



City of Aurora

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

Historic Preservation Commission Meeting Minutes

Thursday

February 11, 2021

7:00 PM

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

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THOSE WISHING TO PROVIDE PUBLIC COMMENT MUST PRE-REGISTER WITH THE ZONING AND PLANNING DIVISION NO LATER THAN 3:00 P.M. ON February 11, 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, Jen Del Debbio, Amber Foster, Seth Hoffman, Kristin Ludwig, Dan Miller, Simon Munoz, Al Signorelli and Mike Walker. Fernando Castrejon called in and excused himself from the meeting. Matt Hanson was absent.

OTHERS PRESENT

The following staff members were present: Mrs. Morgan, Sue Jackson and John Curley.

Others Present: None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

21-0098

Approval of the Minutes for the Historic Preservation Commission meeting on January 14, 2021.

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

COA REPORT

21-0040

January Historic Certificate of Appropriateness

Chairman Miller said my only question would be on the address 419 E. Galena Boulevard. I tried Google Maps to see that house and it did something funny where it kind of flipped around to S. 4th Street, so I don't know if I'm seeing the correct house or not.

Mrs. Morgan said it is the one that has a big front porch. If you've driven by recently, it has like 2 by 4's supporting the porch.

Chairman Miller said okay. Is it actually facing E. Galena or is it facing S. 4th?

Mrs. Morgan said I believe it is facing E. Galena.

Chairman Miller said okay. I may just drive by there so I can see which house that is. But this porch remodeling with all the things you are mentioning here sounds really interesting.

Mrs. Morgan said it is a really nice decorative porch.

Chairman Miller said I think I just found it on a glitch on Google Maps then.

Mr. Hoffman said is the window replaclement on 367 West Park, is that a standing violation or was that a recent replacement that they weren't approved for?

Mrs. Morgan said that is a standing violation. It goes back at least a year, I believe.

There were no other questions on the COA report.

This COA Report was discussed and filed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

AGENDA

Chairman Miller said we do have a special guest tonight. We are pleased to have John Curley. I'd like to put you on first. John, if you could come on and tell us your name and remind us of your title with the city.

Hi everybody. I'm John Curley. I'm the Chief Development Services Officer for the City of Aurora. I'm responsible for, and I understood there are some discussions happening on a couple fronts that would be within my Department. Jill and her preservation responsibilities lie within the Zoning and Planning Division within my Department. I guess I wanted to talk about some reorganization that's been done in the last 3 years and some recent changes we've made in territorial assignments from Property Standards. I'm responsible for Planning, Zoning, Economic Development, the Building Department, Property Standards and there are a couple of other Divisions, but those are the ones that I think would be of interest to your Committee here. I'm going to stick through the whole meeting here, so feel free to ask questions at the end if you want of me too if something else comes to mind. I know there's been some questions about enforcement of issues in the Preservation Districts. I guess I just wanted to take the opportunity to say what we're doing to address those concerns. It doesn't only affect the Preservation Districts, but we've made some, I think, strategic changes that should help the concerns that have been brought up. So recently, again, we've reorganized to bring all of those Divisions within a Department. More than 3 years ago, Property Standards was not even in the same department as was Planning or the Preservation group. So now we have the benefit of all being on the same team and reporting to the same person so we're trying to make sure we are all working on concerns to meet everyone's goals. What we did recently, it had been a plan for the whole 3 years, the reorganizational efforts that we underwent when Mayor Irvin took office were pretty extensive and that took a little bit of time to get that all sorted out. We also went through a software change that hasn't happened in 30 years that my group was primarily responsible for as well. That took a good part of a year, so now we are finally kind of getting our feet underneath ourselves. It is a long way of getting to the point to try and address some of your concerns for enforcement. We recently have rebalanced responsibilities for the inspectors within the Property Standards Division. We did that to balance workload amongst the multiple inspectors. We also did that so we did not split, they were currently, I guess it is probably simpler to explain the way it was. It used to be a responsibility by Ward. I think maybe the thinking was, it was before I was responsible for it, but it was simpler for the Aldermen to understand who their enforcement personnel were. After analyzing workload balancing concerns that I've had about that approach for several years, it was clear that that's not the right approach to balance out workload for those inspectors. So we knew we needed to

change it, so the decision on how to change it, we formed that by several things. One, workload, which was simple. They are responsible for the Apartment Licensing Program and responsible for pro-active code enforcement. So figuring out like a 3 year average of code enforcement plus the workload for the apartments, we tried to balance all of town and split up town evenly, but we initially did that trying to actually pair the inspectors not with the Aldermen, but with neighborhood groups and with your neighborhoods. We drew lines that did not split neighborhood groups, so every neighborhood group would understand who their enforcement personnel were. We additionally took an extra step to try and also address the concerns that your group has brought up by drawing the lines to keep the Districts within a boundary. So the long way of getting what you'll find now is instead of one inspector responsible for half of town zoning responsibilities and enforcement of preservation related issues, we now have 2 inspectors, one on the west side of the river and one on the east side river, that are responsible for a much smaller geographic territory. Again, previously it was half of town. Now it is 1/12 of town and responsible for the preservation responsibilities in the cluster of Districts that are on the west side or the cluster of Districts that are on the east side. It is our hope that that will create a much better opportunity to do a more consistent and more pro-active job in addressing some of the concerns that you've brought up and we'll demonstrate here going forward that our computer changes have afforded our management team a much better opportunity and ease of holding our staff accountable. A long explanation, but I guess I wanted to make sure that you all understood. Jill's brought this concern to our attention and we've tried to incorporate that into our plans that we had been working on to make sure that we try to address your concerns as well.

Chairman Miller said thank you for that. One issue that I had brought up and mentioned it to this group at one point, and I've discussed it with Jill also, was concerning our outstanding violations, some of which have been in violation for many years. It would be helpful for this group to have like a subcommittee or something that meets with Jill periodically to review those and then report back to the Commission on what the status of them are.

Mr. Curley said I'm guessing, and this is not specific to your Commission at all, I think we could do a good job and maybe take an opportunity like an interested audience like yourselves to explain the code enforcement process. One of the reasons we went through the painful process of changing the software is not only for oversight for management for our staff, there are efficiencies that are gained, but the other large benefit that I saw with the change to the software we went to is there is a much better opportunity for transparency to the public. We do understand frustration when it appears like nothing is happening. We've also been working with Legal to change some of our notice periods. There's built into the process, we're changing one right now, but it is built into the process, up until now there is a 5 week notice period between the point where the inspector has notified somebody that there is a problem, they've given them a timeframe to cure, they go back and verify that there's not a cure, they give them another warning essentially and a timeframe, they go back again, there is no cure, then we give them a 5 week notice to appear in our Judaification process. It is completely understandable that somebody who doesn't have insight into what's happening in the background and doesn't see the white car in the neighborhood or didn't have the opportunity to think potentially that nothing is happening and it looks like there is 7, 8, 9 weeks inactivity. It's not that we're perfect. We may have made a mistake in instances, but even when we are doing our job, sometimes it may appear like we are not. That's one of the reasons I had a really strong desire to try and change some of our software tools so that we actually could provide some opportunity for the public to see what's happening. I'd be happy to go through that with somebody

at some point. We might have our Property Standards Managers join us as well. At some point we could go through that and explain that process to you if you are interested as well.

Chairman Miller said I think the process sounds very interesting. That would be helpful. I think the idea I had bounced off of Jill at one time was it was helpful to have a group to help share responsibility with her in like formulating responses and how we deal with them. Some of them I'm thinking of, it's not a matter of 7 or 8 weeks. It is more like of 7 or 8 years, vinyl siding. It is still there.

Mrs. Morgan said John and I talked to some of the Property Standards and Legal because our next step is how to deal with some of these really long outstanding violations. Right now we pushed everything back to April 15th, and the date was due to we feel by that point, well I know some of them were hoping or coming in for grants. We reached out, sent a letter with the date, that this is your next inspection date and here is the grant information as well in the same letter. So, I'm hoping that they come in for a grant, so let's push it off to April and see who comes in for grants, see who gets the grants and then relook at ones who, and several of them have reached out to me, so I think that's a good thing, then figure out with the ones that don't get grants, how much more time and then the ones we are just not hearing anything from, I guess, that's where we're trying to talk to Ruthie in Property Standards and possibly Legal to see what the next step is that we haven't heard anything from.

Chairman Miller said there are some difficult cases out there. One of the reasons I'm bringing up like a support group or something is I'm not trying to do a finger pointing exercise. We are all in this together. I don't know that there are easy answers. If there were easy answers, this would all be done.

Mrs. Morgan said and maybe we, like you said, with that group, if we wanted to convene because some of them we bring forward and we ask them to come forward with a timeframe. Maybe there are some of them maybe the Committee could look at and go ahead and say here is a timeframe we think is reasonable, let's extend it to this date and if it is not corrected by then we'll take further action. I think we've got a lot of them covered with the timeframe, but at this point kind of relooking at all of them and see what seems reasonable.

Chairman Miller said I just thought it might be helpful to have some people go through that with you and develop a consensus on that.

Mrs. Morgan said some of them may have changed even. Some of our guidelines we've done a little clarification, some additional, not leniency, but being open to more alternative materials and that type of stuff, so we might be able to look at some of the older ones to see if we could even change what the actual citation was to allow like aluminum clad or maybe we tell them they have to have full wood.

Chairman Miller said that's possible. Does anyone else have any questions or comments for Mr. Curley?

Yes, hi John. Al Signorelli. I have a question for you, although what you've outlined, it all sounds like positive changes and certainly that you've been working hard on all of that, but I was just wondering is there a possibility, at one time we had an inspector for historic properties and that was their responsibility, the districts and the landmarks. That just seems better for preservation. Is that something that you would consider again possibly?

Mr. Curley said it's not something that could be done immediately. My knee jerk is I believe I can prove to you that what we are proposing will be a vast improvement from what you've seen so far. Based on volume and stuff that I just looked at, I think I would be hard pressed to prove that there is enough volume to justify a person to be isolated to only do this, so it would be somebody that also is doing something else. In the enforcement area, the Property Standards team and myself could have left the enforcement with the Zoning Inspector, but the Zoning Inspector is pulled geographically because we've got 2 Zoning Inspectors to all of town, so I strongly feel that the areas, and I could explain one thing a little better too, so the Ward distribution is set up by population, but our population in town, if you think about it, if you think about pro-active code enforcement activities and apartment licensing inspections, those activities, it wouldn't be surprising to most people that those activities are concentrated in the center of town. They are not nearly as prevalent a need on the perimeter of town. The ages of the structures are different. The prolongation of apartments is different. So what that means is those 12 districts, the perimeter of town districts grew, so somebody that has Ward 10 before has a huge hunk of Ward 1, a big chunk of Ward 8 and all of Ward 10. So those inspectors are going to be covering a larger territory. By selecting the inspectors in the interior of town that are in the same geography, those areas are much, much smaller. Dave Schindel happens to be the inspector that will be handling the west side districts. Glenn Blagg will be handling the east side district. Those gentlemen have areas that are much, much smaller than the ward. It is probably more like a 1/3 of the Ward instead of even half the Ward, so their territory is much reduced and it means they will be in your district a lot more for the opportunity to do the pro-active inspections and enforcement. I think if you'll let us play this out, I think we'll prove to be much more effective. If there are any more concerns, we'll keep talking is what I suggest.

Mr. Signorelli said okay.

Chairman Miller said I think the way you describe it, that sounds to me like it would be helpful for our older neighborhoods, regardless of whether they are in a district or not.

Mr. Curley said correct. I completely agree.

Mrs. Del Debbio said can I ask a question? How does this pertain to the 4th Ward because most of the 4th Ward is on the west side and our historic district is on the east side of the river, so how does that work?

Mr. Curley said the 4th Ward is split with 3 inspectors. There is a far west side inspector, Mike Milewski, who has everything in the 4th Ward that's, you know what, he may not be, it is west of AU, so I'm not even sure he even covers anything in the 4th Ward. Then there is kind of a west central inspector that gets to the river and that is Jeff Chestnut. That's pretty much the area he is in now. Then across the river, the river is a dividing line for all of our territories, across the river, it ends up being Glenn Blagg. Ward 4 has multiple inspectors, but like I mentioned, we tried to keep the neighborhood groups intact with relation to the inspector they would have.

Mrs. Del Debbio said okay. Thank you.

Mr. Hoffman said thanks for explaining this to us John. I think it sounds like a wise strategy. I'm curious, are the inspectors covering the districts already familiar with the standards and the guidelines there or is there additional training or orientation so they kind of know what to look for?

Mr. Curley said we are undergoing training. It is a transition. This literally happened 2 weeks ago, so we are in the midst of doing it now. I'm confident we have the skill set amongst the people who could teach them what the enforcement is. We'll leverage Jill's abilities. We've got someone in the Building Department also that's got a preservation, a Master's in Preservation and Architecture degree for some of the technical stuff. My background is an architect. We've got plenty of people to help with enforcement and/or technical assistance, I guess.

Mr. Hoffman said that sounds good. We've had some, I think some of the violations, at least that we've seen before Commission here, the owners or the contractor has at least made a claim, it is hard to judge how truthful it is that oh an inspector was out here and I asked them about windows and they said oh no you don't need a permit to replace windows. It's hard to say whether they are trying to deflect their blame or responsibility. I think that comes up where people will ask, even it is not for the work they are doing. They are thinking about something else and an inspector who understands what's required in districts is really valuable.

Mr. Curley said that's a good point. That's not only true of the inspectors, it is also true, essentially, of any city personnel. I'm also responsible for the counter, the intake counter for the Building Department and the Property Standards. That's the same counter that takes in the Certificate of Appropriateness forms that Jill is reviewing as well. Our intake personnel also have to be keenly aware and ask the additional question because we do allow window replacements in everywhere but our districts and/or historically designated buildings without a permit. We've got to be smart enough to ask that additional question.

Mr. Hoffman said very good.

Mrs. Morgan said I'm just going to add John, so the 2 inspectors that you were talking about also, they've been doing property maintenance, so while I think we have to train them on the preservation, I think they still have a little better understanding then like the Zoning Inspectors did of the building, the built fabric, dealing with porches and paint chipping and those type of issues.

Chairman Miller said that would be good. Do you have any other questions for John, or should we move on with the rest of the agenda items? John said he would stay on the call, so we can talk again at the end of our meeting if anything comes up.

PENDING

[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 if you recall, we held this at the last meeting just so everyone had a little more opportunity to review it and see if there were any other like minor changes that we wanted to take forward while we were doing this. So just kind of as a reminder, over the past several years, we have been doing clarifications to the guidelines trying to fix any areas where there was an ambiguity to kind of codify some of the practices

that we've been doing and things we have been approving that wasn't against the guidelines, but wasn't really spelled out in the guidelines either, to make it very clear moving forward anyone who reads it, what is or is not permitted. The only thing that we have changed is, and Seth made the change that we were talking about at the end of last meeting about the driveways, allowing them not to have to have that 6 inches as long as it is done in a manner that it won't hurt the foundation. He put in some good verbiage for that. Then solar panels, just clarifying when staff can approve it when it is obscured completely, I think was the wording, from the public way. Were there any other comments or thoughts on it? Once you guys approve it, if you do approve, it will go forward to BZE and then eventually to City Council, so they will become official parts of the guidelines. At the moment, we haven't thought about actually trying to reprint them in all one document, but at least they will be on the website altogether so that people can access them and see that there are some changes to sections.

Mr. Signorelli said I was really pleased. There are so many things that have come up that I can remember in the past where things weren't clear in the guidelines. Even though I wasn't privy to that meeting, having read everything I think everything seems to be fairly clear. I wasn't knowledgeable on the issue that Seth was talking about, but I educated myself with your discussion. I think everything is pretty clear. I think I wouldn't have any trouble going along with all of the proposed changes.

Chairman Miller said thank you Al. Does anyone else have any further reaction to these changes?

Mr. Signorelli said the only other is I was kind of surprised. I probably should have known, but I had no idea the gravel driveways were even allowed any more. I guess it is mostly because mostly people just simply don't do it anymore. I didn't even know it was allowed.

Mrs. Morgan said they are technically, from a zoning standpoint, they are allowed as long as they are maintained. If anyone does have a gravel driveway, if you want to keep it, you need to maintain it. If you get to the point that it is not maintained and get cited, since the guidelines allow for other materials, I say enforce the Zoning Ordinance at that point and they need to come through with an approved zoning material.

Chairman Miller said I can think of at least one or two that are maintained.

Mr. Walker said I hope my house is at least decently maintained in terms of its driveway.

Mr. Signorelli said there's one.

Mrs. Del Debbio said I'm on that list too.

Mr. Hoffman said In Omaha where we lived, there were some city streets that had been built when it was unincorporated, in unincorporated areas, and the developers hadn't built curbs to the city standards, so when the city annexed it, it was in the condition that they were not on the hook for rebuilding the street and so some of them then when they got bad enough and the homeowners weren't pulling together to chip in for the reconstruction, they just ground them up and turned them into gravel. I think they are slowing going through and actually rebuilding now that the taxpayers are assigned. For a while, they were gravel streets in the middle of the city there in these obscure little 50's subdivisions, so they would pave a little asphalt with no curb or drainage.

Chairman Miller said I agree with all the edits and thank you for that. My only further question would be on page 77 with gutters. Perhaps it doesn't matter, and I should have mentioned this before, it does say if the gutters, this is pre-existing language under point C, if the gutters are not readily visible, Ogee gutters of aluminum or vinyl are acceptable. I've wondered before why vinyl is mentioned. I haven't heard of vinyl being used in this climate.

Mrs. Morgan said I would have to say I don't know. It mentions them together in other places.

Mr. Hoffman said they are available here. I see people putting them up. They don't hold up real well over the big temperature fluctuations. When it gets real hot, they get saggy.

Mr. Signorelli said you mean Seth they are vinyl? I was thinking when he said vinyl, it would be like aluminum coated vinyl.

Mr. Hoffman said just like the vinyl fencing. I think it is extruded. It is a solid vinyl.

Mr. Signorelli said that doesn't sound like a good idea at all.

Mr. Hoffman said just like those vinyl patio chairs that get brittle in the sun.

Mr. Signorelli said I thought it was only because I sat in them. I had no idea there were gutters (inaudible).

Mr. Hoffman said I wouldn't recommend them.

Mr. Signorelli said it sounds like a very bad idea.

Chairman Miller said would anyone be up for just striking the words "or vinyl" from this text?

Mr. Signorelli said yes, I would be in favor of that.

Mr. Hoffman said so this would be in areas that are not visible if I read that correctly, right? So it would be like a rear elevation or somewhere that they would be permitted, vinyl windows and so on?

Mrs. Morgan said yes.

Mr. Signorelli said it is just that I'm not comfortable saying something is okay that is a product that really isn't going to work that well and we're saying well this okay for you to use. It doesn't sound that this necessarily is a good product to use. I would be in favor of striking it.

Chairman Miller said the way we've applied this Seth is the gutters may be visible. They are not a striking architectural feature of the house. So like a front gable house, you don't notice the gutters that much. My house is a Four Square with a hipped roof and a half hipped front porch, so you look at my house and you see my half round gutters all around my house, so they probably are an architectural feature.

Mr. Hoffman said, at least around here, there are two profiles, there is a regular K

style, Ogee and then a thin sort of thin U shaped. It is not a half round. It is a segmented...

Mr. Munoz said is that a half a moon?

Mr. Hoffman said yes, only it's got straight, it's got angled sides. I think the appeal for like do it yourselfers is it snaps together. You don't have to do quite as much fabrication as you do with aluminum. I don't have a strong opinion on prohibiting them. People can choose poor quality paint all they want and that's something that we're not weighing in on.

Mrs. Morgan said it is not necessarily hurting the look or character of the house. I guess it could lead to water damage if they fell and they are not replaced.

Mr. Hoffman said I think the worst that happens is they'll remove themselves from the house and take care of itself.

Chairman Miller said they self-uninstall.

Mr. Hoffman said I believe they make vinyl mounting brackets for them too.

Chairman Miller said to me this sounds like a bad idea. We do essentially regulate product quality in other ways. I think with our allowing the concrete siding we specify the percentage of concrete in the siding just to get the higher end product, or a more durable product, and head off maybe a manufacturer making a "concrete siding" that is composed mostly of sawdust and chicken feathers. So that's what I suggested. What does everyone think about striking vinyl from the description of gutters?

Mr. Signorelli said I would be for it.

Chairman Miller said Simon, what's your opinion?

Mr. Munoz said I would say strike it too.

Chairman Miller said Mike, what would you think of that?

Mr. Walker said it sounds fine. It seems like the sort of thing where if later someone gives us a good reason why maybe we should reconsider, we could change it again.

Chairman Miller said it isn't explicitly prohibiting vinyl, it's just not explicitly writing it in the guidelines that you can use it.

Mr. Hoffman said that's a fair point. I was looking at the angle what the guidelines allow or prohibit, but if we are just removing the suggestion of it, but not trying to codify a prohibition on it, I'm on board with that.

Chairman Miller said Amber, what would your opinion be on striking vinyl?

Mrs. Foster said I would be okay with it. It's something that I think that as long as they can come back and discuss, it would be fine.

Chairman Miller said Kristin, do you have an opinion on striking vinyl?

Mrs. Ludwig said I think whatever the group consensus is on that. I don't really feel

like for that I have a strong opinion. I tend toward leaning towards striking it if it is a material that we wouldn't want to recommend in the first place, but whatever the group consensus is I'm okay with that.

Chairman Miller said and Justyn, what is your opinion?

Mr. Arnold said I agree. It wouldn't be something that we would want to encourage at all. I'd say leave it off there. It is not going to stand up to ice. I don't know why they even made it honestly. I've seen it because I thought about putting it on my rental house out in Big Rock, but there's no way. It is a quick fix, but the amount of ice buildup, like right now, they wouldn't hold. I looked at how they were constructed and how they hold up there. I think it would protect the homeowners just not to ever even think of it.

Chairman Miller said that's what I was thinking too. I prefer to not suggest it or have it in the guidelines where we are bound to allow it because it is written there. That was my only suggestion. Jill, I'm sorry that I didn't present that to you earlier. I should have.

Mrs. Morgan said that's fine. I can make that change. It is pretty easy.

Chairman Miller said where I'm at is I would be perfectly comfortable to recommend approving all these changes that are outlined here. In addition, under Section B.2.7 under point C and the sentence "if the gutters are not readily visible, Ogee gutters of aluminum are acceptable", and strike the words "or vinyl". If someone comes in with a vinyl product that looks like it can hold up, we could do that. Do we have a motion of approval on all these changes to the guidelines and with the additional edit of removing the words "or vinyl" as mentioned under Section B.2.7 Gutters and Downspouts?

MOTION OF APPROVAL WAS MADE BY: Al Signorelli

MOTION SECONDED BY: Simon Munoz

AYES: Justyn Arnold, Jen Del Debbio, Amber Foster, Seth Hoffman, Kristin Ludwig, Dan Miller, Simon Munoz, Al Signorelli, Mike Walker.

NAYS: None

A motion was made by Mr. Signorelli, seconded by Mr. Munoz, that this agenda item be Forwarded to the Building, Zoning, and Economic Development Committee, on the agenda for 2/24/2021. The motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A) Grants

Chairman Miller said the Grant Committee will need to meet probably in the next month.

Mrs. Morgan said I think I heard from almost everybody on that so I'm going to go with the 1st, that Monday. I got approval to meet so I just need to send stuff out, get our (inaudible) on board. I have 4 or 5 applications, but they mostly come in right at the deadline.

Mrs. Ludwig said are you going to send out a meeting invite then?

Mrs. Morgan said yes I will.

Chairman Miller said that was March 1st then?

Mrs. Morgan said March 1st, yes. I think I'll move it up to 6:00 instead of 7:00.

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

Chairman Miller said Kristin and Amber have done some very interesting work. Would you be to explain what the project is? I looked at that and what you did looks very interesting. Is this a contest or something?

Mr. Signorelli said I wasn't quite sure what you folks were asking of us.

Mrs. Ludwig said sure, I'd be happy to explain the project. Do you want me to share my screen so we can walk through it? Is that okay?

Chairman Miller said could you please?

Mr. Signorelli said now are you actually asking us how we might interpret, or how we might want to bring in historic properties into the artwork itself?

Mrs. Ludwig said no, we kind of have done that step already, so I'll explain the project. Let me share my screen here. We're really just making sure we didn't mess anything up. Before we go out and present this back, we just thought it would be a good, because the original request was if we wanted to participate in this. I think it went to everybody in this group. We didn't want to overstep our bounds by saying oh yes, we speak for this without bringing it back to you guys, our fellow Commissioners, and

make sure that we didn't come in inaccurate. Are you guys able to see my screen?

Chairman Miller said yes we can see it. Could you spend just a few seconds reviewing what the project is? Was it the Aurora Public Art Commission asking?

Mrs. Ludwig said so the Aurora Public Art Commission has various mural initiatives that they are working on and it sounds like there may be other things coming with buildings and such, but this particular first request is something to do with all of our utility boxes downtown. They provided a list. They have a RFP that's out, so they are looking for artists to submit suggestions and work for the downtown. You know me. I had to open my big mouth, so I saw this on Facebook that this was going to be coming, because I'm a member of one of those groups online, and I said oh wouldn't it be cool if you are going to do something in the downtown, we have so much cool history in the downtown, wouldn't it be cool to tie it into history and then before you know it, we got an email to this group saying hey do you guys want to do this as far as giving our suggestions of what kind of history to incorporate. So that's why I'm volunteered because I figured I got us into this and thank God Amber decided to join me. So we are working with Kate Pearl and Jen on providing them input for artist's inspirations so that they have a little more knowledge of the history of the downtown and specific buildings. We thought, well there's like 6 utility boxes that they want to paint, what if we could tie something in the nearby area that is some sort of a specific architectural theme that we know we have a building to represent somewhat nearby and share with them a little bit about like what that time period was like and what was going on in architecture in the time. So what we want to make sure is like, for example, if we propose oh this would be a really cool theme to use around Art Deco, that we didn't put up a building and say here is an example you should use and here are some of these points and then you go that's not Art Deco. So that's where we got shy and sheepish about like we don't want to come in and like represent this group and be wrong about something we said. So that's where we were hoping, and I don't think it will take long, but to go through each of the styles and just make sure that either if we've missed a building that's a great example of that in our downtown that we didn't mention or if you like think that's not that style. So we are looking for you guys to critique us on that. Amber and I will be presenting this to the artists next week and then they will be going off and designing something and then submitting it back to the city for consideration. So I think there is going to be a certain number of artists picked, but we don't know how many at this point. This isn't dictating to them what they draw exactly. It doesn't mean that you're going to see Leland Tower on a box or anything. It just means that we are trying to give them inspiration.

Chairman Miller said that's great. Thank you for the explanation.

Mrs. Ludwig said I hope that helps a little bit. We kind of took our own take on doing that, those architectural styles. We just kind of did that through brainstorming and thinking of what we did. So the artists are going to get the, this is their explanation. It is supposed to be colorful interpretations and geometric abstractions inspired by our downtown historic architecture. They are going to need to have aesthetics that reflect the underlying level of architectural quality, imagination and variety. There's more language in there, but it does specifically denote pre-World War II structures and that they are going to look for these boxes to be striking and distinctive in appearance and clearly not homogenous. That's why we decided to go with these distinct architectural styles to try to keep it heterogenous and to highlight a tasting of all the things we have in the downtown. Not all of all of them, but some cool ones. These are the locations of the boxes. What you'll see for each of the 6, so here's the first one, and as you can see, this is right near where the big condo buildings are, right next to where Society 57

is, the coffee shop and because Society 57 has gone with a font that is very Art Deco feeling and it is right next to this box, we said okay let's go for it with that one. We split them half and half, so I'll briefly go through mine and then we'll toggle back and forth when we hit the right ones. These details you see with the time period. For each one we tried to do the same thing. Pick a style. What's the time period, roughly in some cases? What are the architectural features that one could pull from? What are some fonts? Because you would imagine they might want to do some writing on some of these. We want them to use a font style that works too, and then to give a couple of downtown examples. Then the next 2 to 3 slides, normally it is 2 slides for these. You'll see just some pictures to give them some inspiration. For this case, we decided to go Art Deco. Now this stuff I'm not worried about because frankly we just researched all that online and found stuff. It is more that if you disagree, that you don't agree with what something is. In here, we are using the example of the Paramount. We will be talking this through we with them, so we'll say oh here, look how you can see.....

Mr. Signorelli said now Kristin, will the font styles differ for each box or will there be one font that you will be using throughout?

Mrs. Ludwig said no, we try to just give them, because again, we don't want to dictate too much to them, but we just wanted to give them some examples. So for this Art Deco style, Metropolis is a pretty popular font for that, but more that we just described the type of characteristics that go into the font. And there's just an example of one of them. But looking at all the vibrancy and the bedazzling and things like that and try and give them some inspiration. Any comments on Art Deco that I've missed a major building or you disagree with the use of the Paramount as the primary example?

Mr. Signorelli said well the only thing that I was thinking with Studio 57, which is the old Pocus Motors building showroom, you could still go with a very stylized Art Deco theme, but what about the possibility of doing a car theme?

Mrs. Ludwig said there is a car theme as part of a different one closer to where Auto Row is. We do have that later. I don't know at this point if we want to totally swap the style because we are starting to get close on the deadline of needing to turn this in. But we do have it. It will be coming up.

Mr. Signorelli said okay.

Mrs. Foster said Aurora has 5 Prairie style buildings. The ones that we used were the Old Second National Bank, Keystone, Graham and the Aurora Elks Building. Of course for the fonts, Frank Lloyd Wright designed fonts, so those are Exhibition, Eagle Feather, Terra Cotta and Midway. Here are some examples of those buildings as well. This is pretty straightforward. We did add the Elks Building, which had kind of Prairie style mixed with the Masonic designs. Other than that, the Prairie, I think, is pretty self-explanatory. Is there anything that we did miss for that one?

Mr. Signorelli said well I would just say that, I mean, obviously, the buildings that you have chosen are all very important. Just to add in the case of the old Elks Club Building, that may be the only building of that architectural style existing in the whole country, so that is a biggie. But also having said that, I love the style and the design motifs on the Keystone building too. That is absolutely wonderful.

Mrs. Ludwig said I'll add that note in there. So then the third one we went with is, because this one is right on New York Street and Broadway, we thought it would be fun

do to that really like classic like Main Street USA kind of feel, right? We thought Queen Anne is a great one because I think that resonates with a lot of people. If they don't know a lot about architecture and history, they can still look at that and go Victorian. We thought that would be fun. It is also a pretty easy one to come up with lots of fun features that they can play off of and the fonts are pretty obvious with that one too, which is fun for them. I know it sounds weird because it is not a building, but the idea of the prefab cast iron, lots of frills and embellishments on a lamppost. I thought they could play around with that a lot, even though these particular ones are on LaSalle. There are probably more on Broadway too. Again, we are not expecting them to paint an exact building, but it is more things that they can pull for inspiration to use on the box. So for this, I looked at these, like the Oriel windows that you see on the commercial buildings or the turrets. Again, because these are commercial buildings, we are featuring downtown architecture. That's why we're not really getting into the porches and things like that. Again, pretty easy to find some fonts, so that's where we tried to go, as you asked before AI, with like different types of fonts. Like in this case, it could be upper case or lower case, but lots of scrolls and certainly very different than what you would think of as an Art Deco style font. So again, to try to break up the humongousness. Then this one is yours again Amber.

Mrs. Foster said we were kind of worried because they were getting a little bit the same. This is by Auto Row, so we have the commercial style, which kind of is LaSalle Street. The Theiss' Garage Building is on the list too, but that is kind of part of it. This one was like starting commercial and beyond, so we did add some of the old photos here of the buildings with the automobiles going by them. We also added the Roundhouse. There's not really a time period here that we were specifying.

Mrs. Ludwig said it is a really broad time period. This is where we decided to go a little crazy, right? It is buildings for commercial, but also think about all the cool things that were happening in terms of transportation and Aurora being this important commercial hub. So that's where we got in and like this one, all that Aurora was. So we kind of expanded the concept in this case to try to bring in some of that because the buildings alone don't tell us some of that story. I found some fonts for you Amber.

Mrs. Foster said nice.

Mrs. Ludwig said so we tried to find some that fit more of the clearly Victorian, that era, but had a little more of a practicality or something you might see on a sign from that era or things like that.

Mr. Signorelli said the other thing that comes to mind, and I haven't been down that street in a while, but I think it is now Tea Café that has the beautiful glass design above the ironworks.

Mrs. Ludwig said this is the Tea Room right here.

Mrs. Del Debbio said it is the Calla Lily Team Room, I believe.

Mrs. Ludwig said yes, this is the Calla Lily Tea Room. Is that the one you are saying AI?

Mr. Signorelli said no. I'm talking about the one that has the open glass bays on either side (inaudible) and doors in the middle. There it is. The white colored brick in the middle here. This building.

Mrs. Ludwig said this on here?

Mr. Signorelli said yes, the glass design above the ironworks.

Mrs. Ludwig said this here?

Mr. Signorelli said I think there's designs in each of those pieces of glass, I believe.

Mrs. Ludwig said maybe if we can get out there before the deadline, either me or Amber, we could get maybe a picture, a close up of that, and kind of blow that up. That may give them some cool ideas.

Mrs. Ludwig said this was the style. Like I actually never heard of this style before. I didn't know there was a commercial style, so that was an interesting one. Any other comments or feedback?

Mr. Signorelli said well certainly you've got to go with some kind of car theme here.

Mrs. Ludwig said it seemed like a good place to fit it with the Auto Row and also you've got the Firehouse Museum right there, so whether it is trucks, or cars, or cable cars, or whatever, you've got a lot of that that happened right in that area, so it seemed like a good place for that kind of box. It's not industrial, but more the commercial side.

Mrs. Foster said this is Leland Tower. I guess we had questions with the modern adaptation of Romanesque because that is what the architects called Leland Tower at the time, which was in the 1920's. I guess with the Leland Tower, the idea was that it was supposed to look like the towering structures over the hillsides. With this one, I guess, the question is, is this a correct assumption that this is, we're just using what the architects called it, or is this something else that we are missing?

Mrs. Ludwig said like we were wondering like would this also be called like Romanesque Revival or are you guys aware of any other Romanesque features that are in the downtown, even if it isn't the whole building? This one was hard because it was one building, one style, but on the flip side it is so cool, just thinking from the artist, we wanted to give them more for inspiration. We really didn't have more, but it is such a cool one it seemed like it needs one.

Chairman Miller said in fact, if you back up to the slide where you show the actual box, in the background that building has the large arches, round arches with the thick piers.

Mrs. Ludwig said we were wondering that because you've got the large arches, but we weren't sure because it's not tall. So could we at least stretch it and say that's a Romanesque feature?

Chairman Miller said I think it has a Romanesque feature.

Mrs. Ludwig said okay, and even also then the Fire Museum. I was even wondering the SciTech Museum has some of those qualities, like the massive quality, the thick wall. That kind of had, we thought, some of that look, so I don't know if we can stretch it that far. Can we get away with that? Is that stretching it too far?

Chairman Miller said I wouldn't mind saying the massive round top arches are a Romanesque feature. I don't know if the SciTech Museum is really a Romanesque building, but I really like it.

Mrs. Ludwig said I wasn't sure because it has the symmetry. It's got the arches. It is massive and thick, but I don't know.

Mr. Hoffman said I haven't studied it. I would say it is a little more Italian Renaissance Revival where the emphasis is more on the big arched flat side. It is interesting about Leland Towers. I hadn't read the description. In the 20's there was a lot of kind of mixing from these various revival styles so you get some interesting combinations and a lot of it is like well that's 1920's. It is a little bit a lot of influences. I like the picture you have there.

Mrs. Ludwig said this is Amber, not me. When I saw that I was like oh my God, yes. I mean, look at that. There is Leland Tower right there. I thought that was so cool, so I thought they were going to get a lot of like that's really, really neat. These are artists. I don't know what I'm saying. They're going to do something cool.

Mr. Signorelli said it's been described as Italian Romanesque.

Mrs. Ludwig said Italian Romanesque. Could we change that and get rid of some of this, sort of a modern adaptation of...

Mrs. Foster said it was a modern adaptation of Italian Romanesque.

Mrs. Ludwig said can we just call it Italian Romanesque, or does it have to be that precise?

Mr. Signorelli said I think it could just say Romanesque.

Chairman Miller said I think Italian Romanesque would be fine.

Mrs. Ludwig said Italian Romanesque. Leave it alone. Okay, cool.

Chairman Miller said I don't know that we're going for, this isn't like our term paper we're handing in to get our Master's Degree.

Mrs. Ludwig said exactly. We can stretch it a little bit. Now we have, so this is the west side of River Street, south of Benton. The problem is that you have 3 of these very close together. So we've got the Art Deco right in this section and then wanted to go for it with some Italianate because we've got a lot of it around, so this is pretty easy to come up with stuff. It is also pretty easy to come up with some good fonts for it. So for this, I used the Silverplate Manufacturing Company. I thought this would be helpful for them to see some of what some of these terms mean. Then we have on Broadway. This is on Galena. This is on Broadway with Water Street Mall behind it, so pretty easy to find bunches of examples. Then I just found a font that's a little bit different from the one that we are using for the Queen Anne font, the all caps, not as frilly is what we went for there. That's all of them. That's #6. The 3 that hit closest to each other is the one for the Romanesque, the Italianate and the Art Deco. Those 3 feel distinctive enough, I think, that we can, they are literally like in 3 parts right across the street from each other. They couldn't be closer. Those were the 3 tough ones. Any issues on the Italianate selections? We got off easier than I thought we would Amber. That's then all that we have. We are going to have talking points. Obviously, Amber and I will present these a little more like you can see this detail here or this detail there. Amber has like so many cool facts about the buildings too. We'll do a little more story telling with it. I think we get 30 minutes to present the whole thing, so

we'll have a couple of minutes, 5 minutes or so per style to talk about a little bit. Then again, these are people Amber and I both know them. As they go along and start to create them, they'll know we are here and via us to you guys if they have any particular things that they want to check up with us in terms of fact checking. I think it will be a ton of fun. It will be fun to see all this more artwork come into the downtown in this way and continuing to really like honor so much of that Aurora history, which is so cool.

Mr. Signorelli said when do you expect that the projects will begin and when you expect them to be fully painted and done?

Mrs. Ludwig said the artists are going to be, they have to have their work in for the RFP by March 1st, so it is pretty quick. Then I'm not sure when they get out and paint. I assume when it is warm enough to get out and paint. I don't believe these are the only projects that are part of that because I think I heard something about certain buildings or things like that may be coming too. I would assume it is a springtime activity.

Mr. Signorelli said that's cool.

Mrs. Ludwig said I think it is really cool. Liven it up.

Mr. Signorelli said I'm for anything that brings our historic fabric, our historic buildings, out to the forefront. That's great with me.

Mrs. Ludwig said I'm really glad that they like the idea. I think what happened last year after the riots and the damage to those buildings and the paintings that you saw go up and those murals were so cool and they were so inspiring, but also fun. I think that that really got the whole city kind of livened up like well maybe it is okay to paint on stuff, like maybe this is kind of cool. I know that particular group is very active and brainstorming lots of things. It is just a cool group of people too. Maybe we'll get an invite to come out and watch them paint when they start actually designing them. That would be really fun. We could get out there and look over their noses. That would be fun too.

Chairman Miller said thank you very much for doing this.

Mrs. Ludwig said thanks for letting us do it. It's fun.

Chairman Miller said thank you for showing us this interesting stuff, all these fonts and everything.

Mrs. Ludwig said I think Amber and I both feel better in knowing that, we didn't want to just go in and like be incorrect with something. We didn't want to misrepresent this group at all. I appreciate you guys looking at it.

Chairman Miller said very good work Kristin and Amber. We've completed all of our agenda items. I think finally, if John is still on, if anyone had any follow up questions for Mr. Curley before we adjourn our meeting. I'm looking forward to seeing how our new inspections regime works. I think you mentioned you could have someone, one of the inspectors or someone, present to us how the system works.

Mr. Curley said we would be happy to do that. I've also mentioned to Jill that Aurora's Building Department is the best in the state according to ISO ratings and part of the reason for that is certification levels of our staff and we're recently getting a lot more

recognition for the use of the existing building codes. I've made more than a dozen presentations on that topic. I've had presentations about how to use Appendix J, which is the alternative method for codes in residential. There is a lot of commercial stuff. We are building a library basically on information on how we try to help save our historic fabric and make code enforcement and meeting codes more feasible in a lot of our building stock. It's exciting the way we've been working that for 15 years. But we are really feeling like there is some momentum happening, a little bit of inertia after a lot of years. We'd be happy to talk about that. If anyone is at all interested, we have training sessions that are 2 days long, usually way too long.

Chairman Miller said if you could boil that 2 days down to like 15 minutes.

Mr. Hoffman said I'd be interested to hear about that.

Chairman Miller said it does sound interesting.

Mr. Hoffman said I follow some preservation groups in other states and cities. It varies a lot. Some of them really do struggle with rehabbing historic buildings and the conflicts with some of the modern energy codes that arise from that. It sounds like Aurora's got a good philosophy on it.

Mr. Curley said I'll make sure Jill kind of knows what we have as far as presentations and we'll share that with you and see if there is something of interest and then we can tailor it to meet your needs a little bit more as well.

Chairman Miller said thank you so much.

ADJOURNMENT

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

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