

**Bloomington Historic Preservation Commission Showers City Hall
McCloskey Room, Thursday July 11, 2019
Minutes**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order by **Jeff Goldin**, @ 5:00

II. ROLL CALL

Commissioners

John Saunders
Jeff Goldin
Chris Sturbaum
Deb Hutton
Sam DeSollar

Advisory

Duncan Campbell
Jenny Southern
Derek Richey

Absent

Lee Sandweiss
Susan Dyer
Leslie Abshier
Doug Bruce
Ernesto Casteneda

Staff

Conor Herterich, HAND
Eddie Wright, HAND
Phillippa Guthrie, Legal
Eric Sader, HAND
Angela Van Rooy, HAND

Guests

Rusty Peterson
Jim Rosenbarger
Steve Wyatt
Mara Lea Rosenbarger
Angie Ricketts
John Vitello
Karen Duffy
Stephen Borszcz
David Holdman
Diana Holdman

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. June 27, 2019 Minutes

John Saunders made a motion to approve June 27th, 2019 Minutes, **Deb Hutton** seconded.

Motion carried 4-0-1 (Yes-No-Abstain)

IV. CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS

Staff Review

A. COA 19-39

2421 N. Barbara Drive (Matlock Heights Historic District)

Petitioner: Glen & Heidi Darling

Replace window in master bath with glass block. Original decorative window framing will remain.

Conor Herterich gave presentation. See packet for details.

B. COA 19-41

1309 E. 2nd Street (Elm Heights Historic District)

Petitioner: John Simon

Install iron picket handrail on the right side of the steps going up to front porch.

Conor Herterich gave presentation. See packet for details.

Commission Review

A. COA 19-40

918 W. Howe Street (Greater Prospect Hill Historic District)

Petitioner: James Rosenbarger

Full demolition of the existing house structure.

Conor Herterich gave presentation. See packet for details.

Discussion ensued

Jim Rosenbarger noted the only threat to public safety is if someone gains entry to the home. The house has not been repaired properly over the years, rail road ties have been used as support. **Jim** also stated that the structure is not historically contributing to the neighborhood. He continued that the house has set for so long it is a negative to the neighborhood. Demolition is necessary for development in the neighborhood, and he looking to demolish and build something new. Which will encourage financial investment in the neighborhood.

Chris Sturbaum asked what the current foundation is. **Jim** stated piers and infilled, but it looks like stacked stones, and the floor joist are mostly rotted. The house has deteriorated to the point that the ceiling joists have bowed. **Chris** asked how this compares to other homes on the east side. **Jim** stated that there are no floors and the home has not been inhabited in years. **Jenny Southern** asked if there were and other notable structures on the property. **Jim** stated the garage is notable, repairable and will be maintained. **Deb Hutton** asked how long the current owners have owned the home and why they bought it. **Jim** stated they bought it about a year ago to build a new home on the lot for resale. The bought the home in its current condition. **Derek Richey** asked the previous owners the state of the home when they owned it. **Stephen Borszcz** stated

the home was in much the same condition, and they began repair to the home until they found the creosoted rail road ties. Their original plans were to renovate the home along with a neighboring property but the home needed too much work to renovate. **Duncan Campbell** asked about the Prospect Hill neighborhood thoughts on demolition. **Jeff Goldin** stated the neighborhood has no objection to removal of the home. **Duncan** questioned the neighborhood approval even though the home does not meet the neighborhood criteria for demolition.

Chris Sturbaum stated the home doesn't fit the neighborhood criteria for demolition, it's not threat to the public safety. He also stated that even if it is on piers the piers and beams could be repaired. The Commissioners would need to decide if they would rather see demolition of this house and a building of a new contributing house. Or if the house cannot be put to any economical beneficial use without demolition. **John Saunders** stated the floors could be replaced and house is savable, he doesn't see any bowing in the roof. **Jenny Southern** stated that the only contributing is in its current structure. **Derek Richey** stated this house is salvageable and is comparable to other homes BRI has restored. **Jim** stated that he has done historic renovations in the past and the question should be considered if restoration will improve the neighborhood. **Derek** clarified that the house is rated as contributing because it contributes to the surrounding historic structures. **Duncan Campbell** asked about comments from the neighborhood. **John Vitello** from the Prospect Hill neighborhood spoke on behalf of the neighborhood and stated that he has done repairs to homes like this one and yes it could be salvaged but it would be cost prohibitive. He has walked by this house and watched it sit empty for years, if he lived next to the house he would want to see something done. If Jim is willing to spend some money, build something that fits in the neighborhood and get rid of this home then **John** wished him God speed. **Stephen Borszcz**, stated that they had plans to renovate the home, but when they began the project they just didn't have the money to complete the renovations properly. They were thrilled to see that something is being done with this house, not just because they are the former owners, but because they live in the neighborhood. **Duncan Campbell** stated that they are not to demolish a house because of demolition by neglect, and this fits the criteria for demolition by neglect. The structure cannot be put to any economical use, which could be argued, and this is a hardship clause. There is a procedure to claim the hardship clause. But this petitioner has always worked with the commission and he is confident that the petitioner will bring back a compatible contributing structure. But this home could be saved, **Duncan** has seen structures in this condition have been saved in the past. But the criteria for demolition of this structure is not being met. **John Vitello** stated that the home is a blight and could be keeping people away from the neighborhood. **Sam DeSollar** echoed the previous comments and he has respect for the people involved with the project, but it will take a lot of money to renovate this home. **Sam** asked **Phillippa Guthrie** for a definition of the hardship clause as it applies to this house. **Phillippa** stated that she would have to look into that and couldn't give an answer right away. **Sam** also asked **Phillippa** about Point 3 in the Greater Prospect Hill Design Guidelines on demolition "Demolition is necessary to allow development". He wanted to know what is meant by the word "development" in that context. **Phillippa** answered that normally that kind of phrasing means you are looking to demolish something so you can build something that brings greater economic value to the area. She gave an example of demolishing an office building in order to build an apartment building. **Sam DeSollar** stated that this is an opportunity that he will have trouble voting for. Several people made comments on their interpretation of Point 3. **Conor** stated concerns that small children could enter the home the way it sits. He also stated the commissioners should consider the future implications if the COA is denied. **Duncan Campbell** stated that he has renovated many similar houses and gave an overview of the home's construction and his method of restoration stating that it is possible to do but it is complicated, messy, and as bad as it gets without falling down. **Rusty Peterson** stated that he understands what the commission is doing but he feels like remodeling will be as expensive if not more

expensive that building new, and remodeling could result in an inferior structure. **Jeff Goldin** stated that Prospect Hill is only a historic district because they were forced to, but guide lines were put in place to preserve the feel of the neighborhood and to stimulate growth. He could argue the economic benefit to the neighborhood, but he too doesn't feel like that this structure meets the guidelines for demolition. **Jeff** does feel like Jim will build a good replacement, but he doesn't feel like Jim bought this house to utilize it for demolition by neglect. Lastly, **Jeff** feels like the time and cost to save this house would be longer and more expensive than building a new home. Jeff stated that he is in favor of approving the demolition. **Philippa** stated that she doesn't think that when people are developing these guidelines they intend to bring the legal interpretation in there and that people are not doing that. **Duncan Campbell** replied that he advises design guideline committees to use case language and that if the language in the Greater Prospect Hill design guidelines is an accident then it is a very verbatim accident. **Jenny Southern** asked the Commission that if you make the person replace everything on the house down to the frame then what are you really saving? She does not think this is demolition by neglect and that it doesn't bother her in that thought to tear the house down. She said the district needed to tweak their guidelines, although it won't happen fast. **Derek Richey** stated that it does make a difference that this is not a demolition by neglect case. **Chris Sturbaum** added that the historic form and style is the most appropriate for the district, not new construction. **Mara Rosenbarger** made her case in support of demolition and stated her support for the process and in historic preservation. **Chris** stated that the Commission needs to be careful not to set a precedent with this demolition. **Jeff Goldin** stated that he believes they would not be setting a precedent and that in fact approval of the demolition would be based on Point 4 in the Greater Prospect Hill Design Guidelines. **Sam** wanted to know if this could be continued to give the petitioner a chance to get the building condemned. **Conor** stated that the COA should be denied because of the 30 day rule that states the HPC must make a motion on a COA within 30 days or it will be automatically approved. After further discussion the Commission decided that was not an option and to make a motion.

John Saunders made a motion to deny COA 19-40, **Chris Sturbaum** seconded.
Motion failed 2-2-1 (Yes-No-Abstain).

More discussion ensued about how to continue.

Sam DeSollar made a motion to approve COA 19-40, **Jeff Goldin** seconded.
Motion carried 3-2-0.

Chris Sturbaum asked what has to be left to make it worth fixing, and he says the idea of the house. He believes Jim is the most apt person to respect the idea of the house. **Deb Hutton** reminded the Commissioners that they need to use caution when basing their findings on the fact that they personally know the petitioner.

V. DEMOLITION DELAY

VI. NEW BUSINESS

VII. OLD BUSINESS

Demo-Delay 19-09
523 W. 7th Street
Petitioner: David Holdman
Full demolition of home.

Conor Herterich gave presentation. See packet for details.

Discussion ensued

Conor Herterich noted the date of the delay period. **Jeff Goldin** stated the house is in poor condition but the front is still intact, in good shape and distinctive. **Chris Sturbaum** stated that the house has a contemporary right next door. He doesn't know how they could save only half of the house. **Conor** reminded that this is demo delay, and the options are to approve or designate. **Duncan Campbell** stated that this home might not meet the criteria for inclusion in the Fairview historic district, but **Duncan** encouraged local designation of the house. **Diana Holdman** stated that the home has been in the family for many years and they appear before the Commission with a heavy heart due to the demolition of the house. The house is not on a foundation, there is not a crawl space and the house does not have good bones so lifting the house and adding a foundation will cost more than building a new house. **David Holdman** stated that if her were to follow the Commissioner's suggestions of preserving the front and rebuilding the rear of the structure then he has to pay double the cost and that this should be considered economic hardship. The petitioners gave an example of the house they are planning to build. **John Saunders** stated they need to save the front two sections of the house regardless of the cost. John also had concerns that the house they are planning to build doesn't fit with other homes in the neighborhood. **Conor Herterich** asked the commissioners to focus their comments on the house to be demolished as they do not have purview over new construction. **Deb Hutton** stated that 523 W. 7th and the house next door are a pair. **Conor Herterich** used Google Maps to show the Commission the surrounding buildings in order to gain contextual understanding of the architectural character of the area.

Jenny Southern asked of the front façade was a one of a kind. **Derek Richey** stated that it is a one of a kind which is why Henry Glassie noted it in his lectures about vernacular architecture in Bloomington.

Chris Sturbaum stated that their job is to decide if it is to be demolished or not just on the merits of the home. Petitioners asked for clarification on designation. **Conor** gave a brief discussion, and time line of local designation.

Deb Hutton made a motion to start formal review of the property at 523 W 7th St for recommendation for local historic designation, **John Saunders** seconded.
Motion carried 5-0-0.

VIII. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

IX. PUBLIC COMMENTS

X. ANNOUNCEMENTS

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned by **Jeff Goldin** @ 6:52 pm.

END OF MINUTES