

Minutes Approved on October 9, 2019

MINUTES
City of Monona
Landmarks Commission
Wednesday September 11, 2019

Chair Kuhr called the meeting of the Monona Landmarks Commission to order at 4:33 PM.

Present: Chair Jennifer Kuhr, Mr. Rick Bernstein, Ms. Anne Wellman, Mr. Erik Lincoln, Ms. Branda Weix, Ms. Mary Murrell, and Ms. Rebecca Holmquist

Absent: None

Also Present: Douglas Plowman - City Planner, William Cole – City Attorney, Dennis Hull, and Tori Hull

Approval of Minutes:

A motion by Mr. Bernstein, seconded by Ms. Weix, for the approval of the minutes of August 14, 2019 carried with one correction.

Appearances

There were no appearances.

Unfinished Business

A. Consideration of Action for a Certificate of Appropriateness Regarding Proposed Alterations to the City of Monona Landmarked Property at 4811 Tonyawatha Trail

Mr. Hull provided an overview of the project and the extent of the work that is proposed. The detached garage/artist studio is a mid-1960's design with Frank Lloyd Wright influence. The doors are tight, and make parking vehicles inside difficult. The door into the office (the former studio) also poses a challenge, with the low roof catching on the door. The door edge has had to be cut to accommodate the gable. The gutters on the property have also been an issue because of the continuous nature of the roofline. Mr. and Mrs. Hull shared that they have waited nearly 20 years to do this work and to improve a space that is not currently functional for their needs. The project architect, Mr. Powelka also worked on previous improvements to the primary structure in 2005, and they expect the work to be of a similar high quality.

Mr. Bernstein highlighted the stone work on the front face of the structure. He specifically asked about the mortar and how this would impact the stone. He recommended a softer mortar that would give way before the stone does. Guidelines for historic properties were referenced, and Mr. Bernstein would like to share these with the applicant. Ms. Holmquist asked about the work proposed to the roof, the insulation, as well as the materials that they intend to use. Mr. Hull responded that the plan was just to remove the top, and use shingle. The submitted plans showed EPDM, instead of shingle, and it was confirmed by Mr. Powelka that it is the applicant's decision, and that either would work with the design. The proposed insulation is the minimum that can be used to provide some additional efficiency in the office area.

Mr. Lincoln asked about the impact the work would have to the exterior face of the garage. Mr. Hull responded that the plan is to keep all four doors, with greater support inside the structure. Ms. Wellman discussed the issue with the office door. It was stated that the same issue exists at Taliesin, and it was asked if it would be possible to use a door that swings in rather than out. Mr. Hull responded that he would prefer to work with what was submitted as this would be a significant alteration to the plans.

A motion was made by Ms. Holmquist, seconded by Ms. Weix to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness and approve the plans as submitted. This included an advisory recommendation to consider the National Park Service guidelines regarding stone mortar.

Ms. Weix made a motion to amend to include the recommendation to pursue the shingle roof, rather than EPDM as shown in the plans. The amendment was accepted.

The motion, and amendment carried 6-1.

New Business

A. Discussion of Historic Preservation Ordinance

City Attorney Bill Cole provided an overview of the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance, what changed with the adoption of the most recent Ordinance, and some background to the process. The new Ordinance gives greater authority to the Landmarks Commission to permit additions and exterior alterations, as well as demolition permits. It was also clarified that all previously existing properties are regulated by the current Ordinance, and the adoption of this Ordinance removes the jurisdiction of the previous, regardless of when the property was landmarked.

There was some discussion among the Commission as to whether existing landmarked properties should be redesignated. Attorney Cole also discussed grandfathering previous properties, and exempting them from the current regulations. It was said that this would be very rare, and with that you risk removing any protections for the property. Mr. Bernstein discussed the process that the City of Milwaukee undertook as they revised their Ordinance. A concern raised was that without the documentation, the Ordinance would be tough to regulate. The Commission discussed how documentation on existing properties could be gathered retroactively, and also from those applying in the future. Others raised the potential to bring a resolution to Council designating or redesignating the properties.

Chair Kuhr summarized the discussion and outlined potential next steps. There seems to be a concern that there is not enough information to review existing locally designated properties. There is an opportunity to gather documentation on the existing properties so that the Commission has greater information moving forward. A resolution could be brought before Council redesignating existing properties if that is the wish of the Commission. The current Ordinance and the designation form could provide the framework for the documentation. The Commission could work on this in the coming months in advance of any future applications. Discussion will continue at the next meeting to formalize next steps.

B. Discussion of State Historical Society Grant Application

Mr. Bernstein discussed the potential to apply for a Wisconsin State Historical Society Grant. This could help the Commission pursue the recommendations of the Intensive Survey completed this summer regarding potentially eligible National Register properties. This could also focus on the potential Frost Woods historic district, although Mr. Bernstein shared that he thought this would be potentially challenging. At this point in the process a letter of intent is required, in advance of the full application. The letter can be vague, with specifics included in the application. Consensus from the Commission was that the City should submit a letter of intent, and that the specifics can be discussed at the October Landmarks Commission meeting.

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The following agenda items were tabled until the October 9th meeting of the Landmarks Commission.

C. Monona Mound Marker

- I. Discuss donation of old marker and stone to the Historic Blooming Grove Historic District
- II. Review position of new marker

D. Discussion of items for future agenda.

- I. Update on Springhaven Pagoda and Stone Bridge Park

Upcoming meetings

Upcoming meetings are scheduled for October 9, 2019 and November 13, 2019.

Adjournment

A motion by Ms. Holmquist, seconded by Ms. Weix, to adjourn carried. (6:00pm)

Submitted by,

Doug Plowman, City Planner