Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission

MINUTES

Wednesday, September 11, 2019

Public Meeting:
1:30 PM, Room 1210

Omaha/Douglas Civic Center
1819 Farnam Street

Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission Members: Scott Dobbe – Chair, Carey Meyer – Vice Chair, Andrew Conzett, Joan Fogarty, Brian Magee, Regan Pence, Kathryn Aultz, Jaime Suarez and Curt Witzenburg.

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Members Present:
Scott Dobbe – Chair
Carrie Meyer – Vice Chair
Kathryn Aultz
Andrew Conzett
Joan Fogarty
Regan Pence
Jaime Suarez

Members Not Present:
Brian Magee
Curt Witzenburg

Others Present:
Jed Moulton, Urban Design Planning Manager
Ivy Freitag, LHPC Administrator
Jennifer Taylor, Attorney - City Law Department
Clinette Ingram, Recording Secretary

Mr. Dobbe called the meeting to order at 1:32 pm. He introduced the Commission members, City staff and explained the procedures for hearing the cases. Mr. Dobbe stated that the last case would be heard first due to time constraints. There were six members present. Mr. Suarez appeared after roll call and the approval of the minutes.

Administrative Items:
Approval of August 14th LHPC Meeting Minutes.
Ms. Meyer moved to APPROVE the August 14, 2019 meeting minutes. Ms. Aultz seconded the motion.
AYES: Meyer, Aultz, Conzett, Fogarty
ABSTAIN: Pence
MOTION CARRIED: 5-0-1.
At the Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission meeting held on September 11, 2019, Mark Reynolds and Jamie Jarecki appeared before the commission.

Mr. Reynolds displayed the logo being proposed for the building. He stated that it was a work in progress and he intended to work with staff to agree on signage that would tastefully distinguish the building as an apartment building, instead of an office or condo building, while being historically appropriate and making the best use of the space.

There was some discussion between Mr. Reynolds and Ms. Freitag about the maximum allowed size of the sign for the district which was determined to be 100 square feet. There was also discussion about the use of a blade sign to further identify the building, similar to what was done in the Capitol District.

Ms. Freitag discussed the sign guidelines for the district with regards to colors and graphics. She explained that there was usually more graphics and color near the street level as opposed to near the tops of buildings. She noted that signage near the tops of buildings was usually very simple with basic lettering. She stated that she would need to clarify exactly how much signage would be allowed if both a blade sign and other building signage were requested. She stated that if more importance was to be given to the logo then perhaps a projecting sign (blade sign) at mid-level would be more appropriate.

Mr. Dobbe asked if there was anything that was ready for the commission to approve and whether a layover was necessary. Referring to the recommendation report, Ms. Freitag stated that the commission could consider: 1) the appropriateness of the logo and its application on the building signage and 2) whether it would be appropriate on a projecting sign.

Ms. Jarecki stated that they would appreciate some guidance from the commission and perhaps a temporary approval that would allow them to proceed with the sign with the provision that the commission would give final approval of the final design.

Ms. Fogarty believed that it was important to keep the building as intact as possible. She stated that it never had a projecting sign on it and she would not support one. Ms. Aultz stated that she was more concerned with the location of the sign and not so its appearance.

Mr. Moulton stated that the goal was to preserve the feeling and association with the historic period as much as possible. He noted that although the building was technically not in the Old Market, it was adjacent to it and the Old Market signage guidelines were being applied. He acknowledged the importance of branding an asset; however, he questioned whether the modern, graphic nature of the logo and sign competed with the historic elevation or whether it complimented or blended in with it. He explained that this could be accomplished through the use of more neutral colors, a single font and less detailing. A blade sign with the logo and more graphic design, detail and color could possibly be installed at the pedestrian level. He added that it could even be on a plaque sign, part of the existing awning or wherever the commission decided was an appropriate location. There was brief discussion about the use of a mural sign.
Mr. Pence had no objections to the use of a projection sign. Mr. Dobbe stated that it would be difficult for him to approve a sign for a prominent, historic building without seeing a final rendering of what was being proposed. He stated that any branding on top of the building would need to be very reserved and not be something that feels like a corporate branding. He was in support of the logo design; however, he believed that it should exist perhaps between the second and third floors.

Mr. Moulton suggested that the sign could possibly be reduced to 6’ in scale and placed near the entrance of the building in lieu of a projecting sign. After some additional discussion the commission decided to vote on a layover.

Ms. Aultz moved to LAYOVER. Mr. Pence seconded the motion.

AYES: Meyter, Aultz, Conzett, Fogarty, Pence, Suarez, Dobbe

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0.
At the Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission meeting held on September 11, 2019, Dan Cook (Omaha Door & Window) appeared before the commission.

Mr. Cook stated that he was proposing to install vinyl windows on the property. He also wanted to install casement sashes so that some of the windows on the front and back did not have the appearance of doors. He explained that because the windows were so close to the ground level and continually rotting, a steel door system could be proposed, especially for the front. He believed that casement sashes would especially work well at the back of the home. Mr. Cook continued to explain his proposal for the windows.

Mr. Moulton stated that the Secretary of Interior Standards provided some guidance about existing historic windows that were original to a home with features and characteristics that could no longer be recreated. The information provided primarily dealt with instructions on how to preserve, repair and maintain those windows. He noted that in this case, several windows had been replaced prior to the homes landmark designation. He mentioned that most of the windows on the lower level of the home had been French doors that were designed to be opened up into gardens. He explained that the use of vinyl windows was previously discouraged due to some issues with the product that occurred over time; however, that and other products had improved over time. It was concluded that the physical size, shape and operational characteristics of the components were more important than the materials being used. He noted that staff had recommended that a simulated light would be appropriate for the French doors with 10 window pane panels. The commission could decide what window materials would be used on the front, back and the addition. It could not be definitively determined which windows, if any, were original to the structure.

Ms. Freitag stated that Secretary of Interior Standards indicated that the windows on the primary elevation should match in form and configuration versus windows on the secondary level where there was more flexibility.

Mr. Fogarty spoke about the historical importance of the house and the family that built it. She believed that the historical details should be maintained for the front of the home and deciding on the best options for the remainder of the home.

Mr. Cook did not believe that casement sashes would be appropriate for the front of the home. He believed that steel or French doors would be better. He suggested vinyl windows for the back and taking some time to talk with the property owner to discuss options for the front of the home. Mr. Dobbe agreed that the front of the home needed the best treatment and he stated that the windows would not necessarily need to be wood but could be a newer synthetic material that would approximate the physical dimensions of the home. He understood the use of vinyl for the secondary façade.

Mr. Cook and Mr. Moulton discussed in more detail the possible window options for the home. Ms. Freitag suggested that the motion could include partial approval for the windows on the back of the home with the condition that nothing would be done to the windows on the primary elevation. Mr. Dobbe added that one of the conditions could be that there would be further dialogue between the
applicants and City staff. Mr. Moulton and Ms. Freitag elaborated on what those conditions would be. Mr. Suarez moved to APPROVE subject to the following conditions: The windows on the second elevation are to be vinyl and no changes shall be made to the front/primary elevation without further dialogue with City staff and approval from the commission. Vinyl casement window solutions with simulated divided lights are to be used for the four French doors on the back of the home (Attachment A – Items 4 through 7); vinyl casement with a simulated divided light shall be used for the existing casement window (Attachment A – Item 3) on the back of the home; vinyl with single-pane windows and no divided lights shall be used for windows 1 and 2 (Attachment A) in order to differentiate between historic and more modern sections of the home. The applicant agreed to research as to whether a fixed-panel, fiberglass door with true divide lights could work for the front of the home. Ms. Meyer seconded the motion.

AYES: Meyter, Aultz, Conzett, Fogarty, Pence, Suarez, Dobbe

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0.

ADJOURNMENT:
It was the consensus of the Board to ADJOURN the meeting at 2:15 p.m.