

MINUTES
BLOOMINGTON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING,
THURSDAY, MAY 16, 2013 5:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL
109 E. OLIVE ST., BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Carson Durham, Mrs. Sherry Graehling, Mr. Dan Greene, Mr. John Elterich, Mr. Jeff Kennedy, Mr. Brad Williams

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Mark Woolard, City Planner

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Durham called the meeting to order at 5:05 P.M.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Woolard called the roll.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

MINUTES: The commissioners reviewed the minutes from the April 18, 2013 meeting and had no changes to such. Mr. Elterich moved to approve the minutes as drafted. Mr. Kennedy seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 6-0.

REGULAR AGENDA:

Case BHP-2-13. Review of application submitted by Front-Douglas, LLC requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for a roof, soffit, fascia, ventilation, wall and brick flashing, tuckpointing, gutters, downspouts, chimney caps for the George Hanna House, Queen Anne style, located at 605 E. Front Street.

Chairman Durham introduced the case. Mr. Woolard provided a staff review and said the quote refers to the fascia and box gutters but the statements are unclear.

Mr. Chase Cavalera of 1406 W. Wood Street stated he is in the process of purchasing this house and fell in love with it a long time ago. He has done a lot of work to be able to purchase it. He said George Nordine is present who had identified other major concerns with the house. Mr. Cavalera said if the right steps are not taken the house is doomed because of serious problems.

Ms. Tracy Haas Riley of Prudential Snyder Real Estate explained that Front-Douglas, LLC is Thomas Nielsen and Kathryn Bohn and they are the owners who have signed a paper authorizing Mr. Cavalera speak regarding the case. She explained they wrote the purchase offer contingent upon the roof being approved by this Commission. The roof has been neglected and water is leaking into the house. Mr. Williams said he looked at the property three to four years ago and the owner stated there was a \$40,000 income from the units on the property. Ms. Riley stated the owners have lost interest in the property. Mr. Williams said he has a solution for the sidewall problem that will cost no money, would not need to do anything to the slate, be attractive and is

easy to do. Ms. Riley stated she does not think there is a lot of marketability for the house with the S-4 overlay. Their goal is to get the roof on and not cost \$95,000. Mr. Cavalera stated he is going with Mr. Nordine and he is the most qualified at restoring older homes with all the issues.

Mr. Kennedy said when he bought his current home it had 3,000 square feet of stucco hanging off the building or had already fallen off, the entire east eave was hanging 12” too low, and it needed a new roof and extensive repair work. He had many visits to this Commission and understands the frustration of having to come back multiple times. However he is glad he had to stay with all the guidelines because he guarantees had he not done so, the value of the house today repaired would be far less if he had gone with modern materials or something that was not historically accurate to the building. He has heard the argument many times and it does not come to bear.

Mr. Williams stated there are five other properties within 200’ of 605 E. Front that are all zoned S-4 and two of them actually abut that property. Ms. Riley stated there are others that are not. She felt it can be cost prohibitive. Mr. Elterich explained that in 1980 when the house was zoned S-4 it was likely in good condition but it has been deteriorating and that isn’t the Commission’s fault but the poor condition doesn’t warrant forgetting preservation because it isn’t economically feasible. We care about the economy because you can’t just pour money into a rental property. Mr. Cavalera said it is far from the original parameters with the Apartment Mart sign and the antenna, the broken stairs and the nearby pastel houses.

There was discussion on a house in a much worse state of repair that went through massive renovations and still stayed within the Commission’s guidelines. The Commission will not support changing the S-4 simply because of an economic equation. If the seller is trying to get more for the property than it is worth and yet it is in such disrepair the property is not worth much. Thus the argument is not with the Commission but with the seller.

There was discussion on the house’s condition, materials and the guidelines. The guidelines the Commission uses are federal guidelines set by the National Park Service. The Commission is not requiring a slate roof and a lot of latitude is given. The bid shows another \$60,000 for following guidelines but it does not indicate where the costs will be spent. The box gutters could cost very little or nothing if lined with rubber roofing which is acceptable. Mr. Williams explained a how the slate walls and siding would not have to be removed and thus save several thousand dollars.

The Commission discussed the estimate. Chairman Durham asked Mr. Nordine if he had an itemized list of how he got from \$30,000 to \$90,000. Mr. Nordine stated he does not and stated his dilemma is that he is not historically correct but he does restoration and makes things better. He said for the crown molding there are materials that have a basic look but do not have wood in it. He said there are many variables and he does not know how to remanufacture all of the details. He said he does not have the where with all, the knowledge or patience to do it. He said he threw a number at it because he has done some of it but never historically all the way. He knows it can be done. There is a lot of uniqueness to the house but some of it he does not know how to do. Chairman Durham said we understand the challenges one faces with an old home. The things that are being thrown away that are not reproduced, is what reduces the quality of the architecture. The other materials do not equate to the same home and new materials will not last.

Chairman Durham explained this is a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to do the work based on this estimate but it does not provide any documentation to say what is planned and to determine if it meets the guidelines. There was discussion on reviewing the request only for the roof and not the crown molding, soffit and fascia and where does the roof stop and the other items start. This is an integrated system. The commission would rather see the items still on the building and working than throwing them in the dumpster. Mr. Nordine said he agrees wholeheartedly.

Mr. Kennedy explained to the applicant how there are substantial grants and tax incentives available for the property however if the work is done as desired it would make him ineligible for the funding. He said if he would have known about this massive funding for his house it would have saved him tens of thousands of dollars. Mr. Cavalera stated if he doesn't do something the work is not going to get done but he cannot spend ten times as much money on the property. Mr. Kennedy said he can hear and feel the frustration and anguish but provided a recent example of how the argument that if we don't do something now no one will is invalid.

There was discussion about separating out the roof from the other components in the bid which are still important. The same architect that designed this house also designed the courthouse. The Commission discussed the specifics of the Nordine Remodeling bid dated April 30, 2013. Mr. Nordine and the Commission agreed the work will include the sheeting, ice and water shield, black EPDM on the porches, lined box gutters with a rubber membrane, other gutters with like gutters, down spouts, reusing the step flashing, only flashing for the chimney, starter strip, rolled roof membrane clean up, but no work on the siding, soffits, porch, dormer floor, and he will not rebuild the box gutters. The six inch gutter would be only used on the east wall and the down spouts will be replaced. Mr. Cavalera said the gutters will match the brick and stone. The note about historic guidelines at the bottom the bid will be struck.

After due consideration, Mr. Kennedy moved to revise case BHP-2-13 to new language, the application would still be submitted by Front-Douglas, LLC limited to the roof, wall and brick flashing, ventilation, gutter on the east wall of the house where there an existing modern gutter, an down spouts all around for the George Hanna House, Queen Anne style, located at 605 E. Front Street. The motion was seconded by Mr. Elterich, which passed by a vote of 6-0.

Mr. Williams moved to approve the case BHP-2-13 review of application submitted by Front-Douglas, LLC requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the roof including the revisions that were with were previously approved as well as being contingent upon the purchase of this property by Chase Cavalera and owning the property and the Certificate of Appropriateness will be issued in Chase Cavalera's name only. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Graehling, which passed by a vote of 5-0.

The Commission encouraged the petitioner to pursue the grants and the other resources.

Mr. Kennedy left at 6:43.

Case BHP-6-13 Review of application submitted by Janina King requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for a new fence for the John Harwood House, cross-gabled vernacular, 1906, located at 901 E. Jefferson Street in the Davis-Jefferson Historic District.

Chairman Durham introduced the case. Janina King of 901 E. Jefferson stated she wants the fence for protection being next to the trail. She said she looked for an original vintage type fence but they do not salvage enough. They found a steel fence for less than half the quote provided. She provided a photo of the fencing.

After due consideration, Mrs. Graehling moved to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness in case BHP-6-13. The motion was seconded by Mr. Williams, which passed by a vote of 5-0.

Case BHP-7-13 Review of application submitted by Janina King requesting an up to \$2500.00 Eugene D. Funk, Jr. Historic Preservation Grant for a new fence for the property with the John Harwood House, cross-gabled vernacular, 1906, located at 901 E. Jefferson Street in the Davis-Jefferson Historic District.

Chairman Durham introduced the case. Ms. King stated she just purchased the fence for \$3,900.00. There will be no labor expense to install the fence.

After due consideration, Mr. Williams moved to approve case BHP-07-13 for a grant of \$1,950.00. The motion was seconded by Mr. Graehling, and passed by a vote of 5-0.

Case BHP-8-13 Review of the Master Plan and Improvements for Franklin Park, located in the Franklin Square National Register Historic District, RATIO Architecture and City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department.

Chairman Durham introduced the case. Mr. Woolard explained the city has held a couple meetings regarding a plan for improvements to Franklin Park and the parks and recreation director is requesting to lay this over in order to provide more time for work on plan revisions.

Case Z-02-13 Review petition submitted by Thomas Nielsen and Kathryn Bohn requesting to eliminate the S-4 Historic Preservation Zoning District Overlay for the George Hanna House, Queen Anne style, and the property located at 605 E. Front Street.

Chairman Durham introduced the case and stated we have stated our concerns. Ms. Riley stated that the requirements will be cost prohibitive, it is kind of on its own and the house has already been altered. Mr. Williams stated the architecture quality is still in pristine shape and almost untouched. It ranks very high as an excellent candidate for preservation and conservation.

Greg Koos of 305 Woodland Ave. stated he has done extensive research for historic properties for over 35 years and placed numerous properties on the National Register of Historic Places. He stated the George Hanna House is among the finest of the Richardsonian Romanesque houses in Bloomington. Designed by the firm of Reeves and Baille, it is unique in its free interpretation of that style. Bloomington has three other Richardsonian houses, The Walsh House on N. Fell, The McClure House on N. Prairie and Holy Trinity Rectory on N. Main. These three were

designed by George Miller. The house features first story walls of random rubble and the stone possibly locally sourced glacial deposit. Upon this base is a course of Franconia sandstone upon which is laid monochromatic red brick with matching mortar. The secondary faced gable ends are covered with hung slate. Porches feature classical columns, some of which appear to be stone. In every sense of the word this house is a masterpiece of design and execution. The materials and their use are of the highest quality. It was built in 1894-1895.

Reeves and Bailie were based in Peoria Illinois. William T. Reeves was born in Bloomington. He apprenticed as an architect with Warren Milner in Peoria. Milner had previously worked in Bloomington and designed many of the houses in the Davis Jefferson Historic District. Locally, Reeves and Bailie designed the Old McLean County Courthouse, now the Museum of History, the Bloomington High School building, which burned in 1933, the residence at 420 E. Grove, an addition to Washington School, and numerous small town schools.

The house is an architectural landmark, which stands on its own merits. It features design, use of materials and craftsmanship on an order no longer practiced locally. Its preservation is important to the stability of the Dimmit's Grove neighborhood, where so many property owners have worked for years upon the preservation of these fine homes. The S-4 zoning for the property is appropriate and should not be removed.

Mr. Woolard explained the Zoning Ordinance stipulates that in order to remove the S-4 overlay all of the standards must no longer apply to the property. No evidence has been presented to warrant that all of the standards are no longer applicable. There was discussion on how the Planning Commission should not make a recommendation for approval unless they have information that the criteria set forth in the ordinance have been met. Ms. Riley stated that she did not know she should have wrote an essay on the house but went through the Zoning Ordinance and thought she would verbally present their point of view and some of the standards are not met. Chairman Durham emphasized that only maybe two percent of the architecture value of the building has been altered and emphasized we are not asking for the box gutters to be put back on the building. The fear that we are asking for gold plated things is completely incorrect. Ms. Riley stated that they do not want the case to be laid over.

Mr. Williams moved to disapprove case Z-02-13 and that we send a letter from the chairman saying that we strongly urge them to look at those guidelines and that unless they can say that those guidelines have not been met, they should not approve removing the S-4. The motion was seconded by Mr. Elterich, which passed by a vote of 5-0.

The Commission discussed how with the preservation of historic buildings will increase the value of the building and rents.

OLD BUSINESS:

Mr. Woolard provided the responsibilities of the Commission per the code.

NEW BUSINESS:

Report of Historic Preservation Activities: None

Any Other New Business that May Arise: None

Mr. Williams made a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Graehling seconded the motion which passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Woolard
City Planner

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