

MINUTES
Historic Preservation Commission
November 4, 2021
City Hall, 100 W. Woodstock Street, Crystal Lake, IL

1) Call to Order

L. Solak called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

2) Roll Call/Attendance

The following Commission members were present, Hamilton Hale, Judi Halter, Nancy Haskins, Brittany Niequist, Lisa Solak, Bob Wyman and Jim Wyman. Diana Kenney was absent. Community Development Director Kathryn Cowlin was present for staff.

3) Public Comment

None

4) Approval of Minutes of the September 2, 2021 Regular Meeting

J. Wyman noted a correction on the minutes. J. Wyman made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 2, 2021 regular meeting with the noted corrections. N. Haskins seconded the motion. All members voted aye. Motion passed.

5) Approval of Minutes of the October 7, 2021 Regular Meeting

J. Halter made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 7, 2021 regular meeting as presented. N. Haskins seconded the motion. Members N. Haskins, J. Halter and B. Wyman voted aye. Members B. Niequist, L. Solak, J. Wyman and H. Hale abstained. Motion passed.

6) Adoption of 2022 Meeting Dates

J. Wyman made a motion to adopt the 2022 schedule of meeting dates as presented. J. Halter seconded the motion. All members voted aye. Motion passed.

7) Demolition Permit Process

L. Solak asked for an update on the draft handout. B. Niequist stated she started putting together a checklist that could be added to the current demolition handout or be a standalone handout. She has not provided a copy of the draft to staff or the Commission for review. J. Wyman stated the Minnie Street house had items that could have been salvaged.

B. Wyman stated it would be nice to have the property owner's information so the Commission could approach the owners. He started to compile a list of all the properties that have been on the trolley tour over the years so that those properties could be flagged. Not all properties on the trolley tour may have architectural value though since they do feature properties where influential people have lived.

L. Solak asked what was the goal of the handout. B. Wyman stated people may not know the historical value of their property. K. Cowlin added that landmarked homes are already flagged in the city's building permit software.

B. Niequist agreed to send a copy of the draft handout to staff once it is finished. City staff, the HPC and the Sustainability Committee could review the handout. The handout could be shared on the City's website and newsletter when completed.

8) Landmark Process

L. Solak shared the form letter that the commission previous wrote to encourage property owners to landmark their home. This letter could be sent to the list that B. Wyman is creating from the trolley tours.

B. Wyman asked if real estate agents could help out by giving out a handout on the history of the property. L. Solak suggested contacting the McHenry County Association of Realtors to see if they could share a handout on how to landmark a property.

The question of looking at the process itself was posed. J. Wyman stated that Franz did not landmark his property because he did not understand the process. It is important to get the information out there in an understandable way. He continued and raised the question if \$50,000 of the Hotel/Motel tax could be distributed to the commission to use to give homeowners \$5,000 to entice them to landmark their property. B. Wyman stated that he called around and Woodstock and McHenry do not give a stipend for landmarking properties.

L. Solak stated we have to flip the script and get people excited about the process. B. Niequist states the trend has started, people want historical homes and all of the shows on HGTV are about renovating historic architecture now. She also stated the \$500 does not cover much anymore. L. Solak said it is a start. B. Wyman spoke of tax relief for home improvements through property taxes. J. Wyman asked if COVID relief money could be utilized.

B. Niequist said it is best to have a conversation with a homeowner. She has five meetings lined up with homeowners about landmarking their properties (70 Center Street – 1930s 2-story brick home, 51 Dole Ave – mid-century modern that is over 50 years old, Crow house – the Philpots are interested, 51 S. Walkup – Queen Anne/Victorian architecture with ginger breading, restored front porch, original carriage house and 151 S. Walkup – brick chimney). She is getting a lot of traction from her Instagram account. B. Niequist added the Philpots wanted to make sure they could do the addition on the rear. B. Wyman said as long as it matches the house.

B. Niequist stated the requirement to have drawings is an obstacle for the application. B. Wyman clarified they do not need to be professional drawings.

L. Solak wrapped up the discussion with asking all commissioners to review the landmark process and certificate of appropriateness to see what we need to edit to make it more understandable. Bring these ideas to the next meeting.

9) 2021 Projects Lake Avenue Cemetery and Veteran's Research Book

B. Niequist shared there are only a couple weeks of good picture taking weather left and she was planning to take the photos of all the headstones at one time. L. Solak asked for clarification on who is getting the drafts for double-checking. N. Haskins will get them first then proof read by J. Wyman, D. Kenney and B. Niequist.

B. Niequist asked if everyone was comfortable with Dropbox and that she would set up a folder so everyone can drop the drafts in one folder. The group agreed with the proposal.

L. Solak added she has more D2 supplies to share, please call her if you need them.

B. Niequist asked for an update on the pillars. L. Solak emailed Randy Funk in the beginning of October and has not received a response.

10) Member Inquiries and Reports

N. Haskins showed the Christmas cards she previous sold at the antique store of historic images/properties. They could do something similar as a fundraiser with the landmarked properties. L. Solak said they would need the owner's permission. They could contact McHenry County Historical Society to see how they did it with their note cards. Everyone liked the idea.

J. Wyman asked what property was included in the City's purchase of the train depot. K. Cowlin provided an overview of the property that would be included in the depot purchase in Downtown.

12) Adjournment

There being no further business, J. Wyman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. J. Halter seconded the motion. All members voted aye. The meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.