

**APPROVED MINUTES OF THE
ROCK ISLAND PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

Regular Meeting

4:00 p.m.

September 22, 2010

Location: Personnel Conference Room, Rock Island City Hall, 1528 3rd Avenue, Rock Island, IL

Attendance: (X) Present () Absent

(X) Steve Andich

(X) Bob Braun

(X) Lendol Calder

(X) David Cordes

(X) Kent Cornish

(X) Jane Koski

() Mark McVey

() John Strieter

(X) Stephen Warren

(X) Linda Anderson (Assoc.)

() Jeff Dismer (Assoc.)

(X) Daryl Empen (Assoc.)

(X) Diane Oestreich (Assoc.)

Staff Present: Alan Carmen, Jill Doak, Ellen Adams

Chairman Braun called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

Approval of Minutes of the September 2, 2010 Special Meeting

Commissioner Andich moved to approve the minutes of the September 2, 2010 Special Meeting.

Commissioner Calder seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Comment on Board of Zoning Appeals Case for 2103 18th Avenue (Revised)

Ms. Doak gave the staff report. Ben Reeder has requested to install a shed on his property in close proximity to an existing garage. Mr. Reeder amended his initial request. He has applied for a variance from the BZA for two feet of the six foot separation required between structures on the same property. The request is to locate the 6 x 12 foot prefabricated shed four feet south of the garage. Staff feels that a four foot separation will make it possible to maintain the south side of the stucco garage. The shed will not be placed on a slab or permanent foundation. Staff recommends the Commission comment to the BZA that location of the shed four feet from the historic garage will allow enough space to maintain both the garage and the shed.

Commissioner Koski moved to approve the staff recommendation for a positive comment to the BZA regarding the Case for 2103 18th Avenue.

Commissioner Warren seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Case #2010-08 – Consideration of a Certificate of Appropriateness for 2103 18th Avenue, which is located in Highland Park Historic District

Ms. Doak explained the design of the proposed shed. The shed will be made of wood with vertical grooves, a shallow gable roof, and doors on side hinges. Preservation Commission approved a similar shed in 2005 which was also in Highland Park. It is a very removable structure that does not require a building permit. The only detriment the shed would have on the site is its location visible to 18th Avenue. This is unavoidable, however, due to site constraints and the applicant's desire for the shed to be visible from the house. Staff recommends the Commission approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for construction of a shed at 2103 18th Avenue because it is very simple in design and is a removable feature that would not negatively affect the historic fabric of the home or neighborhood.

Commissioner Oestreich suggested that Mr. Reeder install a gutter on the side towards the garage. Without a gutter, water will splash onto the garage.

Commissioner Cordes stated that installation of a shed is better than making changes to the historic garage.

Commissioner Andich made a motion to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for construction of the shed at 2103 18th Avenue because it is a removable feature that is simple in design.

Commissioner Cornish seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Case #2010-09 – Consideration of a Certificate of Appropriateness for 1029 3rd Avenue, which is known as the Schriver-Nettles House

Applicant John Viren was not able to attend the meeting in person, so he joined the Commission via speakerphone.

Ms. Doak gave the staff report. Dr. Viren has applied for a COA to extend the deadline for Case #2009-7 which was approved by the Commission on July 22, 2009. The request was to remove and reconstruct the wraparound back porch on the house. The deadline for the reconstruction and painting of the porch was September 1, 2010. Dr. Viren would like to extend that deadline to July 31, 2011. Demolition of the porch has occurred, as well as work on the foundation. Staff recommends the Commission approve the extended deadline. Ms. Doak asked Dr. Viren whether any of the porch materials, such as the gingerbread work, were salvaged.

Dr. Viren stated that he is storing materials from the porch in the dining room.

Commissioner Cordes inquired about the anticipated schedule of work on the porch.

Dr. Viren explained that foundation, posts, and lattice work will be completed. There is currently work, particularly electrical, being done on the interior of the home.

Commissioner Andich moved to approve the COA to extend the deadline of reconstruction and painting of the porch by the proposed date.

Commissioner Cordes seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Chairman Braun asked what would happen if the deadline extension was not granted.

Mr. Carmen answered that time consuming enforcement proceedings would have to begin.

Discussion of 2011 CLG Grant Application

Ms. Doak said that she spoke to Mike Ward, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency CLG coordinator, concerning the two grant ideas that were discussed during the August meeting: a website to provide contractor recommendations and restoration guidance and a reprint of *Picturesque Tri-Cities*.

Ms. Doak spoke with the creator and webmaster of the Des Moines Rehabbers Club website, Steve Wilke-Shapiro. The website is built on a content management platform system called Drupal, which works better than an html based site. Mr. Wilke-Shapiro said that the website was very time consuming to create, but he spends only one to two hours a week on its maintenance. Anyone can fill out a comment sheet, but it is not posted on the website until it is approved by Mr. Wilke-Shapiro. He mentioned that as rule, he does not approve negative comments on contractors to be posted. Also, if a contractor wants to be listed on the site, they must get a customer to recommend them. The website would not be successful without a network of people who work with contractors and continue to come back and share their experiences. Mr. Wilke-Shapiro does not follow up on whether or not a contractor is in business, nor does he have a committee approving what he does.

Commissioner Oestreich asked whether the Preservation Commission's website could take recommendations from residents in neighboring municipalities.

Ms. Doak replied that any area contractor could be recommended, as long as they are willing to work in Rock Island. Ms. Doak explained that the Des Moines Rehabbers site tries to keep its focus on preservation. Mr. Wilke-Shapiro will not post a contractor that he feels does work detrimental to historic buildings. He also

keeps a tight local focus on the website. The website receives about 1500 to 1800 unique visits a year; the average visitor looks at six to ten pages.

Ms. Doak explained that Mr. Wilke-Shapiro is trying to create a “rehabbers club in a box” for other municipalities to adopt. When asked whether he would be willing to set the Preservation Commission’s website, he stated that he would. Mr. Wilke-Shapiro could do the initial setup of the website. There would then be a maintenance agreement between the city and the nonprofit host of the website.

Commissioner Koski asked whether she got a sense of what the state thinks about the two grant ideas.

Ms. Doak replied that the IHPA was favorable about the way the Preservation Commission could set up either grant. Mr. Ward was not concerned about the site’s maintenance after the 18 month grant period. For the *Picturesque Tri-Cities* reprint, the Commission could partner with another municipality, which would require approval from multiple groups, a time consuming process. Also, the preservation purpose that the book would provide would need to be made clear. In terms of the two ideas, the preservation purpose would be better served by the website.

Commissioner Cornish asked which group would be the third party host of the website.

Commissioner Empen stated that two possible groups are the Rock Island Preservation Society (RIPS) or Broadway Historic District. He felt that RIPS would be a more appropriate partner, since it is a citywide preservation group. RIPS would be responsible for the maintenance of the site. Commissioner Empen feels once the website is setup, maintenance would not be too time consuming; he would be able to do it. Also, the maintenance of a content manager formatted site is not difficult, so if necessary, another individual could take over the responsibility.

Commissioner Anderson asked if RIPS would be the gatekeeper of the website content and whether the Preservation Commission would provide oversight?

Mr. Carmen said the Commission would set up basic policies that govern what should and should not be posted.

Commissioner Oestreich expressed concern over the cost of the website for RIPS.

Commissioner Empen stated that domain renewal is just \$25 - \$35 a year.

Commissioner Warren stated concern that the usefulness of the website would be diminished if only one person was involved with its maintenance and direction.

Ms. Doak stated that there would be some sort of maintenance agreement and guidelines to ensure that the website does not become ineffectual.

Commissioner Anderson stated that very clear guidelines from the Preservation Commission would be necessary so that the website does not become something that was not intended.

Ms. Doak stated that an annual review with webmaster and the Preservation Commission could be held. The grant application is due November 29. Because of this, she will need to know whether the Commission would like to go along with the website idea.

The Commission was in agreement that a reprint of *Picturesque Tri-Cities* is no longer an option for the grant.

Commissioner Anderson stated that she would like the website to include how-to demonstrations and other important information so that it is more of a resource, rather than just a place to advertise contractors.

Ms. Doak agreed. While the Des Moines Rehabbers site provides limited instructional information, the RIPS site would not have to. Good informational links and could be included, such as youtube.com how-to demonstrations and National Parks Service briefs.

Commissioner Anderson said that the RIPS board will meet to discuss this idea and send Ms. Doak a letter outlining their interest. She feels that the group would probably be interested in moving forward with the idea. It could be a way to involve a younger audience in the group and would be good for preservation. However, RIPS will want to have a firm idea of the cost and time commitment.

Commissioner Oestreich added that RIPS has talked about trying to get this sort of information out in a more accessible format than a booklet they printed awhile back. They did not think they would have the capacity to do so, and partnering for this grant would give them that opportunity. Also, the website could include language from *Residential Design Guidelines*. Commissioner Oestreich then asked whether RIPS would be able to use some of the grant money for maintenance of the site.

Ms. Doak explained that all grant money must be spent during its 18 month time period. Also, Mr. Wilke-Shapiro has been talking to Preservation Iowa in regards to starting Rehabbers websites in municipalities throughout Iowa in 2012. He feels that working with the Rock Island website would be a good demonstration project for him.

Commissioner Cordes stated that the website would be beneficial in several ways. It would allow Rock Island citizens access to information that the city itself cannot provide. It could also be the catalyst to starting a Rock Island Rehabbers Club. At the least, the website would connect to a younger population, which does not seem to be extremely concerned with preservation.

It was the consensus of the Commission that the idea for a Rehabbers website should be pursued for the 2011 CLG Grant. Ms. Doak stated that she feels funds will be adequate to support a consultant getting the site up and running. Ms. Doak feels confident in Mr. Wilke-Shapiro's interest and abilities. During their phone conversation he was professional, sharp, and enthusiastic about working with the Preservation Commission. He has also had success with the Des Moines and St. Louis Rehabbers websites. The only dilemma would be finding someone to create the site if Mr. Wilke-Shapiro cannot. It would be more difficult, but could be done.

Discussion of MoSUS Buildings for Landmarks Illinois' "Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties" Listing

Ms. Doak explained that the Preservation Commission has had properties make the list in the past. However, funds received are so minimal that they would not make much of a difference for buildings like Old Lincoln School. The biggest advantage of making the list is the media recognition that the building receives. Landmarks Illinois may try to assist in the marketing of the building.

The two items on the list that struck Ms. Doak as having the best opportunity for selection were downtown churches as a group and the West End Settlement House.

Commissioner Oestreich stated that Landmarks Illinois has not wanted to tackle historic churches in the past. The West End Settlement House is a prominent building with a great history. It is also in danger because the group that uses the building does not own the property. Also, perhaps the building should be landmarked.

Ms. Doak added that the building is very unique and intact.

Chairman Braun stated that of all the properties on the list, the West End Settlement House probably has the greatest chance of being chosen.

Ms. Doak said that an application for the West End Settlement House will be pursued. The most difficult aspect of the application will be digging into the building's complicated title situation.

Other Business

Ms. Doak reminded the Commission about the Traditional Building Conference which will be in conjunction with the Illinois Association of Historic Preservation Commissions meeting.

Commissioner Oestreich noted that RIPS's Highland Park Tour received a large article in the Sunday *Argus*. She stated that new editor Sarah Gardener is responsive and good about getting things into the paper.

There being no further business, the Commission adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alan Carmen, Secretary
Rock Island Preservation Commission