

City of Sidney Historic Preservation Board
Meeting Minutes
March 10, 2015

The meeting of the City of Sidney Historic Preservation Board was called to order by Greg Huck, Vice Chairman of the Board at 12:03pm and announcement of the Open Public Meetings Act was made.

Roll Call: Huck, Bruce Leypoldt, Rich Phillips, Scott Williams, Kathy Wilson, and Jake Vickery (arrived at 12:10). Absent: Kay Hicks. Additional attendees: Gary Person, Brad Rowan, and Megan McGown.

Approval of Meeting Minutes: Williams made a motion to approve the February 10, 2015 meeting minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Leypoldt and passed with all members present voting yeas.

COA and Sign Grant Application - Lisa Meints submitted an application requesting approval for a new sign. The sign will be handmade of reclaimed wood and will be hung in the recessed area above the awning on the building located at 1020 Illinois St. An example of a similar sign was shown. McGown explained the guidelines as they pertained to the request, citing the size requirements and materials. She also noted that Meints will work with Rowan to also comply with the City sign code. Wilson asked what smart siding was and how it will be used. McGown will find out what the material is and how it will be used. Wilson also asked if there was a process in place to ensure the completed project followed the submitted application. McGown noted that later in the agenda this issue will be addressed. Williams made a motion to approve the sign as submitted and the grant request, Phillips seconded the motion and the motion carried with all members present voting yeas.

Vickery requested a more descriptive and better rendering for future projects, stating that it was really difficult to see the design and placement from what was submitted. McGown will put on next month's agenda regarding requirements for submitted applications.

The question was raised regarding how to get the word out to potential buyers of properties within the Historic District that there are regulations that specifically apply to those properties. McGown suggested educating the real estate companies of the historic district and the landmarks as well as what that means for buyers. Phillips suggested sending copies of the minutes to the realtors monthly. Wilson stated that rather than the minutes, to send the handbook to the realtors along with a letter explaining the ramifications. She reiterated the importance of bringing people on board from a positive standpoint of guidance and pride, but cautioned that it might be too late to come to the table if we wait until the property has changed hands to inform people of the guidelines. Huck further suggested that we send a copy of the finalized handbook to all building owners in the district and to

City of Sidney Historic Preservation Board
Meeting Minutes
March 10, 2015

landmarked properties. Williams asked whether or not there was a precedence regarding covenants, etc. Do we have the ability to include a covenants page? Person stated that because it has been adopted by law, there is some authority. It is worth running the covenant idea by the City Attorney.

COA request - Jason Juracek submitted a COA application regarding mounting a mailbox to the property that he is renting located at 1136 Jackson St. McGown explained that the hand drawn depiction was what she suggested since the scope of this project was so narrow. Leypoldt made a motion to approve the COA with the stipulation that the mailbox needed to be attached through the mortar and not through the brick. Williams seconded the motion and the motion carried with all members present voting yeas.

Reimbursement request - Travis Arellano submitted a reimbursement request regarding his property located at 1026 Ball Street, in which he reframed and replaced windows, doors, and added stucco. Wilson brought up the question whether or not it is a beautification project versus preservation project. While the building appearance is improved, it isn't meeting the preservation nature of the program. McGown noted that this is an item that needs to be discussed between staff and then brought up on a future agenda. She further suggested that it would be wise to focus the incentive on historic preservation. Huck called for a motion on the reimbursement request. Phillips made a motion to approve the request. Williams seconded and the motion carried with five members voting yeas and Wilson voting against.

Approval of final inspection Form - Wilson asked for a disclaimer regarding work not being done appropriately to the secretary of interior status. McGown noted that it would be most appropriate to add to the COA and grant application which would be completed prior to any work being done. Vickery suggested that the monitor's name be added and a signature line. It was also requested to add before and after photos, and add space for details on non-compliance. McGown will make changes. Phillips made a motion to approve the form subject to the changes that have been suggested. Leypoldt seconded the motion and the motion carried with all members present voting yeas.

Discussion Regarding a Liaison from CCHA - Person suggested that to help with consistency to ask the CCHA for a 1 year commitment from one CCHA board member. He also said that it is a two way street and it would be good to have a liaison from each board. Leypoldt asked what prompted the discussion. Person stated that City Council strongly recommended it. Huck suggested that we send a letter inviting the CCHA to determine how they want to proceed and if they want to participate. Vickery said that it would be best if they could get someone who understood the purpose of the

City of Sidney Historic Preservation Board
Meeting Minutes
March 10, 2015

HPB. Person suggested that the HPB President and McGown draft a letter. Wilson asked if a HPB member would attend the CCHA meetings as well. Person said it would be a good idea to help make that extra effort to enhance communication. Vickery stated that perhaps it could work into a permanent member of the board if there should be an open seat in the future.

Discussion regarding Project Monitors - Vickery's suggestion to assign set up a relationship between the applicant, the board, and the staff is to assign Project Monitors to each COA project. This allows for better communication, more engagement from the board, and if the monitor sees something that needs attention, they can bring it up and report back to the board. The Monitor would act as an advisor and observer. Person suggested assigning Monitors on a rotating basis. The Monitor can explain the process and the standards as it relates to the specific project in order to help the property owner know the "why" and the "how". This structure would also give Rowan a person to touch base with during the project. Vickery stated that the structure is more important on big projects because of the ongoing nature. He pointed out that, for instance, with the Doug Meier project, a monitor would have been helpful in terms of appropriate materials. If there is no monitor, it many times becomes too late. Vickery said it would be helpful to take it to the next step before implementing: setting up duties, processes, etc. before voting to implement.

Vinyl Window and other materials discussion - Wilson asked about historic preservation versus remodeling and after viewing many buildings downtown noted that very few buildings have followed the secretary of interior standards. She stated that if the guidelines are not upheld, they will be called into question. She suggested that from this point on, the board follow the guidelines and the secretary of interior standards. If this is done, it will be easy to maintain consistent in decisions.

McGown brought up the concern with precedence and stated that there are no two buildings alike and that each project has to be reviewed on its own merit, so precedence isn't a valid reason to allow inappropriate materials or work. She further stated that the handbook is being taken before the City Council tonight for final approval. Once it's approved, the HPB can fall back on following the guidelines that are based on Secretary of Interior Standards. Philips stated that he is reluctant to make downtown into a museum and not change anything anytime. He is worried that it will not be cost effective and it will drive business owners out. Wilson stated that cost effectiveness can be achieved when following the guidelines. She cited an example of ordering windows for Camp Lookout that meet the secretary of interior standards. She said that Menards custom made them for \$99 each and they meet the guidelines. The right products are not always more expensive, but it is the unknown and has been the perception. She said that as the HPB, we need to help educate and guide. Huck reiterated the point about making sure building owners are aware of the guidelines and those looking to purchase a building. He agreed that there is a fine line to ensure it doesn't chase

City of Sidney Historic Preservation Board
Meeting Minutes
March 10, 2015

our downtown owners out. Wilson pointed out that this is the point of the grant fund – to help make the projects more cost effective. She further noted the reimbursement rate should make it equal or less cost. McGown pointed out that if windows are repaired or replaced using the appropriate materials, the reimbursement rate is 65%. Vickery noted that windows are a key to many historic elements of the buildings and that the best use of grant funds is to get the windows appropriate. He asked about a workable strategy to get more of the windows un-boarded and fixed. He said that it would be worthy of a work session where HPB invites building owners in to find a workable solution as it is a significant enough of an issue to drill in a little more and hear from people that are making the decisions, finding out the costs. He also noted that it is not just inappropriate materials, but also inappropriate profiles and other details of the windows that need to be fixed. He said that it is important to understand the practical process of where they are now and what it's going to take to get it where we want it to be. Vickery suggested getting a working group and working directly with property owners to work it out to everyone's best interest.

With all business being addressed, the meeting adjourned at 1:30pm