

City of Excelsior
Heritage Preservation Commission
Minutes
Tuesday, September 21, 2010

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Chair Sanders called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Bolles, Finch (arrived at 7:55 p.m.) Meyer, Mueller, Roden, Sanders

Also Present: City Planner Fuchs, Advisor Caron

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Heritage Preservation Commission Meeting of August 17, 2010

It was moved by Commissioner Roden, seconded by Commissioner Mueller, to approve the minutes as written. Approved unanimously.

b. Special Heritage Preservation Commission of August 30, 2010

It was moved by Commissioner Mueller, seconded by Commissioner Meyer, to approve the minutes as written. Approved unanimously.

3. CITIZEN REPORTS or COMMENTS

None.

4. MISCELLANEOUS/COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

a. Recent City Council Actions

Fuchs reported that Hennepin County Commissioner Jan Callison had updated the Council on the status of the new Excelsior Branch Library, and that a community meeting had been set for September 30 from 6:30-8:00 p.m. at the Southshore Community Center to establish a community advisory committee. It is anticipated that additional meetings of the committee with County representatives will be held in October, November, and December.

Bolles asked whether the City was planning to make sure that the County staff and its Library planners were aware of the City's current ordinances and design guidelines to make sure that the committee does not present a plan that does not meet City requirements. Fuchs stated that this information will be brought to the Library's attention, and that they would be encouraged to use the historic downtown fabric as inspiration. Roden volunteered to serve as the HPC's representative on the committee.

4. MISCELLANEOUS/COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

a. Recent City Council Actions – (Continued)

Fuchs stated that October 11 is the deadline for the public to submit expressions of interest in serving on the committee.

Fuchs also reported that general obligation bonds had been approved for the first phase of the pavement management program. The City is also still in discussions to purchase the Lyman property behind the new Library site.

5. NEW BUSINESS

a. Amendment to Site Alteration Permit for Exterior Alterations at 261 Water Street - Carolyn McMahon

Greg and Kay Carlson presented an amendment to the application to make alterations similar to what had been approved in August, but using new colors. They presented the proposed colors and materials. The tan color would be used to repaint the brick, the wood trim would be green, and the entrance door would be Garrison Red. The same tan on brick and green trim would also be used on the rear of the building. The applicants requested some latitude in how the colors are applied to the trim and door in the rear. The Commission indicated that City staff could approve changes administratively if the style for applying the paint colors was handled differently, but in a generally compatible manner.

It was moved by Commissioner Roden, seconded by Commissioner Meyer, to approve the amendment to the Site Alteration Permit as presented. Approved unanimously.

b. Site Alteration Permit for Signage at 21 Water Street -- Katie Westenberg, keiki b salon spa

Katie Westenberg presented the application. She proposed to install signage on the corner of the building above the existing Dunn Brothers sign. Staff indicated that all size and material standards in the sign ordinance had been met. The Commission discussed the proposed bright colors and determined that the signage as a whole was not incompatible with the historic district, especially for a non-contributing structure.

It was moved by Commissioner Mueller, seconded by Commissioner Bolles, to approve the Site Alteration Permit as presented. Approved unanimously.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Demolition by Neglect Ordinance

Fuchs reported that the City Attorney had not yet commented on the draft ordinance. Caron and Fuchs agreed to follow up.

It was moved by Roden, seconded by Mueller, to continue this item to the October 19, 2010 meeting. Approved unanimously.

7. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

a. 2010 Commission Goals and Objectives

Several commissioners discussed their attendance at the annual historic preservation conference in Winona. Sanders stated that there are considerable opportunities for grant money and that tax credits continue to be available for properties on the National Register. She suggested that the Commission may wish to look at some potential sites for National Register designation to obtain the maximum tax credit. Grants are also available from the State Legacy Fund. It appears that building reuse studies generally cost approximately \$10-15,000, but grant funding might be available.

Roden agreed to contact a Wisconsin professor in La Crosse he had met at the conference who may be able to date the Seifert house conclusively on a gratis basis. Sanders agreed to pursue additional information on the potential cost and timing of a reuse study.

Fuchs asked about the long-term plan for the Excelsior-Lake Minnetonka Historical Society (ELMHS) archives. Bolles stated that the Fruit Growers Building was explored as a potential site at one time, but the cost was prohibitive and the building no longer exists. The current Depot site is very affordable, but the lease is cancellable in 30 days. The ELMHS currently pays rent for the archives in the School Administration Building. The Society had also inquired about the possibility of obtaining space in the new library, but the County was not receptive.

Sanders, Roden, and Meyer agreed to work as a subcommittee to explore options for the Seifert house and report back to the Commission.

Jeffrey Bipes, who attended the meeting, introduced himself as a descendant of the Kerber family and current resident with an architectural and engineering background. He stated that he intended to apply for the open seat on the HPC.

Fuchs distributed materials from the SHPO conference, including the compatibility guidelines used in Chicago and Lanesboro.

7. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

a. 2010 Commission Goals and Objectives – (Continued)

Finch suggested that the Commission consider asking the City to improve the ambience of its properties and structures, including the brick building at the Public Works site, which has some interesting but deteriorating art deco features.

8. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Commissioner Mueller, seconded by Commissioner Meyer, to adjourn. Approved unanimously. Adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Finch
Secretary