

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

APPROVED

DATE: March 3, 2004

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rich Cahill, Scott Dossett, Alice Novak, Art Zangerl

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Bill Rose, Trent Shepard

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Steve Ross

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

Urbana Historic Preservation Commission Chair, Alice Novak, called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. The roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared.

2. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

There were none.

3. APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

Mr. Cahill moved to approve the minutes from February 4, 2004 as corrected. Mr. Dossett seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by unanimous vote as amended.

4. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

There were none.

5. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Steve Ross, of 609 West Green Street, made the following comments regarding the proposed guidelines for the MOR, Mixed Office Residential Zoning District.

- On Page 2, under *Purpose*, he felt that the word “additions” should be added to the first sentence. Additions are considered to be separate from remodels. Additions create new extensions of existing buildings, whereas remodels are done within the existing structures.
- On the *Patterns & Building Orientation* page, he suggested using the word “facing” in place of “aligned” under the first design guideline.
- On the *Patterns & Building Orientation* page, under the second design guideline, he suggested that it might be helpful whenever the word “complimentary” appeared to show a particular example. He felt that saying something was complimentary was being too broad.
- On the *Patterns & Building Orientation* page, he pointed out that the fourth design guideline was already covered by the Zoning Ordinance, and it would be superfluous to mention it in the Design Guidelines.
- On the *Patterns & Building Orientation* page, he felt that it would help to have examples for Design Guideline #5 as well.
- On the *Materials* page, under the first design guideline, he thought it might be helpful if a list of durable and long-lasting materials were included, as well as a list of materials that were not long lasting and durable.
- On the *Landscaping* page, under the first design guideline, he commented that since an owner would not have jurisdiction over the street trees, the statement was superfluous.
- In general, Mr. Ross felt it was helpful to have some examples of things that were good and also of some things that were bad.

6. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

7. OLD BUSINESS

(MOR) Mixed Office Residential Zoning District – Design Guidelines

Michaela Oktay, Senior Planner, presented the update of the proposed design guidelines for the MOR Zoning District. She pointed out the changes that staff made to the first draft after the previous meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission, which were as follows:

The “Façade Zone” – Staff reorganized the introduction paragraph to first define the Facade Zone. They also polished the graphics.

Patterns & Building Orientation – Staff tried to make the topic paragraph a little more clear and concise. They added an additional design guideline to this section regarding the use of architectural details and landscaping being able to help blend a new structure or building addition into the patterns on a block. Staff added some illustrations showing streetscape views of different homes.

Massing & Scale – Staff defined “massing” and “scale” in the topic paragraph. They also tightened the language and the design guidelines. They removed a provision responding to setbacks because it was mentioned in another topic area.

Openings – Staff defined “openings”. They made some changes to the annotations for the graphics and reorganized some of the design guidelines.

Balconies, Porches & Patios – Staff defined “porches”, “balconies” and “patios”. In the first draft, there was some confusion as to the difference between the three. Staff wanted to make that as clear as possible. They added some additional illustrations showing examples of patio areas that would not be recommended and an illustration showing an example of a porch that would be recommended.

Mr. Dossett questioned if the City was working towards making the design guidelines and the Zoning Ordinance agree or be unified? Ms. Oktay explained that the City Council added Section XI-12.J to the text of the MOR Zoning Ordinance to use as a stopgap while staff worked on creating the Design Guidelines. Hopefully, the Design Guidelines would incorporate some of the ideas in Section XI-12.J, but essentially the Design Guidelines would be the final product and replace Section XI-12.J. Staff would need to present a text amendment to the MOR Zoning Ordinance to the Plan Commission and the City Council and get their approval in order to officially replace Section XI-12.J.

Materials – Staff made a lot of changes to this section. They added more swatches of the different exterior materials and took out the vinyl siding example. They expanded the introductory paragraph to address the materials used in the MOR Zoning District being diverse and to address the importance of the exterior materials being used to be both aesthetically pleasing and durable. She mentioned that the design guidelines for this section were new.

Mr. Cahill mentioned that roof shingles might be as important to address in this section. The choice of shingles on a roof could make a major difference of the view of a building. He also suggested that “long-lasting” should be defined as 50 years. Mr. Zangerl commented that wood was extremely durable depending on whether it was treated or painted.

Parking – Ms. Oktay noted that staff reorganized the design guidelines for this section and added some illustrations of parking on stilts, which were not recommended, and some illustrations showing a recommended example of a rear-loaded garage. Mr. Kowalski added that there was a lot of discussion about parking at the City Council level when staff presented the text amendment to the MOR Zoning District. Currently, parking underneath of a structure was prohibited. Staff had proposed in the text amendment to allow this, although there was a lot of concern that it would result in a lot of buildings on stilts. There was much discussion on how it might be okay if it were designed appropriately. It was really hard to get through the discussion without having some kind of visual of how it could work. To allow underground parking, staff would need to present a text amendment that would allow it.

Landscaping – Ms. Oktay mentioned that this was a new section. She had talked with the City Arborist, Mike Brunk, to get his input for some possible guidelines and best practices. The introductory paragraph spoke about landscaping being very important and spoke to the preservation of mature trees.

In general, Chair Novak felt that to the highest degree possible, all of the examples throughout the Design Guidelines should be MOR Zoning District examples.

Commercial Site Design – Ms. Oktay pointed out that this was a new section to the draft. This section spoke to the goal of commercial site design and to new commercial structures and adaptive reuse of existing structures.

Chair Novak asked if the “Purpose” was taken from the Zoning Ordinance? Ms. Oktay replied that was correct. Most of the text in the Design Guidelines had been taken straight from the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Zangerl added that if the Historic Preservation suggested a change to the wording in the Design Guidelines, then staff could request a text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance as well. He advised staff to ensure that the text in the Design Guidelines was consistent with the Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Zangerl inquired what would happen if the Design Guidelines conflicted with the Sign Ordinance? Mr. Kowalski stated that because the plans would be reviewed by the Development Review Board, there would be some discretion. However, the Development Review Board would not have the discretion to make the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance more strict.

The Historic Preservation Commission recommended the following changes:

Title Page: change the title to read “A Guide for Developers, Property Owners & Citizens” and highlight the MOR Zoning District on the map. There were as many property owners as there were business owners. Ms. Oktay commented that staff would improve the front page for the final draft.

Purpose Statement (Page 2): change the word “remodels” to “rehabilitated”. This would include any kind of changes to existing structures, and it would also include additions as well. Ms. Oktay stated that staff would reword the entire sentence to clarify that it includes both residential and business development. Mr. Zangerl agreed that the language should be tightened up a little, because “remodeling” was a very broad term, and such things like replacing the windows might be misunderstood in regards to the level of review that would be required. Mr. Kowalski noted that MOR Zoning Ordinance specified what would need to be reviewed by the Development Review Board and what needed to be reviewed by the Zoning Administrator.

Building Code and Zoning Ordinances (Page 3): change the first sentence to read as such, “The requirements of the Urbana Building Safety Code and the Zoning Ordinances must be met in addition to the MOR Design Guidelines”.

(MOR) Mixed-Office Residential Background (Page 3): should say that there were demolitions at 508, 510 and 302 West Green Street prior to 2002. 611 West Green Street had been the only demolition in 2003. Although there were plans to demolish 605 and 701 West Green Street, the existing structures were still standing.

Patterns & Building Orientation: label the streets in the aerial illustration; add a sidewalk to the illustrations at the bottom; change the word “aligned” to “parallel” in the first design guideline; change the word “complimentary” to “consistent” in the second design guideline and change the

word “may” to “should” in the fifth design guideline. The Historic Preservation Commission also suggested adding the heading “Patterns” at the bottom with the fifth design guideline as the only guideline under “Patterns”.

Massing & Scale: change the word “may” to “should” in the fifth design guideline and add to the end of the bottom right bubble and to the third design guideline “on the primary façade”.

Openings: move the sixth design guideline to the “*Commercial Site Design*” section and change the wording “level of transparency” to say something about “display windows”. Chair Novak expressed concern about the “paned windows” or multi-light windows. She suggested adding something to encourage developers to use true divided light windows.

Balconies, Porches & Patios: clarify that porches have roofs in the introductory paragraph, remove the language “single family” in the first design guideline and include “patios” in the seventh design guideline. The Historic Preservation Commission discussed whether or not decks, patios or terraces should be allowed on the front facades. Mr. Kowalski mentioned that one of the safeguards was that the Development Review Board would review new construction.

Materials: There was a lot of discussion as to what types of roofing material should be allowed in the MOR Zoning District. Mr. Kowalski commented that it was never staff’s intent to dictate specific materials, so they tried to offer a menu of the different types of materials for siding that would be compatible. Staff could do the same thing for roofing materials. Hopefully, this would be a good guide for developers and property owners in the MOR Zoning District.

Parking Areas: spread information over two pages and change “must be delicately incorporated” in the introductory paragraph to “should be appropriately incorporated”.

Landscaping: The Historic Preservation Commission and City staff discussed whether the first design guideline was necessary. It was decided that since the City Arborist would no longer serve as a member of the Development Review Board, this design guideline might serve a function, and that it was important to stress the importance of trees in the right-of-ways being preserved. The Commission suggested that staff include mature trees on adjacent properties as well and change “street trees” to “trees in the parkway”. Mr. Zangerl added that something should be written into the Zoning Ordinance requiring permission from the City Arborist to remove trees be contingent upon the Development Review Board’s review in the MOR Zoning District.

Commercial Site Design: Mr. Dossett commented that when he reviewed all of the Design Guidelines, he did not consider every section that preceded the section titled “Commercial Site Design” to be crafted towards non-commercial development. Mr. Zangerl agreed and suggested that the introduction be reworded to say that essentially commercial development structures should take into consideration all of the Design Guidelines in addition to the site design plans specifically mentioned in the last section.

The Commission discussed the option of including language regarding parking, air conditioning units, and movement in and out of commercial structures. They also talked about the possibility of a developer buying up two or more lots and the size of a structure that could be built on those lots.

Mr. Kowalski noted that the size of the structure would be regulated by a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) standard, which is 7,500 square feet of a lot. Owning several adjoining lots would not permit a developer or property owner to be able to build a bigger building than allowed on a single lot. There could be two structures with the maximum square footage.

Mr. Kowalski commented that staff was still working on this section. They were looking for examples in other areas of small-scale, outdoor cafes that were in residential neighborhoods to see how they handle seating outside, parking, dumpster, etc.

General Comments: Mr. Cahill suggested that staff add a picture of 611 West Green Street to the maps and delete the picture for 302 West Elm Street, because it had been demolished.

8. NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

9. NEW BUSINESS

There was none.

10. MONITORING OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

There were none.

11. STAFF REPORT

There was none.

12. STUDY SESSION

There was none.

13. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Novak announced the following:

- Kappa Kappa Gamma Sorority House was listed in the National Register on February 25, 2004.
- The Lincoln Statute had not yet been listed; however, it should be officially listed soon.
- Planning Zoning Institute will be held on the University of Illinois Campus and sponsored by the Department of Urban and Regional Planning on March 4th and March 5th.
- On Friday, March 5th at noon, there would be a talk by Richard Florida at the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Zangerl moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 p.m. Mr. Dossett seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

Submitted,

Michaela Bell Oktay, Senior Planner