



Village of Plainfield
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION (HPC)
Record of Minutes

Date: September 13, 2007

Location: Village Hall

Chairman Lambert called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

Roll Call

Present: Commissioners Bortel, Bright, Carlman, O'Connell, Olsen, Smith, Wright and Chairman Lambert
Absent: Commissioner Spangler
Also present: Michael Garrigan-Village Planner; Sara Javoronok-Planner I; Village of Plainfield

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as submitted.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Wright asked that the minutes be amended to reflect a change of date for the Public Outreach Seminar from October 10 to October 20, 2007. **Commissioner Bortel made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Commissioner Smith seconded. The motion carried.**

Chair's Comments

The Plainfield Historic Preservation Commission was mentioned in the Urbana News Gazette this week. Their research on demolition ordinances led them to a copy of the Plainfield ordinance on line, which they downloaded and referenced in discussion at the Urbana Council meeting. This is an example of the opportunity we have to share ideas and learn from each other, and it's good that Plainfield is able to help others, just as others have helped us.

Commissioner's Comments

None

Five Minute Field Guide

The topic of discussion was Cubic Italianates; the second phase of Italianate structures, which came into popularity around 1875-1880. Chairman Lambert noted that there are approximately one half dozen of some variety of Cubic Italianates left in Plainfield. Showing a slide of the former Corbin residence on Division Street, he described it as being built around 1880 to 1885, and having all the

characteristic elements of the Italianate Cubic style: The mass is primarily a large cube, with a mansard type roof. There is usually a small incised porch into the reentrant corner of the one block, sometimes with bay windows, as a carryover from the Gothic Revival style. A one story service wing on the rear addition was also very typical.

Another example of this style in Plainfield is the old Spiker House, now commonly known as the USG Blakely House. This is a pure Cubic Italianate, without any wings. The house is on a raised foundation, with a grand staircase, which originally led to a small porch, typical of that style. During the time that he lived there, Blakely replaced this with the more contemporary porch. The building has bracketed eaves hidden under the aluminum, and there would have typically been a concealed gutter in the large, overhanging eaves. Sometimes you would see some sense of symmetry on the front of these buildings, such as paired windows, or as shown, a single window over the doorway.

These homes were usually built by the upper middle class, or wealthier members of society. They differ from the Italianate homes looked at previously, in that these have a much more formal, rigid style. The emphasis on verticality is the same though, with the longer proportions of windows, doors, and porches, etc., and is even accentuated by the iron cresting which appears on the roof line of the main house and of the bay windows.

As for colors of the period: While the Gothic Revival style was the first to introduce earth tones in America, the Italianate style leaned more toward vibrant colors: deep greens, golds, maroons; cocoa browns; and in the Chicago area, even such things as burnt oranges were carried over from the Gothic Revival style into this period. These colors created a deep, moody look, and made the houses appear very anchored to the ground; a very different look from the lighter houses of sixty years earlier.

Another example of the Cubic Italianate style is the Daley Thompson House on Lockport Street. It is a smaller version of the same cubic form shown previously, but on a very small, working class level, and it blends easily into the Queen Anne style (which will be discussed at a later meeting). It is fairly symmetrical, with a bay window that's been put to the front of the house, and a more elaborate roof line branching away from the mansard type of roof to a gable roof, with jerk and head details over the front gables. Victorian details begin creeping up into the gable ends with the shingle work, but the details around the exterior windows are identical to the early Cubic Italianate houses shown in the previous slides. With that, Chairman Lambert concluded his Five Minute Field Guide - a brief introduction to Cubic Italianates from about 1880 to 1895.

Public Comments

None

Staff Report

Ms. Javoronok reported that there were no new Landmark, or District applications received, but there was one Landmark pre-application meeting, for the 15326 S. Joliet Road residence. There were no new developments to report, and no new demolition permits were applied for or issued. Two new properties were added to the Demolition Watch List, otherwise it remains the same. Those new properties are: 1) 15130 S. Route 59, and 2) 23718 W. Lockport Street. The Urban Survey identifies them both as potential landmarks. With that, Ms. Javoronok concluded her report.

Commissioner Smith asked if the property at 606 (n/k/a 15106) Fox River Street should still be on the Demolition Watch List; whether it was still owned by the same people, or if it had been sold. Chairman Lambert said it was his understanding that this property was pending a sale, and still warranted being on the Watch List. Mr. Garrigan agreed. Commissioner Olsen asked if it would be appropriate for the Watch List to show more detail about each property, to help distinguish one property from another, at a glance. Chairman Lambert said it would, suggesting it might also be helpful to incorporate a thumbnail photograph of each property into the Watch List. Ms. Javoronok said she thought this could be easily done, as most have photos available through the Urban Survey.

Chairman Lambert gave some background as to why these potentially contributing properties came to be placed on the Demolition Watch List. Regarding the Route 59 site, there had been some inquiries to the office about its potential redevelopment. As for the Lockport Street site, there was rumor of a potential change of ownership. Based on the ideas and suggestions discussed, Chairman Lambert asked that in the future, staff include both a thumbnail photo and a brief reason as to why a property had been added to the Demolition Watch List.

Old Business

None

New Business

CASE: 1357-081007.HPC
Request: Landmark Designation; Rehabilitation Grant (Public Hearing)
Location: 14907 S. Bartlett Avenue, f/k/a 803 N. Bartlett Avenue
Applicant: Michelle Kelly and Heath Wright

Before proceeding with the public hearing, Chairman Lambert asked that it be noted for the record that Commissioner Wright had recused himself and left the room. He then invited a motion to open the public hearing. At 7:18 pm, Commissioner Bortel made a motion to enter into public hearing for Case # 1357-081007.HPC, which was seconded by Commissioner Olsen, and carried.

Chairman Lambert turned the hearing over to Sara Javoronok, who asked that the record reflect that the appropriate notice of this public hearing has been published, posted, and provided to adjacent property owners pursuant to state statute and local ordinance.

Ms. Javoronok reported that the applicants, Michelle Kelly and Heath Wright, are requesting landmark designation, and a rehabilitation grant for their property at 14907 S. Bartlett Avenue, located in the H.H. Evans Subdivision, at the northeast intersection of Bartlett Avenue and Amboy Street. The nomination is for the residence, not the non-contributing garage. The property is to be known as the Caton-Kelly Wright House.

Proceeding with the Landmark Application analysis, Ms. Javoronok summarized the property ownership history, from Albert R. and Alice E. Caton (the builders and first occupants of the residence) in 1890, through its present owners, Michelle Kelly and Heath Wright, who purchased the property in 1999. The period of significance for this property ranged from 1890 to 1942, and includes the first three owners: Albert and Alice Caton, Truman and Hannah Mason, and those directly related to Avery Lambert. There are a number of Queen Anne style residences in the village,

and this home is an excellent example of one, with its varied walls, the roof line, and the cutaway bay window. This home was identified in the 2006 Plainfield Historic Urbanized Core Survey as a contributing structure, and recommended for local landmark status. It was also marked as a contributing structure for potential local historic districts, and the national register of historic districts. The Survey also noted that this outstanding example of Queen Anne style had a high degree of integrity due to the renovation work that was done.

In accordance with the Historic Preservation article of the Zoning Ordinance (Article XV), Section 9-147, subsection (7), the Caton-Kelly Wright House is nominated for designation as a local landmark in the Village of Plainfield under the following criteria: (c) Is identified with a person who significantly contributed to the development of the community, (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, type, method of construction, or use of indigenous materials, (f) Embodies elements of design, detailing, materials, or craftsmanship that are of architectural significance, and (j) Is suitable for preservation or restoration.

Continuing her report with the Rehabilitation Grant analysis, Ms Javoronok stated that the applicants are seeking a grant for several areas of work, including: restoration of original details, the repair, stabilization and replacement of deteriorated elements, and continuing maintenance. The specific areas to be addressed include the shed dormer (front façade), crown & soffit, tuck pointing, painting, porch storm windows, and gutters. These proposed improvements meet the requirements of the rehabilitation grant, and would enhance the appearance of the structure. The total cost for this work is \$12,060, of which the applicants are requesting 50%, or \$6,030.

Concluding her report, Ms. Javoronok stated that staff would not be making a recommendation on the proposed landmark designation and rehabilitation grant application until the Historic Preservation Commission has had an opportunity to review the information and findings in the staff's report. On that basis, staff is seeking a recommendation from the HPC on the requested landmark designation and rehabilitation grant application for 14907 S. Bartlett Avenue.

Chairman Lambert asked if the applicant was present and would like to make any public comments. Applicant Michelle Anne Kelly stepped to the podium, stating first that she wanted to thank the staff for all the time and effort they provided in assisting with the application process. She went on to say that they have fallen in love with the house over the past eight years that they have lived there, and that she really enjoyed doing the research on the history of the house. The neatest thing about it was to find out that everyone else (she talked to) who lived there, felt the same way.

Chairman Lambert then opened the floor to members of the public who wished to speak. Stepping forward was Merle A. Hayward of 14915 S. (f/k/a 733) Bartlett Avenue. Mr. Hayward stated that he and his wife June have lived as neighbors of the house at 14907 S. Bartlett for 49 years, and really enjoy the outstanding work that's being done on it. He said that it has certainly improved the house, and brought it back to its original architecture; that he and his wife wanted to be present to let the Historic Preservation Commission know that they support Michelle Kelly and Heath Wright's work on this project, and the HPC's recommendation for approval of the rehabilitation grant.

Chairman Lambert then opened the floor for questions. Commissioner Smith asked why the period of significance for the property ends at 1942. Michelle Kelly explained that this was because the

Lambert's had both passed away by this time. Avery died in 1939, after which Vera transferred the house to herself and her sister Vivian. When Vera died in 1942, Vivian retained ownership, but rented the home out. Bruce McMullin, first cousin to Vera and Vivian, moved into the residence in 1945, and Vivian transferred the property to him in 1959.

Discussion regarding the criteria used in the nomination of the home for landmark status followed. Regarding criterion (c): *Is identified with a person who significantly contributed to the development of the community*), Chairman Lambert commented that he thought it would be a worthwhile to add a short paragraph identifying real estate speculator and land developer (Senator) H.H. Evans from Aurora as one of these significant persons. He developed the subdivision the subject property is in. He always had six or seven subdivisions he was developing, and was instrumental in establishing Riverview Park in Montgomery, which is akin to our Electric Park. He was very involved with the railroads and the streetcars as well. This may be the only house that dates back to the 1886-1890 period in a subdivision he developed.

As the general discussion of the remaining criteria continued, Chairman Lambert verified consensus of the HPC that each criterion was met and satisfied, and that the home was suitable for preservation. He then asked what the position of staff was on the landmark application status. Ms. Javoronok stated that it is the staff's belief that the subject property does qualify for landmark designation under the four criteria suggested.

Chairman Lambert then turned to the subject of the rehabilitation grant application, suggesting that the Commission begin with discussion, and defer to the scoring sheet tool if points of concern arise. He asked if there were any questions, comments or concerns regarding the work proposed to be done, or the bid estimates submitted. Commissioner Smith wanted to know if galvanized gutters were typical of the time period. Chairman Lambert confirmed this, then summarized the overall project, stating that the grant is designed to cover some dormer reconstruction work - epoxy work to repair some of the original trim; soffit and crown work to match the historic profile of the house; painting of the entire west portion of the house from the addition forward, all four sides of the historic two story portion of the house, and the horizontal board above the limestone foundation; tuck pointing of the entire foundation of the historic home; restoring and renovating the porch storm windows; and installing the half round gutters.

Commissioner Carlman asked if the porch was original, noting that in comparison to the photos of the original building, the current porch seems to have been moved slightly to the right. Michelle Kelly explained that the porch had to be replaced because it was crumbling. The current porch windows are newer, vinyl plastic and the goal is to replace them with ones that look like they belong with the house. When asked by Commissioner O'Connell if the windows were situated in an area of the house that is original, or part of the later addition to the back of the kitchen, Ms. Kelly said that about half of the existing porch rests over the original structure and half does not.

Chairman Lambert asked if there were any other concerns or questions about the rehabilitation grant. Commissioner Carlman commented that he had no problem with the funding of the porch windows. Commissioner Smith said she thought it was important to make mention of the specific type of material being used per the type of project, so that when the application is being reviewed, it will be easier to determine if the material is appropriate to the historic period. Ms. Javoronok made note of

this for future reference. Regarding the tuck pointing, Commissioner Carlman suggested that the contractor should find the most well preserved section of the original work that was done, and duplicate the technique. Michelle Kelly affirmed that this was their intention.

Chairman Lambert asked staff how many months the applicants would have to complete the work, and what staff's position on the rehabilitation grant was. Ms. Javoronok stated that the applicant would have one year to complete the work, and that it was staff's belief that the subject property does qualify for the rehabilitation grant. Upon hearing no further comments or questions on the rehabilitation grant portion of the request, Chairman Lambert asked for a motion to close the public hearing. **At 7:58 p.m., Commissioner Bortel made a motion to close the public hearing. Commissioner Carlman seconded. The motion carried.**

With the public hearing for the Caton-Kelly Wright House completed, Chairman Lambert invited a motion from the Commission on the Landmark application request. **At 8:00 p.m., Commissioner Carlman made a motion to recommend to the Village Board that the home located at 14907 S. Bartlett Avenue be designated a historical landmark in the Village of Plainfield, qualifying under criterion c, d, f, and j, and that (Senator) H.H. Evans should be included as a significant person relative to the history of this home (under criterion c). Commissioner Bortel seconded. The motion carried.**

At 8:02 p.m., Commissioner Bortel made a motion to recommend to the Village Board that a rehabilitation grant for the home located at 14907 S. Bartlett Avenue be approved in the amount of \$6,030. (50% of the total rehab cost of \$12060.), to be reimbursed upon completion of the work. Commissioner O'Connell seconded. The motion carried.

Chairman Lambert noted that both recommendations will be moving forward to be heard at the next Village Board meeting on Monday, October 1st, 2007. He thanked the applicants for putting together and submitting the applications; potentially adding one more landmark to the community.

Historic Preservation Brochure

There was discussion regarding the design and layout of three different versions of the (first ever) HPC Brochure, which were drafted by Ms. Javoronok. By consensus, the second version, with the Garamond typeface on the cover, was selected. The picture of the Ottawa Street house will be re-photographed and replaced before going to final print and distribution of the brochure. Discussion continued with regard to costs, and best methods of printing and distribution of the brochure. It was decided that this discussion would be continued in depth at the next subcommittee meeting. Staff was commended for an outstanding job done on the brochure.

Subcommittee Reports

Landmarks & District Designation (LDDC): Commissioner Bortel reported that the LDDC met on Thursday, September 6th, 2007 at 5:30 pm., and discussed plans for the small-group homeowner meetings regarding the creation of historic districts. Commissioner Olsen and he are planning to host some of these meetings, concentrating first on the Bartlett, Center, and Lockport Street areas - possibly sometime in late September or early October. He further reported that he made a presentation on Historic Preservation in August to residents who came to Alley Fest, and there seemed to be some genuine interest. With the landmarking of this house on Bartlett, and hopefully

more to follow soon, the possibility of having a historic district by the Preservation Month in 2008 (May) looks like a possibility.

Committee Reports

Lockport Streetscape: Commissioner O'Connell gave a brief overview of the recent Lockport Streetscape meeting she attended. The plan is to have the least impact on the downtown as possible, including maintaining traffic flow in one direction at all times as the work is being done. All of the work is projected to be done by October of 2008.

Chairman Lambert commented that the HPC will also be asked to offer their input as to some of the design elements, etc., as this project progresses.

Discussion

Storm Procedures: Ms. Javoronok gave her direct contact information to all present, and asked that they contact her or leave a voicemail message in the event that they are unable to attend, due to problems such as the weather. This will help in determining ahead of time if there will be a quorum or not. Chairman Lambert also noted that if the siren goes off, people should seek shelter in the basement.

At 8:35 p.m. Commissioner Bortel made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Commissioner O'Connell. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna Ryan
-Recording Secretary