

Bloomington Historic Preservation Commission

Thursday July 23, 2020

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order by **John Saunders**, @ 5:00 pm.

II. ROLL CALL

Commissioners

John Saunders
Jeff Goldin
Sam DeSollar
Deb Hutton
Susan Dyer
Chris Sturbaum

Advisory

Derek Richey
Jenny Southern
Ernesto Casteneda

Absent

Lee Sandweiss
Duncan Campbell
Doug Bruce

Staff

Conor Herterich, HAND
Eddie Wright, HAND
Dee Wills, HAND
Eric Sader, HAND
Philippa Guthrie, Legal
J.D. Boruff, City of Bloomington

Guests

Osamu Nakagawa
Aviva Orenstein
Danielle Thompson
Janice Sorby
Keegan Gulick
John Crane
Steve Redick

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. June 23, 2020 Minutes

Deb Hutton made a motion to approve June 23rd, 2020 minutes.
Sam DeSollar seconded.
Motion carried 5-0-1 (Yes-No-Abstain)

IV. CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS

Staff Review

A. COA 20-24

122 W. 6th Street (Courthouse Square Historic District)

Petitioner: Eric Harris

Replacement of storefront windows with insulated glass. Removal and replacement of old trim and fascia.

Conor Herterich gave presentation. See packet for details.

Discussion ensued.

Conor Herterich stated that most of the façade has been stripped away from the building. **Sam DeSollar** asked if the contractor could provide drawings for what is going back on the front of the building.

Commission Review

A. COA 20-23

2431 N. Barbara Dr. (Matlock Heights Historic District)

Petitioner: Sam DeSollar

Remove non original rear deck and roof. Replace with new wood deck and roof. Construct detached ADU building in backyard.

Conor Herterich gave presentation. See packet for details.

Discussion ensued.

Sam DeSollar gave brief explanation as to his plans on the site, further clarifying the presentation.

Deb Hutton asked about what is on the west side of the studio and the roof. **Sam DeSollar** explained it is a parapet roof with a slot to the downspout to allow the removal of water. **Deb** also asked for clarification as to what part of the project is considered an ADU. **Keegan Gulick** explained that they would only consider living space as the ADU.

Chris Sturbaum stated this this will be fine in the neighborhood, **Jeff Goldin** likes the project and it will be an improvement. **Deb Hutton** thinks Sam did a good job on the project, **Susan Dyer** agrees. **Chris** added that he would like to see more windows if the budget allows. **Jenny Southern** asked if the ADU structure could be turned 90 degrees to face Glendora St and the back of the house. **Sam** stated that due to what the owner does in the studio, sculpting, the

roof needs to be high and if it is turned the structure wouldn't hold the wall. Also the roof is placed where it is to achieve the most solar gain. **John Saunders** echoed the other Commissioners and likes the project and the placement of the structure on the property.

Jeff Goldin made a motion to approve **COA 20-23**.

Deb Hutton seconded.

Motion carried 5-0-1

B. COA 20-25

629 S. Woodlawn (Elm Heights Historic District)

Petitioner: Jon & Danielle Thompson

Remove barn door on north wall of detached garage and replace with solid wall and matching beveled wood siding.

Conor Herterich gave presentation. See packet for details.

Discussion ensued.

Chris Sturbaum asked about placement of the door, outlining of the door, or a second door. **Danielle Thompson** stated that there really wasn't a door there to begin with as there wouldn't be a way to get in the garage due to placement of the structure in reference to the alleyway. **John Saunders** clarified that this isn't the original door and it was added at a later date. This wasn't originally used as a garage but a shed. **Jenny Southern** suggested the trim on the structure matches the trim on the house.

Chris Sturbaum suggested the use of mock doors. **Jeff Goldin** agrees with **Chris** and feels like the structure will lose some flavor with just a plain wall. **Sam DeSollar** agrees with **Jenny** but he noted that the current trim doesn't match that of the house. He suggests stripping out the door and replacing with siding. **Ernesto Casteneda** and **Derek Richey** agree with the previous comments.

Sam DeSollar made a motion to approve **COA 20-25**.

Jeff Goldin seconded.

Motion carried 6-0-0

C. COA 20-21 (resubmission)

309 S. Davison Street (Greater Prospect Hill Historic District)

Petitioner: Aviva Orenstein

Full demolition of primary structure.

Conor Herterich gave presentation. See packet for details.

Discussion ensued.

Aviva Orenstein gave a brief presentation outlining the visible cracks in the foundation and that the foundation only goes 16 inches into the ground. She mentioned a study of the structure and foundation that was conducted by Kevin

Potter. **Steve Redick** joined the presentation and stated there are cracks in not only the mortar but also stone of the foundation. They also displayed pictures of the damage to the foundation and the poor workmanship both on the inside and outside of the foundation. There are several stones that have gaps where no mortar was used. They intend to salvage as much of the limestone as possible from the foundation. **Aviva** stated that she has spoken with the neighborhood and they do not have an attachment to this structure. If demolition is allowed she intends to build a structure that will fit in with the neighborhood. She noted that she is unable get insurance or a mortgage as this is considered an unsafe structure.

Chris Sturbaum stated that he has not visited the site but he asked if there are filled piers and he asked about the beams under the structure. **Steve Redick** stated that he dug under the corners of the building and along the building, the bottom stone was 16 inches below the grade but it didn't appear to be a stacked pier. **Jenny Southern** asked if the house is removed is there a way to keep the remaining parts such as the step or the walk. **Aviva Orenstein** stated that they will salvage as much as they can, and they will use the current walkway, **Steve** agreed. **Derek Richey** asked if there was anyone there from neighborhood or general public to make comments or ask questions or make comments, **Conor Herterich** stated that the public comments come after the Commissioners had made their comments.

Chris Sturbaum stated that there are a lot of foundations in the city that are not up to code nor will they be repaired. He continued that he is surprised at the shallowness of the foundation. **Steve Redick** asked how they might repair this foundation. **Chris** explained how that might be done, but he stated that he would not excavate the crawlspace. **Steve** explained that if they demolish the present structure they could rebuild with a full basement which would include a location for the utilities. **Chris** stated they must be careful they are not starting down a slippery slope of demolishing a healthy structure just because the foundation is in bad shape. But he would feel comfortable with the demolition if they are doing this due to conditions of this specific property, in most structures they would do a pointing job. **Conor Herterich** explained that the HPC reviews each submission on its own merit and they are not setting precedent. **Jeff Goldin** is conflicted on demolition but he understands that the foundation is in bad shape and he sees signs of settlement in the home. However, replacement of this structure with a similar structure is not the point of historic preservation. **Jeff** believes there are ways to finance restoration of the current structure. **Deb Hutton** agrees with the points discussed as well as the conflicts, she stated if they do allow demolition they should use as much of the old limestone foundation blocks as possible in the new foundation. **Sam DeSollar** stated that he lives in an older house similar to this one and it has light shining through the foundation. He feels like this house is salvageable but a lot of work will be needed. He is also looking at the greater good of this project and the fact that the neighborhood committee supports this project. Also, that the petitioner is willing to work within the guidelines is important. This house is in better shape than some other houses in the neighborhood, but after consideration he would support demolition. **Ernesto Casteneda** believes this house can be rescued and he has

seen houses in worse shape restored. He noted that the report stated how this house can be rescued and does not recommend demolition. It would be a shame if this was demolished. **John Saunders** stated that he has done houses on the west side and they have replaced full foundations and even put in a full basement. He would hate to see another home go away. **Chris** added that he has come up with an idea of how to add a basement and he does not feel like the foundation is bad enough for demolition. **Derek Richey** stated that it is contributing and the house defines the neighborhood. If the petitioner wants more room they can talk about adding on to the back later. Also, in the 50 years BRI has been doing houses they have seen and repaired worse, they cannot let this one go. **Jenny Southern** likes the house and it has a lot to offer, but she feels like they can add a storm shelter, bathrooms and a bed room at the back but it will take money, but the structure is in good shape for its age.

Janice Sorby stated that Steve Wyatt could not be there but she is there representing him, and she agrees with everything said about the condition of the house and that BRI has seen a lot worse. There were foundations a lot worse than this one, and whomever stated that lifting the house was needed for a new foundation told her wrong. The house is square even though it has been there for a long time. The roof is built for cedar shake and those are made to get wet and to shift. All houses in the neighborhood have this roof system. Kevin Potter has put piers in houses like this in the past. BRI's insurance company has stated that this house could be insured for \$440 a year and she would be happy to share this information. There are also loans available that are designed for refurbishing historic structures such as this one and stated two options for obtaining funds. So she sees no reason for the Commission to even consider demolition of this structure. She stated that BRI will do whatever is necessary to save this house. This structure adds to the fabric of the neighborhood. **Derek** added that he disagrees with point two of the staff recommendation that the structure is not unique or rare and questioned what that has to do with a contributing house. **Conor Herterich** clarified that he put that on there because the criteria for considering demolition of a contributing structure include whether it is unique or rare within the City of Bloomington. **Conor** also stated that they need to find a balance between historic preservation and what can be lived in. He also said that the commissioners need to look at public interest and public use, they shouldn't just save something because it's old. **Jeff Goldin** disagreed with **Conor** as this is a COA in a historic district and not demo delay. **Conor** asked if when a neighborhood becomes a historic district do you put a glass case over that neighborhood and no changes can ever be made. **Jeff** clarified that the vision is that the neighborhood grows, but they cannot just allow the careless destruction of historic structures. He used the analogy that if you begin to remove teeth then you lose the smile. Do they allow historic structures to be removed because restoration would be hard? **Conor** stated that the bar is can it be fixed. **Derek** clarified, can it reasonably be fixed, and this structure is within the framework of reasonable. **Chris Sturbaum** stated that the current structure can be preserved and a new structure added as well, it doesn't have to be one way or another. **Derek** stated that the Commission has been very flexible and allowed people to build on the rear of historic structures. **Aviva Orenstein** stated that the structure report didn't address the depth problem with the foundation. Also she

is hearing the emotion about the house and they should ask about the neighbors and the neighborhood, not just people devoted to historic housing, but the people want it demolished. She didn't buy this to demolish, she bought to renovate for about \$60,000 but she discovered that it would take a lot more than that to renovate this structure. The Commission should consider what the neighbors want and not just what BRI wants. She is cash flowing this and will not take a line on her mortgage, she will still fix up the home but it will take a lot longer than originally planned--five years as opposed to two years. But going forward people will be discouraged from fixing up a home because of how difficult this process is with the HPC. They will let these structures sit and rot in place. She is happy to hear about the insurance options and will look into this. **Ernesto** stated Kevin Potter's report was giving them a guideline to renovate the house as opposed to demolish. **Aviva** stated that she still feels like Kevin missed something crucial when compiling his report.

Chris Sturbaum made a motion to deny COA 20-21.

Jeff Goldin seconded.

It was noted prior to the vote that a yes vote was to deny the COA and a no was voting for demolition of the structure.

Motion carried 4-2-0

V. DEMOLITION DELAY

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Masonry Work to City Hall: JD Boruff

Conor Herterich explained that they did a test of sealant on the building but and the result was that the brick was slightly darker and beaded water well. **JD Boruff** explained that there were some structural issues and they replaced some steel window headers on the second floor. There are bricks that are spalling and it is because of water soaking in, freezing and thawing. So they are looking to apply a breathable sealant to the building to prevent this in the future. **John Saunders** asked why this is occurring now. **John Crane** the contracting engineer on the project, explained this is because of weathering. After a few years weathering takes a toll and the brick loses its shininess and the ability to repel moisture and then the brick becomes porous and allows the absorption of more water. This is common in older brick buildings. They must do something now before it gets worse because it just gets worse over time. **John Saunders** asked about putting a sealant on brick, the moisture getting behind the sealant, also when they might have to reapply. **John Crane** stated that they are looking to stop as much moisture as possible but if nothing is done it will get worse quickly and they may need to reapply again in 10 years. **Sam DeSollar** asked about why that side of the building. **JD** stated that it is because that side of the building gets more weathering, the south side gets all of the sunlight and the heating and cooling of the bricks. **Sam** asked about the same treatment on other sides of the building. **John Crane** does recommend that, but there are also problems that sealer does not fix. But he would leave that up for discussion. **Sam** asked about the tuck pointing and gutters on the other walls. **JD** stated that the guttering is good, there are some problems with the downspouts and they replace

those as needed. Tuck pointing is needed on a portion of the south side but they decided to do the whole south side. They are looking at a 25% tuck pointing on the east side. He cannot speak to the other sides of the building as those are controlled by other organizations and they do not access. Spalling is occurring on the east side but not as bad as on the south side, but it's due to the mortar deteriorating. They looked at the scoffer locations from the ground but didn't get a crane to get up close, but the cause is from the heating and cooling. **Chris Sturbaum** asked if humidity from the inside is transferring to the brick. Also would it make sense to do a test site? **John Crane** stated that the brick is porous and it will soak up moisture. However, if there is a good HVAC system then there is moisture removal and they are not seeing any moisture on the windows. **Jenny Southern** asked about going through another winter. John Crane stated it will just get worse. **John Crane** stated that freeze and thaw could lead to additional problems and he recommends sealing. **Chris** suggested doing a test sample of the sealant. **Conor** stated that a water sealant is only recommended when a specific problem is identified and not just a general application. **Conor** suggested that maybe a historic brick expert might be asked to consult on this issue and they should consider that before applying a sealant. It was determined that there is no real opposition from the Commission to putting sealant on the building.

B. 2020 National Alliance for Preservation Commissions FORUM: August 3-9

Conor Herterich stated that the forum will be virtual this year and the cost will be \$100 but there are scholarships available. He encouraged the commissioners and advisory to participate, and he will be streaming a few of the sessions here at city hall.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

VIII. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

IX. PUBLIC COMMENTS

X. ANNOUNCEMENTS

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned by **John Saunders** @ 7:18 pm.

END OF MINUTES

Video record of meeting available upon request.