



Living with History

MINUTES

CITY OF MILWAUKEE

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING

Monday, May 18, 2009, 3:00 PM

Room 301A, Milwaukee City Hall

Matt Jarosz, Chair

Sandra McSweeney, Vice Chair

Sandy Ackerman, Pat Balon, Ald. Robert Bauman,

Randy Bryant, Ann Pieper Eisenbrown

1. **ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present: Sandy Ackerman, Pat Balon, Ald. Bauman, Matt Jarosz, Sandra McSweeney, Ann Pieper Eisenbrown

Commissioners Unexcused: Randy Bryant

Staff Present: Carlen Hatala, Paul Jakubovich, Vanessa Koster

Chair Matt Jarosz called the meeting to order at 3:10 P.M.

2. **MINUTES**

Approval of the April 20, 2009 Historic Preservation Commission Meeting Minutes

THE MOTION: Sandra McSweeney moved and Pat Balon seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the April 20, 2009 commission meeting. The motion carried with Sandy Ackerman abstaining as she had not been at the April 20th meeting.

3. **CONSENT AGENDA**

None

4. **PUBLIC HEARING**

Reconvene Public Hearing on the Interim Historic Designation Application of the Nicholas Senn Building 300-318 W. Juneau Avenue (Commonly called Sydney Hih) (6th Ald. District Milele Coggs)

THE MOTION: Pat Balon moved and Sandy Ackerman seconded a motion to reopen the public hearing. The motion carried.

Staff Paul Jakubovich reported on new developments at the building. He stated that he had spoken to the owners right before the commission meeting. They have removed boards from some of the windows and are working on the building. There is some interest in using the building for offices and a restaurant.

Ald. Bauman asked the owners to present an update. Matt Jarosz and staff reminded all that they were still under oath. Developer David Florsheim was recognized. He reported that they are looking at the different components of the complex and want to retain the corner, the Senn Building and are looking into costs for keeping all four buildings. They have had a party interested in leasing the building for offices and a restaurant. Mr. Florsheim added that they are fixing the façade and removing boards. He said the Senn Building was in no danger of demolition.

The commissioners then questioned Mr. Florsheim about the condition and status of the Gipfel Building since windows are out and the building is deteriorating. He replied that the Department of Neighborhood Services has expressed concern as well and wants a stabilization plan. He said they are still looking at removing the westernmost (fourth building) building of the Sydney Hih complex and moving the Gipfel there as originally planned but that they are working on the costs. Another site could also be possible. He added that if Sydney Hih were given historic designation then removal of the fourth building for the Gipfel might not be possible.

Gail Fitch was recognized. She stated that she had nominated the building and wanted to remind everyone that only the Senn Building and not the entire complex was nominated. She urged everyone to make a commitment for the Senn Building.

Ron Roberts from the Department of Neighborhood Services (DNS) was recognized. He reported that the owner, Rob Ruvlin has been in communication with the Commissioner of DNS and there had been a walk-through of Sydney Hih to allow permit for the owner to bring investors through the building. He wanted to add that DNS is not encouraging the demolition of the Gipfel Building. They want the owner to make a plan and communicate that plan to DNS. The mover wants his bond. Mr. Roberts hoped that a suitable location is found, even if temporary. None of the options had been adequately pursued.

David Florsheim clarified that the walk-through at Sydney Hih was not for investors but in preparation for an art show to take place outside the building. Sydney Hih will be used as a museum during the art show. He wanted the commissioners to know that they are exploring every option at the present time.

THE MOTION: Pat Balon moved and Sandra McSweeney seconded a motion to adjourn the public hearing. The motion carried.

Matt Jarosz asked the commissioners how they wanted to proceed and what they wanted from the developer. Options could include actual plans showing some alternative schemes or continued monthly oral updates.

Ald. Bauman indicated that designation could have an impact on their budget and that the developers would need to know where they stand.

Matt Jarosz stated that if the Senn Building were designated, they could use the Historic Building Code and possibly lower their costs. For example, at Pabst Boiler House Building #10, the Historic Building Code allowed the developer to retain the original staircase.

Staff Carlen Hatala and Sandra McSweeney indicated that there was no point in retaining the building if more historic features were to be removed. Designation will ensure the exterior will be preserved.

Pat Balon reminded commissioners that there was significant history associated with the building aside from its architectural character. Removal of the building would erase its history.

Matt Jarosz added that the Senn Building clearly hits three to four of the preservation criteria solidly. It occupies a corner but there is a lot missing around it so it is not in the way of development.

Pat Balon stated that the Senn Building could become an icon of a new development project if done well. It is also not cheap to demolish a building.

Matt Jarosz concluded that the commission should terminate their deliberation in one month. The matter could not be left open indefinitely. The developer needs to know in order to formulate their plans and budget. He urged Rob Ruvin to work with someone who is familiar with the Historic Building Code.

5. OLD BUSINESS

None

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. Certificate of Appropriateness for new 2-car frame garage at 2018 N. 2nd St. (Brewers Hill Historic District) Applicant Chris Rasch and Theresa Mambu PTS#58608 (6th Ald. District Ald. Milele Coggs)

Staff Paul Jakubovich summarized the project. A new 2-car garage will be built behind a new in-fill house in Brewers Hill. It will be clad in cement board siding and have cement board shingles and a carriage barn-style door.

In answer to questions by Sandra McSweeney Paul Jakubovich indicated that tapered frieze boards were typical of Milwaukee and that of the three corner board options shown, he thought Option B was better.

Owner Chris Rasch was recognized. He wanted to thank Paul for providing the design and indicated that his garage door would actually be somewhat different from the one drawn. He indicated that he would paint the garage and trim to match the house. The dimensions of the garage will be 24 by 20, slightly smaller than drawn.

THE MOTION: Sandra McSweeney moved and Sandy Ackerman seconded a motion to approve the proposed garage with staff having the authority to approve the final details. The motion carried unanimously.

B. Certificate of appropriateness for window alterations on rear elevation at 3410 N. Lake Drive (North Lake Drives Estates Historic District) Applicant: Andy Hurley PTS#58607 (3rd Ald. District Ald. Nik Kovac)

Staff Paul Jakubovich summarized the project. The prairie style house at 3410 N. Lake drive was one of three new houses approved by the commission for the 3400 block of N. Lake Drive. The current owner proposed to remove a porch roof and change out windows for better views. The rear or lake-facing façade is not visible from the street.

Commissioners commented on the difficulty in assessing the project from the drawings provided. There was a brief discussion about whether the changes would be in keeping with the style of the house. Commissioners felt that since this was new construction and at the rear of the house, the changes were appropriate.

THE MOTION: Ald. Bauman moved and Ann Pieper Eisenbrown seconded a motion to approve the alterations. The motion carried unanimously.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Mayor's Design Awards update

Staff Carlen Hatala reported that there will be 10 recipients for the preservation category. Planning Director Vanessa Koster added that there were about 15 to 20 other recipients for the Mayor's Design Awards. In answer to a question by Pat Balon, staff indicated that cream bricks will be given to the preservation award recipients.

B. HPC Training May 29 and May 30, 2009 in Madison

Staff Carlen Hatala reported that registration was closed for the training but that commissioners could call Madison if they were still interested in attending.

C. Staff updates on preservation projects.

Staff Carlen Hatala reported that the Weinstock house would be on next month's agenda for consideration of permanent designation. A new interim petition for the Hide House will be on the agenda as well. A new hotel proposal for Downer Avenue might be scheduled and there might be a streetscape plan for Downer Avenue as well.

Staff Paul Jakubovich reported that the Lion Bridge restoration in Lake Park was on track for completion in early fall. The County is working on funding for the north Lion Bridge. The County might be bringing in an application for a dog exercise area at Lake Park south of the water purification works. They have indicated their interest in a chain link fence which is not appropriate. It would be the only dog exercise area in a county park within the city limits.

Pat Balon asked whether or not the gardens being planted in Kilbourn Reservoir Park were under the purview of the commission. Mr. Jakubovich replied that they would be and that he would check into this.

Matt Jarosz expressed concern over the documentation of four buildings by the Historic American Building Survey at the VA grounds. He hoped it was not mitigation for upcoming demolition. Staff did not have any information on this matter.

9. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Pat Balon announced that the annual Reclaiming Our Heritage would be taking place on the VA grounds on May 30th and 31st. She will be a docent at the Ward Theater.

B. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission is Monday, June 15, 2009, at 3:00 PM, Room 301-A of City Hall, 200 E. Wells

10. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Pat Balon moved and Sandra McSweeney seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned.