

MINUTES  
PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
MARCH 18, 2015  
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS

MEMBERS PRESENT: Brent Bogen, Lendol Calder, Sue Swords, Anthony Heddlesten, Craig Kavensky

MEMBERS ABSENT: Colleen Vollman, Lo Milani, John Strieter, Kent Cornish

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS: Linda Anderson, Diane Oestreich

STAFF PRESENT: Ben Griffith, Brandy Howe

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Bogen called the meeting to order at 5:02 PM.

AN ORDER APPROVING THE WRITTEN AGENDA:

**MOTION:** Kavensky made a motion to approve the written agenda. Swords seconded the motion. **The motion carried on a vote of 5-0.**

AN ORDER APPROVING THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 21, 2014 MEETING:

Chairman Bogen asked if there were any corrections to the minutes of the January 21, 2015 meeting. Associate Member Oestreich requested a correction be made on page 3, that the Griffith be changed to Heddlesten in the first line of the third paragraph under Other Business. Chairmen Bogen asked for a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Heddlesten made a motion and Swords seconded the motion. **The motion carried on a vote of 5-0.**

REVIEW AND PROVIDE COMMENTS TO CITY COUNCIL ON A SPECIAL USE PERMIT REQUEST FOR 2106 7<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE:

Chairman Bogen asked Howe to provide a report. Howe reported that CED staff received an application for a special use permit from Steve Pressly to add a crematorium to the former funeral home at 2106 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The subject property is in the Broadway National Historic District and is immediately to the west of the Karpeles Museum, a landmark property. The former funeral home did not have a crematorium in its business operation. The space proposed for the crematorium is an attached garage located on the east side of the structure. The applicant also plans to renovate the existing chapel area to be used for visitations. Exterior improvements are also proposed to the parking area and grounds. It is expected that the existing lighted freestanding sign will also be utilized. One full-time employee will work out of the facility with the possibility of an additional part-time employee added in the future. The applicant also provided an emissions testing report which indicated the proposed cremator will emit no visible smoke and will produce no odor. Further, the stack will have a low profile and will be visually unobtrusive.

Chairman Bogen asked the applicant if he would like to make a statement. Mr. Pressly commented that he is requesting to add an appliance to the facility. He has looked at viable locations in other cities but would prefer to purchase the property in Rock Island. He added that the retort would be added to the garage and have very low visibility. Mr. Pressly stated that the manufacturer requires the stack to be at least 17 feet above the floor that the crematory is installed upon and that it would be approximately 2 feet above the roof. He added that it would be wrapped in brick to look like a chimney. Mr. Pressly indicated that installation of the retort will be necessary to make this business expansion feasible.

Chairman Bogen asked if Mr. Pressly is currently under contract for the building. Mr. Pressly indicated that he has entered into a purchase agreement but approval of the special use permit and testing of mechanical equipment will be necessary to move forward with the purchase. Mr. Pressly added that it is

his intention to restore the structure to its 1934 appearance when it was originally a funeral home. This would include removal of the cobblestone parking lot which is hazardous in the winter with ice accumulation. Mr. Pressly added that he has been in communication with John Snow of the Karpeles Manuscript Museum who has provided an email of support for the proposed new use for the building. Associate Anderson commented that she is excited to see someone investing in the property.

David Levin, realtor for the Pressly's, stepped up to the podium and commented that the building has been on the market since December 5, 2012. It was initially listed for \$440,000 and is now down to \$149,000. Mr. Levin has shown the property to many interested buyers over the years, including doctors, churches, and theatre groups, but the costs involved to improve the property have proven to be cost prohibitive. Mr. Levin added that the fact that the Pressly's intend to purchase the building and use it for its original purpose is remarkable.

Chairman Bogen asked for any additional comments. Hearing none, Chairman Bogen asked for a motion. Kavensky made a motion that the Preservation Commission is in favor of the City Council issuing a special use permit to Mr. Pressly. Calder seconded the motion. **The motion carried on a vote of 5-0.**

#### OTHER BUSINESS:

Chairman Bogen asked if there was any further business to discuss. Howe indicated that the CLG annual report will need to be submitted to the state in the spring. She asked that the Commissioners provide any educational activities that they have participated in over the past year to be added to the report. Howe added that they are still waiting to hear from the Illinois State Historic Preservation Agency regarding the CLG grant award.

Associate Oestreich noted that National Geographic is accepting applications for geo-tourism sites along the Mississippi River. She suggested this is a great opportunity for Rock Island to showcase some of its historic and other tourism sites. Associate Anderson added that the applications will likely be due in the next three months. Chairman Bogen added this is an fantastic opportunity for economic development.

Chairman Bogen asked if there was any further business to discuss. Griffith stated that no landmark applications or applications for a certificate of appropriateness have been submitted. Griffith reminded everyone to be mindful of any *ex parte* communications and to contact the Planning Office with any questions regarding any items on upcoming agendas.

#### ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Bogen asked for a motion to adjourn. Calder moved to adjourn. Heddlesten seconded the motion. **The motion carried on a vote of 5-0.** The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Brandy Howe