

Heritage Preservation Commission
July 13, 2020 Special Meeting Minutes
City Hall – Council Chambers

Due to the COVID-19 emergency, the HPC members participated through video conference from home. The meeting was held as a Special Meeting pursuant to Minnesota Statute 13D.021 in response to the Covid-19 emergency.

Call to Order and Roll Call

President Jessica Fortney called to order the meeting of the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) at 12:00 p.m. on Monday, July 13, 2020.

Attendance: (Via WebEx video conferencing – all votes conducted via roll call)

Attending: Ken Buehler, Stacey DeRoche, Jessica Fortney, Mike Poupore, and Sarah Wisdorf

Absent: Meredith Anderson and Brandon Hartung

Staff Present: Steven Robertson

Agenda item #4 moved up in the agenda and added item #7 regarding Tiffany windows.

Communication and Other Businesses

4. Correspondence: MN SHPO, Lincoln Park National Outdoor Recreation Legacy Grant – Lisa Luokkala announced she will be leaving the city and has accepted the position of Executive Director of the Lake Superior Hiking Trail. The HPC's new liaison will be Parks and Recreation Manager Jessica Peterson. Luokkala gave an overview of the project. Progress has slowed since the beginning of the year. The draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was supported. They are looking forward to the National Park Service taking over the lead role of the 106 process. The city can focus on final design and public engagement. The Minnesota DNR will provide an active role in the process. They are waiting for a timeline to be established. Mike Poupore stated it sounds like it's moving forward. Luokkala noted their contract expires at the end of the year, so a new contract is forthcoming. Poupore asked if the money was safe. Luokkala stated it appears so.

Unfinished Business

1. Update and discussion on MN SHPO CLG Grant Award District (a grant of \$24,000 to prepare design guidelines for the Duluth Commercial Historic District. The city will establish a planning project boundary from 1st Street bound by 1st Avenue West to allow for guidelines focusing on the unique built form, based on historic building massing, height and character within the smaller planning area of the Duluth Commercial Historic District) – Senior Planner Steven Robertson gave an overview, and shared an example of the Pastoret mitigation, and would like to highlight preservation activities going forward. The current map reflects the Historic District created in the 90's. Examples in the packet included Mankato and Stillwater. He noted Requests for Proposals (RFP's) could be requested, and a sub-committee could be created. Stacey DeRoche noted the map and why 1st and 4th Avenue West wasn't included. Poupore thought the original design wasn't included and may be been from the U.S. Bank's entry. DeRoche feels it is an important area to encompass, which includes the Alworth Building and Security Jewelers. On the lower side of the street, the buildings are all original. Robertson will do

some research, and this item can remain on the agenda. Chair Fortney noted RFPs. The questions to consider are, why? What does it mean to the owners? What does it mean to the city? Robertson noted the city of Hastings' Frequently Asked Question section. Chair Fortney appreciates the diagrams and the straight-forward language. She noted the language shouldn't be aimed directly only at HPC experts. Ken Buehler found it to be well written and educational and agrees with the format. Sarah Wisdorf also liked the Hastings example. To encourage redevelopment, it should be as straight-forward as possible. Poupore noted establishing good design guidelines into the UDC would be a good asset as well. Robertson will draw up a draft RFP and bring back to the commission in August. He also agreed with Poupore about adding language to the UDC.

2. Update and Discussion on MN SHPO CLG Grant Award 2021 Conference (a grant of \$13,000 for the 2021 Minnesota Annual Historic Preservation Conference) – No update. Chair Fortney noted they will find out soon. Poupore noted the CLG grant involved. Robertson stated DEDA will also be matching funds.
3. Update on Archival Documentation for Pastoret Terrace and Paul Roberson Ballroom – Robertson noted the SPHO letter was included in the packet. It's not an action item, but the letter was forwarded. Poupore noted the HPC will comment on the final draft after SPHO is done.

Communication and Other Businesses

5. Correspondence: Section 106 Public Outreach for Cell Antenna Colocation at 325 South Lake Avenue, June 17, 2020 – Robertson noted they are replacing existing equipment, and the appearance will not change.
6. Consideration of Minutes: May 26, 2020 and June 1, 2020

MOTION/Second: Buehler/DeRoche approve the minutes

VOTE: (5-0)

New Business

7. Tiffany windows. Buehler gave an overview and shared the resolution he would like the HPC to submit to the city council. The city is facing financial hardship, and are looking into the possibility of selling the Tiffany windows. The city is the owner, and they are now on display inside the Depot. The windows had deteriorated over the time. Hanging them caused a separation in the materials. There was money allocated towards restoration. After the restoration, the city decided to place them back in the Depot. They are north facing and behind bullet-proof glass. They are now suspended in a floating hanging system, which is stress free. The Ness administration tried to sell them and thought they were valued at 3 million dollars. The value was tainted due to a commission-based sale. The historical society, working with city councilor Jeff Anderson, was able to designate the windows as a historical landmark. They are insured for \$125,000 each, which the county pays for. This leads us to today's resolution. They need to convey the HPC is not in support of the city taking the windows off of landmark status. Poupore noted the city council's resolution is not conforming to the proper protocol, and isn't valid. Robertson stated tonight's city council resolution is gauging the interest to start the process. This is a prologue, and the actual process will require

proper procedural steps. Poupore doesn't agree with the language and bringing it forward in resolution form. Chair Fortney added they were tip-toeing around HPC's input. She was offended that the city council didn't invite the HPC to participate. The city council resolution does not follow proper policy and procedure. Poupore asked if it can be removed before an HPC member has to attend the agenda session. Robertson stated he can forward Buehler's resolution to the city councilors. DeRoche noted the landmark status designation, and asked why even bother with the designation if it can be so easily reversed? It makes the whole process seem meaningless. Poupore reiterated the city council needs to go through proper channels. DeRoche stated the point of landmark protection is to take away the threat. Buehler was careful in choosing his words for the HPC's resolution to the city council. Soft pedalling at this point, but is open for changes. Chair Fortney thanks Buehler for writing the resolution, and feels the need to convey the message more strongly. Poupore also, asked if they could strengthen the language. Buehler is amenable to any amendment, if it's the will of the commission. The conversation is now educational in nature. Part of the HPC's role is to educate the people they work with. Chair Fortney agreed if the language is too strong, it can go the other way fast. She suggested changing the language around local landmarks, and finds it unfortunate that they need to be reactive versus proactive. Buehler stated the city is in desperation mode, but if they vote to maintain the landmark status, and waters calm, he suggests inviting Noah Schuchman to a meeting to go over the HPC's role and importance to the community. Poupore agrees and supports the HPC's resolution as written. DeRoche thanked Buehler and stated it is a considerable investment by the county. Buehler noted the city has been a good steward.

MOTION/Second: Poupore/Buehler approve the HPC's resolution to share with the city councilors

VOTE: (5-0)

Robertson will forward the resolution to the city councilor and copy Chair Fortney.

Adjournment at 1:07 p.m.

Respectfully,


Adam Fulton – Deputy Director
Department of Planning and Economic Development