MINUTES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING,
Thursday, February 9, 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
                        Sam Bergus

Members Absent: Caitlin Hartman
                        BJ Hobart
                        Todd McNall

City Staff: Jeff Hintz, Planner
                        Anne Russett, Planner
                        Anne Kroll, Administrative Assistant

Call Meeting to Order
• Amanda McKnight Grafton called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m.
• Seven (7) Commissioners were present with three (3) absent.

1. Public Comment
• There was no public comment.

2. Approve Meeting Minutes
• Barb Westercamp made a motion to approve the minutes from January 12, 2017. Tim Oberbroeckling seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Action Items
a) Letter of Support Request
   i. Façade restoration to original appearance at 411 First Avenue SE
• Jeff Hintz stated that Jennifer Pratt spoke with the owner of 411 First Avenue SE who is looking to restore the building to its original appearance. There is paneling on the building that was added in the 1950s. The owner has been communicating with SHPO for Historic Tax Credits to restore the building. SHPO stated that the paneling on the building is old enough that it would qualify as acquired significance. Mr. Hintz shared some historic photos of the building before the panels were added. The owner is asking for a letter of support from the Commission for removing the panels.
• Mark Stoffer Hunter gave a brief history of the building that included the former depot in front of the building, the apartment on the roof of the building, and the original design at
the top of the building. Mr. Stoffer Hunter gave examples of other buildings downtown that had panels that were removed and the buildings restored and how much better they look now.

- Sam Bergus stated that for a majority of Cedar Rapids residents this building with the panels is what they remember growing up and would consider it historic the way it is.
- Tim Oberbroeckling stated that the brick work and construction was all done by hand and the people who worked on the building are a part of the history of the building and those panels cover that up.
- Jeff Hintz stated that there is some mention in the site inventory form about the metal paneling conflicting with architectural significance so perhaps by removing the panels it would become eligible on its own and not just as part of the National Historic District.
- Tim Oberbroeckling made a motion to approve the letter of support for the façade restoration to the original appearance at 411 First Avenue SE. Barb Westercamp seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- Amanda McKnight Grafton noted that the letter of support should include the following information: the fact that Josselyn and Taylor were the architects, the railroad connection and history of how there is no longer any representation of that, the historic significance of the train and how presidents came to Cedar Rapids on their whistle stop tours, how the paneling is available throughout the United States but the brickwork, labor, and materials are local, that this building contributes to the Downtown District but the current façade takes away from it being eligible by itself, the building is in jeopardy of being torn down, and three fourths (3/4) of the building is from the 1800s and just the front is from the 1950s. Jeff Hintz stated that staff will draft the letter and Amanda McKnight Grafton and Mark Stoffer Hunter will review it before it is sent.

4. 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 and is separate from the effort to prioritize areas identified for intensive surveys. At the last meeting, staff outlined the example methodology and the Commission gave feedback. Staff used GIS to identify forty-one (41) properties for the review of the Commission. Jeff Hintz shared pictures of the properties and discussed how GIS was used to narrow down the list.
- The Commission discussed how important the condition of the property is and if it should be considered in the criteria for the list. The Commission feels that the story behind the property is more important than the condition although it is harder to filter for the criteria. Mark Stoffer Hunter stated that redevelopment pressure is also important criteria as well as whether or not changes done to a building are reversible.
- The Commission discussed the intensive surveys that were done in the downtown area and adding properties outside of that area to the list.
- Anne Russett provided a summary of data that was not included in the list of forty-one (41). Staff found that using only one (1) or two (2) variables for criteria with GIS yields too large of a list. Staff would like the Commission to go over this list of properties and decide which ones should be included on the prioritization list.
- Amanda McKnight Grafton asked that Commissioners send to staff a list of four (4) to five (5) properties that they would like to see on the list that are not on the list of forty-
one (41) reviewed today before the February 23, 2017 HPC meeting. Mark Stoffer Hunter has sent a list of properties to staff.

b) Historic Rehabilitation Program

- Jeff Hintz stated that staff received four (4) completed applications at this time and three (3) of those are for painting. Staff will present the completed applications at the February 23, 2016. The Commission will only see eligible applications. There were some applications submitted that were not complete and staff has followed up with those applicants. There were also applications for projects that are not eligible for funding. One of the applications will require a COA, so the COA will be considered first and the funding will be considered second on the next agenda.

- Bob Grafton asked if there were any applications for windows. Jeff Hintz stated that there were a few inquiries for replacing windows, but after looking into it realized it was very expensive and are now looking into restoring the windows. There is one person getting a second bid for interior storm windows.

5. Announcements

- Anne Russett stated that on Tuesday, February 14, 2017, staff is requesting that City Council set a public hearing for Chapter 18 for February 28, 2017.

6. Adjournment

- Barb Westercamp made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:51 p.m. Tim Oberbroeckling seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Anne Kroll, Administrative Assistant II
Community Development