MINUTES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING,
Thursday, January 12, 2017 @ 4:30 p.m.
Five Seasons Conference Room, City Services Center, 500 15th Avenue SW

Members Present: Amanda McKnight-Grafton     Chair
Bob Grafton
Ron Mussman
Tim Oberbroeckling
Mark Stoffer Hunter
Barb Westercamp
Caitlin Hartman
BJ Hobart

Members Absent: Sam Bergus
Todd McNall

City Staff: Jeff Hintz, Planner
Anne Russett, Planner
Jennifer Pratt, Community Development Director
Anne Kroll, Administrative Assistant

Call Meeting to Order
- Amanda McKnight Grafton called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.
- Eight (8) Commissioners were present with two (2) absent.

1. Public Comment
- Jim Hobart shared his concerns with the Bever Building on 1st Avenue possibly being torn down and asked if there was an update. Mark Stoffer Hunter stated that the plans for that building are not yet set in stone, but he is keeping an eye on it and there are a lot of people who are concerned about the building.

2. Election of Officers for 2017
- Tim Oberbroeckling stated that even though Amanda McKnight Grafton and Bob Grafton’s terms end in June 2017, he recommended that they, along with Todd McNall, continue their roles. Mr. Oberbroeckling asked if there are any issues with this since Mr. McNall is not in attendance. Jeff Hintz stated that he does not have to be in attendance. Jeff Hintz stated that he does not have to be in attendance.
- Tim Oberbroeckling made a motion to re-elect Amanda McKnight Grafton as Chair through June 2017, Todd McNall as Vice Chair, and Bob Grafton as Secretary through June 2017. Ron Mussman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
3. Approve Meeting Minutes
   • Tim Oberbroeckling made a motion to approve the minutes from December 8, 2016.
     Barb Westercamp seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Jennifer Pratt arrived to the meeting at 4:37 p.m.

4. Action Items
   a) National Register Nominations
      i. Cedar Rapids Milk Condensing Company – (Knutson Building) 525 Valor Way SE
         • BJ Hobart recused herself from discussion and voting.
         • Jeff Hintz stated that this nomination is being pursued by the future property owner with
           permission of the City and the documentation information indicates Criteria A is
           applicable. Criteria A is associated with historic events. If the HPC approves the
           application it will go to the City Council and to SHPO for approval and then should be
           added to the National Register of Historic Places.
         • Tim Oberbroeckling made a motion to approve and recommend to City Council and
           SHPO the National Register Nomination for the Cedar Rapids Milk Condensing
           Company Building. Ron Mussman seconded the motion. The motion passed
           unanimously.
   b) 2016 Certified Local Government Report
      • Jeff Hintz stated that the purpose of the report is that it makes SHPO aware of
        Commission/staff activities, it provides a summary of 2016, a summary of
        Commissioners, and highlights changes to historic structures and districts. Mr. Hintz
        noted that the Ed McMahon workshop was not included previously, but after a
        conversation with Barb Westercamp it was added to the report. Other Commissioners
        participated and Mr. Hintz will include those people in the report. The report will go to
        Council for approval and then onto the State. Any changes or additions are needed by
      • Barb Westercamp made a motion to recommend approval of the Certified Local
        Government Report to City Council. Tim Oberbroeckling seconded the motion. The
        motion passed unanimously.
   c) Update to Chapter 18 – Historic Preservation of the Municipal Code
      • Anne Russett provided the background of the update and a summary of the changes
        requested by SHPO and the City Attorney. A vast majority of the changes are not
        substantive and they help to clarify language and intent. Staff and Amanda McKnight
        Grafton felt it was important to bring back the revised draft to the Commission so that
        they are aware of the changes.
      • Anne Russett stated that one specific change is that applications for designation of Local
        Historic Landmarks may be withdrawn if one property owner objects. Bob Grafton asked
        if that is the same for demolition. If one of the property owners does not want the
        building to be demolished is that application withdrawn? Anne Russett stated that staff
        will have to check with Building Services since that is not in Chapter 18.
      • Amanda McKnight Grafton asked Anne Russett to share the comment from SHPO about
        accessory structures. Anne Russett stated that SHPO asked why a date of 1943 or earlier
        was chosen for demolition review for accessory structures instead of fifty (50) years or
        older like primary structures. Staff commented to SHPO that this was decided by the
Commission to focus on the pre-World War II buildings that would have a higher chance of being historically significant. Staff did not receive a response from SHPO, so that date was kept in the draft.

- Barb Westercamp made a motion to recommend adoption of the revised draft ordinance by the City Council. Tim Oberbroeckling seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Discussion Items
   a) Prioritization of Historic Resources

   - Anne Russett stated that, in November 2015, City Council requested information that prioritizes the community’s buildings of historic significance and identifies the historic resources that should be preserved. The purpose of prioritization is to help in decision making and identify potential local historic landmarks. Ms. Russett stated that the focus is on individual buildings, not areas or neighborhoods, which is a separate effort. Staff recommends the development of a methodology and provided suggestions for narrowing the list including, among other things, a focus on buildings that are well-preserved and have historic integrity. At the December 8, 2016 meeting the HPC requested that staff put together a preliminary list for review and discussion. Staff requested data from the City’s IT Department and are waiting to receive that data.

   - BJ Hobart stated that the idea of buildings with integrity is subjective and that is a concern because with the Knutson Building many thought it could not be saved. Mark Stoffer Hunter added that he believes integrity also means that the building has a good story to tell and reminded the Commission to keep an open mind for the story behind the building. Bob Grafton added some examples of where the integrity of a building has been compromised, but they are still historically significant because of their importance to Cedar Rapids and what is hidden underneath.

   - BJ Hobart asked what purpose the list will serve. Anne Russett stated that the next step could be to reach out to those property owners and letting them know that the Commission feels that their building is important and that they could make it a Local Landmark. Tim Oberbroeckling noted that the City Council asked for this list. Mark Stoffer Hunter added that the City Council asked for another tool to help them clarify the differences between a historic building and an old building.

   - Amanda McKnight Grafton stated that this is a fluid list because things can change. Before the Flood of 2008 there were buildings that would not have been considered significant but because so many were lost of that style the few left became significant.

   - Tim Oberbroeckling asked that with the Bever and Skogman Buildings is there a way to contact the owner and relay information to them about the Commission’s concerns. It is important to get ahead of this before it gets too far along in the process. Jennifer Pratt stated that the Commission could use this list as an opportunity to look at the stories behind the buildings and to share that with the property owners.

   - The Commission discussed ways to reach out to property owners and if there is a legal process that needs to be followed with this communication. Staff will check with the City Attorney’s office.

   - Amanda McKnight Grafton asked when staff will have a first draft for the Commission to review. Anne Russett stated that staff will have a first draft at one of the February 2017 meetings. Amanda McKnight Grafton stated that in the meantime Commissioners can start working on their own lists of buildings to share with the group. Mark Stoffer Hunter stated that the History Center is a great resource if there are questions about buildings.
• Mark Stoffer Hunter asked if companies that plan to work on historic buildings or buildings next to a historic building (such as United Fire) could come to the Commission and give a presentation so that the Commission is aware of what the plans are for their building. Jeff Hintz stated United Fire did reach out to staff and staff let them know that they are welcome to present at an HPC meeting. United Fire stated that they would reach out if time allowed, but did not contact staff again.

6. Announcements
• There were no announcements.

7. Adjournment
• Barb Westercamp made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:32 p.m. Tim Oberbroeckling seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Anne Kroll, Administrative Assistant II
Community Development
Historic Preservation Commission
January 12, 2017

National Register Nomination

Milk Condensing Company
• Known as Knutson at 525 Valor Way SW
• Nomination pursued by property owner
• Documentation information indicates Criteria A is applicable

HPC Role
Apply Bulletin 15 from NPS (NRHP Criteria):
A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
B. That are associated with the lives of significant persons in or past; or
C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
D. That have yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

Recommendation
• Concur with NRHP documentation Criteria A is the most appropriate for this structure.
• Recommend to Council and SHPO structure be added to NRHP

Certified Local Government (CLG) Report
Background

• Purpose of the report:
  - Makes SHPO aware of Commission/Staff activities
  - Summary of the 2016 year
  - Highlights changes to historic structures and districts
  - Includes a summary of Commissioners.
• Any changes or additions needed by January 16
• Approved by Council

Update to Chapter 18 – Historic Preservation

Background

• Sept 22, 2016: HPC recommended adoption of the draft ordinance by the City Council
• Sept 23, 2016: Staff sent approved draft to SHPO for review
• Nov 29, 2016: Staff received SHPO’s comments
• Dec: Staff revised the ordinance based on SHPO’s comments, as well as comments from the City Attorney

Summary of Changes

• Vast majority of changes help to clarify language and intent
• Specific changes include:
  – Revised definition of “architectural detailing” to include mass produced items (not just unique items)
  – Revised definition of “historically significant” to include integrity
  – Clarified the CPC’s role in reviewing proposed local historic districts and landmarks

Add’l Change from City Attorney

• Enforcement Provisions:
  — Any person, firm or corporation violating or failing to comply with any terms or provisions of this chapter shall be subject to the provisions of Chapter 1 of the Municipal Code. When a building permit is not required, the Community Development Department shall have the authority to enforce the terms and provisions of this ordinance as provided by law. When a building permit is required, the Building Services Department shall have the authority to enforce the terms and provisions of this ordinance as provided by law.
Next Steps

• January 18: City Council Development Committee
• February 14: Set the date for the City Council public hearing
• February 28: City Council Public Hearing

Staff Recommendation

• Staff recommends that the HPC recommend adoption of the revised draft ordinance by the City Council

Prioritization of Historic Resources

Background

• November 2015
  – City Council requested “information that prioritizes the community’s buildings of historic significance and identifies the historic resources that should be preserved”

Background

• Purpose of Prioritization
  – Help in decision making
  – Help to identify potential local historic landmarks

Background

• Focus is on individual buildings
• Separate from the effort to prioritize areas identified for intensive surveys in the Cedar Rapids Citywide Historic and Architectural Reconnaissance Survey
Example Approach

• Staff recommends the development of a methodology, for example:
  1. Exclude local historic districts and landmarks
     Local historic districts and landmarks are already protected by the adopted regulations and guidelines.
  2. Focus on areas that have been surveyed and identify properties contributing to a historic district or a potential historic district or are individually eligible for listing
     Need to demonstrate that the building is historically significant. Surveyed areas provide the justification necessary for prioritizing a building.

Example Approach

3. Focus on areas with redevelopment pressure
   May be at risk of being significantly altered or demolished.

4. Focus on buildings that are well-preserved
   Positive way to approach the list.

Narrowing the List

• Possible additional questions to help narrow down the list:
  – Does the building have local importance?
  – Is the architecture unique to Cedar Rapids or designed by a local architect?
  – Is the building historically significant under more than one National Register of Historic Places criteria (i.e. architecture, events, people, and archeological)?

Update on Preliminary List

• On 12/8, the HPC requested that staff put together a preliminary list for review and discussion

• CD staff requested data from the City’s IT Department