Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission
MINUTES

Wednesday, June 13, 2018

Public Meeting:
1:30 PM, Legislative Chamber
Omaha/Douglas Civic Center
1819 Farnam Street

Members:
Joan Fogarty – Chair, Scott Dobbe – Vice Chair, Carrie Meyer, Regan Pence, Kathryn Aultz, Jaime Suarez, Brian Magee and Curt Witzenburg.

Certification of Publication: Omaha Preservation Administrator certifies publication in the Daily Record, the official newspaper of the City of Omaha, on Monday, April 30, 2018 notice re: Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission meeting on Wednesday, May 9, 2018.

Members Present: Joan Fogarty, Chair
Scott Dobbe – Vice-Chair
Kathryn Aultz
Brian Magee
Carrie Meyer
Jaime Suarez

Members Not Present: Regan Pence
Curt Witzenburg

Others Present: Jed Moulton, Urban Design Planning Manager
Jennifer Taylor, City Law Department
Clinette Ingram, Recording Secretary

Ms. Fogarty called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm and introduced the Commission members and staff. She explained the procedures for hearing the cases. There were five members present. Mr. Suarez appeared at 1:45 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Ms. Aultz moved to APPROVE the May 9, 2018 minutes. Mr. Dobbe seconded the motion.

AYES: Dobbe, Aultz, Magee, Fogarty

ABSTAIN: Meyer

MOTION CARRIED: 4-0-1
At the Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission meeting held on June 13, 2018, Brian Whetstone, Restoration Exchange Omaha, and Ashley Kuhn, White Lotus Group, appeared before the Commission. Jed Moulton appeared on behalf of the Planning Department.

Mr. Whetstone showed several pictures of the exterior of the brick building that was built in 1924. He stated that the only major alteration to the outside of the building are the wooden stairs and decks added to the rear. He stated that the building is significant for two reasons: 1) for its association with the development of attached dwellings in the city of Omaha during the early 20th century, and 2) for its architectural association with the Italian Renaissance Revival style.

Mr. Whetstone explained that before 1890 most residents lived within a walkable area since the streetcar system was not fully developed. The growth of the streetcar system and the rise of automobile use allowed attached dwellings to be constructed further away from the downtown area. He stated that of the 545 attached dwellings visible on the 1918 Sanborn map, only 110 survive in various conditions. He explained that the attached dwellings are important because they are physical evidence of Omaha’s transition from a walkable frontier town to a prosperous, growing suburban city.

The building was named after Louie W. Kay who was born in Minden, Iowa in 1883. He eventually settled in Omaha in 1924 and purchased the land for the apartment. He hired Matthew John Lahr to design the building. Mr. Lahr designed the Nottingham Apartments and an addition to the Notre Dame Academy and Convent. The building is almost identical to the original design that was published in the World Herald with the exception of two additional windows that were added to the first floor. The Italian Renaissance Revival style chosen by Mr. Lahr was popular nationally and in the Omaha area during that time and was most visible on the east façade of the building. That style is visible in several features of the structure: the building’s symmetrical, rectangular form; it’s hipped, tiled roof; heavy roof brackets and overhanging eaves; and the original casement doors and railed balconies. He concluded that the building retains the features that identify it as an example of the Italian Renaissance Revival style.

Ms. Fogarty expressed concern about the problem with vagrants in the green space in front of the building. Ms. Kuhn responded that they are working with the Mayor’s Office to take care of that issue.

Mr. Dobbe added that the streetscape was an important piece of the overall character of the building. He noted that the parking strip on 31st Street that had been removed and the mailboxes that had been relocated to the back of the building were an improvement to the site.

Mr. Dobbe moved to APPROVE the request as presented. Ms. Meyer seconded the motion.

AYES: Dobbe, Aultz, Meyer, Magee, Suarez, Fogarty

MOTION CARRIED: 6-0
CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL:
CASE NUMBER: 18-13-H3
PRESENTED BY: Paris Cunningham
LOCATION: 3426 Lincoln Park Blvd
REQUEST: Certificate of Approval for replacement of historic boxed gutter to contemporary metal gutters.

At the Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission meeting held on June 13, 2018, Richard Stueven, Property Owner, appeared before the Commission. Jed Moulton appeared on behalf of the Planning Department.

Mr. Stueven stated that home had existing box gutters that are built into the roof. He explained that the gutters are wooden trenches in the roof that are lined with metal. He explained that they have deteriorated to the point that the water has leaked out and destroyed the siding on the southwest corner of the home. This leakage threatens historical murals that were painted on interior walls of the home. He indicated that during the past year he and his wife had contacted several contractors who did not know how to work with box gutters. Those contractors who could do the work provided bids of $50,000 - $100,000. He requested that they be allowed to hang white, seamless gutters that would resemble the roof of the home. They would also be tied in with the existing downspouts that would remain invisible.

Ms. Meyer noted that the Planning Department recommended approval of the request with the following conditions: 1) The owner and contractor must coordinate the final gutter construction details and design with the Planning Department prior to commencing the work, and 2) Repairs to the exterior wall and window must be of the same dimension and material characteristics as what is existing. Mr. Stueven stated that he was in agreement with the conditions of the Planning Department.

Mr. Dobbe commented that box gutters were attractive but were not practical. He supported the placement of the downspouts and encouraged communication with the contractor so that the look of the home is not changed.

Ms. Meyer moved to APPROVE the request as presented subject to: 1) The owner and contractor must coordinate the final gutter construction details and design with the Planning Department prior to commencing the work, and 2) Repairs to the exterior wall and window must be of the same dimension and material characteristics as what is existing. Ms. Aultz second the motion.

AYES: Dobbe, Aultz, Meyer, Magee, Suarez, Fogarty

MOTION CARRIED: 6-0

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Moulton stated that a new Preservation coordinator, Ivy Frietag, had been hired.

ADJOURNMENT:
It was the consensus of the Board to ADJOURN the meeting at 2:00 p.m.