

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

Monday, August 16, 2021 at 5:00 PM

Minutes

Call to Order – Roll Call

Present

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

Absent

Andrew Clary
Steve Strubberg, Vice-Chairman
Bryan Bogue
Jamie Holtmeier
Tom Neldon, Building Official

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of minutes from Monday, June 21, 2021. Motion made by Tyler King. Seconded by Greg Skornia. Passed without dissent.

New Business

1. Design Reviews since last meeting approved by email:
 - a. 8 Lafayette St.

Carolyn Witt:

8 Lafayette was done by email and we need to put in on the record. Does someone wish to move to put that on the record that it was approved for the new condos?

Rick Hopp:

I so move.

Tyler King:

Second.

Greg Skornia:

Is that going to be one 1 or 2 units?

Sal Maniaci:

Two units up top and then the garages down below are for the people who live across the alley. So, 2 residential units and then 4 or 5 storage garages.

Greg Skornia:

I'll abstain from voting.

Carolyn Witt:

All those in favor? Opposed? Motion carried.

Old Business

1. Potential Grants

Carolyn Witt:

I don't think we have any potential grants.

Sal Maniaci:

In our budget for 2021-22 starting October 1, I requested some additional funding to apply for a district at the city auditorium, city pavilion and pool house. Those qualify really because of their age, but also because they were built with new deal money and certain circumstances under how things were funded could qualify. So I submitted funding for that. The reason for that being is that if we do get it registered as a district, the city can then apply for grants to rehab them. We have that budget and capital improvement to a certain amount, but we would be able to do all three. When I say all three - the upstairs of the pool house, there is some discussion about maybe moving the park's office there. It would need a lot of rehab. Then the auditorium needs insulation and since we have that barrel roof, it needs to be done on the outside. Then the pavilion is in pretty good shape. So we're going to get that reviewed. We're actually going to pay for that ourselves and then use individual grants in that same budget year to apply for funding for it.

Carolyn Witt:

That is good news. I was so glad that the old pool house was not scheduled to be gotten rid of with this new plan. Anything WPA is pretty cool and it was usually built to last. It may need work, but it's a good base. This is excellent. That was good news and thank you for watching out for us.

Greg Skornia:

Isn't that one of the last roofs to have that design in it?

Sal Maniaci:

The barrel roofing? Yes. An environmental group did an energy audit on all of our city buildings. They said it would probably be cheaper to insulate from the inside, but we said no - with that barrel roof, we need to leave it. So they came up with the plan to insulate it from the outside.

Carolyn Witt:

I think the Historical Society had posted something on Facebook about it and that there was only one other.

2. Education/Conferences

Carolyn Witt:

I know there's a Main Street conference, is it this month or next month?

Tyler King:

It will be next month in Trenton, MO. It's not necessarily around revitalization. It's more of a Main Street boot camp, all encompassing, day training about just Main Street in general. I believe that is on September 24th.

Sal Maniaci:

That's the same week as MML in St. Louis, so some of us won't be able to go – but if anyone else would like to, we do have training funding and we'll let the board know.

Carolyn Witt:

That's good, if you'd share that with everyone, Jamie. If you can find something that would qualify for this, it would be close and the funding would be available to pay for it.

3. Curb Appeal Award

Carolyn Witt:

If you can send me a copy of the picture at Angelina's, I missed that. She was ecstatic. She was so excited. Apparently she has it in the restaurant where you go in. She has her certificate right on the countertop. I made my 3rd visit to the law office of Ben Hotz. I told the girl if he's not interested, that's not a problem. But I'm not going to harass you anymore. I'll get a phone number for the house on West Fifth. It's in the 900 block. It's between 905 and 915. It doesn't have a number. They put the new porch on and they did a path. I think that would be a good one.

Sal Maniaci:

Jamie Holtmeier emailed everyone today with an idea of how to move forward with curb appeal, of having nominations. Basically, instead of having a committee – just having a nomination period. Since we only meet 4 times per year, having a nomination at each meeting. It can be done via email and we can vote on it here. That way we can have a list of them. The plaques is where a lot of homework needs to be done. The curb appeal, we really don't need a committee to go out and do any homework. We just need to nominate and let people know that they won. Ben Hotz, we could just tell him that they won. If he wants the plaque, he wants the plaque. If he doesn't, you know what I mean? You can nominate and give anyone an award regardless whether they want it or not.

Carolyn Witt:

If I hear back from him, fine. If not, we could just put the word out and see if anybody wants their picture.

Sal Maniaci:

I thought she gave a list of the steps that she would take and I thought it was a good idea. It's a lot simpler rather than having a committee pick them.

Greg Skornia:

We've got a Busch home on Cedar that I think would be great.

4. Creating New History Award

Nothing new.

5. Budget Report

See potential grants.

6. Information Plaques for Historic Buildings

Nothing new.

7. Calvin Theatre

Carolyn Witt:

I would think it would get to the point where eminent domain is probably, I mean either that or it's going to fall down and be a hazard to the neighbors. But that's something the city has to decide. I wish we could tell you we had somebody with pots of money to step in and do something. As I've said, that's always on agendas and it makes you sad.

Sal Maniaci:

The problem with eminent domain is then taking over liability.

Other Business

Carolyn Witt:

Under other business, Sal, would you tell us a little bit about the C3? Even though it doesn't affect us directly, it's increasing the reach of the historic district in, to a point.

Sal Maniaci:

The parking is really the biggest thing that helps save buildings. There's been discussion for a couple of years, really, that our C3 downtown zoning district is not really contingent – it's not orderly. There's gaps in it. If you're going to be a downtown zoning district, it really should be contiguous. When people were asking for re-zonings of that – if they were outside or more contingent with existing downtown zoning, we recommend denial because at what point do you say yes or no. If it's not contiguous, someone could be a block away and you allow it and then that next person is five blocks away and they asked for it. So we wanted to come up with a definitive growth boundary of what is downtown and when I say, what is downtown for zoning purposes? Zero lot lines, mixed use, and no parking. Those are really the three big things that we wanted to say – this is in that district. It then alleviates hurdles when someone buys a historic property, they don't have to go through the rezoning and send out all these notices to the neighbors. They want to do this investment and we're throwing all these public hearing hurdles. Say you have an existing structure on Market Street that takes up the whole lot and you want to do a mixed use where you have apartments and then maybe an office which is very historically accurate and appropriate for the building and the current zoning their market – they would have to provide off street parking, which would mean they would either have to get a lot next door or tear down probably an adjacent building to then provide parking. So we wanted to define that growth boundary. P&Z has looked at it for three months now. We've gone back and forth three different months and readjusted this map. What we decided to do, we went back and forth to an overlay district or not. What we decided to do is draw this boundary. Then any property in that boundary that wasn't currently C3, we decided just to rezone. We sent out 84 letters, there were 84 properties in there that weren't zoned properly and it wasn't just one or two different zoning districts, there were four zoning districts in that area – so it was not

contiguous or orderly at all. Now, hopefully, we'll have a new growth boundary. It'll have Front to Market, Market down to 6th actually. So anything that touched 6th, 6th over to Elm and then it kind of stair steps down. So the reason that stair steps as you go west, each block you get one more block in until you get all the way to Rhine River. The reason we did that is that we did not want to include the historic properties on Elm & Cedar and so forth because those are already zoned R2 overlay. They allow for the two family - that's not really a mixed use and wouldn't be appropriate there. The zero lot line wouldn't be appropriate there because there's not really any empty lots anyway. The benefit of what you see down here is you don't want any more empty lots in the other district. You want to be utilizing all the space that we have and not make people tear down for parking. On Cedar is a really good example. We didn't want to include that in C3 because up and down on each side of Cedar, it's already developed. Those are old historic Victorian homes. We didn't want to change that. So it's very straightforward. On Front, Market, Sixth and then I go west, we kind of stair stepped it down. We had a public hearing after we sent out all 84 letters - 13, 14 people showed up. We really didn't have any pushback. We had one family who was a little concerned about having the possibility of mixed use next to them because they're in single family. After, it was shown to them that they're actually in C2 overlay - which already allows for mixed use. They have a vacant lot right next to them. They're worried about what can go in there. Currently you can already put in commercial mixed use in there. The only thing that this does allow us to instead of having a 10 ft setback on the street, they could go zero on the street. Which a lot of those houses on Elm are already or buildings already at zero. It's funny when someone calls me and they're like on Fourth Street, but right here, Fourth and Jefferson - someone says I bought a property downtown. I want to do X, Y, Z. When you pull it up according to our zoning map, they're not actually downtown and that I felt was not right when someone says on Third street, I can do zero lot line mixed use and a block up where someone across the street has been doing it forever and it's grandfathered in. Why are we mixing up the zoning? And so now we'll have a very organized downtown district. That rezoning will go to council in September. We're also going to have a code amendment to change the definition of C3. Right now it just talks about the historic nature of downtown and the historic area. We're actually going to define these boundaries and say this is the growth, we're calling it a growth boundary, of our downtown district. So when someone comes in and even if they're on Locust and they are only a block away they can say they're going to request to come into the downtown district. You know our code is clear that this is what we consider the boundary. If you want to petition to be in that C3, it's not just a rezoning. You need a petition to counsel to change that definition and make a pretty big case as to why that should be extended even more. Say in 10 years as hopefully investment continues and we start doing infill downtown, I think someone could make a case of expanding that boundary - but for right now I think we have a very wide boundary. It actually started at Fourth, we went to Fifth to cover some. We saw the historic society had pictures of Fifth and Jefferson and

what that intersection used to look like. It looked like Main and Elm, buildings all the way up to it. Same with where Purcell used to be. Fifth St. in that whole corridor looks very similar to Elm or Main where you had zero lot line all the way up and in reality, if someone wanted to come back and restore – say someone bought the Purcell lot and they wanted to restore to what it would have looked like historically maybe put some parking in the back because it's a big lot, but put zero lot lines up on those streets there. Why would we turn that down? Why would we add a hurdle? And so that's why we expanded that boundary to Fifth. The only reason I got down to Sixth even was Emmanuel Lutheran and St. Peters they're on Fifth and they own the whole block. So when you do a zoning, you can't do it on half a parcel, you have to follow the parcel line. So it went all the way down to Sixth just in that area, kind of narrows up to the south. We decided just to make it square and clean right at Immanuel Lutheran down to St. Peters will follow Sixth Street and everything north then down to the river will be considered in this downtown district. In reality, we made sure to make clear in the letter, it's not going to change anyone's taxes. They're not going to have to stop doing anything at their property. Everything they're doing now can continue to be done. What's actually happening is bringing them into conformance. We have a lot of people, I don't know why it was back in the day when we drew our first zoning boundary, but if you look from Market over to past Locust - all the way from Main up to Fifth is all zoned multi family. Most of those are single family homes. So a lot of it's not even in conformance anyway, I don't know how that happened way back when. We're slowly starting with overly districts and rezoning, getting all these historic areas ironed out. So I think it'll be good in the long run and it'll save us for controversial P&Z meetings when someone asked for downtown zoning and we don't really have a leg to stand on other than no, you're not in the downtown district. Now, we can say we have something, this is it. I think it'll be good. The only reason it's not going to council this month is that since we added those three properties on Sixth Street, we have to send it, send another letter, go back to P&Z in September and then the second meeting in September, we will have the final public hearing.

Carolyn Witt:

If you're interested, he does have a good map that will show you that. I think it's one of those things I loved, it was just quoted to me recently that if you don't continue to grow and change, you're falling behind. I think that's one thing that makes Washington really unique is we're constantly looking to the next, whether it's, you know, not just historic, but also industrial park, whatever. They're always looking at the next step. And that's, that's a good thing. Is there any other business?

Greg Skornia:

I would like to mention something about the Calvin. When I worked in Sullivan – I think it was called Meramec Cinema by the old Wal-Mart. They converted it into a buffalo wing restaurant. Well, it was set up the same way as the Calvin. You come in off the street and you go up a little bit, then you get in and you go down – it's at a slant. You go all the way down to the basement. There's probably 12ft of fall from the entrance to the seating area to the stage. They knocked a wall out and hauled

rock in to level the floor. You can't do anything with the Calvin until you level the floor. The only way you're going to get rock in there is if you tear out the back wall and then this building doesn't have a lot of structural credibility in my opinion. I'm not an engineer, but the engineering I've been around - I wouldn't tear that wall out to save my soul. That's kind of the big hang up on the Calvin. That's going to be a big ticket to level the floor. You can't put in a traditional floor joist because you the live load is going to be too great. You're going to need a concrete floor for anything on that big of a building. On this zero lot line, it's zero side yards too in C3?

Sal Maniaci:

Yes.

Greg Skornia:

I don't think the fire department is going to approve a lot of side plots that way. You can't get fire equipment around them.

Sal Maniaci:

It's already existing. Think about Main and Elm and all of that. That is what C3 is.

Greg Skornia:

Yeah, but this is a new thing.

Sal Maniaci:

Think about what we just built on Andy's town homes. They just have to have new fire ratings.

Greg Skornia:

Bill Halmich said that's the worst thing the city ever did.

Sal Maniaci:

Don't worry, Tim Frankenberg and Mark Skornia were at P&Z and we talked about this so the fire department has been briefed and they know about the rezoning.

Tyler King made a motion to adjourn and Greg Skornia, seconded the motion. A vote was taken and unanimously approved. The meeting of the Washington Historic Preservation Commission ended at 5:25 PM.

The next scheduled meeting of the Washington Historic Preservation Commission will be held Monday, November 15, 2021 at 5:00 PM in the Council Chambers of City Hall.