

City of Sidney  
Historic Preservation Board  
July 8, 2014 Minutes

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by chairperson of the board, Kay Hicks, at 12:05pm.

Roll Call: Brandy Root, Greg Huck, Scott Williams, Rich Phillips, Dave Faries, and Kay Hicks. Additional attendees: Gary Person, Megan McGown, Shelley McCafferty, Bruce Leypoldt. Board members absent: John Phillips

Approval of Minutes: R. Phillips made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 10 meeting as submitted. Williams seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all board members present voting yeas.

COA/Facade Enhancement Request: Mark Plaster/Dale Walker requested COA and grant funds for a new awning at 1133 Jackson St. Hicks clarified that wording on the awning is now allowed where it had been previously recommended not to restrict building owners from putting verbiage on the awning. Root suggested alternative wording on the awning rather than the services provided. McGown noted that this it can be suggested, but that the HPB does not typically determine the verbiage. Huck made a motion to approve COA and Grant Funds. Faries seconded the motion and the motion carried with all members present voting yeas.

Review/Finalize Preservation Plan:

McCafferty recommended approving the Preservation Plan and recommending approval to the City Council of the Plan. It is ready for approval with a few minor editing items that need updated, but content will not change. As for the handbook, McCafferty suggested that the Handbook be approved alongside the ordinance, which is not completed yet. She reiterated the importance of the HPB to read the plan and the handbook. She stated that it is the board that answers to the documents, not the staff and it is important that the board is educated on what is in the documents; The Board is ultimately accountable. She asked board members to read them and think about how it relates to projects of the past and how would it change any outcomes.

McGown explained that the Plan is a 5 year document, which outlines strategies and goals for the HPB. McGown noted that the document, though not officially adopted, is being used in terms of CLG Grant planning.

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Leyboldt asked about the board and if their purview is limited to the building structure, materials/documents, or the land. McCafferty said that it is limited to the property, which **typically means the building since the building takes up the majority of the land.**

Leyboldt noted that there are a great deal of documents regarding the historic properties and Sidney's history. The documents are now being stored in the basement of the **courthouse and are subject to damage and loss.** McCafferty said that would fall under the CCHA rather than the HPB as the HPB members are not responsible for curating, but more for the structures.

Williams made a motion to approve the Preservation Plan and to recommend approval to the City Council. Faries seconded the motion and the motion passed with all **members present voting yeas.**

Update on Upper Floor Feasibility Study: McCafferty noted that she did not have an official update from Scott Day, however she suggested that it would likely be September before the bulk of the work would begin on the project. Steps will include a community-wide survey, a workshop regarding upper floor reuse, as well as measuring, and some drawings.

Discussion regarding the Letter of Concern sent to the CCHA: Person sent the letter as directed by the HPB. He sent copies to the HPB and County Officials. At this point, the CCHA has not responded, however the County Commissioners have shown concern and requested a copy of the Handbook, knowing that it is in draft form. Person noted that a citizen advocate has purchased the windows with the intent to eventually restore them to the museum. Person believes that the County Commissioners may not officially respond until after the two new Commissioners begin in January. McGown stated that when SHPO visited a couple of weeks earlier she asked them to drive by the Post Commander's Home and take pictures. She asked if they would follow up with the appropriate person in their office. R. Phillips asked if there was any process to get ownership changed from the CCHA to the HPB. Person said that the City would have to be okay with taking over ownership and maintenance. R. Phillips said that nothing is going to change if they are not challenged on any of the issues. R. Phillips asked if the federal government had any stake. McCafferty said that the federal government programs are mostly "feel good" programs and don't have teeth, unless they are receiving federal funds. Person also noted that the buildings were originally sold at

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auction by the federal government. Person said the issue is really the structure. They are a taxing authority and the way that they are operating seems to violate state statute. Root asked about a public safety standpoint stating that by changing the structure [windows], they could be further debilitating the building. Person suggested making them a landmark in order to keep things like this from happening. McCafferty said that she spoke with the CCHA twice and they do not want to be a Local Landmark. She said that they will fight that and it will not likely pass. Huck suggested that the HPB start with the County Attorney to get some of the issues on the table and to better understand the structure. Person agreed that would be a good first step. McCafferty suggested that we find documentation on preserving "House Museums" in order to show that it is not just the City HPB, but there is a guide already in place to help them to better maintain the facility in an appropriate way.

Comments by the Director: McGown announced that Ruben from NSHPO will be in Sidney to train in August or September. It will be mandatory training and she will notify the board as soon as she has the date from SHPO.

McCafferty also asked about conducting training for masons to work on historic properties.

Comments by HPB: Faries announced that he is resigning due to relocation to California. He noted that he has appreciated being on the HPB and has enjoyed being a **part of the process**.

Comments by City Manager: Person spoke about the ordinance and the process for making updates to it. He also introduced Bruce Leypoldt, who he will appoint at the July 22 Council meeting to fill the vacancy on the board left by Faries.

Leypoldt provided his background to the HPB.

With all business being addressed, the meeting adjourned at 1:15pm