

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING

URBANA HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

DATE: January 20, 2016

APPROVED

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

PLACE: Council Chambers, 400 South Vine Street, Urbana, Illinois 61801

MEMBERS PRESENT: Scott Dossett, Matt Metcalf, Alice Novak, Gina Pagliuso, David Seyler, Kim Smith

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Trent Shepard

STAFF PRESENT: Lorrie Pearson, Planning Manager; Kevin Garcia, Planner II; Teri Anel, Administrative Assistant II

OTHERS PRESENT: Brian Adams, Richard Cahill, Gary Cole, Andrea Decker, Andrew Fell, Kevin Hunsinger, Linda Lorenz, Ilona Matkovski, Dan Newman, Dennis Roberts, David Thies, Kara Wade, Karl Weingartner, Jonah Weisskopf

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

Chair Novak called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared present.

2. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

There were none.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the January 6, 2016 Historic Preservation Commission regular meeting were presented for approval.

Kevin Garcia, Planner II, requested the following changes to the minutes:

1. Page 3, Paragraph 1, Line 4 – change “two” to “one” so that it reads as such, “...the property must meet one of the seven criteria...”.
2. Page 8, Paragraph 3, Line 5 – change the sentence to read as such, “This ~~did not~~ reduced his revenue, ~~but it did~~ and it reduced his ability to make renovations to the house.”

3. Page 9, Paragraph 6, Line 5 – add language so that it reads as such, “...he addressed all seven criteria in his written report. At the request of the Commission, he only addressed Criteria A and C during his testimony.”

Mr. Dossett moved that the Historic Preservation Commission approve the minutes as corrected. Ms. Smith seconded the motion. The minutes were then approved by voice vote as corrected.

4. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

There were none.

5. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

There was none.

6. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

Case No. HP-2015-L-01 – A request by Brian Adams to designate the Stephen S. Henson House located at 611 West Elm Street as a local historic landmark.

Chair Novak reopened the case and noted the procedure that was followed at the previous two meetings regarding this case and where in the procedure the Commission continued the public hearing to this meeting. She stated that although she had closed the public input portion of the hearing at the previous meeting, she would reopen it for anyone who did not already speak or anyone wishing to present new evidence.

ADDITIONAL PROPONENTS TESTIMONIES

Ilona Matkovski approached the Historic Preservation Commission to speak in favor of the landmark nomination. She said the house at 611 West Elm Street is an excellent example of the Dutch Colonial Revival style building and has historical merit. In addition, it retains a high degree of integrity. The fact that it needs paint and a new roof can easily be resolved. The footprint and roofline of the original porch were retained, so if someone wanted to restore the porch, it could be done. The building, as it currently is, contributes to the historical integrity of a near downtown Urbana neighborhood.

She talked about a historic hotel in Indianapolis. TWG Development, LLC purchased the property and restored it. The City of Urbana is now considering having TWG Development, LLC construct a new development at 200 South Vine Street.

She said the building at 611 West Elm Street retains high architectural integrity. All old buildings need work. She urged the current owner(s) to reconsider their plans for the property and think about restoring the existing building and use all of the financial incentives that are available.

The property is located next door to the Ricker House, which is a local and nationally registered landmark. She talked about Nathan Ricker. She said in order to retain the integrity in context of the

Ricker House, then the City needs to leave as many of the historic buildings that surround it in their place. The new development that the owner proposes to build will have newer materials and not be historic; and therefore, she encouraged the Historic Preservation Commission members to vote in favor of the landmark nomination. She asked that each member consider what they would like to have next to their historic house. Would they like to have a historic building preserved? Or would they like to have a four story, out of proportion, modern, plastic Disneyland apartment building with 15 or 20 new residents? She asked that they consider whether they would designate the existing structure as a historical landmark if there was not a plan to redevelop the site. She said that, yes, it is an excellent example of a Dutch Colonial Revival building and it should be landmarked.

CROSS EXAMINATION OF ADDITIONAL PROPONENTS BY OPPONENT OR OPPONENT'S REPRESENTATIVE

Mr. Thies stated that they had no questions for Ms. Matkovski.

Rich Cahill approached the Historic Preservation Commission to speak in favor of the proposed landmark nomination. He talked about his role in preserving the Ricker House. He mentioned that they used to call the 600 Block of Green Street "Ground Zero" because slowly everything, except the Ricker House, was demolished and the properties were redeveloped, and then the same thing started happening to the south side of the street. His point was that the historic context of 611 West Elm Street anchors the 600 Block of West Elm Street and holds the whole neighborhood together. He urged the Historic Preservation Commission to forward this case to the City Council with a recommendation for approval of the landmark designation by unanimous vote.

CROSS EXAMINATION OF ADDITIONAL PROPONENTS BY OPPONENT OR OPPONENT'S REPRESENTATIVE

Mr. Thies stated that they had no questions for Mr. Cahill.

Jonah Weisskopf approached the Historic Preservation Commission to speak in opposition of the proposed landmark nomination. He mentioned that 611 West Elm Street has been a party house for ten years or so. He stated that if the subject property is designated a historical landmark, then he would have trouble with why all the other 100-year-old homes are not landmarked.

CROSS EXAMINATION OF OPPONENTS BY THE PROPONENTS

Dr. Adams stated that he did not have any questions for Mr. Weisskopf.

Dan Newman approached the Historic Preservation Commission to speak in favor of the proposed landmark nomination. He mentioned that he lives next door to the subject property and stated that 611 W. Elm Street is not a party house. His family and he have never been disturbed by tenants that lived in the house. He added that the size of the future new development would be two to three times larger than the existing house and does not look residential.

CROSS EXAMINATION OF ADDITIONAL PROPONENTS BY OPPONENT OR OPPONENT'S REPRESENTATIVE

Mr. Thies stated that they had no questions for Mr. Newman.

OPPONENT'S SUMMARY

Mr. Thies approached the Historic Preservation to speak in opposition of the proposed landmark nomination. He mentioned that Kevin Hunsinger, Gary Cole and Andrew Fell were available to answer any questions that the Commission may have. He addressed the concerns mentioned in testimonies that were heard at this meeting.

With regard to the comparison of the hotel property in Indianapolis, he stated that Mr. Hunsinger's team presented evidence at the previous meeting to prove the economic viability of a new development. This does not mean that the developer would not be open to a different economically viable idea. When looking at the Urbana Zoning Ordinance, the current condition of the property, and the amount of money that would be needed to repair/restore the existing house to an economically viable condition, it does not work. The alternative would be to leave the property as is, but this is not an economically viable solution either, nor is a landmark designation of the property.

He said that one person suggested that the new development would house 15 to 20 residents. He assured the Commission that given the Zoning Ordinance and the design of the future development, there would be less than 15 residents.

He stated that one of the Council members, Eric Jakobsson, submitted an email to the Historic Preservation Commission members. He asked that the Commission not consider the email and to strike it from the record because Mr. Jakobsson is part of the decision-making body. He noted that when the case is forwarded to the City Council, he intends to ask that Mr. Jakobsson not vote as he basically declared his position without consideration of the evidence.

PROponent's SUMMARY

There were no concluding comments from the applicant.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION DISCUSSION

With no further audience participation, Chair Novak closed the public input portion of the hearing and opened it up for discussion by the Historic Preservation Commission members.

Discussion ensued about the email from Mr. Jakobsson and how to proceed. Ms. Pearson stated that it was up to the Commission to judge whether or not they should remove the email from the record.

Mr. Dossett felt that the email was not different from a substantial amount of content that the Commission received that talked about neighborhood context. Ms. Pagliuso stated that the

Commission received this email after the MOR Development Review Board meeting and prior to the landmark application. She believed that Mr. Jakobsson was voicing his opinion based on his owning of a historic home and that the City should try to preserve the historic character of our neighborhoods. She felt the email should be included because of his strong opinion and because he addressed the email to all of the Commission members. However, she would be willing to remove the email from the record, so that it does not impede Mr. Jakobsson's ability to weigh in on the case at the City Council level.

Mr. Dossett moved to strike the email dated October 3, 2015 submitted by Eric Jakobsson from the Historic Preservation Commission's consideration in this public hearing. Ms. Pagliuso seconded the motion.

Mr. Metcalf commented that regardless of whether he is a member of City Council or not, Mr. Jakobsson is a citizen who has a right to voice his concerns. He did not want to set a precedent that a citizen's opinion or thoughts were not valued at the Historic Preservation Commission level.

Chair Novak stated that she would be okay with striking the email because Mr. Jakobsson did not know about the landmark application at the time he sent the email to the Commission. The email was not sent within the context of discussing evidence within this public hearing.

The motion carried by a majority vote and the email was removed from evidence. Mr. Metcalf voted against the motion.

Mr. Dossett pointed out for the record that the Historic Preservation Commission did not remove the email because they did not value Mr. Jakobsson's input. They only want to make the process clean and legal and to provide Mr. Jakobsson with as many options as possible.

DELIBERATION OF THE APPLICATION

Chair Novak stated that the applicant submitted a landmark nomination for 611 West Elm Street referencing Criteria A and C.

Ms. Smith began by talking about the integrity of the house. The extra time allowed her an opportunity to walk around the building. She noticed that the house retains some of its historical physical features of a Dutch Colonial Revival and Colonial Revival styles such as the cross gambrel roof with the front-bay facing gambrel and the front-facing shed dormer, the original clapboard siding and shingle siding, the denticulated-cornice molding and some of its decorative trim, the existing fan window openings on the east and west gables with keystone-like features above, and the original window pattern.

Although there are historic characteristics that remain, they are in deteriorated and degraded state and not completely intact. The fan window opening on the west gable was boarded up. Most of the windows have been replaced with vinyl windows, which do not have the characteristic original divided lights that were in some of the upper sashes. There were two window openings boarded up and one window opening that had been enlarged for an egress door. There are many areas in the siding where both clapboards and shingles that are damaged or missing. The wood soffits are

severely deteriorated. The crown cornice molding at the second floor eave overhang and on the first floor fascia on part of the south and west elevations was covered with a pre-finished aluminum. There appeared to be water damage and dry rot on many of the existing window frames, the sills and trim. Some of the windows are missing the trim. Part of the denticulated cornice molding is degraded and separating from the fascia. There is missing scroll work on the decorative trim above the upper north-facing gable window. The southeast brick chimney is crumbling and loose.

It was her opinion that the Henson House had been altered significantly by the inappropriate alteration of the enclosure of the porch. This has eliminated the original front porch entry with the decorative columns and brick piers. There is no evidence that these exist within the existing construction. Although the original roof remains and the addition utilizes clapboard siding that matches the original house siding, the fenestration is not in scale or character with the house. The windows are not in scale with the original first floor windows. The north pair of windows are double-hung. The east window is a sliding window, and the west window is a fixed window unit. The front door, screened door and trim are non-decorative and plain. There is no longer a front entry porch, only the concrete stairs.

She felt that the scale of the entire house has been altered with the porch enclosure, which detracts from the character of the house and diminishes its historic integrity. She agreed with the staff recommendation that it did not meet Criterion C.

Mr. Seyler talked about the enclosed porch/addition. He has seen porches filled in and porches opened back up. Since the roofline of the original porch is intact, the space below could be turned back into a porch and the house would be given its Dutch Colonial look again. There are a lot of maintenance issues that could be addressed with enough money. The vinyl replacement windows could be swapped out with wood windows as long as the interior trim is in place. Therefore, it seemed to him that there was still plenty of integrity left with the existing house.

Mr. Dossett stated that he had a motion prepared to deny the proposed landmark nomination, and the integrity issues of the existing house were a major reason why. The house lost a great deal of its architectural style when the porch was enclosed. This enclosure makes his reading of the Historic Preservation Ordinance clearer to understand. The Ordinance states that the current condition of the existing house applies to whether it is inherently valuable for the study of the style. He did not feel that the existing house in its current condition met the integrity test. In addition, he did not feel that it met Criterion A as well.

Mr. Metcalf stated that the key issues that were presented and discussed at the previous meeting on January 6, 2016 were as follows:

1. *How much of the property should the Historic Preservation Commission take into account?*

He said it would be unrealistic to consider only the house itself and not the context of its location. Houses, like people, exist in context. Therefore, historic preservation, which seeks to preserve and reinvigorate existing structures that give residents a “sense of place,” must also consider context.

He added that this is not specific to this case, but is inherent to all preservation considerations everywhere.

2. Is our Historic Preservation Ordinance valid?

He agreed that some parts of the Ordinance are flimsy. He felt that we need a stronger, broader ordinance that commits more strongly and more thoroughly to the values implied in the City ordinances. While he liked Mr. Cole's idea of a "plain language" document, some of the testimony that was heard makes him doubt whether that would be the best route for historic preservation in the City of Urbana. However, this is for the future and for now we have the current Historic Preservation Ordinance and the Commission has to move forward presuming that it is representative to the minds and hearts of the residents of Urbana.

3. What does the Historic Preservation Commission serve to do, broadly and specifically?

He did not agree with Mr. Cole's comment at the previous meeting that "economic sustainability" was the Commission's primary responsibility. Economic considerations are on the City's radar per the 1998 Urbana Historic Preservation Ordinance, which guides the policies of the city and by extension what they do on the Historic Preservation Commission. However, that is one of the several historic preservation goals outlined by the City, and it also comes after "promote preservation of Urbana's historic resources."

Mr. Metcalf pointed out that the Commission members were instructed to focus on the application. So, his focus was on whether the property met Criterion A or Criterion C.

With regards to Criterion A, while Mr. Adams did a fine job of presenting what he found to be special about the home, it was Mr. Metcalf's opinion that 611 West Elm Street did not qualify as a local landmark under Criterion A.

Concerning Criterion C, Mr. Metcalf found that the existing house at 611 West Elm Street does have the following:

- Integrity of Location – The house has not been moved.
- Integrity of Setting – While diminished by the construction of large apartment complexes nearby, he believed that in connection with the Ricker House, the existing house has historic merit.
- Integrity of Materials and Design – These do not seem to have been altered other than the porch. He believes an addition constitutes a new structure that was not part of the original construction. The original porch appears to still be there because the dentil-moldings are in the same place as in the 1909 and the 2015 photographs. To him, this is evidence that the intent was NOT to build an entirely new structure onto the home, but rather to enclose an already existing part of it.

Mr. Metcalf discussed the Dutch Colonial style. He noted that during this period, builders sought to emulate styles of the past. Colonial Revival structures of all forms celebrate the past, but do not attempt to directly recreate it. Today, we use technology of the period just as those at the turn of the

20th century did, to construct homes that are popular in the period. A strict interpretation of Virginia McAlester's "Field Guide" fails to consider local styles and personal tastes that were so prevalent in this mix-and-match architectural period. Its lack of precision to the "typical" style as outlined by McAlester typifies the Colonial Revival, which was all about choosing what worked best for the person who constructed it.

Therefore, he found that the existing house, even in its current imperfect state, met both the spirit and letter of the claims made by Mr. Adams in his application under Criterion C. As a result, he planned to vote in favor of the landmark nomination.

As to the degradation of the property, Mr. Metcalf stated that he was disappointed the existing house was allowed to get in its current condition. It is entirely unacceptable for property owners to allow their properties to slowly degrade and then say "Oops! Now I have to tear it down and build new." As far as he is concerned, the passivity of demolition by neglect actively subverts the will of the residents of this City in creating a historic preservation ordinance in the first place. He stated that he did not know if that was the intent in this case; however, Mr. Hunsinger knew when he bought the property that it was located in the MOR Zoning District and that a structure of this age could very likely end up at the some point in the jurisdiction of the Historic Preservation Commission.

He is empathetic to the challenges of creating properties of value, but he believed that historic preservation could do that. There is a wealth of research that shows that proper, well-timed, consistent investment in historic neighborhoods revitalizes them and makes them jewels of the city.

Ms. Pagliuso stated that she walked around the house three or four times. She has a soft spot in her heart because her house is about 115 years old. When she purchased her home, it was in the same condition as the existing house at 611 West Elm Street. She talked about her home and pointed out that much of the materials on her home are 110 years old.

She said other people are buying and renovating older homes and turning them into student housing or rooming houses. They had to put money into the houses, but they are also making money off of them. You can rent to more than four unrelated people if you own a rooming house.

She researched building permits for the property at 611 West Elm Street. She found a building permit from 1975 to remove the front porch. While the original porch was demolished, the house still retains the original footprint, and it retains the original dentil work and roofline.

She said everyone who owns an older home is a steward of the property and of the history of the City of Urbana. It is the history of where we have been and brings us to the present and into the future.

She recognized that there are many stumbling blocks in the way of turning the property into a profitable entity. If the City Council decides to landmark the house, the economics will come in down the road through an Economic Hardship and/or Certificate of Appropriateness requests.

She does not believe in demolition by neglect. It happens a lot in the City of Urbana. This house is not too far gone. From the pictures in the written staff report, the interior craftsmanship is incredible. She agreed that the integrity of the house is there. The original footprint is intact. The windows are one-over-ones even though they are now vinyl. Many times when windows are replaced, the new windows run smaller, but not in this case. The vinyl windows were constructed to fit the size of the openings.

Therefore, she agreed that Criterion C has been met through the nomination.

Ms. Novak stated that she found the house to have a high degree of integrity. She expressed appreciation for the testimony of Mr. Otto and Mr. Newman in highlighting the Section VIII, *How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property*” in the National Register Bulletin 15 (How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation), which City staff had also partially addressed.

On Page 46, Criterion C, the Bulletin notes, “*A property that has lost some historic materials or details can be eligible if it retains the majority of the features that illustrate its style in terms on the massing, spatial relationships, proportion, pattern of windows and doors, texture of materials, and ornamentation.*”

The intact features of the house at 611 West Elm Street include:

- Massing
- Footprint – Including what some people call a small rear addition, which is not as evidenced on the Sanborn Maps.
- Wall Material – Including 1st story narrow gauge clapboard and 2nd story wood shingle
- Roof Shape – Cross Gambrel
- Fenestration Pattern – The window openings are unchanged, except for the addition of an exterior staircase where a door was inserted into a window space on the east elevation.
- Architectural Detailing:
 - Rectangular leaded glass windows;
 - Denticulated cornice on the enclosed porch, the front-yeast shed roof dormer, and the first story semi-hexagonal bay;
 - Triple course wood shingle round arch surrounds above a fanlight with an exaggerated wooden key at the attic ends of the east/west gambrels;
 - Paired 2nd story façade windows with a shaped hoodmold which connects to an attic-level rectangular sash which appears to be leaded glass; and
 - Very unique application of wood shingle to the rake boards on all gambrels.

She felt that the seven degrees of integrity as defined by the National Registry have been met including the location, design, setting, materials workmanship, feeling and association. The integrity issues of the house located at 611 West Elm Street, including an east elevation wood staircase and the enclosure of the front porch, are outweighed by the numerous intact original features of the house.

Ms. Novak also believed that the architectural value of the existing house met Criterion A. While the application establishes the architectural context for the house, we can easily picture that Elm Street was an original street of the City. It was a major street leading to the downtown and became

one of the two most prestigious streets (with Green Street) to live on. There were five mayors, two State of Illinois senators, Champaign County judges, and Urbana industrialists who once lived on Elm Street. Mr. Adams discussed in his landmark application how it served as a park or garden-like setting on the west edge of town. McCullough Street to Lincoln Avenue in the 1800's had larger estates, occupied by the wealthiest and most outstanding people of the city who built large and elegant residences on the estates.

611 West Elm Street is one of the very few remaining structures of the elegant buildings built in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Its significance is architectural heritage in the context of this elegant near-downtown street, a continuum of the "aristocratic" development that had begun in the late 19th century.

Under Criterion C, Ms. Novak found that the building is "representative of the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type inherently valuable for the study of a period, style, craftsmanship, method of construction or use of indigenous materials, while retaining a high degree of integrity." At a very minimum, the house is a well-detailed example of the Dutch Colonial Revival style. Baroque influence, classical influence and more has been noted in testimony, along with a variety of expressions of the style found on examples throughout the West Urbana neighborhood. Again, the established context of this house is this particular area of the neighborhood, this vestige of an aristocratic residential development which was on an original street, an extension of the downtown.

Mr. Seyler stated that even though the house was behind on its maintenance, he felt that it was still architecturally significant. There was still enough integrity left to nominate it.

Ms. Novak addressed the issue of condition versus integrity. The National Register goes into detail about this. It is possible to have a property in quite poor condition that could still have a high degree of integrity. The intertwining of these two terms comes from a condition that is severely horrible that a person can no longer interpret or determine the integrity or the honesty of a building as it was originally expressed. That is not the case for this house.

Mr. Metcalf agreed. It was brought up in the staff report that there are several other Dutch Colonial Revival style homes in Urbana. None of them have been brought to the HPC. There is nothing the Commission can do about those until a nomination is written on them. This is the first of its style to be nominated.

Mr. Metcalf moved that the Historic Preservation Commission accept the landmark nomination to the register under Criterion A and Criterion C. Mr. Seyler seconded the motion.

Ms. Novak stated her findings, which were as follows:

1. Article XII of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance provides the City of Urbana the authority to designate local landmarks and historic districts with the stated purpose of promoting the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the community.

2. The City of Urbana on October 16, 2015 received a landmark application to designate the property located at 611 West Elm Street as a local landmark. The application was deemed complete by staff on October 26, 2015.
3. The Urbana Historic Preservation Commission opened a public hearing on December 2, 2015, which, pursuant to a written request from the property owner, was continued and held on January 6, 2016, which was continued and held again on January 20, 2016 to consider the landmark designation of the subject property. (The continuance to January 20th was at the majority vote of the Commission, with commissioners needing extra time to review the Memorandum in Opposition to Historic Landmark Designation of the property located at 611 West Elm Street, which had just been provided to commissioners that afternoon.)
4. The house located at 611 West Elm Street was constructed c. 1902 in the Dutch Colonial Revival architectural style.
5. The house located at 611 West Elm Street meets Criterion A having significant value as part of the architectural, artistic, civic, cultural, economic, educational, ethnic, political or social heritage of the nation, state or community. The house represents the continuum of houses built on one of the City's original streets by some of the City's prominent citizens.
6. The house located at 611 West Elm Street meets Criterion C as it is representative of the distinguishing characteristics of the Dutch Colonial Revival architectural style and retains a high degree of integrity, retaining its original massing; footprint; wall material with 1st story narrow gauge clapboard and 2nd story wood shingle; cross gambrel roof; fenestration pattern; and architectural detailing including rectangular leaded glass windows; denticulated cornice on the enclosed porch, the front-east shed roof dormer, and the first story semi-hexagonal bay; triple course wood shingle round arch surrounds above a fanlight with an exaggerated wooden key at the attic ends of the east/west gambrels; paired 2nd story façade windows with a shaped hoodmold which connects to an attic-level rectangular sash of leaded glass; and the very unique application of wood shingle to the rake boards on all gambrels.
7. The integrity issues of the house located at 611 West Elm Street, including an east elevation exterior wood staircase and the enclosure of the front porch, are outweighed by the numerous intact original features of the house.
8. The applicant did not nominate the house located at 611 West Elm Street under any of the other criteria, including b, d, e, f and g, thus the Commission did not consider the eligibility of the house under those criteria.

Mr. Metcalf and Mr. Seyler accepted these findings as part of the motion. Roll call was taken on the motion and was as follows:

Mr. Metcalf	-	Yes	Ms. Novak	-	Yes
Ms. Pagliuso	-	Yes	Mr. Seyler	-	Yes
Ms. Smith	-	No	Mr. Dossett	-	No

The motion was approved by a vote of 4 to 2.

Chair Novak asked if the Commission agreed that they did not rely on any materials, information or communications received outside of the formal public hearing process when reaching their decision. The Commission members agreed.

Chair Novak closed Case No. HP-2015-L-01. Ms. Pearson noted that this case would be forwarded to the City Council on Monday, February 1, 2016 at the earliest.

7. OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

8. NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

9. NEW BUSINESS

There was none.

10. MONITORING OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Mumford House

Chair Novak stated that she would draft a letter to the descendant. Ms. Pearson said that the Chair could do this without the Commission needing to vote on it.

Urbana Free Library

Ms. Pagliuso stated that there was an article in the News-Gazette talking about fundraising for the Library. It talks about disassembly of the porch and pouring of new footings. The article mentions the large glass windows leaking air and racking up big power bills. Ms. Pearson reiterated that as she mentioned at the last meeting, the Library is in the early stages of planning any work. As this article pointed out there is way too much work and not enough money, so the Library needs to prioritize what repairs need to happen first.

11. STAFF REPORT

Kevin Garcia mentioned that he received an invitation for the Historic Preservation Commission to tour Restoration Works in Bradley, Illinois. Restoration Works restores historic windows. In conjunction with this, there is a Frank Lloyd Wright house that they could tour. City staff thought this might be a good thing to do in May for Historic Preservation Month. The Commission agreed.

12. STUDY SESSION

There was none.

13. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Mr. Dossett gave an update on the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association (HEUNA) meeting with TWG Development, Inc. on January 14, 2016 in the Lewis Auditorium in the Urbana Free Library. There were about 25 residents and 4 City staff. They received lots of input and came up with a good list of concerns about the impact to the neighborhood. With the help of Councilmember Roberts, they will provide a letter of feedback to the developer of Block North. Some of the concerns involved tax base, parking, drainage issues, etc. Ms. Pagliuso added that some other concerns involved having commercial space on the ground floor and concerns about what it would look like. Mr. Dossett wrapped up saying that HEUNA has a Facebook page where a lot of dialogue is taking place. At some point, he will take comments from people when the developer submits a design.
- Next regular meeting will likely be March 2nd. The Commission could resume discussing education efforts from the fall.
- Brian Adams and Alice Novak will be holding a session on “How to Research Your House”. Hopefully, it will promote some positive publicity.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Pagliuso moved that the meeting be adjourned. Ms. Smith seconded the motion. With all Commission members in favor, the meeting adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

Submitted,

Lorrie Pearson, Planning Manager
Historic Preservation Commission Recording Secretary