Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission

MINUTES

Wednesday, July 13, 2016

Public Meeting:
1:30 PM, Room 1210 – 12th Floor
Omaha/Douglas Civic Center
1819 Farnam Street

Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission Members: Joan Fogarty – Chair, George Killian – Vice Chair, Carrie Meyer, Regan Pence, Scott Dobbe, 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 Friday, July 1, 2016 notice re: Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission meeting, July 13, 2016.

Members Present: Joan Fogarty, Chair
George Killian, Vice-Chair
Kathryn Aultz
Scott Dobbe
Brian Magee
Regan Pence
Jaime Suarez
Curt Witzenburg

Members Not Present: Carrie Meyer

Others Present: Trina Westman, LHPC Administrator
Ruben Acosta – Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office
Jennifer Taylor, City Law Department
Clinette Ingram, Recording Secretary

Ms. Fogarty - Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:35 pm, introduced the Commission members and staff. She explained the procedures for hearing the cases. There were seven members present. Mr. Suarez appeared after the roll was called and the minutes were approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Magee moved to APPROVE the June 8, 2016 minutes as submitted. Mr. Dobbe seconded the motion.

AYES: Killian, Aultz, Dobbe, Magee, Pence, Witzenburg, Fogarty

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0
At the Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission meeting held on July 13, 2016, Dr. Petzar appeared before the Commission. Ms. Fogarty recused herself from this case since she is a close neighbor of the applicant. Mr. Killian took over as chair of the meeting.

Trina Westman, LHPC Administrator, stated that some optional fence designs had been presented. Also, within the last month, the neighbors had met and consulted with the applicant and provided Ms. Westman with additional research and guidelines from other historic districts. From that information she put together a summary which was then presented to the commission. In addition to approval for the fence, the applicant also requested approval for the front step handrails. Ms. Westman clarified that Section 24-74 of the city ordinance indicates that economic factors can be taken into consideration along with preservation objectives.

Dr. Petzar recalled that the fence was for two dogs he planned to adopt. He originally proposed chain-link fence along the side and iron/metal fencing across the front of the home. The neighbors were concerned about the precedence that would be set with the use of chain link fencing. His revised plan included the use of wood fencing along the side and back and iron along the front. He inquired as to whether it would be acceptable to put wood fencing along the front of the home.

John Ransom - 415 North 38th Street (President - North Gold Coast Neighborhood Association) appeared before the commission. He stated that the association was in support of a wood fence along the south side yard and west boundary, and a metal/iron/aluminum style gate across the front of the home. He indicated that the other 9 homes within the historic district have metal or iron gates and/or fences.

In response to Mr. Dobbe, Dr. Petzar stated that the height of the fence along the side and rear yard would be between 4′ – 5′. The type of wood used would be cedar; however, if treated wood were used it would be painted.

Mr. Suarez commented that wrought-iron style fencing along the front would preserve the historical nature of the property. He felt that wood was acceptable for the other areas. Mr. Pence added that the handrails should match the fencing material used along the front.

Mr. Dobbe moved to APPROVE the request with the conditions that 1) the south fence (side lot) and west fence (rear lot) be of: a wood picket style; at minimum 30% open or of a non-opaque material; a nominal height of 4′ to 5′; and of a cedar material or if treated wood, painted a neutral or historically appropriate color; 2) The entire front yard fence and gate must be aluminum or of iron-like material; and 3) The railing at the steps on the northeast side of the property should be of similar materials as the front yard fence. Mr. Suarez seconded the motion.
AYES: Aultz, Dobbe, Magee, Pence, Suarez, Witzenburg, Killian

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0
At the Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission meeting held on July 13, 2016, Kristine Gerber appeared before the Commission on behalf of the applicant.

Ms. Gerber explained that Hanscom Apartments is the original name for the building currently known as the Bristol Apartments. The owner of the property is inCommon who purchased the building so that, with the help of State and Federal tax credits, individuals with lower incomes could continue to afford to live in the area. The building currently has 62 units and is a Spanish Colonial Revival style building that was constructed by Drake Realty in 1921. Drake Realty constructed several apartment buildings from 1915 to the late 1920s. She presented an original plan and a picture of the building from 1985.

Ms. Gerber noted the “Maltese cross” design of the building creates light wells in the kitchens. She showed several angles and elevations of the building and its details which include the elaborate door surround of the main entrance and the building’s hooded windows. Also shown were pictures of the interior which showed the wood detailing, original windows and kitchen cabinets, spacious dressing rooms with built-ins, and bathrooms with original sinks and toilets. The original wood railings and balusters are located in the hallways along with the historic elevator. The building is significant because of its rare architectural style and Maltese cross shape.

Mr. Killian inquired as to whether additional stair towers would need to be added for egress purposes. He was concerned about the egress stair being compatible with the building. Ruben Acosta (Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office) stated that the building owners would need to comply with the Secretary of Interior Standards which would ensure that any additions were compatible with the architectural style of the building.

Mr. Acosta stated that he had been working with the applicant on the building and had toured the inside. He reiterated that the style of the building is not very common which adds to its significance. He added that the Spanish Colonial style was very popular in the 1920s. In addition the builder, Drake Realty, was a prominent developer in Omaha apartments for that time period. With the exception of the windows that had been replaced and the stair that had been enclosed for Life Safety purposes, he noted that the integrity of the building had been maintained.

Trina Westman, LHPC Administrator, stated that the Planning Department had reviewed the proposal and that it agreed with the nomination and recommended approval.

Mr. Killian moved to APPROVE as submitted with a recommendation of approval to the Nebraska State Historic Preservation office. Ms. Aultz seconded the motion.

AYES: Killian, Aultz, Dobbe, Magee, Pence, Suarez, Witzenburg, Fogarty

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0
At the Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission meeting held on July 13, 2016, Kristine Gerber appeared before the Commission on behalf of the applicant.

Ms. Gerber presented several pictures of the exterior and interior of the building which was built in 1893 as a manufacturing plant. There were also some original architectural drawings which showed window wells that were part of the building design. Some of the existing features are the original tiles, wood beams, original windows, wide elevators that were used to deliver supplies, and original fire door.

Ms. Gerber noted that the building was significant because it was very good example of a 19th century commercial building. There have been manufacturing businesses in the building since it was built in 1893 up until it was purchased by the current owner in 2015. It was constructed by P.G. Karbach who was a very early citizen of Omaha. He was a blacksmith who made carriages in the building until about 1896 when it was purchased by George Joslyn who used the building to print newspapers. The building is mostly significant for the Scott-Omaha Tent and Awning Company. Its owner, Allen Cecil Scott, provided tents and other materials for the war effort. He also developed the Scott parachute in 1918 that was patented and used in World War I. The building was recommended as an example of a late 19th century/early 20th century commercial building and also for the significant events that occurred in the building.

Ms. Fogarty commended the applicant for the well written nomination. She also felt that the building could be recommended under Criterion A for its affiliation with Mr. Joslyn alone. Mr. Dobbe noted a minor typo on page 14 of the document and expressed support for the nomination.

Mr. Killian moved to APPROVE as submitted with a recommendation of approval to the Nebraska State Historic Preservation office. Mr. Suarez seconded the motion.

AYES: Killian, Aultz, Dobbe, Magee, Pence, Suarez, Witzenburg, Fogarty

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0
Discussion:

Mr. Fogarty thanked the commission members who were able to attend the house tour that she hosted. Mr. Acosta was thanked for his years of service to the State of Nebraska. She began a discussion about whether the commission should establish guidelines for fencing in historic districts. Ms. Taylor stated that the commission could request that Ms. Westman put a document together that could be presented and adopted by board members. Ms. Westman responded that she would put some design guidelines together. Ms. Fogarty also introduced the idea of the Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission creating a plaque that could be placed on historic structures that had been adopted. She explained that a plaque would elevate the prestige of a structure and would be installed at the property owner’s expense. Ms. Westman invited the members to submit ideas to her so that she could research the cost and approve a design.

Adjournment:

It was the consensus of the Board to ADJOURN the meeting at 3:00 p.m.