



Village of Plainfield
Historic Preservation Commission
Record of Minutes

Date: October 14, 2010

Location: Village Hall

CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, PLEDGE

Chairman Bortel called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. Roll call was taken; Commissioners Allen, Bright, Olsen, Spangler, Feagans, and Chairman Bortel were present. Commissioners Wright and Derrick were absent. Michael Garrigan –Village Planner; was also present.

Chairman Bortel led the pledge to the flag.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Spangler moved to approve the Agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Olsen.
Voice vote: All in favor. 0 – opposed 2-absent. Motion carried 6-0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Olsen made motion to approve the minutes from August 12, 2010 as presented. Commissioner Allen seconded the motion. All in favor. 0 – opposed 2-absent. Motion carried 6-0

Village Clerk Michelle Gibas swore in Commissioner Joshua Feagans.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS:

Chairman Bortel thanked Heath Wright for his assistance over the years. Mr. Wright asked not to be reappointed as a commissioner.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS:

None

PUBLIC COMMENT: (Items not on the Agenda)

No one approached the microphone.

STAFF REPORT

Mr. Garrigan stated there have been no new applications for landmarks or districts; there have been no pre-application meetings; and there are no new demolition permits. The preservation watch list basically remains the same with two caveats, first - the Weinhold property (the barn and buildings on the southwest side of 127th Street and Naperville Road) should be added;

second - a site plan for construction of a second floor on the existing structure of the property commonly known as 24108 W. Lockport (f/k/a 609 W. Lockport St.) has been submitted along with a major exterior alteration to the building. This property was previously the Village Jail/Police Dept. The HPC has no jurisdiction over the review of the subject property as it is not a protected building. Staff will be working with the applicant.

Chairman Bortel stated that the applicant could follow the same path as that of the Clock Tower Opera House Building if he would locally landmark it and apply for National Register because the building is historically important and it is also a stand alone building in the downtown. The owner could apply for tax credit if it was locally landmarked and on the National Register but then he might not be able to add the second story.

Mr. Garrigan stated Staff would work with the applicant with regard to the actual removal of the brick and whether this is the original brick.

Commissioner Olsen asked if the applicant has applied for façade grant money. Mr. Garrigan stated not as of this date.

Chairman Bortel mentioned the plan shows cars parked next to his building and he was not sure this was part of the applicant's property.

NEW BUSINESS EXISTING BUILDING CODES

Mr. Garrigan stated the "Existing Building Code" contains policies that would be sensitive to existing and historical structures. There have been discussions about adopting the "Existing Building Code." Many communities have adopted this building code naming a few as being Galena, St. Charles and Batavia.

Chairman Bortel asked if there was a cutoff on the age of a building that would allow the owner to use this code instead of the current code. Mr. Garrigan indicated he thought there was a threshold. Chairman Bortel stated this had been brought up on the last LDDC meeting.

The house the commissioners would like to see preserved is a balloon frame house as opposed to the current type of construction. Commissioner Spangler said this type of construction is a more substantial form of construction especially with the partition walls. With balloon framing you have a wall cavity that goes all the way from the top of your foundation up to the attic. In current building codes, typically if you open up a wall you have to go back and fire stop those. The good thing is you get the fire stop protection, the down side is you are eliminating the natural ventilation to the building which is one of the things that has kept this structure standing like it is for 100 years.

Commissioner Olsen asked if code is a green standard. Commissioner Olsen thought it was safer for the village to adopt this code. Commissioner Spangler stated restoration is a kind of green initiative. The biggest changes with the building code now are ADA requirements in commercial buildings.

Mr. Garrigan said this would be a public hearing and we would publish before going to the Village Board as it would be a text amendment. If there is support from the HPC Mr. Garrigan would draft the text amendment.

Chairman Bortel thought it made sense to proceed. Chairman Bortel asked if there was anyone on the commission that was opposed to the adoption of the "Existing Building Code." All commissioners agreed to proceed.

OLD BUSINESS: CORBIN – ROUTE 30 HOUSE

Chairman Bortel stated the area of Route 59 and Route 30 has substantially changed with the reconstruction of Route 59. The commission had until October 31st to prepare a Community Impact Study. The Study was not completed because the current owners would not agree to give the Village or HPC a letter of consent so that we could follow through with asking for a grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation to fund 50% of the cost of a commercial appraisal of the property and an architectural appraisal survey of the 1843 house. Enclosed in your packet was a second proposal for this property. The Village would agree to pay for the removal of the 2 story house and the garage that is east of the 1843 house if the owners would agree to remove the debris and restore the site by filling in the hole and seeding it.

Commissioner Spangler asked what benefit the Village would receive from this action.

Chairman Bortel indicated the 2 story house is considered an eyesore. The current owners would like to have both properties demolished to make it easier to facilitate the sale of the land.

Commissioner Spangler asked about the need for a site plan prior to removal of the second property. Mr. Garrigan indicated that is part of the demolition process. The Village Board has the prerogative to ask for a site plan or conceptual plan and the demolition ordinance requires submission of a site plan. Initially the Village Board supported the Community Impact Study. The consensus of the board is the boarded up house needs to come down. The issue is the second house. The applicant has identified they have no concept plan; no immediate plans; and no prospect to develop this property.

Commissioner Spangler asked if we had policy in place to force them into demolishing the two story house.

Mr. Garrigan said there is a provision in the ordinance which allows the Village to proceed with requiring an applicant to proceed with demolition; if they do not there is a legal recourse that the Village has to either require them to basically proceed with demolition or allow the Village to proceed with a condemnation and demolition. That is a long drawn out legal process. It is our hope that the applicant would work with us to demolish the first house at a minimal expense to the Village or at the applicant's expense.

Commissioner Spangler would like to see the applicant show some kind of interest. If the applicant will not support any of this, why should the Village spend a dime?

Chairman Bortel said the HPC is amenable to the demolition of the first building and the Village would assist the applicant in this demolition. The taxes on the property will be considerably less now that the gas station is removed and would be even less if this structure was removed.

Mr. Garrigan said the only leverage the Village has is zoning if that the applicant would like to have this property as commercial use.

Mr. Garrigan said this proposal needs to go before the Village Board to give them an update.

Chairman Bortel said we have gone as far as we can without some response from the owner or direction from the Village Board.

Mr. Garrigan asked if all commissioners agreed if the building is not structurally sound that these discussions are moot.

Chairman Bortel said the village building inspector stated the building was not sound in October 2007. However it was later determined it has to be a licensed architect who makes that determination.

Mr. Garrigan suggested staff send a formal certified letter to the actual owner requesting either a written response or some type of action as it relates to the demolition of the first house.

Commissioner Olsen asked if they need to add sending a certified letter to the owner to this proposal.

Mr. Garrigan thought it might be better to send the letter before it goes to the Board.

Chairman Bortel thought it would be better for the Board to direct the sending of the certified letter.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

LDDC discussed the above items at their last meeting.

DISCUSSION:

Chairman Bortel has been reviewing applications for commissioners.

ADJOURN:

Commissioner Bright made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Olsen seconded the motion. Voice vote: All in favor. 0 - opposed. Motion carried

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p. m.

Respectfully submitted,
Merrilee Trotz - Recording Secretary