

MINUTES
PLATTEVILLE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

April 13, 2010 at 5:30 p.m.
Council Chambers at City Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ken Kilian, Mort Stephens, Scott MacDowell, Jean Propst, Garry Prohaska

ALTERNATE MEMBERS PRESENT: Arlene Siss (arrived at 5:50)

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

MEMBERS EXCUSED: None

STAFF PRESENT: Joe Carroll, Ric Riniker

OTHERS PRESENT: Tud Bowden, Brad Frey

MINUTES:

March 23, 2010 – Prohaska suggested an amendment to the minutes so they mention the information that was presented regarding the plaques, and the request that was suggested regarding City funding for members to attend the WAHPC meeting. Motion by Propst to approve the minutes as amended. Second by Stephens. Motion approved.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

96 E. Main Street (HP10-05): Gangster's Steakhouse

The applicant would like to install a sign on the Main Street façade that would reuse the existing projecting sign but install new sign faces. There would also be a tommy gun profile installed over the existing pick. The colors would be black, white and red. Vinyl window signage would also be installed. The business is open so the signage had already been installed.

MacDowell motioned to table the request since a color rendering of the sign was not provided. Motion failed due to the lack of a second.

Motion by Propst to approve the request and urge the owners to get approval next time before proceeding with the work. Second by Stephens. Motion approved. (MacDowell voted no)

75 N. Bonson Street (HP10-05): Municipal Building

The City would like to tuckpoint the municipal building using a tooled concave joint, which would be a change from the existing deep raked joint. This project was submitted to the State Historical Society for comment and a letter was received (letter attached). There was a long discussion regarding the bid process and the specifications that were used during the bidding. The consensus of the commission is that the bid process should have included better specs for doing the work, and should have included an option for the raked joint over the entire building, as needed. The specs should have called for removing the mortar deep enough to obtain proper bonding, and the work should only be done on the areas that require repair. The commission would like to have an architect that has experience working with historic buildings look at the building. Kilian suggested Jeff Morton from Dubuque.

Motion by Prohaska to recommend to the Council that the City hires an architect that has experience working with historic buildings. Second by Stephens. Motion approved.

Motion by MacDowell to table until the next meeting. Second by Prohaska. Motion approved.

DATABASE – HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Prohaska had updated address list with names for the LLC's. A request was made to have the list sorted by street address. Some properties require updated owner's addresses.

ADJOURN

Motion by Propst to adjourn. Second by MacDowell. Motion approved.



WISCONSIN
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

March 26, 2010

David Berner
City Manager
City of Platteville
75 North Bonson Street
P.O. Box 780
Platteville, WI 53818

IN REPLY, PLEASE REFER TO CASE # 09-1092/GT

Re: Proposed Exterior Renovations of the Platteville Municipal Building

Dear Mr. Berner:

At this time, based on materials forwarded to me for my review and based on phone conversations I have had with you, Bradford Frey, Joe Carrol, and most recently Brian McGraw, I write to provide comments and offer suggestions concerning the proposed rehabilitation of the Platteville Municipal Building. The Municipal Building is owned by the City of Platteville and is listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places as a contributing element of the Main Street Commercial Historic District.

First, I applaud the City for its effort to retain the general historic appearance of the building, as it was originally constructed. While we have some concern with specific details of elements of this renovation project, overall, the project, will not adversely affect the Main Street Commercial Historic District. While there may be some adverse effect to the Municipal Building itself, the effects are not so significant as to render the building ineligible for listing on the State or National Registers as a contributing element of the Main Street Commercial Historic District.

Second, I offer some comments below about our review process, and provide some proposed mitigation provisions for the adverse effects that may result to the Municipal Building itself and modification to proposed details in the project documentation.

Of greatest concern to us is the City's timing of submitting materials to our office for review. In November, the City submitted materials including bid documents and subsequent cost-estimates for specific project elements, particularly tuck-pointing the exterior of the building (as described below). We understood upon receipt of these materials that at that time the project had already been let for bid. We had not had an opportunity to review project details before the entire project was let for bid. We review projects at the earliest stage of planning. Had we received initial project design or

proposal information this time last year, we would have been able to assist the City in incorporating guidelines and specifications into the bid documents that would have prevented any adverse effects to the building. It is difficult if not impossible for us to comment on projects that have been let for bid. By the time projects are at that level of planning, very little may be done to effect changes to these proposals.

Given this, we request that for future proposed projects that the City may undertake, when such projects may affect historic properties (both properties individually listed on the State and National Registers and also properties that are contributing elements to historic districts that are listed in the State and National Registers), the City will contact us in the earliest stages of planning: meaning that the City will contact us early enough to allow our office to provide input to potentially change project designs and bid documents to incorporate specific treatments to historic properties, if such changes are warranted.

Next, as I mentioned above, we have expressed concern to you and Mr. Carrol, but particularly to Mr. Frey not only about the timing of the submittal to our office but also about project particulars including the proposed tuck-pointing of the exterior of the building. The proposal includes changing the mortar joint from a "raked" joint to "concave" joint. In projects affecting historic properties, we prefer, and the Secretary of the Interior's "Standards" for such work require that original stylistic details such as the raked mortar joint be incorporated into any "new" project designs that may replace/repair or otherwise affect such details.

I am aware that the bids received for the exterior tuck-point work were significantly higher to create raked vs. concave mortar joints. Mr. Frey was able to provide me with specific details in a conversation we had two weeks ago justifying these costs. Given the cost difference, we understand that the City is not in a position to require the rake joint over the concave joint.

However, allowing that the joint modification will be implemented as designed and bid, I offer the following modification with respect to the tuck-pointing work to protect the brick itself for the long-term. The specifications call for type "S" mortar for the exterior repair. We believe that this mortar is too hard for brick. We request that this specification be modified to type "N" mortar, which is softer and more suitable for this project. As well, the mortar mix ought to replicate the color of the existing, original mortar as closely as possible. I believe that these changes may be implemented at no additional cost to the City.

I mentioned at the outset of this letter, I am pleased that the City intends to maintain the historic appearance of this significant structure. Of note is the City's intention to replace the current windows (not original) with windows that more closely reflect the appearance of the originals. With this in mind, I request that the new windows be based on drawings or photos of the original windows, that any divided lights be created using permanently-applied muntins on both the inside of the unit and the outside, and incorporating a sandwiched muntin between the glass. This creates the appearance of a true divided light, which the original windows would have been. As well, if the City requires low E glass,

this must not be reflective but clear glass. Pyrolitic low E glass is clear, replicating the look of the original windows while providing the insulating qualities of modern window units.

Finally, I suggest that to the extent possible, the City retain as much original fabric (plaster, trim materials, doors, flooring) as possible during this renovation project.

I appreciate the opportunity to evaluate this project to the extent that I am able to do so. I look forward to a continued mutually beneficial relationship with the City of Platteville on all future projects we may be involved with. Of course, as this project develops, I am available for consultation. With any questions, please contact me by telephone at (608) 264-6508 or by email at chip.brown@wisconsinhistory.org . If he will be drafting materials based on our recent telephone conversation, I look forward to hearing from the City's Attorney Brian McGraw. Thank you for your continued attention to this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Chip Harry L. Brown III, J.D.
Government Assistance and Training Specialist

Cc: Bradford Frey, Project Manager, City of Platteville
Attorney Brian McGraw, City of Platteville
Joe Carrol, Planning Director, City of Platteville
Ken Kilian, City of Platteville Historic Preservation Commission