

MINUTES

**TOWN OF NORMAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
UPTOWN STATION, 3rd FLOOR (Illinois Terminal Conference Room)
11 UPTOWN CIRCLE
NORMAL, ILLINOIS**

**REGULAR MEETING
September 12th, 2017
12:30 p.m.**

Members Present

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

Members Absent

Anne Matter

Others Present

Mercy Davison, Town Planner; Taylor Long, Associate Planner; Jeff Augspurger, 607 N Main Street; Mike Kearns, Contractor for 409 Normal Avenue

Call to Order

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

Minutes

Ms. Burgess moved to approve the minutes of the August 8th, 2017 regular meeting. Ms. Armstrong seconded. The motion carried 6-0.

CA-17-09-42: Railing Installation, 310 W Virginia Avenue

This item was listed last on the agenda, but moved up in the order because of its routine nature. Mr. Warloe introduced the application for the installation of a handrail on the front porch steps of 310 W Virginia Avenue and invited Ms. Armstrong to explain he plans further. Ms. Armstrong explained that this was the last major piece of her front porch's reconstruction that was first approved by the commission back in June of 2017. Ms. Armstrong explained that the railing would be made of wrought iron and explained that the exact method and placement of its attachment to the steps and/or wingwalls was still being discussed with her contractor. Ms. Armstrong summarized that the railing would be installed in a way that detracted the least from the home's entrance and caused the least likelihood of harm to the new masonry work. Most importantly, the railing's addition would provide another level of safety to the recently reconstructed steps and enlarged landing.

Ms. Christensen moved to approved the motion for a railing's installation on 310 W Virginia's front porch steps. Mr. Niebur seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0.

BG-17-09-10: Siding Replacement, 607 N Main Street

Mr. Warloe introduced the application for a \$5,000.00 Bone Grant to be approved for siding and wood exterior detailing restoration at 607 N Main Street. Mr. Long began the discussion by refreshing the commissioners on the initial approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for this work being done back in May of 2017. Mr. Long further explained that although the applicant, Mr. Augspurger, did get his Certificate of Appropriateness approved, his Bone Grant applications for the extensive restoration work were denied as presented, but were to be reapplied for once new scopes of work were defined and clearly lined out in revised estimates for the two applications. Mr. Long and Mr. Augspurger then summarized the honest misunderstanding that followed that meeting in May that led Mr. Augspurger to begin his exterior restoration project (which was approved), but not return with revised estimates until the work was well underway and nearly completed (which would usually eliminate an applicant from receiving grant funds since they cannot be awarded for work that has already begun). Mr. Long stated that it was Town staff opinion that the commission should award Mr. Augspurger the two \$5,000.00 grants he has currently applied for on the grounds that the exact process for Bone Grant approval and the timing at which work should have begun were not clearly communicated to Mr. Augspurger. What's more, Mr. Long and Ms. Davison added that the work that has been done was completed exactly how the commission had approved it under the Certificate of Appropriateness and that the only mix-up was an understanding of the order by which documents should be submitted and approved.

Mr. Warloe agreed with Town staff's recommendation and stated that the commission had all but guaranteed Mr. Augspurger that his grants would be approved once he resubmitted estimates back in May. The other commissioners agreed and expressed appreciation for the massive undertaking that was 607 N. Main's exterior restoration. Both the commissioners and Town staff stressed that this and the following Bone Grant's approval for work that was already completed were not to set a precedent and that this was a unique situation centered around an honest misunderstanding.

Ms. Armstrong moved to approve a Bone Grant for 607 N Main Street in the amount of \$5,000.00. Ms. Christensen seconded the motion. The motion carried 6-0.

BG-17-09-11: Siding Replacement, 607 N Main Street

This item was discussed alongside the previous Bone Grant application.

Ms. Burgess moved to approve a Bone Grant for 607 N Main Street in the amount of \$5,000.00. Ms. Armstrong seconded the motion. The motion carried 6-0.

CA-17-09-43: Window Replacement, 409 Normal Avenue

Mr. Warloe introduced the application for the replacement of two damaged, wood windows at 409 Normal Avenue with two vinyl replacements. Mr. Warloe then invited the contractor for the applicant, Mr. Mike Kearns of Nordine Remodeling, LLC, to further explain his client's situation. Mr. Kearns stated that the two southern windows proposed for replacement are wooden and original to the home, but in a state of deterioration beyond repair. The two damaged windows, according to Mr. Kearns and the homeowner, leak rain water into the home and, if not mitigated in the near

future, would do serious damage to the building's exterior stucco walls. The two proposed vinyl replacement windows would be white and feature muntins between the modern windows' glass panes. Mr. Kearns also stated that a variety of window styles and muntin patterns were already visible from the street and, referring to pictures projected by Town staff, walked the commissioners around the home's exterior. Mr. Kearns added that as part of the replacement, the wood surrounds for each window frame would be maintained and replaced where needed. Lastly, Mr. Kearns stated that his client is in her mid-nineties, and although perfectly independent, does live on a fixed income and that any other kind of window's purchase and installation would be outside her means.

Ms. Burgess – as all other commissioners did subsequently – expressed her understanding and sympathy for the homeowner's situation, but explained that vinyl windows could not be approved. Commissioners Burgess and Armstrong summarized their role as commissioners and charge to preserve the historic integrity of any and all designated historic sites – no matter their size or grandeur. The commissioners stated that wood-composite windows are a regularly approved and grant funded replacement for original wood windows, but that the commission could not approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for window replacement as proposed.

Aware of the relative urgency to replace the leaking windows and understanding of the applicant's financial restraints, the commission and Town staff presented the applicant with the following next steps:

1. Reapply with wood-composite replacement windows and apply for a Bone Grant to help with costs. The commission could ask Town staff to pursue a budget adjustment for the grant and help cover half the costs of these significantly costlier, but more appropriate windows.
2. Return to the commission for the approval of the two vinyl windows through the Economic Hardship process. Staff explained that the applicant would just be asked to provide a number of privileged financial documents illustrating her financial restraints and estimates showing the cost difference between vinyl and wood-composite windows. From there, Ms. Davison explained, the commission could reconsider the application for vinyl window installation and entertain their use in this one specific case on the grounds that any other kind of window's purchase and installation would put true economic hardship on the applicant.

Town staff and Mr. Kearns resolved to follow-up with the applicant and present her with these two best options to move forward and have the damaged windows replaced as soon as possible.

Ms. Christensen moved to approve the application for window replacement at 409 Normal Avenue as currently proposed. Ms. Armstrong seconded the motion. The motion failed 0-6.

Other Business

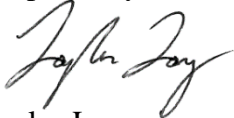
1. Mr. Long informed the commissioners that the commission's next regular meeting on October 10th, 2017 would take place in the Union Pacific Conference Room. Mr. Long assured the group that appropriate notice of the change in location would be made to all applicants and the public at large prior to the meeting.

2. Commissioners Armstrong and Burgess provided the other commissioners with a summary of topics and discussions had by some-30 attendees at Saturday, September 9th's Commissioner Assistance & Mentoring Program (CAMP) workshop.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Taylor Long". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "T".

Taylor Long
Associate Planner