

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING

URBANA HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

DATE: April 7, 2021

APPROVED

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

PLACE: City Council Chambers | Zoom Webinar

MEMBERS ATTENDING REMOTELY: Alice Novak, Gina Pagliuso, Renee Pollock, Trent Shepard, Kim Smith

MEMBER ATTENDING AT CITY BUILDING: David Hays

STAFF PRESENT City of Urbana (Host); Marcus Ricci, Planner II; Kat Trotter, Planner I; Liggett, Jason, UPTV Manager

OTHERS PRESENT REMOTELY: None

1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Chair Novak called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared with all members present.

2. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

There were none.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the January 6, 2021 regular meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission were presented for approval. Mr. Shepard moved to approve the minutes as written. Ms. Smith seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as written by unanimous voice vote.

4. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

There were none.

5. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

There was none.

6. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

7. OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

8. NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

9. NEW BUSINESS

There was none.

10. MONITORING OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Ms. Pagliuso stated that she drove around Elm Street, Buena Vista Court, and the Halberstadt House. The properties seemed to be the same as when the Historic Preservation Commission met last time. She noted that the JSM rental signs are still on all of the properties that Norman and Carolyn Baxley sold.

11. STAFF REPORT

Historic Preservation Month Activities: Historic Downtown Walking Tour Podcast

Marcus Ricci, Planner II, talked about a walking tour podcast that he and Lily Wilcock, Planner II, are preparing for Historic Preservation month. The walking tour will be of the Downtown Urbana Historic District and will be made available as a mobile phone app as well as a desktop computer app. There will be audio and visual features.

Mr. Shepard asked about the Hunter Building. He did not recognize that name. Ms. Pagliuso said it was also known as the Whittaker Building because Whittaker Jewelry occupied the building.

Mr. Ricci continued his staff report by talking about the nine sites to be featured in the tour, which are as follows: The Urbana Free Library, Tres Nopales, Rose Bowl, Cohen Building, Princess Theater, Post Office/IMC, Urbana Landmark Hotel, Hunter (Whittaker) Building, and Crane Alley. He mentioned that the podcast tour would be educational for both historic preservation and for comprehensive planning. The tours will be 30-45 seconds for each site, featuring interviews from building/business owners. They are hoping to launch the walking podcast tour in May to coincide with Historic Preservation month and with the planned Comprehensive Planning activities. He mentioned that Ms. Wilcock had already interviewed Charlie Harris of the Rose Bowl. They are hoping to interview additional owners of the remaining properties.

Ms. Pollock asked if there would be an attempt to mention the names of each business that inhabited each building. Mr. Ricci replied yes. The 30-second blurb would be long enough to mention when

the building was constructed, who the original tenant was, possibly what style of architecture the building is, and who the current tenant is. Ms. Pollock mentioned Carson's Candy on Race Street as one of the original businesses. Mr. Ricci stated that he would take any old photos of buildings in Downtown Urbana that the Commission members would be willing to share.

Mr. Ricci stated that he redrafted the proclamation from last year for Historic Preservation month. He is looking at adding the projects such as the Historic Downtown Walking Tour Podcast and looking to create a Buena Vista Court Walking Tour later in the summer.

Historic Property Activities

Certificate of Appropriateness – Status of Work

- HP-2019-COA-01 and HP-2020-EH-01 (2 Buena Vista Court) – Mr. Ricci reported that all of the windows have been replaced except for the basement egress window.
- HP-2020-COA-07 (806 West Main Street) – Mr. Ricci reported that the work status is unknown. No permit has been issued for the work as of yet.
- HP-2021-COA-01 (8 Buena Vista Court) – Mr. Ricci stated that owner Henry Strehlow submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to repair the porch. Mr. Strehlow would like to remove the non-original access ramp, replace the non-original concrete steps with concrete or wood steps and remove the brick sidewalls, and repair the porch exterior stucco and window screens and install an exterior door. He would consult with Chair Novak to determine the level of review.
- HP-2019-COA-01B – 2 Buena Vista Court – Mr. Ricci stated that the exterior plaster repair is on hold pending completion of the interior renovations.
- HP-2020-COA-2 – 4 Buena Vista Court – Mr. Ricci stated that all of the work has been completed except for the exterior stucco repair. It will get painted later this year.
- HP-2020-COA-06 – 8 Buena Vista Court – Mr. Ricci stated that the exterior stucco repair work is in progress.
- HP-2020-COA-09 – 801 West Oregon Street, Royer House – Mr. Ricci stated that the pergola roof repair had been completed. Mr. Shepard mentioned that the posts are still in the ground from when the previous owners put up a sign. Mr. Ricci stated that he would contact the new owners to remove the posts. He noted that sign management was done on a complaint basis.

Mr. Hays inquired about the one-year time frame for a Certificate of Appropriateness with regards to Case No. HP-2019-COA-01B. Mr. Ricci replied that it is not an issue because a building permit was applied for within the one-year timeframe.

Status of Compliance Violations

- 1404 South Lincoln Avenue, Chateau Normand – Mr. Ricci stated that the rental sign boards had been removed and the management promised to remove the posts when the weather allowed it. He planned to remind management to remove them as soon as possible. He mentioned that the owner would need to apply for a Certificate of Appropriateness for any/all signs because it is a historic property. The application would then need to be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission because it would be considered a major work. The Commission agreed that they would prefer to see signs posted in the yard rather than on the buildings of historic properties.

- 502 and 504 West Elm Street – Mr. Ricci mentioned that he had been working with the owner, Jonah Weisskopf, and Nick Hanson, the City’s Building Official, on installation of porch railings whether it be repairing the old railings or replacing with new railings. Ms. Pagliuso talked about the height of the proposed railings and noted that 24 inches is the “historical height”. Mr. Ricci stated that Mr. Weisskopf is dealing with insurance, Property Maintenance Code and Building Code requirements, along with historical considerations, and how they interact with each other. If a railing is required by the insurance company, it will be required to meet building code, and then will require review by the Historic Preservation Commission. The Commission talked about creating a “false sense of time” and the type of material the owner should use. Chair Novak suggested that the owner stylize some element of the historic trim if he wanted to install railings around the porch. This would be respectful to the original design without creating a false sense of time. Mr. Ricci stated that he would forward the information from this meeting to the owner and would give an update at the next Commission meeting.
- 612 West Green Street – Mr. Ricci stated that he has contacted the new owners about retroactively submitting an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work being done on the roof, and needs to send them an application.

Ms. Novak asked Mr. Ricci to talk about the status of the Landmark Hotel. Mr. Ricci replied that the only thing he has heard about the hotel is that there is an active electricity meter. The new owners are working out details and know that when they start making improvements that they will need to bring their plans to the Historic Preservation Commission for review.

Mr. Shepard felt that this was an impressive staff report, and he thanked Mr. Ricci for his hard work.

12. STUDY SESSION

There was none.

13. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were none.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Pollock moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:59 p.m. Mr. Shepard seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous voice vote.

Submitted,

Marcus Ricci, AICP
Historic Preservation Commission Recording Secretary