MINUTES
PUBLIC HEARING AND ADMINISTRATIVE MEETING
LANDMARKS HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION
1:30 P.M. - WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13, 2011
12TH FLOOR – ROOM 1210
OMAHA DOUGLAS CIVIC CENTER - 1819 FARNAM STREET

CERTIFICATION OF PUBLICATION:
Omaha Preservation Administrator certifies publication in the Daily Record, the official newspaper of the City of Omaha, on Wednesday, April 7, 2011, notice re: Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission meeting, April 13, 2011.

MEMBERS PRESENT:  Doug Bisson, Chairman
Albert Macchietto, Vice Chairman
Bryan Zimmer
John Schleicher
Nicholas Hogan
Eduardo Santamaria
Gregory Mahloch

MEMBER NOT PRESENT:  Edward Quinn

OTHERS PRESENT:  Mike Leonard, Preservation Administrator
Jim Krance, Planner (retired)
Elizabeth Smith, GIS Technician II
Lynn Meyer, Planner
Mike Schonlau, Public Works

Mr. Bisson, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.  Roll call was taken with seven members present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Macchietto moved to APPROVE the February 9, 2011 meeting minutes as written.  Mr. Zimmer seconded the motion.

AYES:  Zimmer, Schleicher, Hogan, Santamaria, Mahloch, Macchietto, Bisson

MOTION CARRIED:  7-0

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Mike Leonard, LHPC Administrator, stated that an opening statement was prepared for the Chairman that introduces members and staff to public participants attending the Commission meeting.  He stated that new members would be provided with the Commission's policy and procedures.  Mr. Mahloch recommended that new members receive the meetings minutes from the previous six months.  Some members present confirmed receipt of orientation material prior to their first meeting.

Mr. Leonard stated that the CLG grant this year will also be used to scan archival material and develop Omaha’s Geographic Information System (GIS) and website development.  This year’s proposal includes scanning, development of Omaha GIS and web site development.  The goal is to have information related to National Register sites and locally designated Landmark sites available on GIS and on a web site.  Leonard stated that the Aksarben reconnaissance survey will be held over this year in order to focus on archiving.
Mr. Lynn Meyer discussed the process of the archiving project: getting material (data, photographs, National Register nominations, mapping, etc.) which was compiled over years into a geographical information system and onto a website for public access. He stated that a high-quality, dedicated photo scanner would be essential for the project. Meyer stated that they are in the beginning stages and discussing the criteria for this resource. He stated that another aspect of this project is to scan the photos. Meyer discussed the use of a contractor or the public library's expertise in the scanning process. In response to Doug Bisson, Mike Schonlau, Public Works, stated that part of the design process will be to determine access and criteria for the right fields to include, databases and search engines. Mr. Mahloch felt that more current technology is available. He recommended contracting with a company that currently does archival work for the Douglas County Register of Deeds. He felt that contracting with the same company which services the County could keep costs at a minimum.

Mr. Meyer mentioned that some of the earlier surveys from building permits were destroyed years ago. He stated that survey data from many of the permits were entered into a database and maintained on a mainframe at HDR Systems. Meyer stated that fortunately they have hard copies of some of the information. He stated that once the data is scanned and migrates into a database then onto GIS, people will be able to locate information online. Meyer stated that GIS has other features valuable for planning and evaluation type purposes. He stated that queries can be requested to create maps, which is a primary capability available through GIS. Meyer concurred that DOGIS, like GIS, has value for preservation planning.

In response to Eddy Santamaria, Mike Leonard discussed the repository for the Landmark material. Leonard stated that it is very important to protect original documents. Mr. Krance stated that the Landmark material is currently housed in a locked room located across from the staff. Mr. Bisson felt that the physical material should be made public and safeguarded. Mr. Meyer stated that the Commission started in 1979 and accumulated this work of records and photographs over the years. He stated that it has become a historic resource for anyone interested in doing research. Leonard expressed appreciation for the Commission's involvement with the archiving project. He recommended that members email further ideas.

Mr. Jim Krance responded regarding the varied approaches of the scanning process. He expressed the significance of collating and the quality control necessary in the scanning process. Krance had concern about seeking a competent preservation contractor familiar with their goals.

Mr. Eddy Santamaria suggested that the Commission receive regular updates on the archiving process. Mr. Macchietto inquired about maps that are changing; historical resources that are no longer there and how they are kept current. Mr. Schonlau stated that GIS has early versions of data that are retrievable. He stated that as things change, snapshots of history are not lost in going forward. Mr. Meyer felt comfortable that GIS provides in-house staff an element of control. Mr. Leonard recommended that the Aksarben project be set aside. He will send an amendment to inform the Lincoln office. Mr. Krance stated that surveying is done on a yearly basis. Leonard stated that efforts are being refocused due to the special project of archiving. Krance stated that this special project is an appropriate direction to take for the greatest need of preservation for the City and the State.

Macchietto moved to APPROVE the grant, excluding Aksarben as a survey territory subject to the Commission being kept apprised of developments once staff goes back to the Aksarben project. Mr. Zimmer seconded the motion.

AYES: Schleicher, Hogan, Santamaria, Mahloch, Macchietto, Zimmer, Bisson

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0
Mr. Jim Krance stated that the Rock Bottom Café originally requested to convert the outdoor eating area into a deck. He stated that the applicant did not adhere to the guidelines for the deck and elevation. Krance stated that the applicant submitted a different solution. He stated that the design, per the Commission, was not to interfere with the architectural features on the east corner of the building. The Commission recommended regarding the stair, that any new element to the exterior needs to stay behind the line.

Mr. Krance stated that an owner in the Cathedral West/Central Historic District has approximately 10-20% deterioration in the porch floor which is usually taken care of through and inkind Repair & Replace. He stated that the owner wants to use a new type of material. Krance stated that the contractor wants to replace rather than repair the porch floor with the new material. Santamaria recommended that if the new material is used, it should be used only on the horizontal floor surface and not used vertically.

Mr. Mike Leonard announced that Ed Quinn resigned from the Landmarks Commission after many years of service. A recommendation for replacement will be submitted to the Mayor’s office. He discussed the composition roster. Leonard informed the Commission that nominations for membership can be submitted to the Mayor’s office.

Mr. Bryan Zimmer stated that the PepperJax project in the Old Market district has a new façade on the north face of an existing building. He stated that PepperJax sits within the public right-of-way with awnings and light fixtures. Zimmer stated that PepperJax is adjacent to the entrance of the Old Market historical district. He had concerns about protecting the boundary edges of a historical district. Jim Krance stated that property owners in the area can propose a Neighborhood Conservation Zone and use Old Market guidelines. Mike Leonard stated that there are issues regarding the materials this business used. He stated that others have voiced concerns as well. Leonard agreed to investigate this project and follow-up with the Commission.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Santamaria moved to ADJOURN the meeting of the Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission at 3:11 p.m. Mr. Schleicher seconded the motion.

AYES: Hogan, Santamaria, Mahloch, Macchietto, Zimmer, Schleicher, Bisson

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

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Approved (date)

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Doug Bisson, Chair

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Claudia Moore, Secretary