

Washington Historic Preservation Commission Meeting
Council Chambers of City Hall
405 Jefferson Street
Washington, Missouri 63090

Monday, April 19, 2021 at 6:00 PM

Minutes

Call to Order - Roll Call

Present

Carolyn Witt, Chairman
Bryan Bogue
Rick Hopp
Jamie Holtmeier
Andrew Clary
Tyler King
Joe Holtmeier, City Council Liaison
Greg Skornia, City Council Liaison
Sal Maniaci, City Planner/Economic Developer

Absent

Steve Strubberg, Vice-Chairman
Danielle Grotewiel
Tom Neldon, Building Official

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of minutes from Monday, November 16, 2020. Motion made by Tyler King. Seconded by Andrew Clary. Motion carried.

New Business

1. Design Reviews since last meeting approved by email (to be put on record):
 - a. Awning - 109 W. Main St. (John G's Tap Room) 12/22/2020
 - b. Front porch replacement - 15 E. 2nd St. 1/19/2021
 - c. Sign - 310 Elm St. 3/5/2021
 - d. House addition - 401 Cedar St. 3/8/2021

Carolyn Witt:

Could I have a motion to put these on record officially?

Andrew Clary:

I'll make a motion to officially put these on record.

Rick Hopp:
I'll second.

Carolyn Witt:
All those in favor? Opposed? Motion carried.

Old Business

1. Potential Grants

Sal Maniaci:

I don't really have anything new there. Those emails keep going out to all of you for grants that are available. We don't have anything, any project in the pipeline right now that we are looking to do at this time. If there's something that comes up that we think would be available, then just keep an eye on those possibilities. If we want to do another district, that kind of thing, we always can.

Tyler King:

Missouri Main Street came into some money through the state that they're offering services as far as grants go. They're also looking for ideas on how they can potentially spend the money, if we wanted to come up with an idea. As an organization, we did the facade program through downtown Washington, but if we want to approach maybe Main Street, the state, to say you have a little money - maybe you should look into doing something like this, we can. I don't know if they, I mean they're open to ideas, but I don't know if they would jump on something like that. If there's any interest there, I can always approach them and ask them that.

Carolyn Witt:

If anybody has any ideas, if anything comes across that you think looks like a winner - it's nice, perhaps, to get it from another source. The state has a tendency to be knee deep in red tape. If we could do it through Missouri Main Street, it might be a little more simplified. I know Main Street and CLG's do work in conjunction a lot. This is not something that's unexpected. We might be able to come up with something, but again, we have to have a good plan. We have to have something solid to say this is what we want to do. Since we will have a meeting next month, if any of you have any ideas to float, please do.

2. Education/Conferences

Sal Maniaci:

We've been sending out the general information. They haven't had any in person trainings yet this year. I know downtown did their Main Street - they did their national conference virtually last week.

Tyler King:

We have our state conference July 28th through the 30th - virtual again. I don't think we're going to have any in person trainings until potentially September.

Sal Maniaci:

Jamie always forwards anything we get from the CLG Training. They normally do something every May, so I'm assuming we'll get something for virtual training on the camp. It was a camp last year or two years ago.

Carolyn Witt:

Two years ago - and it was very good. One of the best ones. Tyler and I both attended. It was a virtual webinar training on how to package and leverage the value of your program. I'd like to share, very briefly, one of the things they talked about. Historic Preservation is one of the foundations of a Main Street program. I thought it was interesting. They talked about - don't quote statistics. I love this, especially these days, that no one has ever marched on Washington because of a pie chart. Well, they marched for a lot of other reasons. The idea is start with why, the story behind your buildings - what the emotional tie is to the downtown to your community. I think that's something we all need to remember. If you're ever in a position where it comes up, that's your opportunity to jump in and say this building is worth our effort because it has memories and tradition, that sort of thing. That's the kind of thing that people respond to as far as saying yes, downtown is worth paying attention to. One of the things they were talking about - what we have is unique buildings, which Washington is very fortunate. We really do. Also how events are the thing that lure people downtown for them to say this is why I love downtown or this is why I want to live downtown. I think it's important for us as the Historic Preservation Commission to always remember that we're in a position to put forth our agenda as far as support and preservation of these monuments to our history. So please take that opportunity when you have it. The rest of it wasn't quite as informative but that was the piece I got that I thought was of use to share.

3. Curb Appeal Award

Carolyn Witt:

If anybody has any suggestions, I know we've had some in the past. You were talking about the house on East Main. Jamie will be happy to help us make the connection with the homeowner because she's in a position to find out who owns it. So if you and Danielle could get just one or two - we haven't done this in like three years, maybe.

Andrew Clary:

I would keep an eye on that Cedar Street renovation that's happening right now, I think once that's wrapped up - it would be a really good one.

Carolyn Witt:

That's good. Yeah, that's really going to make a difference on the front of the building with the porch extended. I was so happy to see that someone was putting the money into one of those historic homes, making it livable for the 21st century - but still respecting the history of the building. Anything else we come across like that would be good. Has anybody noticed the old Post Clinic? I don't know whether that would be good because they painted the brick and changed the windows, but it's still a cool building that dates from the 1930's and had the curved walls and industrial windows. The Post Clinic has quite a history for the City of Washington and that somebody's putting the money into that building to live in. That's another good one to look at.

Sal Maniaci:

If we want to think about doing something for the shoe factory as they get into their next phase. Recognizing that renovation, that could almost be its own award.

Bryan Bogue:

I was going to say Schroeder's, too.

Greg Skornia:

In 1990, the Missourian ran an expose on the Tibbe historical district and the Post Clinic was mentioned in there.

Carolyn Witt:

Was it? I don't know how big the Tibbe district is but that is in that block, basically.

Greg Skornia:

I think it's Cedar to Elm. I'm not 100% positive on this, I think Ulrich Busch designed the building.

Carolyn Witt:

Really? I know he was an architect, wow! It was empty for a long time so I'm really happy to see it.

4. Creating New History Award

Carolyn Witt:

I wonder if the shoe factory would go, even though it's not a new building it's really unrecognizable. It's still historic. Could that be creating new history?

Andrew Clary:

That's what I was thinking.

Carolyn Witt:

What's gone into it, has given it a rebirth. Well that's something to be considering. If you're putting together award nominations, that might be good. He's still working on the wing on the west side. It has not been done. We should probably wait until he's finished.

Sal Maniaci:

Yeah, because he's got phase one and phase two. He already started on phase two, but it's not done yet.

Carolyn Witt:

I hope you had the opportunity to go and visit when they had their open house. It was cool. I'm not ready to move, but it was neat.

5. Budget Report

Sal Maniaci:

We have not spent any money since the city cemetery.

Jamie Walters-Seamon:

I did spend around \$30 to renew our subscription to the Missourian, which is used for the annual report.

6. Information Plaques for Historic Buildings

Carolyn Witt:

Information plaques are still on hold at the moment.

7. Calvin Theatre

Carolyn Witt:

Last I heard, they were trying to talk Hoffman into buying it – which I thought was interesting. But, it's still on the agenda.

Other Business

Carolyn Witt:

As far as the city cemetery sign, if any of you have seen it – it's amazing. If you're going to Knights of Columbus and you make a right onto that, Wildey Way goes along the cemeteries and it really looks nice and they're going to dedicate it this Thursday at five o'clock. If any of you can attend, hopefully they will take a picture. I think it's very important. When you think about it, we were instrumental in getting that ball rolling. Using our budgeted money for historic preservation. I thought it was a very wonderful choice of use of that money. They're getting more contributions and they're going to have a plaque similar to what's done with the Civil War information around Franklin County where they'll have information about the city cemetery. It was not something that was easily put on a stone. We'll have an information plaque next to the stone. I was really wishing that we had some flowers planted. Now I'm really glad we don't because they would have been dead. If any of you can come on Thursday at 5:00pm, we will have a picture. If you send out an email on the people that aren't here, then they would know. For those who are here, that would be a reminder. I think Sandy is going to speak. I don't foresee a lot of time spent because I think it's going to be pretty chilly. It is really dramatic whether you're coming from either side. It really looks best when you're turning from the Knights of Columbus, up on that hill, you can't miss it. It really looks good. They, the Monument Company, did a wonderful job. Did we have enough money to pay for the whole thing?

Sal Maniaci:

For the sign itself – we have not raised enough money for the educational placard of it, which is still part of it. Every time the paper would run something, I think we got a little bit here and there, donations from that. So that would be something that if it's not paid for by next budget year – to see if this group wants to still contribute to that to get that done. Either Darren or Mark, someone went to all the service organizations and already asked them. So I think the city and this group, well this is the city's budget – will have to get that done before going out to ask them for more donations. And that was the cheaper side of it. I think Ziglin said

\$1,000 for that. I think at the time the one they were looking at was bigger than what we needed, so it may be cheaper than that.

Carolyn Witt:

It's really nice to see that because that's been unrecognized for over 100 years. Does anyone have any other business?

Sal Maniaci:

I'll just bring up that the construction has begun at Market and Front for that 4 story structure with an underground parking garage. The only reason it wasn't brought back here is we did approve that over a year ago and they never broke ground. Those building permits expire in six months - so when they re-applied, it didn't change at all so I didn't bring it back. If you're wondering, that's the same design and everything that was submitted. We've issued that and they've already started digging the piers for that parking garage.

Jamie Holtmeier:

Is that a public parking garage?

Sal Maniaci:

No, it'll be for the users right there. It was originally 12 units, unless he got something bigger, which could be could be the case.

Carolyn Witt:

I got a call from a gentleman who lived across the street from the Sirens Hotel and he had a grave issue with the trash.

Sal Maniaci:

We've looked into it and it's not against city code.

Carolyn Witt:

Right. Well, I have not heard anything from him since it's been completely fenced or closed in so I'm hoping he's not terrifically unhappy. The gentleman had worked with planning and zoning and building inspection type of thing in his previous job. He chose to move to Washington. He relocated. I did feel bad because it was right across the street from his front door. I think he felt he was getting the run around. I think in the long run, it's all worked out and I have not heard anything else recently but I did just want to bring that up. He wanted to know how they got a review from us. Well the trash thing wasn't even mentioned in the review when we were doing that.

Sal Maniaci:

You don't need a building permit for that.

Jamie Walters-Seamon:

He also went through the engineering and building departments and no one could find anything that they did wrong.

Carolyn Witt:

Right, right. You know, everybody is different and where he came from, he was upset. As I said, I have not heard anything else from him, so I'm hoping that he's more reconciled to that.

Jamie Holtmeier:

I usually don't like to bring this up as like a complaint, because I don't want to do that. What I want to do is show my observation and then maybe we can collectively find a solution or something. Painting of our brick buildings has always been a touchy subject for us. It's unsettling that we have two white buildings now sticking out and for sale. I think one sold and another is for sale, but we were sold on the idea of all these things and now the business owner is gone. It brings up the whole Pot Shop, the two buildings that were supposed to be whitewashed - they weren't just white. I think they're beautiful and it is part of a trend, certainly a trend right now, and I know people comment on it that it does look nice. I think part of my concern is that if we just let people paint over brick, we're going to get so many different color buildings - old buildings - that it is not going to look historic anymore. It's going to look like a multicolored building in downtown Washington. I'm struggling to how we move forward as a committee whenever we are presented with any owner of the building if they want to paint it. I don't think we ever really settled on that other than they have to get our permission. But it's not mandatory compliance. I'm not quite sure.

Bryan Bogue:

They just have to be reviewed, correct?

Carolyn Witt:

Yes, and there's no way we can forbid it. In the case of the Pot Shop, we heard nothing. It just appeared one weekend.

Jamie Holtmeier:

I know that. That's why we started.

Carolyn Witt:

Then there was the issue with their awning. It was blinding in Cowan's going in those windows.

Andrew Clary:

The renovation of the old Inn, remember, was just that. That was the intent from the get go that it wasn't brick. It was just siding and she said we're going to put it up

and paint it. So that's a little different. I'm with you on painting brick. One of our neighbors entertained it and I was like, yeah, let me tell you all the reasons why it's a terrible, terrible idea. It's so hard to come back from. It's cost prohibitive.

Tyler King:

Sal, you might be able to answer this? How do we get to the point of mandatory review, mandatory compliance? Is that something that needs to go forth in front of city council?

Carolyn Witt:

The only thing we've got is if it's in the TIF.

Sal Maniaci:

Yes, if it's using public money, it's mandatory/mandatory. You'd have to get council to want to approve a code amendment that requires architectural guidelines. It could be as simple as just painting and not even given a scale of colors, but saying it has to be approved by this organization. And if you go through without it, then you're technically in violation of zoning code, just like anyone else. We have not brought it up in a long time, but in the past they have not wanted to impose those restrictions on property owners. Even in 2017, we really didn't ask for it. The only thing we asked for mandatory/mandatory was the signage and that went through no problem. That would be the way to do it is to make it enforceable as the zoning rule. Your historic preservation section is under chapter 400 which is in the zoning book.

Andrew Clary:

After the Pot Shop, I had conversations with people like why? Why did that happen or how could this happen? That was it, we can't make you stop.

Jamie Holtmeier:

I certainly don't want to step on innovation of any kind when people put a lot of money, time and effort into a vision, I want to appreciate that. I mean, obviously it's done well. It's just disappointing that now we have an empty building that's white even though we were told it was going to be used for so many other things. At the end of the day, I don't know what to do about it and I don't know if it's a problem. I'm just echoing some sentiment about turning the old red brick buildings into whatever color we want and I don't really know if we can do anything about it.

Tyler King:

That's why I bring up the point - is it worth our while looking into a mandatory review/mandatory compliance, bringing that to council and seeing where it goes. I'm asking the group as a whole, not just the council. Is it worth our time, worth our while?

Carolyn Witt:

It sounds like something we might want to pursue as a single. Don't do the whole ball of wax, just do like the sign ordinance. We have things to point to to say we don't want any more of this in our immediate historic downtown area.

Joe Holtmeier:

It just takes a changing the code amendment.

Bryan Bogue:

I would suggest the same thing. We've talked about this before going back a few years ago and I think the committee at that time was not ready to pursue that, but we talked about it as all encompassing – basically everything we had to review would be mandatory. Maybe if there's a way to select specifically paint color and make that like we did our sign and awning and make that a mandatory portion, it would be a little easier to swallow. It is a pretty major thing.

Carolyn Witt:

I know the Jasper building over here, the brick had deteriorated. It would have to be a case by case basis, then at least we would have the power to say convince us or let us convince you that this is not a wise move and there are options. Look around and see what we have and how we don't want to lose it. Could we, perhaps, put something together?

Sal Maniaci:

That could be a pretty easy code amendment. I would recommend making it almost vague because you don't want to strong arm yourself into a set of colors or palette. If you're going to paint in any of those districts that are in the black boundary, it has to be approved by this board.

Carolyn Witt:

I would think the council, I would hope, would be similar to the sign ordinance where when it's explained that – it's a case by case situation. We're not coming down. I have talked to people, I think they were from Santa Fe, New Mexico and you couldn't paint your shutters, you couldn't paint your mailbox. It was strict. If you're in a historic district, there were limitations. This is the rule and there's only this you can do. It would not be that – we would not be that. I wouldn't want that either. But this would give us the opportunity to talk to the person. I think it needs to be broadcast enough that you're not going to have a Pot Shop – do a weekend project and paint something and realize that they can't do that.

Sal Maniaci:

Just so you know, in that circumstance, that comes down to a zoning violation – which would get you into circuit court, which is no longer municipal. That will mean that you would have to have the county prosecutor want to prosecute that for

us to be able to make them change it. That would be the path to having anything done about it.

Carolyn Witt:

Hopefully, it wouldn't get to that. Do I need a motion on that?

Sal Maniaci:

No, I think it's just direction. It's good that we're meeting next month already.

Greg Skornia:

I kind of think there's a lot of violations on the sign ordinance now. Put up these banners for a weekend gun show. That's just an example, or a Lions Club barbecue. They used to have that banner across Jefferson Street, but I don't think they do it anymore because we made this sign ordinance and it's so restrictive.

Carolyn Witt:

That was really good. I'm really glad you brought it up because if you don't talk about it, you can't fix it.

Jamie Holtmeier:

It's an observation and I wish I had a solution to present with it.

Andrew Clary:

You do! You did!

Tyler King:

You have a point too, you don't want a stronghold somebody, you want to have innovation as much as possible – but correct innovation.

Sal Maniaci:

That is a question. What do you do whenever you issue a certificate of review based on what they say, and they don't do it? Do you revoke the certificate? It's already done. I guess that still sends a message. You could vote to revoke it. I don't know because if they didn't request any TIF money, we can't withhold anything. You're right, they came here with pictures of what it was going to look like and then decided not to do the last step.

Jamie Holtmeier:

Now I understand the last year has been crazy for everyone. So that comes with understanding. But, it could have been the next building or the next building.

Sal Maniaci:

Well, what's the point? If someone is going to come and say whatever they want and then not do it?

Jamie Holtmeier made a motion to adjourn and Andrew Clary seconded the motion. A vote was taken and unanimously approved. The meeting of the Washington Historic Preservation Commission ended at 6:31 PM.

The next scheduled meeting of the Washington Historic Preservation Commission will be held Monday, May 17, 2021 at 6:00 PM in the Council Chambers of City Hall.