

City of Sidney
Historic Preservation Board Meeting
July 9, 2013

The Meeting was called to order at 12:10 pm. by vice chairperson of the board.

Roll Call: Meagan Smuin, Kay Hicks, Greg Huck, and Casey Cortney responded to roll call. Members absent: Rich Phillips, John Phillips, and Doug Meier. Additional attendees included: Gary Person, Brad Rowan, Floyd Brandt, and Megan McGown

Approval of the Minutes: McGown asked for clarification to a statement in the June minutes regarding a funding request made by the Sidney Fine Arts Center. Smuin asked about the discussion from the last meeting regarding the windows projects ensuring that the windows being replaced would be the same style as the ones that were being taken out. McGown will notify Jerry Steffens regarding the windows. Smuin made a motion to approve the minutes with the appropriate changes, Huck seconded the motion and the **motion carried with all in favor.**

Reimbursement of funds: Tammy Temple applied for reimbursement for her sign. The total cost is \$1642 making her eligible for \$821. Cortney made a motion to approve the reimbursement for the sign for Rust and Roses. Smuin seconded the motion and the motion carried with all in favor.

CAMP topics discussion: Smuin provided guidance from her experience having attended the training last month. She suggested Procedures, Identifying and Designating Resources, and Public Support. McGown noted that NAPC is willing to tailor the training to the community and include specific issues we face. The board discussed early October to mid-October as the preferable date for the training.

Preservation Conference report: Rowan noted that procedures need to be kept professional rather than personal. Smuin would like to share on a monthly basis a topic from the training. She handed out a list to see if the board had particular issues they want to go over at future meetings. She discussed legalities and the public process, noting that State level of laws - in Nebraska the state laws have no authority over what we decide on a local basis in terms of preservation. If we use money from a state or federal program, we are bound by their rules. In the preservation process, there are times when the standards do not reflect the goals of the community. There are times when we can't always use the national standard. The job as a board is to look at the ordinance and the guidelines and work with the consultant to find a common ground that reflects both. We need to have standards that meet the standards for preservation but **also meet the needs and values of our community.**

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She also talked about the 4 approaches to preservation and encouraged board members to remember the approaches when determining what treatment is best suited **for the resources that we have. We need to address this in the guidelines.**

The training went over fair and informed decision making. Smuin pointed out that when there is a project in front of the board, we need to refrain from subjective comments. The board needs to make sure the improvements comply with our local ordinance and guidelines and cite the compliance. Just because it is an improvement and looks nice, it is not a reason to approve the project. If the board passes something that does not comply, must cite the reasons so that if a similar situation arises, there are notes as to why the decision was made. Precedence is a guide, not a handcuff - don't have to make every decision based off precedence, as long as reasons are cited.

Infill: Buildings should be compatible with surrounding properties. People that want to alter or add to the buildings need to do it in a way that isn't distracting to what the **district/surrounding properties are.**

The Board needs to develop a strong vision for what we want and then tailor our guidelines and ordinance to make sure they support the overall vision. The Preservation **Handbook should really help with this.**

Code of Ethics for Commissioners and Staff - McGown handed out the code of ethics document to each board member present. Cortney suggested adopting this as a board. Smuin suggested that we use it as a guide now and then in the future, incorporate it into the Preservation Handbook. Hicks asked that McGown ensure that the absent board **members receive a copy of the code as well.**

Smuin will try and incorporate into each monthly meeting a topic of interest to the board. **McGown will make it a standing agenda item.**

Comments by City Manager: Person announced that we are working with Scott Day on future designs of Hickory Street Square. He suggested that we may have a discussion regarding compatibility. Smuin pointed out that progress and enhancement are important as well and that new and new looking are okay as long as they are compatible **and enhance what we have, not try and recreate the old.**

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McGown will put on the next agenda discussion regarding the Preservation Plan.

Smuin asked about the elementary school plans. She asked what would happen with the old buildings. Person explained that currently there is no plan in place. We've met with a variety of developers regarding retrofitting the buildings into housing projects. Cortney brought up the Historic Preservation aspect during one of the public meetings regarding the school plans, stating that North Elementary has a lot of historic elements. Cortney asked about our role in the process. Smuin asked about demolition permits and whether the ordinance includes that. Person stated that it does not. McGown stated that if the property is designated as a local landmark, then it would be mandated by our ordinance to get a COA before demolition. More discussion may be needed in the future.

Comments by the public: Brandt commented that the board has done a wonderful job.

With all business being addressed, the meeting adjourned at 1:05pm