



City of Aurora

2nd Floor Council
Chambers
44 East Downer Place
Aurora, Illinois 60505
www.aurora-il.org

Historic Preservation Commission Meeting Minutes

Thursday

January 14, 2021

7:00 PM

**THIS PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING WILL BE VIEWABLE VIA
REMOTE ACCESS ONLINE AT:**

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TO JOIN THIS MEETING FOR PURPOSES OF PUBLIC COMMENT VIA TELEPHONE:

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MEETING ID: 856 9519 8707

THOSE WISHING TO PROVIDE PUBLIC COMMENT MUST PRE-REGISTER WITH THE ZONING AND PLANNING DIVISION NO LATER THAN 3:00 P.M. ON JANUARY 14, 2021 – VIA EMAIL: COAPLANNING@AURORA-IL.ORG OR VOICE MAIL (630) 256-3080. SPEAKERS MUST PROVIDE THEIR NAME, TELEPHONE NUMBER FROM WHICH THE MEETING WILL BE ACCESSED, AND TOPIC OF THEIR COMMENT. THE PUBLIC IS ADVISED THAT ALL TELEPHONE NUMBERS AND PARTICIPANT NAMES MAY BE VISIBLE TO THE PUBLIC.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Miller called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and stated the following:

On June 26, 2020, the Governor of Illinois issued a statewide disaster declaration related to public health concerns. As head of this body, I have determined that an in-person meeting or a meeting otherwise conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act is neither practical nor prudent because of the disaster. This meeting will be conducted by Internet teleconference without the physical presence of a quorum. Prior to the commencement of this meeting, all members of this body were verified and can see and hear one another.

I further find that the physical presence of members of the public is not feasible at this meeting due to the disaster, and more specifically, the practical difficulties associated with accommodating the public in an accessible hygienic location that allows for appropriate social distancing. Alternative arrangements have been made to allow the public to contemporaneously hear all discussion and roll call votes live on the City's official website, on Facebook, and via Zoom teleconference. Notice of these arrangements have been given in accordance with the Open Meetings Act. The public may address this body consistent with the rules previously adopted and recorded and as adapted by Mayoral order.

Jill Morgan, Planner, is physically present at our regular meeting location as those terms are defined by Resolution R20-124.

All votes shall be conducted by roll call and a verbatim record of this meeting shall be made and maintained in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

ROLL CALL

The following Preservation Commission members were present: Justyn Arnold, Fernando Castrejon, Seth Hoffman, Kristin Ludwig, Dan Miller, Simon Munoz and Mike Walker. Amber Foster and Al Signorelli called in and excused themselves from the meeting. Jen Del Debbio was absent.

OTHERS PRESENT

The following staff members were present: Mrs. Morgan.

Others Present: Juan Barragan (300 Blackhawk Street).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

21-0028

Approval of the Minutes for the Historic Preservation Commission meeting on December 17, 2020.

A motion was made by Mr. Castrejon, seconded by Mr. Munoz, that the minutes be approved and filed. The motion carried.

COA REPORT

[21-0032](#)

December Historic Certificate of Appropriateness Report

Mr. Hoffman said it appears to be roofing season, or rather it's not anything else season.

Chairman Miller said I saw the roof work getting done at 305 N. View Street, and like, I guess, January is roofing season now.

Mr. Hoffman said I have a friend in Iowa who had a roof done. They were supposed to have done it months ago, but when they eventually came out, they had to shovel snow off the roof before they could start work.

There were no questions on the COA report.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

AGENDA

21-0029

Certificate of Appropriateness to wrap wood soffits, fascia and band with

aluminum on a modern apartment building at 300 Blackhawk Street (Juan Barragan- 21-0029 - AU21/2-21.007-COA/HP - Ward 6)

Mrs. Morgan said I'll go over and briefly introduce the project and I'll hand it over to the homeowner, or the building owner, to add anything or to answer any questions. Let me just quickly share my screen to show the building we are discussing. This is 300 Blackhawk Street. The owner is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness to wrap the wood soffits, fascia and band with aluminum on this 1972 apartment building. The building is zoned R-5 Multiple Family Dwelling District. It is within the Tanner Historic District. It is a 12 unit brick apartment building that was built in 1972. It has an arched entry and recessed panel balconies and then right along the top of the building is a wood band. Generally the applicant is proposing to wrap the band as well as soffits and fascia in aluminum. This building is identified in our Historic Research Survey as an intrusion. The survey divides the buildings into 4 categories; primary, contributing, non-contribution and intrusions. Intrusions appear to be post 1950's buildings that are not single family homes. The HCOA as it stands does not adhere to our guidelines. As you can see in the picture, the owner has started wrapping the soffits and fascia. When staff discussed it with him, I believe he went ahead and finished it. I agreed that at that point it was so close he might as well and then come before the Commission to get the Commission's input on it. He is appealing on the grounds that animals are getting into the attic and it is a health hazard and the apartment tenants can hear the animals and that wrapping the soffits in aluminum that's white doesn't really change the appearance of it. That's really kind of the introduction of it and some photos. I'll show one more photo kind of from the side so you can see the soffits there and kind of an up close picture of it. I will stop sharing. Are there any questions for staff?

Mr. Hoffman said do you have photos of the original soffits before they were hidden?

Mrs. Morgan said all I have is something I found on Google. It is not very clear. This is really all I was able to find. By the time I had got out on site, there was really no wood left. I got there at the tail end of them wrapping it.

Mr. Barragan said the reason we wrapped it around was because there was no wood on it. It was like a cardboard and we had a lot of problems with squirrels getting into the building on it. It gets to the point sometimes they die inside and we've got a lot of smells in the kitchens in the (inaudible) floor and people complain because there is a lot of scratching and they sometimes go into the walls and get into the apartments. So that's one of the reasons. There was no wood on it. It was just like a cardboard thing and the squirrels were getting so easily into the building.

Mrs. Morgan said I'm sorry. Could you state your name and address just for the record?

My name is Juan Barragan and the property is at 300 Blackhawk in Aurora.

Chairman Miller said when you are referring to cardboard, are you referencing the soffits of the building, the original soffits?

Mr. Barragan said yes, the original soffits. It was like a cardboard. It was not a plywood. It was not wood or anything. It was just like a cardboard in the bottom where all the vents go through and the squirrels started scratching and they get in so easily. I got to the point I had to put a chicken wire on it because they were getting all over the place.

Mr. Hoffman said it was probably a wood fiber product like Masonite, one trade name,

pretty common. Not as available now that it is being replaced with fiber cement, but it was pretty common for a soffit construction around that time.

Mr. Barragan said but still I had to do a lot of cutting and put vents on it to get the ventilation on it.

Chairman Miller said so were vents installed in what you are referring to as cardboard?

Mr. Barragan said I still have a piece over there I can show you guys and I can prove that there was like no wood on it. It was just a cardboard thing.

Mr. Hoffman said it's an engineered wood product.

Mr. Barragan said they get in so easy with the weather, it gets soft.

Chairman Miller said I've seen soffits constructed with something that I probably would refer to as cardboard, but not on a building as substantial as this one, but like a really inexpensive house from that period. It appeared to be a hardened, almost like a paper product.

Mr. Barragan said like I said the, one I had before was so soft. We painted it for years and still the squirrels are getting through. I can't control the squirrels. We tried to make the property look better.

Chairman Miller said I think the Commission maybe has a couple of things to think of. This property is considered to be an intrusion. We did just recently deal with a property that was considered to be an intrusion. That was on Spruce Street. I think it was a 2 unit building.

Mr. Hoffman said the one at Spruce and New York, the duplex?

Chairman Miller said yes, the duplex, yes. I might have the wrong address. I'm sorry. It had sort of a mansard roof on it and that one, I think as Seth has noted, looks pretty good. We did permit that property owner to put in vinyl windows, which would normally not be allowed. It simply was due to the style of the property. We didn't feel it was going to really make a difference to the historic district. The owner in that case did make a push for vinyl siding, which we believe would substantially change the appearance of the property and was also not compatible with the Tanner Historic District and we actually denied her request for vinyl siding. She has since repaired, or she has replaced some of the vertical siding the building had and it looks much better.

Mrs. Ludwig said I think in her case it was even going to change the direction of the siding.

Chairman Miller said it would have.

Mrs. Ludwig said it was really significant.

Chairman Miller said and with a product that isn't compatible with the historic district at all. So we have that example. Another example we have, I think just last month, the property next door to this one did request aluminum wrapped soffits. Is that correct? That one is substantially older, an older property. It's been significantly altered over time, but at least the roots of that building are much older than this one. We did turn her down and say she needed to repair the wood. It has some wood moldings and

things that could be replaced or repaired. That is relevant background I wanted to review for us. We would need to decide what would be appropriate on an intrusion in this case. It was built in 1972. Keeping in mind we did tell the neighbor no just last month. The neighboring property, I would admit, is much, much older than this one.

Mrs. Ludwig said by much, much older do you mean early 1920?

Chairman Miller said I think so. That property was originally a store.

Mrs. Morgan said yes it was, I believe, even older than that. It think it was in the 1800's. It was originally a store, though the front has been subsequently altered.

Mrs. Ludwig said and is that one considered an intrusion as well?

Mrs. Morgan said our survey did not note it as an intrusion. Intrusions are usually only for ones that were built after the 1950's.

Mrs. Ludwig said that would maybe make some different guidelines between this one and the neighbors I would think.

Chairman Miller said it could be. The neighbors was not an intrusion. It's an older building that's been altered pretty dramatically, but the soffits that she wanted to cover was probably the main historical feature that still remained.

Mrs. Ludwig said so it still has some potential to contribute to the neighborhood if she were to do that, whereas this one it's not going to contribute one way or the other. Is that kind of the thinking?

Chairman Miller said my opinion would be no, it doesn't really contribute to the Historic District. So our decision would be what would be appropriate for an intrusion and does the age, for Tanner circa 1972 is it relatively modern, and does that make a difference in what we can allow in this case? Of course, this is a brick building and we told another intrusion no on vinyl siding. I would definitely say no to vinyl siding for this one, but that's not what he is asking.

Mrs. Morgan said Fernando, did you have something to add?

Mr. Castrejon said the photos that you found on Google, was the original wrapping, which is being referred close to cardboard, was there a difference in how they finished up on the profile, the actual wrap of the final product is an enhancement to a more modern building?

Mrs. Morgan said I think that it basically kind of doesn't change the profile a lot since the underneath wood is still there so it just kind of wraps it. I feel not so much on the soffits, but maybe more on the band along the top is a little more of a more visual alteration and I think the soffits really are.

Mr. Hoffman said the band, are you referring to the freeze where the wall meets the soffit?

Mrs. Morgan said yes.

Mr. Hoffman said in the older picture, it does have the same like porkchop squared returns in the corner, so that hasn't been, the visual profile is still the same. The

biggest difference in appearance is, as Jill pointed out, is that freeze is a little wider and thicker. The other difference would be the actual bottom surface. The original Masonite would have been a smooth or a faux textured wood where the aluminum soffit is a corrugated metal, but that's in the shadow. I think an easy answer for us would be a synthetic material that matched the appearance like cement fiber, which is commonly made in 4 inch thickness and full (inaudible) panels. It might even be available perforated for venting. I'm not positive on that. So if this were in the proper initial application before the work was done, the way the process is supposed to go, that would be my recommendation. That being said, the aluminum doesn't significantly alter the overall appearance and doesn't drastically change the character. The bigger consideration from my prospective is what the precedent is and what other neighbors might misinterpret on what's acceptable in contributing or other structures within the district.

Mrs. Ludwig said I might have missed this, but what was the reason this didn't go through the regular process, that the work was done before coming here?

Mrs. Morgan said the owner did get the HCOA on a roof permit, but it didn't mention the wrapping of the soffits and fascia.

Mr. Barragan said well I went to the Village and I asked them I want to put new gutters and we are just going to make some repairs on it and they say I don't need a permit for that. When I was there, when I was starting the job on it, I wanted to try to cover this because for us I got to just redo the fascia, re-tear the whole thing down. It was easier/better with the aluminum and we don't have a problem with squirrels anymore. I'm not trying to change the colors or anything. I'm just trying to make the improvements a little bit better on it.

Mrs. Ludwig said I can see that happening. Like when I had my roof done, then all of a sudden you start going into gutters and soffits and this and that and I can see that happening without realizing, that oh wait, I'm outside the scope. I was just curious if none of it was discussed in an answer and I can understand that.

Mr. Barragan said I not trying to change the (inaudible). I just want to make it look much better for my investment too.

Mrs. Ludwig said right. That makes sense.

Chairman Miller said I kind of hesitate to say it, but I have up the picture as the building is now and I pulled up the Google Maps picture, I don't really see any substantial difference. I know that there is because although the soffit is very shallow, if I look up there, I notice the aluminum covering the soffit with a grooved (inaudible). I know the appearance would be different.

Mrs. Ludwig said I do agree with you Daniel. I have a hard time seeing a big difference as well. I don't necessarily have a fine-tuned eye as Seth would for example, but as an average person walking down the street, I don't see a big difference in if he had gone with a different material. I don't consider that specific area my expertise.

Mr. Barragan said I'm not trying to change any historical anything. I just put the same thing, white like it was before. I think it looks much better. Like you guys are saying, it's not much different from what it was before.

Chairman Miller said yes, it's similar. Does anyone have any further questions for Mr.

Barragan? Does anyone have any further comments on the property or the suitability of these types of alteration?

Mr. Castrejon said (inaudible) wood sets, based on the newness of the building, I don't have an issue making an exception at this time.

Mrs. Ludwig said I agree.

Chairman Miller said I don't either.

Mrs. Morgan said does anyone else want to add anything?

Mr. Munoz said no.

Mrs. Morgan said does anyone want to make a motion? It would be to approve or deny the Certificate of Appropriateness to wrap wood soffits, fascia and band with aluminum on a modern apartment building at 300 Blackhawk Street.

MOTION OF APPROVAL WAS MADE BY: Seth Hoffman

MOTION SECONDED BY: Mike Walker

AYES: Justin Arnold, Fernando Castrejon, Seth Hoffman Kristin Ludwig, Dan Miller, Simon Munoz, Mike Walker

NAYS None

Chairman Miller said thank you for coming Mr. Barragan. Just a reminder, before doing any future work on the building, we appreciate you taking care of the building, please talk to Jill first and get a COA first. In some cases, especially our members like Seth, have a lot of really good experience that we can talk things over with your and help you out. I hope you don't have any further trouble with squirrels. I don't know that aluminum necessarily keeps them out. I've heard of them tearing through aluminum as well.

Mr. Barragan said I hope that will be all. I'm just thankful that I keep them from trying not to.

Chairman Miller said and if your neighbor wants to know why, we'll actually have to communicate with her, why we didn't approve hers. You'll have to remind her, her building was built in the late 1800's.

A motion was made by Mr. Hoffman, seconded by Mr. Walker, that this agenda item be approved. The motion carried.

[21-0024](#)

An Ordinance Approving a Text Amendment to the Historic Districts and Landmarks Guidelines to modify certain portions being B.2.6 Existing Garages, Carriage Houses and Outbuildings; B. 2.7 Gutters and Downspouts; B.2.14 Satellite Dishes, Antennas, and Solar Panels; B.2.18 Windows; B.2.19 Wood Siding; B.3.3 New Garages and Outbuildings; B.4.1 Fences and Walls; and B.4.5 Parking

Mrs. Morgan said so just kind of to recall everyone, over the past probably 3 or 4 years, we've kind of been making some clarifications to the guidelines where we felt the wording was ambiguous or that portions really weren't covered, so we've been making those text changes. Staff has put those on the website. Most of the clarifications aren't really changing guidelines, but we have felt that, well we discussed

the satellite dishes specifically, and it was kind of a change to the guidelines, as well as allowing window materials other than wood or a wood clad product was really if we allowed other materials we would need to change the guidelines. So I am proposing to bring all those clarifications through and to officially have City Council approve them. So I'm starting with the Preservation Commission for you guys to officially altogether kind of approve everything and just to kind of briefly recap for everyone. I know some of these may even date before some of the Commission members. If you also recall, prior to my time actually, we gave numbers to actually all the sections in the hope at one point to completely update the guidelines so we can quote sections and not just quoting titles, so that's where these numbers come from. So Section B.2.6 – Existing Garages, Carriage Houses and Outbuildings. This is where we did the Text Amendment to allow substitute materials on replacing garage doors that aren't real visible and trying to include historic features like raised panels and glass windows. The next one is Gutters and Downspouts. This is to clarify the should portion of when requiring half round gutters and allowing half round gutters, allowing the "K" style gutters if the home has "K" style gutters or if half of the home has "K" style gutters. The next one is the Satellite Dishes. We just discussed this, allowing a little more flexibility and removing shall not be visible to allowing minimally visible. The next one is Windows. This is a Text Amendment for when the windows are beyond repair or the existing material was never really wood, the wood window had been replaced years ago before the District, allowing alternative materials if the original wood window is not present or beyond repair, if the detailing, dimensions, proportions, type, grill pattern, muntin profiles, and styling are consistent with that of other historic windows. If you recall, there are points where it has to go before the Commission and other points where staff can approve it. Wood Siding. This one was to outline when cement board siding can be used in place of wood siding, as the Commission felt it simulated wood siding. The next item is New Garages and Outbuildings. Similar again, to allowing synthetic materials for garage doors on new garages. The next one is Fences and Walls. This was allowing an amendment to allow a 72 inch fence in an interior yard only if that portion that is over 60 inches is more than 50% open. So it is allowing basically a lattice style fence is really kind of the popular style that meets that requirement in the side yard if it doesn't obstruct any historical architectural features. That was kind of consistent on what the Commission had been varying through the years. The next one is Parking. This is to clarify that asphalt parking, while not encouraged, it is not outright prohibited when repaving. Are there any questions for staff?

Mr. Walker said for parking, what do we have for general guidelines? I guess we haven't had too many ones come up. Do we have like a material preference, hierarchy or something?

Mrs. Morgan said concrete, I think, is probably the hierarchy, stamped concrete and like ribbon, to keep the ribbon as well is the preference, but then asphalt is not prohibited is how we worded it. Does that answer your question?

Mr. Walker said yes. I was just curious if somebody who has a gravel driveway and (inaudible).

Mrs. Ludwig said are we all going back to dirt because of historical accuracy and all?

Mr. Walker said I like gravel just fine, but a lot of municipalities don't like gravel for driveways.

Mrs. Morgan said with gravel in Aurora, as long as you maintain the gravel, you can

keep it and I have also applied that to the Historic District since we do allow other materials. I wouldn't (inaudible) to allow gravel. Homeowners do need to make sure they maintain the gravel in order to retain it per the Zoning Ordinance.

Chairman Miller said right, that's city ordinance, not Historic District ordinance.

Mr. Hoffman said this isn't one of the revisions, but I just noticed now reading the driveway section, it says driveways shall not be poured closer than 6 inches to foundation walls because it causes damage. There are a large portion of driveways out there that are.

Mrs. Morgan said there is. I think we unofficially said that one time about how it is all throughout the district. I know I have approved it on one instance where the homeowner was able to (inaudible) that it wouldn't hurt the foundation. So I don't know if that's something we need to enforce more or if that is something we should be more relaxed on.

Mr. Hoffman said so construction practice, from a structural perspective is you should have some type of expansion joint there, but that can be 3/4, or 1/2 to 1 inch expansion joint filler material. Leaving it 6 inches away, that's safe, but I don't see that it would be a shall in there. I think that could be maybe a should have an expansion joint provided or be held back 6 inches or something. It is a minor thing. I'm just thinking some of these driveways are really narrow. If you have a car with mirrors, you can't really get your tire much closer than 6 inches anyway. If I narrowed our driveway 6 inches, I probably couldn't fit both wheels of the car on it.

Mrs. Morgan said that's a good point. We can make approval with conditions to add that change as well if everyone agreed to it. While we are doing it, if there is something else that is easy to change like that.

Chairman Miller said I would be okay with changing it. It is also interesting to me that this is in a Historic District guideline rather than just a city-wide ordinance.

Mrs. Morgan said and someone stated they thought it was an ordinance. It's not something I was aware of. I could check with our Building Department, but again, I don't know if the Preservation Ordinance is the place that we want to try to enforce a regulation that's not being enforced by other city departments where that's in their ordinances.

Mr. Hoffman said I would almost expect that to be. I'm actually doing a quick search to see if it is in the International Residential Code. I believe that's the adopted building codes in Aurora. I don't actually recall seeing something in there about it.

Mrs. Morgan said our Building Department does not review driveway permits.

Mr. Hoffman said unless you have cases where it could cause issues if you have it where it's sloping down toward the house, in which case you have even bigger problems because you are funneling all your water against it. So if the driveway is sloped away from the house, which it should be anyway and the rest of the grade is done appropriately, you don't have a retaining wall. If you have a retaining wall against the outside of the driveway, let's say due to an elevation change to the adjacent lot or yard, that could then put load into driveway and into the foundation of the house. That's probably the only case I can really think it would be an issue. If you have just a slab on grade driveway that's 8 to 10 feet wide, even if it is poured directly up against

the house without an expansion joint, it's unlikely to cause a problem unless you have something that's external that's pushing the driveway, either a slope or a retaining wall or some other structure. I just noticed it going through here. There probably are some other little items here in the guidelines that are maybe just kind of helpful tips, and not strictly preservation requirements. I don't think that's a problem, but it just jumped out at me as a shall. At the point where I need to repave my driveway, I need to put it right up against the house or it won't be wide enough.

Mrs. Morgan said and I would agree. I think it is probably good. I would say let's go ahead and change it with having that shall because, like I said before, I have waived it because we've had this discussion that if they do what you were talking about properly, it is not an issue. So I would definitely be up for getting rid of that shall so we are not really going against guidelines when I approve that.

Mr. Hoffman said I would suggest it could be just reworded slightly to say driveways should not be poured closer to 6 inches to the foundation or if poured against the foundation that an expansion joint should be provided.

Mrs. Morgan said okay.

Mrs. Ludwig said or should not be closer than 6 inches without a joint.

Mr. Hoffman said unless an expansion joint is provided. Maybe that's more concise.

Chairman Miller said I don't know how detailed we want to get in this. Do we also have to say and grade away from the house so the water doesn't run against your foundation?

Mr. Hoffman said that should be in the building code about grades around the property sloping away. It is usually a ¼ inch per foot.

Chairman Miller said back to my observation. Like this seems odd in a Preservation Ordinance and why is it is not in just city-wide ordinance. I don't see anything particularly historic about it.

Mrs. Morgan said I will make that change then to the wording that is should not be closer than 6 inches unless an expansion joint is provided.

Mr. Hoffman said that sounds good to me. Somebody cared enough to put it in here when it was originally drafted, so we can carry on their legacy.

Chairman Miller said so does that mean if it is 5 inches you need like to put a joint in?

Mr. Hoffman said if you were within 5 inches, I don't know why you would leave a 5 inch gap instead of 6.

Chairman Miller said that's a good change, I think. We covered several things here. Does anyone have any questions or comments about any of the others or need a few minutes to review them? That's fair too.

Mr. Hoffman said for cement board siding, where does the 68% cement come from?

Mrs. Morgan said a colleague had done a lot of research on that. I believe it was the quality that it seemed to be the best product. Hardi board siding meets that

requirement.

Mr. Hoffman said okay.

Mrs. Morgan said I think it was to make sure you have a quality actual cement board product and not like something that kind of doesn't quite meet actual...

Mr. Hoffman said a more disposable engineered wood product. I have worked with some of that Masonite soffit board that our previous petitioner talked about and you do wonder if it is really a building material. The plus side is it easy to work with because you can cut it with a utility knife. You don't need a saw.

Chairman Miller said I don't know if it is the same thing or not, but I've seen some soffit material that I would personally call cardboard.

Mr. Hoffman said it doesn't hold up to water that well. I suspect the issue on that property is there was water from failing roof or flashing that allowed it to become wet and at that point it is soft enough that a squirrel could get through it.

Chairman Miller said I remember some of the discussion on the cement board was you don't want to specify a brand, like Hardi board, that there was some concern that a manufacturer might come up with something that's 40% cement and the other 60% is whatever scrap material was cheapest that day and we might want to keep that material out of the district.

Mr. Hoffman said I think that's a good way to go. I agree, we shouldn't be referring to brand or specific product names. That will eliminate the more short-lived products.

Chairman Miller said it does potentially allow for trim pieces to be made of cement board also if it meets the criteria.

Mr. Hoffman said do we otherwise have language that requires replacement trim to match the shape, dimensions and profiles of existing?

Mrs. Morgan said I would think somewhere.

Mr. Hoffman said that would go if you are replacing it with original wood with replacement wood.

Chairman Miller said under Section A, if replacement is necessary, wood siding and shingles shall be replaced with new to match the original in size, placement and design.

Mr. Hoffman said I guess I would need to check the old guidelines.

Chairman Miller said then there would be different sections like for windows and soffits and things like that.

Mr. Hoffman said I just want to double check to make sure that we don't have a gap there when we refer to cement fiber trim. It should go without saying, of course.

Mrs. Morgan said it does say in soffits and fascia, original soffit, fascia and trim boards and details shall not be removed and those deteriorate beyond repair should be replaced with boards that match the originals. That covers like that part. There is no

rush on this, so if the Commission, if you guys feel like you want to take a little more time to see if there any other changes while we are doing it, we don't have to approve it tonight.

Chairman Miller said how does everyone feel about that. If it is not a rush, a lot of these changes are current practice.

Mrs. Morgan said they are because most of them we consider clarifications and not really changes. The only other really changes would be the windows and satellite dishes, which requires Preservation Commission approval anyway. You are basically giving a variation to the guidelines, which you are permitted to do.

Mr. Hoffman said would these changes go through City Council to be approved?

Mrs. Morgan said yes.

Mr. Hoffman said so do we want to do this kind of in one big clean shot.

Mrs. Morgan said to like opening it up. I would say probably clean up what we can.

Mr. Hoffman said but we're not on an agenda that we are trying to meet a deadline to get this through?

Mrs. Morgan said we are not, no. They are not aware this is coming or anything like that. Does everyone fell that maybe we should just wait until next month to give everyone a chance to really kind of look at it and see if there is anything else you want to change before sending it forward to Council?

Chairman Miller said I'm good with that. What does everyone else think?

Mr. Castrejon said maybe have AI and the rest get a chance to have an opinion.

Mrs. Ludwig said do you want comments back before the next meeting Jill? Does that help you with your timeline though?

Mrs. Morgan said yes, maybe if you can give me your specific comments, your thinking, if you could sentdthat to me in an email, that way I can go ahead and make those changes and we can have the actual exact wording.

Mrs. Ludwig said does it hurt your timing to let it go another month?

Mrs. Morgan said no.

Chairman Miller said so we can table this.

21-0023

The Preservation Commission is providing comments on the National Register Nomination of the Hobbs Building located at 2-4 N. River Street (Illinois Historic Preservation Agency- 21-0023- AU22/3-21.004-HP -JM - Ward 6)

Mrs. Morgan said I'm going to do a screen share. So here is what is the Hobbs building as it stands currently. It's nice that the nomination has some nice interior photos. You can see some of the historic windows and the detailings that are still present.

Mr. Hoffman said I was surprised to see the interior casing and window trim was still there in some places. That's some pretty nice stuff.

Mrs. Morgan said there is a nice interesting photo. I can bring it up real quick. An old historic photo. So as you might remember, we've had several of these National Register nominations come before the city. As the city is a certified local government, that title requires the state to get the city's opinion on any National Register nominations. So the state has asked us for our comments, the Preservation Commission for their comments and I will send them a form whether the Commission agrees with it or does not agree with it. They are bringing forward the Hobbs building. If you also recall last year, I believe, we looked at the National Register nomination for the building to the right of the Hobbs building, a little 2 unit brick commercial building. Now they are coming forward with the Hobbs. The Hobbs is currently considered eligible for the National Register, but in order to get tax credits, you have to have the full nomination complete and approved. The Hobbs building is located 2-4 N. River Street. It was built in 1895 in the Richardsonian Romanesque with a mix of Queen Ann and Exotic Revival elements. It is a four-story building constructed of a combination of masonry bearing, heavy timber, and post and beam wood framing construction. One of the biggest characterizations is the unique corner turret, which you could see in the old photos, but as you can see now is no longer there. There were also the large pronounced arch windows with masonry detailing. There were repetitive alternating tiers of projecting bay windows. Historically, it had a cornice that was kind of along all of the top and now that cornice you can still see in the turret itself. I won't try to go through this in too much detail. I kind of wrote quite a bit. I'll try to just briefly point out some other things. There are some alterations to the turret. The dome on the turret has been removed. As mentioned, the cornice along the rest of the building other than that center bay has been removed. Originally the cornice was copper and the siding was copper and that has been replaced with kind of a diagonal siding material. But also, as Seth has mentioned, a lot of the original detailing is still present, particularly in the interior. You have the great staircase. A lot of wonderful wood trim still remains, a wood ceiling. You have skylights still present in the stairwell. So it hasn't been significantly altered. Just a little background on the family. Nathaniel Hobbs came to Aurora in 1867 to establish a furniture undertaking business. It was his son, Albert, who decided to move the business to this building. He commissioned James E. Minott to begin building the plans. He was also the architect for the Fire Museum. The building was meant to be a very prominent building even from the beginning. Once it was no longer used as a furniture store, it had several other uses through the years. The Hobbs building is eligible for listing on the National Register according to the nomination at the local level under the Criterion C for embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction. The period of significance identified in the nomination is 1895. Staff has reviewed the nomination and does feel that it meets the National Register criteria for Criterion C and that it has remained mostly intact, so it has still that element that's required by the National Register. Are there any questions for staff?

Chairman Miller said do you know anything about the current owner or what their plans are?

Mrs. Morgan said yes. The current owner, his first name is Harish, I can't recall his last name at the moment. He is going in for tax credits for this building and the two buildings beside it. It is going to be a residential use on the above story and

commercial uses on the first story and the buildings will connect for the residential so they'll have like, I believe, using the elevator in the Hobbs and then connect internally to the other two buildings. They have submitted plans, which staff is still reviewing. It has to meet the FoxWalk Guidelines. As I mentioned, they are going for tax credits, so all of the requirements for concerns for preserving the buildings will be met through the tax credits requirements. That's historic tax credits.

Chairman Miller said that's good news. So a word to staff. I was pleasantly surprised with these interior photos to see how much original detail is still in there. I know of situations where the original woodwork is stripped out and somebody uses it make a campfire or something.

Mrs. Morgan said and to note, the dome was removed in the 2000's because it was structurally unsound. It wasn't salvageable. The city did take some detailed dimensions in order to be able to recreate it.

Mrs. Ludwig said I saw the notes that said the intention was to recreate it and it even said something about some of that was in process or something like that, so at least it looked favorable that it would try to reconstruct it at some point. That was great news.

Mr. Hoffman said it looks like they are going to reconstruct the parapets and cornice as well. That's almost more than the dome. If you didn't know the dome was there, looking at the building just the plain brick parapets there are glaring.

Mrs. Morgan said unfortunately, I don't know if that is going to happen. The last I discussed, and the plans aren't finalized, is that the state is not going to push that and it is very costly and kind of would possibly make the project not feasible. I'm working through with them on what the state is going to allow and what possibly the FoxWalk Guidelines can push back on.

Mr. Hoffman said recreating the stamped metal cornices is not particularly cheap because they are not mass produced now. When this was built, those were catalog pieces put together. They could, well more cheaply than having stamped metal recreated to match that, although there is, is this in Kansas, I don't know if they make cornices. There still a company, I think it is called WF Norman. They started making that stuff in the 1970's or something and they are the one that hasn't gone out of business in the last 150 years. They have the original tooling and they make stamped metal ceilings and a lot of other architectural stamped metal work. They use the same dyes they've had for 100 and some years. I don't know if they do cornices or not.

Mr. Castrejon said they are still around. I think they are somewhere near St. Louis.

Mr. Hoffman said I actually corresponded with them when I was working on a project a while back. I would say for the building, even creating, if it is not a stamped metal, but just the general kind of stepped profile at the top, would balance out the building better than just mis-matched brick and the little clay tile parapet cap that's there.

Chairman Miller said yes, that could help. I also wonder if the stamped metal cornices were mass manufactured at the time. If anything, even like an approximate match, it could be found like through a salvage yard from some other building somewhere that's being torn down.

Mrs. Morgan said since a portion of the historic still remains, it makes it even a little more difficult because you don't want to go with something that doesn't match exactly

because it is going to look a lot more obvious. If none of it were there, you could maybe even find something more mass produced that you could just put up there that resembled it since you do have the existing still up there.

Chairman Miller said so your mismatched cornice could be a sore thumb. There are probably ways to be creative with that. I think it speaks well that this building was built to be a landmark building in downtown Aurora and today it is 2021 and it actually still is.

Mr. Hoffman said those pictures of the street there really show how it is one of the lone survivors along that stretch.

Chairman Miller said it looks like much of that street must have come down to make way for the bank. Any other questions on this nomination? Jill thanks for your work on this. I found this really interesting,

Mrs. Morgan said it is a great read.

Chairman Miller said it is kind of fascinating. It is interesting it also has a permanent designer under your pictures and some other things in the architect design. He did like his onion domes. That is kind of a signature for him and you had a prominent builder in the Chicago area.

Mrs. Morgan said yes. Any other comments?

Chairman Miller said any other discussion or questions?

Mr. Walker said for 125 years, some of that stuff is pretty crazy.

Chairman Miller said it was very pleasant to see how much of the interior actually remains. I'm surprised. Pressed tin ceiling tiles.

Mr. Walker said very pretty.

Mr. Arnold said how long has it been empty?

Mrs. Morgan said it was in the nomination, I believe since the 90's.

Chairman Miller said since about 1990, I think. Sometimes older people that had grew up in Aurora referred to the building as Crosbys, the sporting goods store.

Mrs. Morgan said that was the last use.

Chairman Miller said that was in there for like 30 years or so. It was kind of a local institution until most shopping had moved out like to malls and things like that. If there's no further discussion, can we have a motion to support this National Register nomination?

MOTION OF APPROVAL WAS MADE BY: Kristin Ludwig

MOTION SECONDED BY: Fernando Castrejon

AYES: Justyn Arnold, Fernando Castrejon, Seth Hoffman, Kristin Ludwig, Dan Miller, Simon Munoz, Mike Walker

NAYS: None

A motion was made by Mrs. Ludwig, seconded by Mr. Castrejon, that this

agenda item be approved. The motion carried.

[21-0025](#)

An Ordinance Amending Chapter 37, entitled "Preservation", of the Aurora Code of Ordinances to modify certain portions being Article II, Sec. 37-21 - Creation; members

Mrs. Morgan said this is an Ordinance amending Chapter 37 entitled Preservation of the Aurora Code of Ordinances to modify certain portions being Article II, Section 37-21 – Creation; members. This Text Amendment is to remove the term limits for the Preservation Commission Board. Currently as it stands, Commission members can serve 2 consecutive terms only and each term is 3 years. The removal of the term limits will be beneficial in that it would aid in retaining a full Commission. The Preservation Commission requires special knowledge in preservation of historic buildings, which can limit our potential candidates. In addition, the organizational knowledge of the longer standing members staff feels is important and it is helpful to retain that. This will also codify, basically codify current practice that is already occurring. So Commission members can serve even through their 2 consecutive terms are up until there is a replacement. Really, we have been allowing Board members to serve more than 6 years, so this just really codifies that. Just to let you know, there is really no term limits on other Boards within the city that I'm aware of. There's not one for our Planning and Zoning Commission. Are there any questions?

Mr. Hoffman said I guess this would be a good AI question, but I wonder if the Commission has ever been in a position where there is full members and there is interest from other people in the community who would like an opportunity to serve or bring new perspective.

Mrs. Morgan said one time I did have 2 openings and I had 3 candidates. So there has been, in my term, just that one instance. Before that, we were down members by several for several years. Before my time, I'm not for sure. It there needs to be a change, like if the staff or if the Mayor's office feels like we could use some new blood into the Commission, or there's been a lot of interest, once your term limit is up we can also just not renew it, which we have taken advantage of as well when we felt that we could use a different person coming into the Board. So it does permit there could be a change if we needed that.

Mr. Hoffman said okay, so everyone is still subject to a reappointment every 3 years?

Mrs. Morgan said yes.

Chairman Miller said in my time on this Board, it's been more typical to have open spots on the Commission that don't get filled and also to have some members that, for one reason or another, may attend only infrequently.

Mr. Hoffman said we have a requirement. There is a limit on how many you can miss before you are no longer in good standing.

Mrs. Morgan said yes, there is. That is also a way that if we are having an issue with someone attending we use that clause.

Mr. Hoffman said let's say when there are more interested parties then there are openings, I assume you can have, not like a waiting list, but they can be made aware that there may be future openings or changes to the Board makeup and there are future opportunities to kind of keep...

Mrs. Moran said yes, we could keep those names and if we have an opening let them know if we felt the person was a good candidate.

Mr. Munoz said who will make the suggestions to be bring somebody else or to have them apply?

Mrs. Morgan said well I would think if we were a full Commission and we felt we needed to bring in new people, it would probably come probably from staff, but ultimately it would be the Mayor's office decision to not renew somebody. If we have an opening, anyone can recommend somebody and I can reach out to them or there is an online application that people can just fill out. I know a lot of people just kind of reach out the Mayor's office. Alex Voight kind of coordinates all the Boards and Commissions. Sometimes when she is speaking to someone about one Board and she thinks they might be a good fit for the Preservation Commission, she might mention it to them as well.

Chairman Miller said any other questions or comments on this proposed amendment?

Mrs. Morgan said do we have a motion?

Mr. Walker said is there a phrasing to remove the term limit or to approve the removal of the term limit?

Mrs. Morgan said you would be approving the amendment to Chapter 37.

Mrs. Morgan said so if you want to make a motion to approve an Ordinance amending Chapter 37 entitled Preservation of the Aurora Code of Ordinances to modify certain portions being Article II, Section 37-21 – Creation; members.

MOTION OF APPROVAL WAS MADE BY: Mike Walker

MOTION SECONDED BY: Simon Munoz

AYES: Justyn Arnold, Fernando Castrejon, Seth Hoffman, Kristin Ludwig, Dan Miller, Simon Munoz, Mike Walker

NAYS: None

A motion was made by Mr. Walker, seconded by Mr. Munoz, that this agenda item be Forwarded to the Rules, Administration, and Procedure, on the agenda for 1/19/2021. The motion carried.

PENDING

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A) Grants

No Report.

B) Near Eastside Historic District

No Report.

C) Riddle Highlands Historic District

No Report.

D) Public Awareness

No Report.

E) Landmarks

No Report.

F) FoxWalk Design Review

No Report.

G) Tanner/Palace Historic District Committee

No Report.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mrs. Morgan said just an update. The Grant Program, hopefully, everyone received the emails and the postcards, so we were able to get funding for the Grant Program. The applications are due February 22nd. I apologize for not really giving people a heads up on that. I was waiting until making sure the budget got approved before we actually did any calls for applications, but wanted to get it out quickly as well. Hopefully we'll get some good applications in. It is the same as 2019 where it is exterior work. We are excluding asphalt roofs, driveways, fencing and landscaping, owner-occupied homes with no more than 2 units unless originally built with more than 2 units. Other than that, really any other exterior project is open for the grants. Once they come in, staff will organize everything. I need to reach out to the Grant Committee. We have a little bit of a quick deadline, since we had to wait until January to actually do the call, so we'll have a week for the Grant Committee to meet to discuss it. We'll provide a memo of their recommendations to the Preservation Commission that will meet the following week and then your recommendations will then go onto the Building, Zoning and Economic Development Committee, COW and City Council for final approval.

Mr. Hoffman said what is the amount in the budget this year?

Mrs. Morgan said the amount currently was \$112,800, but some of that is rollover. Several of the grants from 2019 weren't able to complete the project do to COVID related issues, contractor issues, so I did tell them that they would get first dibs if we did receive any funding. So as long as those are interested, we'll renew those agreements. We didn't do an extension since we weren't sure the budget was going to be approved, so it will be a new agreement, but I did give them that verbal consent that we would give them the first dibs on it.

Mr. Hoffman said do they need to reapply or are we going to put their previous applications in the pool?

Mrs. Morgan said previous applications, but they'll just need to do a new agreement.

Mr. Hoffman said so you'll flag those for the Committee then?

Mrs. Morgan said yes.

Chairman Miller said this is the postcard. I got one. Thank you for that update and thanks for all that work on the Hobbs application. That's really interesting. I'm excited to see that go through. I'm glad the developer wants historic tax credits and also seeing that it would be developed with the stipulations the state would put on it with the tax credits.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Walker, seconded by Mr. Castrejon, that meeting be adjourned. The motion carried. Chairman Miller adjourned the meeting at 8:18 p.m.

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