



City of La Crosse, Wisconsin

City Hall
400 La Crosse Street
La Crosse, WI 54601

Meeting Minutes - Final

Heritage Preservation Commission

Thursday, August 17, 2017

6:00 PM

3rd Floor Conference Room

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:02pm.

Present: 6 - Charles Clemence, Terence R. Collins, Jessica Olson, Chris Kahlow, Daniel Manke, David Riel

Excused: 1 - Ariel Beaujot

Roll Call

Others Present: Beth Pischke, Rahn Pishke, Robert Pischke, Blake Winters, Tom Kieffer, Barbara Kooiman, George Italiano

Approval of Minutes

1. Approval of the July 20, 2017 Meeting Minutes.

Terry Collins moved to approve the minutes. Charles Clemence seconded. The motion passed 6-0.

2. Approval of the August 3, 2017 Special Meeting Minutes.

Charles Clemence moved to approve the minutes. Dan Manke seconded. The motion passed 6-0.

Agenda Items:

3. [17-1108](#)

Review Nomination of the Wenzel Schbuert Meat Market and residence, located at 520 3rd Street S, to be designated as a Local Historic Landmark.

Terry Collins moved to open a public hearing. Charles Clemence seconded. The motion passed 6-0. Barbara Kooiman, President of the Preservation Alliance of La Crosse (PAL) stated that she prepared the nomination on behalf of PAL and is a local architectural historian. She also stated that all of the information gathered was obtained from the Main Public Library Archives and the Murphy Library Archives. She then stated that she nominated the building under Criteria (3) in the Municipal Code for its architectural style and stated that the building is a good example of a vernacular style of commercial architecture from the late 19th Century and retains most of its distinguishing architectural features. The building was also nominated under Criteria (1) in the Municipal Code as it is an example of the economic history in La Crosse. Barb stated that this building represented the type of business where the family lived upstairs and operated their business below. The building has also demonstrated its adaptability to different types of businesses over its lifetime from a meat market to a bottling works to a motor manufacture and repair business before being purchased by Collins Outdoor Signs. Barbara finished by stating that it still appeared to be a solid building. PAL was approached to prepare and nominate the building in order to preserve the building and prevent it from becoming a surface parking lot, or at the very least, have a dialogue about the building and maybe identify alternatives.

Terry Collins asked Barbara Kooiman if there were other examples of this style in La Crosse. Barbara stated that there were some that had altered facades but were not exactly like this one. Charles Clemence asked if these types of buildings were less likely to be preserved. Barbara stated that they were. Chris Kahlow asked if this building would be contributing if it was in a National Register Historic District. Barbara stated that this building would be because it was still intact despite having several additions. David Riel asked if the building could moved. Barb said yes. Barbara stated that her assessment is based solely on exterior review and that she did not see any evidence of poor condition. She also stated that she was not an engineer though. Terry Collins asked if it would be possible to preserve just the facade in the future. Barbara stated that she didn't think it could because there were no buildings on either side to help support it.

George Italiano expressed his support for the nomination of the building.

Robert Pischke thanked the Commission and Barbara Kooiman for putting the effort into preparing the nomination. Has an appreciation for historic preservation as their family has been here since the 1920s. Robert expressed to the Commission that they were not trying to rush anything and have been thinking about the redevelopment of this site for a long time. He also stated that he did not feel that the nomination presented a strong case of historic significance to the history of La Crosse.

Rahn Pischke stated that he had acquired the property in June 2017 and that he supports what Barbara Kooiman and the Heritage Preservation Commission do. He stated that he loves La Crosse and has a growing business. There are many car dealerships in Downtown La Crosse and all have made a large investment in the City. Rahn stated that a challenge of keeping the building is its current condition. The foundation is falling apart from the inside. He also stated that he felt there were other examples of this style of architecture in the Downtown that includes the Burgermeister Building, Batavian Bank, and the John Reyfuss Building, all of which were better examples and better taken care of. This building stands by itself and is not part of the Downtown buildings. He stated that the building has plain sides with no windows and a

non-descript building located to the north. The site also includes two billboards which would also be removed from the site as part of the project. He then stated that he felt the use of the building as a meat market did not make it historic and that there were likely other meat markets in La Crosse's history. The building has been vacant for the past 15 years and is far from good condition. It is missing lintels. He then stated that if it was in the middle of the Downtown he could maybe see saving it but everything around has been torn down and there are other buildings like this in La Crosse. Terry Collins asked Rahn if he would demolish the building or move it. He stated that he would support moving it if other people pursued it. He has been approached by others to move it but was not sure if it was feasible. Terry Collins asked what his timetable was. Rahn stated that he did not have a timetable but did want to move forward and improve the site for the display of cars. He then stated that it was not an emergency to move forward. Willing to give time to explore moving the building if someone else is interested in doing it. Charles Clemence clarified that only if others would pursue it and not the owner. Rahn confirmed that he would not pursue the process of moving it. Chris Kahlow asked how many cars can he park where the original building is. Rahn stated that the value is also in the visibility of the site and not just parking spots. This includes access in and out off the 3rd Street. Access is currently next to the building which makes it tough for visibility and internal circulation. Chris Kahlow asked if Rahn saw no benefit to preserving the building for future offices for his business. Rahn stated that he did not have a need for an office on this site. It was also cost prohibitive, would far exceed what he would gain. Rahn also stated that the City had issued an Order to Correct for the building that included tuckpointing and deterioration of the foundation. Jessica Olson asked which part of the building the OTC pertained to. Rahn stated that it pertained to the original part of the building because that was in the worst shape. David Riel stated that he visited the site and confirmed the deterioration. He then stated that the Order to Correct addresses maintenance issues and does not agree that they are serious enough to warrant demolition, or to demolish the building because maintenance was not done. He then stated that the building seemed generally intact. Jessica Olson asked if the property was MLS listed prior to sale. Rahn stated it was not and that the property was privately sold as he had asked the previous owner about purchasing it about 2 years ago. Jessica Olson asked if he had obtained any estimates on what it would cost to fix up the building for use, maybe to display the history of the Pischke Family. Rahn stated that he had not. Jessica Olson asked if he would be willing to use what he would save in demolition and landfill costs to help move the building. Rahn stated that he would be open to compromise on that. Barbara Kooiman stated that only the front 2 sections of the building are original and that would be the only portion that would need to be moved. Terry Collins moved to close the public hearing. Charles Clemence seconded. The motion passed 6-0.

Jessica Olson asked if there were any potential vacant lots that the building may be moved to and asked staff if the designation ties the building to the parcel. Staff stated that designation does not tie the building to the parcel unless the Commission specifically states that as part of the designation. Staff also stated that they could not think of any suitable vacant lots at this time. Terry Collins asked staff about how soon the Commission had to act on the nomination. Staff stated that typically the City is required to act on applications within a certain time period but was unsure if that applied to nominations.

Chris Kahlow moved to approve the nomination under Criteria (3) Embody the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen, inherently valuable for a study of a period, style, method of construction, or of indigenous materials or craftsmanship and Criteria (1) Exemplify or reflect the broad cultural, political, economic or social history of the

nation, State or community. Dan Manke seconded. Terry Collins suggested that the Commission find a legally binding way to push off the designation and prevent the demolition so an alternative can be found. Charles Clemence stated that the owner was not looking for a Demolition Permit tomorrow. The Commission's role is to see if the nomination meets the standards. Designation of the building would not cut his options. Jessica Olson stated that designation could help with funding options. David Riel stated that Buzzard Billys was the only building on the block at the time it was rehabbed. It could be fixed and the historic flexibility it had with different businesses shows potential for today. Charles Clemence stated "Does it meet the standards?" He believes it does, This type of vernacular commercial building is not often saved because it is not an elaborate building but that does not mean it is not historic. He stated that he fixed a large crack in the foundation of his home. They can be repaired. The current owner may not be interested in it but others might be. Chris Kahlow read to the Commission the Purpose and Intent of the Commission from the Municipal Code. She then stated that this is the job of the Commission. The fact that the owner said he would save it if it was in the Downtown means it is historic. In this instance the location is not a factor. Does it meet the criteria? Chris stated she believed it did.

The motion passed 6-0.

4. [17-0771](#) Review of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the property located at 111-115 3rd Street S. (Downtown District)

Staff provided an update to the Commission. The applicant is in the process of obtaining additional quotes and applying to Downtown Mainstreet Inc's Facade Improvement Program. Staff requested that this item be referred for 30 days. Chris Kahlow moved to refer for 30 days. Terry Collins seconded. The motion passed 6-0.

5. Discussion and possible action on revising the text on future historic plaques.

David Riel proposed to the Commission to revise the wording on the historic plaques from Historic Site to Historic Landmark. David stated that this would be make the wording consistent with the Landmark Nomination Form and with the definition of site, landmark, and object as defined by the National Park Service. The revision to the text would only occur with new plaques. David Riel moved to approve the revision of the text on future plaques to read "Historic Landmark" instead of "Historic Site". Dan Manke seconded. The motion passed 6-0.

6. Update on Memorial Pool designs from the Heritage Preservation Commission liaison.

Chris Kahlow updated the Commission on the design of Memorial Pool. Chris Kahlow stated that the the first meeting was spent with the architects informing them of the preservation aspect and ordinance. The architects also informed the committee on its current status and the reason for having to bring the pool up to current code. Chris Kahlow stated that she feels that the HPC needs to hold the City to the same standards they would require of the public with designated buildings and sites. Chris stated that another meeting was in two weeks and would provide another update at the next meeting.

Staff 2017 Local History and Historic Preservation Conference
info

Staff informed the Commission of the 2017 Wisconsin Historical Society State Conference that will be held on October 20th and 21st in La Crosse. Staff also informed the Commission that if they would attend the Historic Preservation Commission Training session of October 20th then the City would pay their conference fee for the whole day which would allow them to attend other sessions. Staff requested that the Commissioners who were interested inform him as soon as possible in order to get the early bird registration rate.

Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items

Adjournment

Dan Manke moved to adjourn the meeting. Terry Collins seconded. The motion passed 6-0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:45pm.

Notice is further given that members of other governmental bodies may be present at the above scheduled meeting to gather information about a subject over which they have decision-making responsibility.

NOTICE TO PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY

Requests from persons with a disability who need assistance to participate in this meeting should call the City Clerk's office at (608) 789-7510 or send an email to ADAcityclerk@cityoflacrosse.org, with as much advance notice as possible.