Preservation Commission meeting Wednesday, December 21, 2022 at 7:00 P.M.

13. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 9:08 p.m.