

HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

DATE: July 10, 2013

TIME: 4:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Robert Sebo, Mary Edel Beyer, Lynn Englund, Merle Hanson, Andy Bloedorn, Carolyn Larson, Susan Briggs, and Shaune Burke

ABSENT: Kendall Larson and Wes Hamilton

STAFF PRESENT: Mark Moeller

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Chairman Sebo.

The minutes from the Commission's meeting of June 12, 2013, were reviewed and upon motion by Commissioner Carolyn Larson and second by Commissioner Englund, were unanimously approved as submitted.

Prior to beginning the official meeting, Chairman Sebo noted that Mayor Peterson had been invited to this meeting. Although unknown to him, the purpose of requesting his attendance was to present him with a formal resolution commending him for his past participation as a charter member of the Heritage Commission. Chairman Sebo noted that given Mr. Peterson's election as Mayor of the City, he had been forced to resign from the Commission.

At this point, Mayor Peterson presented a resolution to Mr. Sebo commending him for his years of service as a charter member of the Heritage Commission. Created in 1989, he stated that Chairman Sebo had served in a number of capacities all furthering the purpose and intent of preservation within the City. He concluded by noting that Chairman Sebo's voice will be missed now that he is leaving the City and he will be hard to replace.

Chairman Sebo stated that the issue of historic preservation has been a big part of his life and that he would continue this mission in the St. Paul area, his new home.

Review of Proposed Amendments – Chapter 22.27

Mark Moeller, City Planner, introduced this item and noted that given discussion occurring at the Commission's last meeting, he was referring a number of proposed changes to City Code Section 22.27 to the Commission for reaction. He noted that proposed changes had been discussed for a number of months and it was his desire to bring this discussion to some form of a completion in order that the matter can be referred to Council for official action.

In referencing proposed amendments, Mr. Moeller explained that most significant Commission discussion had related a proposal that would require certificate of appropriateness (COA) approvals for exterior painting activities. At present, painting is listed as an exempt activity from a COA. Given past discussions, opinions have varied

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significantly. Those supporting the idea felt that such a provision was needed in order to prevent future problems. Others have felt that the implementation of such a requirement would be difficult because no building permit is required and building owners, within a local district, may not fully understand, or know, that a Certificate of Appropriateness is required for painting activities.

Mr. Moeller explained that given these differences of opinion, the draft ordinance included in this afternoon's agenda included a modified version of how the regulatory process might work. In it, although a COA would be required for painting activities, if a proposed paint scheme revolved around colors that are found on the historic palette of any paint company, the City Planner could simply issue a Certificate of Appropriateness without the need for full Commission review and approval. However, if the paint scheme did not meet a palette of a paint company, full Commission review would be required. Outside of this, under no circumstances would the painting of previously unpainted masonry surfaces be allowed to be painted.

Mr. Moeller further explained that while developing this proposal, other cities as well as SHPO had been contacted for input. From these discussions, SHPO has suggested that the control of painting schemes would be difficult to grasp. Additionally, cities such as Faribault had been working on a similar proposal for a number of years and had some significant problems in implementing the idea.

Chairman Sebo noted that he, for one, had been a vocal opponent of regulating exterior painting schemes. In short, he stated a desire to fight fights where they would be most significant. He did not feel that the regulation of exterior painting activities fell into this category. In concluding, he did not feel that the language as proposed was at all workable and would appear to be heavy handed to most.

In response to a comment from Commissioner Burke, Chairman Sebo stated that he felt the Commission has been effective in promoting change, particularly in the Central Business District Area. Mr. Moeller reaffirmed this fact by noting that since the implementation of the Commission's COA process, 30-40 building applications had been reviewed. Although most have been approved, in some cases full Commission review was required and good discussion has occurred. He further noted that some applications have in fact been denied because they did not meet suggested design guideline standards.

Chairman Sebo suggested that rather than regulating this item, the Commission might consider developing a brochure that could highlight some of those points that are now being advocated through code changes. As opposed to a regulation, a brochure would not be quite as threatening and could be a very valuable resource in laying out Commission expectations to both local district property owners, as well as paint stores.

Given the previous, Chairman Sebo asked if there was a motion to approve proposed ordinance amendments relative to the regulation of painting activities within local historic districts and sites. There being no motion to approve or deny, Chairman Sebo then called for other business.

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Other Business

Commission Carolyn Larson noted that a Main Street meeting would be held tomorrow at 11:00 am at Home Federal. She noted that there are currently openings for two members from the Heritage Commission on the Committee and asked for any volunteers to contact her.

Chairman Sebo noted that given this was his last meeting he was assigning Commissioner Englund as a liaison to the Bridge Reconstruction Committee.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned. Again, all present wished Chairman Sebo well in his new home.

Mark Moeller
City Planner