

**CITY OF WOODSTOCK
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

January 26, 2015
City Council Chambers

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Woodstock Historic Preservation Commission was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Allen Stebbins on Monday, January 26, 2015 in Council Chambers at City Hall.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Jodie Kurtz-Osborne, Rodney Paglialong, Chairman Allen Stebbins

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: Erica Wilson

STAFF PRESENT: City Planner Nancy Baker

OTHERS PRESENT: Deputy City Clerk Amy Weber

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Rodney Paglialong moved to approve the minutes of the November 24, 2014 meeting with the following corrections:

Page 2, last sentence, change “Appropriate” to “Appropriateness”.

Page 3, first paragraph, first sentence, change “with the stipulation that” to “with a condition of”.

Page 3, second paragraph, third sentence, change “Council” to “Commission”.

Page 3, fourth paragraph, first sentence, insert “on the E. Jackson side”.

Page 3, fifth paragraph, first sentence, change “Appropriate” to “Appropriateness”.

Page 4, fourth sentence, change “needed” to “didn’t need”.

Page 4, fourth sentence clarification:

N. Baker explained that the fireplace and patio are treated as landscaping by the City Code which can be approved administratively. Though it was not required by the City Code, Baker asked the Commission to review the original paver request because it was a significant site change to a National Register site.

Jodie Kurtz-Osborne seconded the motion. Ayes: Jodie Kurtz-Osborne, Rodney Paglialong, Chairman Stebbins. Nays: None. Absent: Erica Wilson. Abstentions: None. Motion Carried.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments from the public.

IV. GENERAL BUSINESS

A. 217-219 N. Benton Street – Certificate of Appropriateness for façade remodel

Allen Stebbins wants the record to show that the property is listed on the survey of historic district properties as numbers 31 and 31 and is considered “contributing.”

Paul Glenn of PSTM Architecture represents the owner Mark Bezik. Mr. Glenn requested a COA on the 219-217 Benton St. project. He is familiar with the style of architecture and has worked on numerous projects of a similar nature. His firm is familiar with Department of Interior Rehab Standards, and he is a registered architect for the State Historic Commission. Mr. Glenn described the proposed work, focusing on the façade and brick work as well as noting some of the changes that were made in the past to these buildings. He also noted the owner’s request to replace many of the windows and change the color scheme, referencing the five photos included in the proposal. Mr. Glenn also noted that the proposed brickwork would maintain the current diamond pattern, but would use new bricks, not recycled bricks.

Rodney Paglialong asked for clarification on the color and construction of the windows and also where the lighting would be located. Mr. Glenn referred him to the example photos, indicated the material would be wood or wood core models and that the lighting would be at the top of each column, with possibly one light in the middle as an accent.

Allen Stebbins asked if there was a cost estimate for the project, with Mr. Glenn responding that they only have a ballpark idea as they are waiting on Commission approval before going any further.

Mr. Stebbins then asked for clarification on the transom windows. Mr. Glenn indicated they would be clad wood—they would utilize a commercial grade storefront system that Anderson Windows makes. Mr. Stebbins asked if Mr. Glenn had cut sheets of them, with Mr. Glenn saying he did. The commission and Mr. Glenn further clarified the details on the construction and look of the proposed transoms.

Rodney Paglialong asked about the main support beams above the transoms—would they be restored or covered up? Paul Glenn indicated that both beams are concealed, one is with masonry, the other with wood. They are uncertain of the condition of the iron product, but can repair it if necessary and cover it eventually.

Mr. Stebbins noted that many of the mortar joints have lost portions of mortar, which is what it should do over time. He asked who decided that the historic façade couldn’t be restored, that the brick veneer couldn’t be repaired. Mr. Glenn replied that he had made that determination. Mr. Stebbins asked if a structural engineer had confirmed Mr. Glenn’s conclusions on the need to redo the brick veneer. Mr. Glenn replied that they did not have that confirmation.

Chairman Stebbins directed the Commission to the COA Findings report and asked the Commission if they agreed with everything on page two. All replied yes. Mr. Stebbins asked if the property was currently a tavern/bar. Paul Glenn confirmed it was.

Chairman Stebbins indicated that he does not agree with item two (page 4), since there are no indications from a structural engineer that the veneer is failing and cannot be repaired. He feels the property would become unnecessarily homogenous, making two buildings into one and that the historic nature of the property would not be preserved. Mr. Paglialong asked if Mr. Stebbins felt this way because of the storefront. Mr. Stebbins replied in the negative, indicating he was okay with the storefront, which has changed many times over the years, but he does not believe the brick veneer is deteriorated enough to warrant tearing it off and replacing it with a façade that looks like it is for one large building. Mr. Paglialong noted they will be improving the appearance of two buildings and he is uncertain how they will be altering historical elements if much work has already happened on the two buildings. Mr. Stebbins noted that there is no report from a structural engineer that the façade is failing or a safety concern. He asked Nancy Baker if the city had cited the property for the failing façade and Ms. Baker said, no.

Further discussion ensued, with Mr. Stebbins noting that he has a problem with “replacing the brick façade with something that looks like Disneyland, which goes against guidelines.” He encouraged the applicant to come back with another proposed solution, one that does not involve removing the brick façade.

Mr. Glenn stated he doubted they could match that design from 1950s. Mr. Stebbins reiterated that they could find another creative solution instead of removing the façade. Jodie Kurtz-Osborne stated she believed the owner would like uniform buildings. Mr. Stebbins stated that if you look in the district, you have variation of buildings. Mr. Glenn asked for further clarification of Mr. Stebbins objections. Mr. Stebbins stated he objects to the removal of historic materials with no explanation, with no other alternatives having been explored and with no indication from a structural engineer that the work must be done for safety reasons. He stated that the Commission’s purpose is to preserve and that there were other options to be explored, including tuck pointing, other options with the brick or chemical peels on the painted building. Mr. Stebbins then asked if the Commission wanted to vote on the question of whether or not the historic property will be preserved. Mr. Paglialong and Ms. Kurtz-Osborne both agreed with Mr. Stebbins that the proposed changes would not preserve the historic nature of the property. The Commission then reviewed the remaining project findings for 217-319 N. Benton Street.

Allen Stebbins asked if any member of the public wished to comment on the project.

Paul Glenn asked for clarification on matching the brick, something he did not feel was possible. Mr. Paglialong asked Ms. Baker about the brick work on the old courthouse, with Ms. Baker indicated they had dyed some of the bricks on the south side to match the old bricks. Mr. Stebbins noted that this was all speculation at this point, since the owner had not explored to see if various colors were used as decorative elements. If so, that could change the Commission’s view going forward if that information was available. Further discussions ensued about what constitutes maintenance, what is repair and what is replacement. Mr. Stebbins summed up by stating, “Looking at the project as proposed, what portion are you preserving? You are not proposing to preserve, you are replicating. That is a replication of the historic building that exists.

There is nothing in the proposed project that preserves.” Both Mr. Paglialong and Ms. Kurtz-Osborne agreed with Mr. Stebbins to deny the COA at this time, but both encouraged Mr. Glenn to do some more research.

R. Paglialong moved to deny the Certificate of Appropriateness for 217-219 N. Benton Street. Jodie Kurtz-Osborne seconded the motion. Ayes: Jodie Kurtz-Osborne, Rodney Paglialong, Chairman Stebbins. Nays: None. Absent: Erica Wilson. Abstentions: None. Motion Carried. The COA was denied.

- B. 121 W. Calhoun Street – Certificate of Appropriateness for entranceway renovations**
Nancy Baker referred to photos on page 1 and 3 of the Certificate of Appropriateness Findings report. She explained that originally there was no entrance on the east side of Central School. It is not known for sure when the entrance was created but it was probably installed when the building was converted to City Hall in the early 1970s. She noted that in the early 2000s, the Commission approved replacing the aluminum storefront type system with a wood door and wood sidelights. The limestone surround was retained. The top piece of limestone is now cracked and the sides are eroded and in pretty bad shape. The proposed work includes the removal of the limestone surround, refinishing of the sandstone edges, and installation of a new beam over the door which will be covered with a brick soldier course. The proposal is to keep the wood door and sidelights and trim it out in mahogany. Rodney Paglialong asked if the mahogany would replace sandstone or adjacent. Ms. Baker replied it would be adjacent all the way around. Further clarification of some details were pursued by the Commission.

The Commission completed the Certificate of Appropriateness Findings report.

Jodie Kurtz-Osborne moved to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for 121 W. Calhoun Street. Rodney Paglialong seconded the motion. Ayes: Jodie Kurtz-Osborne, Rodney Paglialong, Chairman Stebbins. Nays: None. Absent: Erica Wilson. Abstentions: None. Motion Carried. The Certificate of Appropriateness for 121 W. Calhoun Street was approved.

V. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATIONS:

- A. IHPA site visit to Old Courthouse and to 220 N. Benton Street**
Anthony Rubano, architect with the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency visited Woodstock and walked through the Courthouse and Sheriff’s House with Nancy Baker and Allen Stebbins. Anthony identified features Illinois Preservation Agency should be preserved if an owner wants to claim a federal historic preservation tax credit. . Nancy has a report that can be read later. Ms. Baker noted that the only thing that surprised her was the ceiling in the courtroom, where he thought it should be repaired rather than reconstructed. She recommended doing structural studies before making decisions. The Commission asked for clarifications on the condition of the plaster, lathe and joist work and the amount of water damage.
- B. 220 N. Benton Street**
Chairman Stebbins introduced Jakes Dioguardi who purchased the buildings at the northeast corner of North Benton and East Judd Streets. There are actually three

separate buildings and Jakes is working with Anthony Rubano because they have a long range plan to restore the buildings and want to take advantage of tax credits. There is concern about the condition of the foundation wall along the railroad tracks and if the entire façade could collapse onto tracks. Their structural engineer indicates the solution is simple but costly-- long term they need to shore up the building and install new roof systems. The oldest part of the structure is from the 1840s. The building is not in a state of collapse, but does need to be shored up-- a lot of water drains to the back. Owners plan to work with the City to get water pushed to drain. They need to do nothing to outside of building at all. Everything is inside. The fieldstone will be repaired and support beams reconstructed. Mr. Stebbins asked for information about funding via the TIF District. Mr. Dioguardi noted they have been able to rent two spaces that have sat empty for two years and that they are exploring any options for any monies that can help him preserve historical integrity. He also noted they will make the February 1 deadline for the Façade Improvement Program and that they hope to make a bistro style restaurant on the lower level with a residential apartment upstairs.

C. Temporary Door to restaurant at Old Courthouse

Chairman Stebbins stated that the permanent door to the restaurant has been installed. He noted that he was very concerned about the temporary door and had received negative feedback regarding its appearance. The Commission needs to seriously consider things like imposing conditions in the future. In response to a question from Chairman Stebbins, N. Baker stated that the owners have not contacted her regarding the canopy which was discussed at a previous meeting.

D. Banners at 111 Van Buren

Nancy Baker indicated that the banners at 111 Van Buren have not been removed due to poor internal communication. The City's previous code enforcement officer was supposed to handle the Commission's complaint, but when he left, it did not get passed to the new enforcement officer. She called the store last week and they said they would remove banners. Allen Stebbins stated that if they are not down within 30 days that the Commission should recommend to city council to enforce the sign ordinance to remove the banners. He will put this back on our agenda if the signs are not down.

E. Abandoned house at 315 W Judd Street

Mr. Stebbins noted that the property has been foreclosed, but the bank doesn't want to do anything with it. Ms. Baker confirmed, stating that the property was lost due to foreclosure over a year ago and it was awarded to the bank. The bank did not want the house however, and had the foreclosure vacated. The title went back to the previous owners who moved out of state and also don't want the house. The city attorney is making an effort to acquire it in some fashion. Quit claim deeds have been signed by both the previous owner and the bank, however an out of state company purchased the property at a tax sale. The city attorney is currently negotiating with them. Mr. Stebbins noted that in the meantime, the property sits and deteriorates. He suggested the Commission recommend to the city council to take action under Section 7.7.5.9 of the City Code to prevent demolition by neglect.

J. Kurtz-Osborne moved to ask the City Council to take action under Section 7.7.5.9 of the City Code to prevent demolition by neglect. Rodney Paglialong seconded. Ayes: Jodie Kurtz-Osborne, Rodney Paglialong, Chairman Stebbins. Nays: None. Absent: Erica Wilson. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

F. Old Courthouse and Sheriff's house stair project update

Nancy Baker reported the work on the Courthouse stairs is nearly complete. The Sheriff's House stairs are on hold until spring. The completion date is April 30, 2015.

G. Chairman Stebbins noted that N. Baker had provided copies of membership information for Landmarks Illinois and the National Trust. The membership to the Illinois Association of Historic Preservation Commissions has been mailed and Commission members will receive membership information when it becomes available.

VI. Other Updates

A. Courthouse

N. Baker reported that the Urban Land Institutes Technical Assistance Panel (or TAP) regarding the Old Courthouse and Sheriff's House is scheduled for March 10th and 11th. The TAP process involved a team of experts who will meet to study the property and the community and make recommendations regarding future use and ownership. This team is to interview 25-30 stakeholders in the community. On the second day the team will do extensive brainstorming and at the end of the day they will offer their best thoughts on the use of the courthouse. In 4-6 weeks the team will come back with a formal presentation and a booklet. R. Paglialong asked if this was at no cost. N. Baker said it was at a considerable cost of \$20,000 and the McHenry County Community Foundation offered a grant to cover costs.

B. Scholarship

A. Stebbins stated that the State Preservation Conference will be held on June 25, 2015 in Carbondale IL. Financial assistance is available to cover registration and travel costs. Interested Commission members should contact N. Baker.

C. Opera House

Mr. Paglialong stated that he would like to have a HPC site visit at the Opera House. Commission members thought it would be informative to learn more about the building itself and the prioritizing of conservation and maintenance needs. N. Baker will contact Mark Greenleaf regarding his availability for a site visit.

VII. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by R. Paglialong, second by J. Kurtz-Osborne to adjourn to the next regular meeting of the Woodstock Historic Preservation Commission. Ayes: Chairman Stebbins, R. Paglialong, J. Kurtz-Osborne. Nays: None. Absentees: Erica Wilson. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Weber – Deputy City Clerk