

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

APPROVED

DATE: December 4, 2002

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

PLACE: Council Chambers, 400 South Vine Street, Urbana, Illinois 61801

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rich Cahill, Liz Cardman, Sharon Irish, Alice Novak, Art Zangerl

MEMBERS ABSENT: Bill Rose, Trent Shepard

STAFF PRESENT: Rob Kowalski, Planning Manager; Michaela Bell, Planner; Teri Andel, Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT: Knut Bauer, Norman Baxley, Gerald Brighton

1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Urbana Historic Preservation Commission Chair, Alice Novak, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared.

1. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Mr. Zangerl moved that the Historic Preservation Commission change the agenda so that Item #8: New Public Hearings came before Item #7: Old Business for this meeting. Ms. Irish seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

3. APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

Mr. Zangerl moved to approve the minutes as corrected. Ms. Irish seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as corrected by unanimous vote.

4. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

2003 Ten Most Endangered Historic Places

5. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

There was none.

6. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

7. NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS

HP-02-COA-02: Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness filed by Norman Baxley to allow the removal and replacement of double doors located at 120 West Main Street.

Michaela Bell, Planner, presented the staff report for this case. She began with a brief background by describing Busey's Hall/The Princess Theater and talking about the history of this historic landmark. She reviewed the proposed changes. Ms. Bell discussed the requirements for a Certificate of Appropriateness. She read the options of the Historic Preservation Commission and noted the staff recommendation, which was as follows:

Based on the findings outlined in the written staff report, and without the benefit of considering additional evidence that may be presented at the public hearing, staff recommended that the Historic Preservation Commission grant the proposed Certificate of Appropriateness as requested.

Ms. Novak asked Ms. Bell to clarify the conflicting information in the application regarding the drawing for the proposed replacement door. Ms. Bell noted that the fax from Arrow Glass replaces the original sketch drawing by Norman Baxley.

Norman Baxley, petitioner, briefed the Historic Preservation Commission on the proposal. He explained the history of Busey's Hall/The Princess Theater. He noted that the building was constructed in 1870. The original Busey's Hall was part of a three-story building. The building is now only two stories. In 1903, Gus Freeman, a local businessman, reconfigured this 3,200 square foot room at the top of the stairs (Busey's Hall). It has not been occupied since the 1960s. Knut Bauer has relocated the business, Central Illinois Aikikai into Busey's Hall. By doing so, they have allowed Mr. Baxley to almost complete the final phase of the redevelopment of the entire structure. Next, Mr. Baxley described Busey's Hall in great detail. The proposed doors would be the entryway for Mr. Knut. The only thing left to be redeveloped and brought up to code is the small second floor over Mirabelle Bakery.

Mr. Baxley noted that this was a nice development and would keep the theater building viable.

Ms. Irish stated that she has been inside, and it is a beautiful facility. Mr. Baxley added that he was pleased that the Central Illinois Aikikai could be in Downtown Urbana.

Mr. Zangerl commented that the drawing of the proposed doors submitted by Arrow Glass would look more like other doorways nearby than the original sketch drawing. He wondered if the reason for changing the doors was for code purposes. Mr. Baxley replied that there was a balance between what actually constitutes code. In the back of the auditorium, there is a three-foot door. The second stairway has three-foot clear doors at the top and the bottom and onto the side. These doors are two-foot six-inch double doors that swing out. Mr. Zangerl added that the issue was not that they were

double doors, but that each door was too narrow. Mr. Baxley stated that the two doors together constitute five-feet of clear opening. From a pure life safety standpoint, with a group of people coming down that flight of stairs, it would be a better means of egress to crash out through with panic hardware onto the street with two doors that open than one three-foot door.

Mr. Baxley addressed one other issue, which was that on some of the other commercial buildings, particularly the front facades have been altered. He noted that the facade on this building is a 1934 part modern brick facade, which is covering the original Italianite facade. When it comes to reviewing changes on commercial buildings (particularly on the first floor), the Historic Preservation Commission will not find many landmark buildings that will have historically accurate facades.

Mr. Zangerl commented that by maintaining the transparency of the doors would help be more consistent to the original doors. He noted that for the record, he would like to "X" out the sketch drawing originally submitted in the application. Ms. Bell responded that language accepting the final drawing submitted by Arrow Glass could be included in the motion.

Mr. Cahill inquired if a transom would be added above the proposed doors? Mr. Baxley replied that a full-light transom would be added.

Mr. Cahill asked if the multi-pane windows would remain? Mr. Baxley stated that those windows would come down. In order to maintain the consistency of the same type of enclosure, this will have the doors below and the same narrow style aluminum window above, which will be a full-light transom.

Ms. Novak asked for clarification regarding the soldier course flat arch across the top. Mr. Baxley responded that soldier course of bricks was setting on the flange of the lintel. Ms. Novak inquired as to whether the brick patterning would still remain? Mr. Baxley answered that was correct. Ms. Novak asked if the plain glass transom would have the same exact fenestration pattern as the French doors? Mr. Baxley said yes. The same opening goes from the two brick pilasters. Mr. Cahill questioned whether the pine looking header would be removed. Mr. Baxley answered that it would be removed, because it was just covering up the transition of the metal doorframe.

Ms. Novak commented that the view through the double glass doors would be the staircase. Mr. Baxley noted that the view would be of the five-foot wide staircase. He had designed and would love to be able to put nice chandelier behind the transom at some point. Mr. Cahill inquired as to how big the staircase landing was? Mr. Baxley replied that there would be about a foot of landing inside the door.

Mr. Baxley thanked the Historic Preservation Commission for their effort and time.

Mr. Zangerl moved to approve the requested Certificate of Appropriateness based on the plan laid out in Exhibit D, not in Exhibit A. Ms. Irish seconded the motion.

Mr. Zangerl felt that it should be clear that neither the existing doors or the existing transom are originals. The proposal was to replace both the door and the transom with larger, open glass, and

lights. He believed that the doors would match better with Mirabelle’s and the Cinema Art Café. He added that the transom would fit better with the open lights above the storefront at Mirabelle’s.

Mr. Cahill believed that the Commission should support this request. The existing doors are clearly the most inappropriate part of the entire façade.

The roll call was as follows:

Ms. Cardman	-	Yes	Ms. Irish	-	Yes
Ms. Novak	-	Yes	Mr. Zangerl	-	Yes
Mr. Cahill	-	Yes			

The motion was passed by unanimous vote.

8. OLD BUSINESS

Historic Preservation Fund Grant – Living with Historic Preservation Forum

Ms. Bell announced that the City of Urbana received a \$900 grant from the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHSA) to help implement our Historic Preservation program. This grant will help to fund our 2003 Historic Preservation Forum, a public education endeavor valued by IHSA as one of the top priorities in the fiscal year 2003.

Staff drafted a tentative title for this forum or educational event, which is “Living with Historic Preservation”. Staff drafted a tentative agenda as well, which they would like to discuss and have the Commission give their ideas and goals. Staff would like the Commission to help set a date for this event. Mr. Kowalski added that it would be helpful for the Commission to discuss what the goal of the forum would be. It would help staff understand what audience to target and advertise for.

After much discussion, the Historic Preservation Commission decided the following:

- Targeted Audience – people who may potentially be affected by designations and people who want to learn more about what it means to be designated and how historic programs work in other communities. The Historic Preservation Commission members stated that they would like to target the following people:
 - Homeowners who are skeptical about their properties becoming a historic designation.
 - Individuals that might be interested in making nominations.
 - West Urbana Neighborhood Association (WUNA), Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association (HEUNA), and United Citizens and Neighbors (UCAN).
 - Proposed West Main Street Historic District property owners.
 - All downtown businesses and property owners.
 - Relatively small and locally owned real estate companies.
 - Churches and their members.

- Goal of the forum
 - Focus on other communities where historic districts have been happening.
 - Focus on how the Urbana Zoning Ordinance is different and how the City deals with that.
 - Focus on what it means to be part of a historic designation.

- Time and Place of Forum
 - Saturday, April 12, 2003 in the early morning was their first choice.
 - Saturday, April 5, 2003 in the early morning was their second choice.
 - Staff will check on availability and seating of different locations, such as churches, high school, Civic Center, Park Inn, and Carle Forum. Staff will present results to the Commission at the next meeting.

- Guest Speaker Possibilities
 - Jill Doak, City Planner from Rock Island.
 - Rebecca Smith-Hoffman from Grand Rapids.
 - Someone from a community where they have an active review process for applications for Certificates of Appropriateness to set the stage for what his/her experiences have been in general.
 - Gary Anderson, architect in Rockford, to speak about how his neighborhood turned around after being designated a historic district in the late 1970s.
 - Ginny Gregory from Rockford.
 - Good idea to get a variety of representation to deal with misconceptions of historic designations; such as one staff person on how the regulation process works, two property owners, and a representative from the Preservation and Conservation Association (PACA).
 - Mike Ward, from the state office, to speak about the incentives offered to property owners through the State of Illinois to become part of a historic designation.

- Agenda
 - Allow Rebecca Smith-Hoffman approximately thirty minutes as key speaker.
 - Other guest speakers get approximately fifteen minutes each.
 - Allow Questions & Answers session.
 - Refreshments after the guest speakers' presentations.

- Other
 - Prepare a packet of information to send home with people who attend the forum, such as a copy of the Ordinance, fact summary sheet, or a question and answer brochure.

- Stress visual presentation by guest speakers, because too much talk and too technical information might lose some people's interest.
- Sponsorship will be IHPA and the City of Urbana.
- Benefits for guest speakers would be hotel accommodations to spend the night, mileage reimbursement, and provide dinner the night before.
- Emphasize that the guest speakers talk about the process of what they have been through in the span of their historic preservation programs, briefly tell when their ordinances were enacted and controversies they experienced, how many historic landmarks and districts, how many Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) applications they received, and how many COAs were approved.

9. NEW BUSINESS

There was none.

10. MONITORING OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Mr. Cahill heard rumors and talk of 605 and 611 West Green, which are across from the Ricker House, being developed into apartments. Since the Historic Preservation Commission monitors the Ricker House, then would they, as a Commission, have any say of what happens across the street? Mr. Kowalski's understanding was that there have been some plans that are being worked on for development at that location. Those plans have been in the works for years now. He did not know if anything had been submitted for review. Projects submitted for a review in a MOR Zoning District have to go through the Development Review Board, which is mostly an internal staff group.

Mr. Zangerl inquired as to what the status was of the reconfiguration of the MOR Zoning District. Mr. Kowalski replied that was something that Libby Tyler, Director of Community Development Services, had been working on. She has some solid ideas on how to make it more accommodating. There had not been too many projects proposed in the MOR Zoning District, since it was formulated. Some of the restrictions are severe as far as setbacks and floor areas. The size of many of the lots has made it really difficult to redevelop. This will go before the Plan Commission and the City Council as a text amendment.

Ms. Novak mentioned that PACA owns an easement on a nearby property in addition to the Ricker House as well. Mr. Cahill stated that the easement was for the Brighton House. According to the plan, easements for both 605 and 611 West Green Street would now be owned by PACA. About four years ago, when development at 611 West Green was proposed, the building was going to be built close to the sidewalk. Brighton (now Ross's) House next door was set way back on the property. It worked because the average of the next two lots were close to the street. 605 West Green will be used for parking, because it is a very small lot. 611 West Green is a corner lot, which creates double-setback problems. He noted that he has been watching since early September when someone mentioned that no cars were parked there and no lights were turned on.

Mr. Zangerl inquired about the Warm Air Research House. Mr. Cahill responded that it is in the final legal writing contract before the University of Illinois takes ownership. There is an occupant for this space. Ms. Novak added that the house would be restored.

11. STAFF REPORT

Ms. Bell reported on the following:

- ✓ Trip to Springfield. She learned about the Historical and Archaeological Resource Geographic Information System (HARGIS). IHPA had invited all of the Certified Local Government (CLG) staff persons to attend meetings to learn about HARGIS. It is a giant database that they are trying to get very comprehensive information on the historic landmarks in the State of Illinois and any other information about historic or architectural sites.
- ✓ 2003 Ten Most Endangered Historic Places – Request for Nominations. Ms. Bell noted that the applications are due to the Landmark Preservation Council of Illinois by Monday, January 20, 2003.

Mr. Kowalski reported on the following:

- ✓ The text amendments were approved by City Council without any changes to the Historic Preservation Commission's recommendations.

12. STUDY SESSION

There was none.

13. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were none.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Zangerl moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:19 p.m. Ms. Irish seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

Submitted,

Rob Kowalski, Secretary