

MINUTES

**TOWN OF NORMAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
UPTOWN STATION, 3rd FLOOR (Union Pacific Room)
11 UPTOWN CIRCLE
NORMAL, ILLINOIS**

**REGULAR MEETING
November 10, 2015
12:30 p.m.**

Members Present

Kristen Allen, Nancy Armstrong, Kathy Burgess, Laurie Christensen, Bruce Warloe

Members Absent

Anne Matter and Bob Ward

Others Present

Mercy Davison, Town Planner; Ralph Endress, Young America, owner of 501 Broadway

Call to Order

Mr. Warloe called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. noting that there was a quorum.

Minutes

Ms. Armstrong moved to approve the minutes of the October 13, 2015 meeting. Ms. Christensen seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

DR-15-11-40: Demolition of 501 Broadway

Ms. Davison noted that the structure at 501 Broadway was built as a single-family structure in the early 1900s. The house was used as a single family residence until approximately 7 years ago when the owner sold it to Young America, which has since been using it as a student residence. The property is zoned R-3A Medium Density Multiple Family.

Ms. Armstrong said that this structure is more architecturally and visually significant than Mecherle Hall, which the commission voted against demolishing at its October meeting. She noted that it is an excellent example of Victorian architecture and that it is the duty of the commission to protect such structures. She further noted that the structure appears to be in fairly good condition notwithstanding the student residents. She stated that it is unfortunate that such a structure is surrounded by student residential properties and that she understands the likelihood that demolition will ultimately be approved.

Ms. Burgess agreed with Ms. Armstrong's statements. She also explained that it is the duty of the commission to make recommendations on the preservation of structures that significantly contribute

to the history of Normal. Further, she explained that it is not the commission's job to evaluate the economic feasibility of maintaining or restoring structures nor to approve demolition based on the quality of the proposed redevelopment plan. She read sections of the code to support these statements. She also noted that the structure is being used now – it is not completely obsolete. She also read in the Pantagraph quotes from the residents, who stated how much they enjoy living there.

Ms. Allen stated her agreement with all previous statements.

Mr. Warloe disagreed, stating that the house is certainly old but not that historically significant from an architectural perspective. He also noted that the badly deteriorated state of both the house and the detached garage, coupled with the multiple family zoning, make it almost impossible to restore and continue inhabiting. He asked Town staff if there were evidence of any other historically significant aspects of the property, such as the architect or previous owners. Ms. Davison said she had found no such evidence in The Legacy but had not researched it further.

Mr. Endress stated that when he purchased the property, he contacted Anne Matter and the history museum and offered to give them the house if they would relocate it. The potential to relocate it to 701 Broadway was discussed, and Ms. Davison recalled that an investigation into that revealed a very high relocation cost primarily due to the house height and the power lines in the vicinity. Ms. Davison stated that she toured the house with Ms. Matter and recalls that the interior of the house was not as remarkable as the exterior. According to Mr. Endress, Ms. Matter was not interested in relocating the house.

Mr. Endress also noted that the addition on the west side of the house has no significant interior architectural features such as trim. He is also willing to have the Old House Society come through the house to strip out any materials of historic value.

Ms. Burgess moved to approve the demolition permit, and Ms. Christensen seconded. The motion failed 1-4, with Mr. Warloe voting in support of demolition.

CA-15-07-24: Window Restoration, 706 N. School (Amended Request)

Ms. Davison explained that the owner has completed most of the window restoration approved in July, and he would now like to expand the Certificate of Appropriateness to include 10 wood storm windows visible from the street.

Ms. Armstrong moved to approve the amended request, and Ms. Allen seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

BG-15-07-03: Window Restoration, 706 N. School (Amended Request)

Ms. Davison explained that the owner has requested that the grant approved in July be increased to cover half the cost of the additional windows. The funds would go toward materials and some re-glazing. As proposed, the grant would increase from the previously approved \$1,142 to \$1,642.

Ms. Burgess moved to approve a grant increase to \$1,642, and Ms. Armstrong seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

Other Business

1. Ms. Davison informed the commission of her recent meeting with the Payne Place neighborhood regarding the potential to have the neighborhood designated a Historic District. Ms. Davison further explained that it will be up to the residents to start and complete the designation process, although Ms. Davison will assist as necessary. The Legacy recommends that Payne Place be designated.

No further business was discussed.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mercy Davison
Town Planner