



Living with History

MINUTES

**CITY OF MILWAUKEE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING
Monday, September 21, 2009, 3:00 PM
Room 301A, Milwaukee City Hall**

**Matt Jarosz, Chair
Sandy Ackerman, Pat Balon, Ald. Robert Bauman,
Randy Bryant, Ann Pieper Eisenbrown**

1. ROLL CALL

Chair Matt Jarosz called the meeting to order at 3 PM.

Commissioners Present: Sandy Ackerman, Pat Balon, Ald. Robert Bauman, Randy Bryant, Matt Jarosz, Ann Pieper Eisenbrown,

Note: Sandra McSweeney's term expired September 15, 2009. She was not reappointed.

Staff Present: Carlen Hatala, Vanessa Koster

2. MINUTES

A. Approval of the August 17, 2009 Historic Preservation Commission Meeting Minutes

THE MOTION: Pat Balon moved and Sandy Ackerman seconded a motion to approve the minutes from the August 17, 2009 meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

None

4. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Public Hearing for the permanent historic designation of the Nicholas Senn Building 300-318 W. Juneau Avenue (Commonly called Sydney Hih) (6th Ald. District)

Staff Carlen Hatala reviewed the possible criteria for permanent designation.

THE MOTION: Randy Bryant moved and Pat Balon seconded a motion to open the public hearing. The motion carried.

Staff swore in those wanting to testify.

Dawn McCarthy was recognized. She spoke in favor of permanent designation on behalf of the Milwaukee Preservation Alliance. She referred to the letter submitted at the previous hearing.

Staff Carlen Hatala indicated that the nominator was out of town so was not present to testify.

There were no other persons who wanted to testify.

THE MOTION: Sandy Ackerman moved and Ann Pieper Eisenbrown seconded a motion to close the public hearing. The motion carried.

The commissioners were in agreement on the criteria for designation.

THE MOTION: Pat Balon moved and Sandy Ackerman seconded a motion to recommend permanent designation based on the three criteria in the staff report, e-1, e-3 and e-9. The motion carried unanimously.

B. Public hearing for the permanent historic designation of the St. Marcus Parsonage / Mathis House at 212 East North Avenue (6th Ald. District)

Staff Carlen Hatala gave a brief overview of the potential criteria for designation.

THE MOTION: Pat Balon moved and Ann Pieper Eisenbrown seconded a motion to open the public hearing. The motion carried.

There was no one present to testify.

THE MOTION: Randy Bryant moved and Ann Pieper Eisenbrown seconded a motion to close the public hearing. The motion carried.

The commissioners were in agreement on the criteria for designation.

THE MOTION: Pat Balon moved and Ann Pieper Eisenbrown seconded a motion to recommend permanent designation based on the three criteria in the study report, e-5, e-6 and e-9. The motion carried unanimously.

C. Public Hearing on the petition for Interim Historic Designation for the Schlitz Tavern/ Coventry Inn/Benjamin Briggs Tavern at 2501 W. Greenfield Avenue. (6th Ald. District)

Staff Carlen Hatala gave a summary of the history of the building and the potential criteria for interim designation.

THE MOTION: Ann Pieper Eisenbrown moved and Randy Bryant seconded a motion to open the public hearing. The motion carried.

Staff Carlen Hatala swore in those wishing to testify.

Raul Varela, the new owner, was recognized. He stated he had purchased the building in early 2009 and that it had been empty for awhile. The former owner moved to a location downtown. The interior was very nice with leaded glass and wood floors. He was doing as much as he could to keep it original. He was honored to get designation.

Ald. Robert Donovan was recognized. He indicated that he was pleased to nominate the building through his staff assistant. He had spent a fair amount of time in the building and appreciated its beauty and history. He commended the new owner on taking care of the building. The alderman urged the commissioners to stop in. He said he hoped designation gave the owner an opportunity for financial assistance to help maintain the building.

THE MOTION: Ald. Bauman moved and Pat Balon seconded a motion to close the public hearing. The motion carried.

Staff was asked to explain the process for designation and eligibility for tax credits.

THE MOTION: Sandy Ackerman moved and Ald. Bauman seconded a motion to grant interim designation based on criteria e-1 and e-5 of the ordinance. The motion carried unanimously.

Ann Pieper Eisenbrown asked whether the preservation guidelines applied to the original building or the building as it looked now. Staff answered that the guidelines apply to the current appearance of the building.

5. OLD BUSINESS

A. Certificate of Appropriateness for revision to previously approved parking lot for Glorioso's at 922-924 E. Brady Street (Brady Street Historic District) (3rd Ald. District)

Staff gave a brief explanation of the proposed changes to the parking lot.

The chair recognized owner Michael Glorioso and architect Jose Dominguez.

In answer to questions from the commissioners, Jose Dominguez indicated that the fencing will consist of aluminum pickets. The lot might be upgraded with masonry piers in the future but the owner did not know.

Staff referred the commissioners to a copy of a letter from the Brady Street BID that supported the changes.

There was discussion about whether or not the shrubs should be in front of or behind the fencing. BOZA had approved the shrubs being planted behind the fence; something the owner thought would lessen the vandalism to the plants. There is a lot of vandalism to the street planters at present. The commissioners wanted to see the plantings in front of the fence. It was suggested to use larger, mature plants or even use vines. Michael Glorioso was agreeable to the change.

THE MOTION: Randy Bryant moved and Ann Pieper Eisenbrown seconded a motion to approve the revisions to the original Certificate of Appropriateness with the shrubs to be located in front of the fencing. The motion carried unanimously.

B. Certificate of Appropriateness for revision to previously approved streetscape improvements for the 2500 and 2600 Blocks N. Downer Avenue (Downer Avenue Commercial Historic District) (3rd Ald. District)

Staff Carlen Hatala reviewed the proposed changes to the Downer Avenue streetscaping.

Architect Grant Reginato was recognized. He reported that the substrate below the current paver areas varied in depth and the cost of making that substrate uniform would necessitate using half bricks since the bids had come in over budget. In a recent development, Mr. Reginato said that funding sources had been found to allow work on the substrate so that the paver bricks will be full size bricks as originally proposed. He showed the commissioners samples of the brick and the quarry tile for the entry areas. The number of trash receptacles was being reduced as well as the number of trees.

Ald. Bauman asked whether or not DPW had informed the architect about using salvaged city pavers. There were thousands of the granite pavers available. They might be cheaper than the brick proposed or even free. Mr. Reginato was unaware of the pavers. Ald. Bauman acknowledged that he did not want to hinder the project because a change of pavers could result in another long cycle of reviews. He would support the brick proposed.

THE MOTION: Alderman Bauman moved and Pat Balon seconded a motion to approve the proposed changes. Should the architect and Brady Street merchants choose the granite pavers instead, this change would be handled through HPC staff and did not have to return to the commission. The motion carried

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. Certificate of Appropriateness for a front landscape retaining wall at 2037 N. 1st Street (Brewers Hill Historic District) (6th Ald. District)

Staff gave a brief overview of the project. Staff Paul Jakubovich, before he was ill, had informed the owner that the front retaining wall was not appropriate and he would not approve it. Staff Carlen Hatala also informed the owner of this and the owner has expressed his wish to go before the commission. Before the meeting, the owner went ahead and had the retaining wall installed.

Owner Randy Goll was recognized. When asked why he installed the wall before the commission reviewed his request for a Certificate of Appropriateness, the owner said there were "over 50" such walls in Brewers Hill. He wanted the commission to see his vision and the scheduling worked for his contractor. He said he was his own contractor and that Hickory Landscaping was the sub-contractor. He has 100 feet of frontage, three city lots. The wall is 22 inches high on the plans.

Chair Matt Jarosz said the owner's action put the commission in a bad position.

The commissioners indicated that the retaining wall was inappropriate for the urban setting, and it diminished the work he had done on the house.

Ald. Bauman indicated he did not like to see berms destroyed and that fine plantings in an urban neighborhood tend to accumulate trash and litter and commented that people get into the flowers. Grass is better; nothing can hurt it.

Matt Jarosz suggested two alternatives. One, deny the wall and the owner could appeal to the Common Council's ZND committee. Two, the owner could work with staff to modify the wall, remove its curvature. Randy Bryant said a third option was to not consider this a retaining wall but have more extensive landscaping to cover/screen it. The owner said he did not want to see the wall and it was the landscape designer who came up with the wall.

THE MOTION: Randy Bryant moved and Pat Balon seconded a motion to deny the wall but approve the rest of the landscaping. The motion carried unanimously.

Matt Jarosz reminded the owner that he could appeal the denial or mitigate the wall. Randy Bryant added that the owner could continue with the other great work he was doing with the property.

B. Certificate of Appropriateness for a handicap ramp at 3020 W. McKinley Boulevard (Cold Spring Park Historic District) (4th Ald. District)

Staff Carlen Hatala gave a summary of the project and how the decision was made to place the ramp at the east side of the house.

The owner Mattie Echols and the builder Jodell Meyer were recognized.

Chair Matt Jarosz said the project was reversible, the owner and builder had done a good job keeping the ramp from touching the wall of the house, and the design was simple but well done. The commissioners agreed.

THE MOTION: Ald. Bauman moved and Randy Bryant seconded a motion to approve the project. The motion carried unanimously.

C. Certificate of Appropriateness for the removal of asphalt siding and wood siding and the installation of fiber cement siding at 713 E. Brady Street. (Brady Street Historic District) (3rd Ald. District)

Staff Carlen Hatala reviewed the proposal and recommended denial. The commission had been consistent in denying cement fiber cladding in the past.

Mary Colla, daughter of the owner, was recognized. She had hand-outs about Hardie Plank for each of the commissioners.

Matt Jarosz explained about the availability of tax credits. He also said that if the owner could not bring back the building, it could be left alone.

Pat Balon thanked Ms. Colla for the handout. She said that it showed that the fiber cement cladding was mostly used in new construction. She cautioned Ms. Colla that the manufacturer was trying to sell a product so promoted its benefits.

Ald. Bauman asked Ms. Colla how she knew she would have to replace all the siding on the house. The original siding could be fine. She could be spending more money than she had to.

Ms. Colla said that when she had the soffits power washed there was a lot to repair. Commissioners responded that power washing causes a lot of damage and would damage even good wood.

Matt Jarosz suggested the removal of only a little portion off the back where it wouldn't show to evaluate the condition of the wood under the asphalt siding. Alderman Bauman said real pine clapboards were better than Hardie Plank. The commissioners added that Hardie Plank cannot be installed over existing wood siding. The owner will have spent more money than they had to and the results would be disappointing. The contractor's quote of \$7,000 for the removal of the asphalt siding and the installation of fiber cement cladding was somewhat suspect.

THE MOTION: Randy Bryant moved and Pat Balon seconded a motion to deny the installation of fiber cement cladding. The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioners encouraged the owner to work with staff to find better ways to enhance the property. It would be a great gift to her mother to return the house to original appearance. In the Concordia Historic District they have had siding removal parties to take off the substitute siding.

Ms. Colla asked if a letter of support from the Brady Street Association would mean anything. Matt Jarosz said it wouldn't apply in this situation because the material did not meet guidelines.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

At the call of the chair, the public will be allowed to comment on any of the above-listed agenda items as they are being discussed.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

Matt Jarosz reported that Tom Hubka from UWM would like to do a presentation to the commission about Milwaukee's vernacular architecture that his students have been researching.

9. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission is Monday, October 19, 2009 at 3:00 PM, Room 301-A of City Hall, 200 E. Wells

9. ADJOURNMENT

THE MOTION: There being no further business, Randy Bryant moved and Pat Balon seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 5 PM.