

MINUTES

**TOWN OF NORMAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
11 UPTOWN CIRCLE
ILLINOIS TERMINAL CONFERENCE ROOM, ROOM 336, (3RD FLOOR)
NORMAL, ILLINOIS**

REGULAR MEETING

January 8th, 2019

12:30 p.m.

Members Present

Bruce Warloe, Nancy Armstrong, Todd Bugg, Laurie Christensen, Chris Niebur

Members Absent

Kathy Burgess, Anne Matter

Others Present

Derek Beigh, The Pantagraph; Mary Cullen, WGLT; David Shields; Karyn Smith; Joel Studebaker; Marc Tiritilli; Chris Koos, Mayor of the Town of Normal; Kathleen Lorenz, Town Council; Mercy Davison, Town Planner; Taylor Long, Associate Planner; Eric Hanson, Assistant City Manager; Jason Querciagrossa, Deputy Corporate Counsel

Call to Order

Mr. Warloe called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. noting that there was a quorum. Mr. Warloe explained that the three items on the agenda could be discussed as one by the commission but would be voted on individually. Mr. Warloe then invited any interested members of the public that were present to offer comments on the three demolition permit applications being considered by the commission.

Karyn Davis addressed the commission stating her concern that the full removal of 104, 106, and 108 E Beaufort would negatively alter the historic character of that area of Uptown. Ms. Davis asked the commissioners to consider recommending the preservation of the brick facades of each of the buildings proposed for demolition and their incorporation into the new Trail East building's exterior.

Marc Tiritilli addressed the commission and asked that the commissioners be mindful of preserving the history extant in Uptown. Mr. Tiritilli cited the Farr Plan [the Uptown Renewal Plan] and offered his interpretation that the plan stressed broad preservation of existing buildings in the downtown area and that the three buildings proposed for demolition as part of Trail East were not included in the plan's footprint for the new building northeast of the circle. Mr. Tiritilli specifically asked that the demolition permit for 104 E Beaufort Street be denied allowing the persons who painted the mural on the west façade of the building more time to preserve or relocate their work.

Lastly, Mr. Tiritilli stated his disappointment that the mural's painters might be required by the Town to pay for the artwork's potential relocation, while the developers of the new building would be receiving public financial assistance.

Chris Koos, Mayor of the Town of Normal, addressed the commission and stated that he was in attendance to answer any questions the commission might have pertaining to the Town Council's perspective on the Trail East development. Mayor Koos added that he was chair of the Historic Preservation Commission in the early 2000s when the Uptown Renewal Plan was being drafted. In response to Mr. Tiritilli's interpretation of the Uptown Renewal Plan, Mayor Koos clarified that initial maps for the Trail East area did not include 104, 106, and 108 E Beaufort Street, but that 104 E Beaufort was ultimately included in the future building's footprint in the final, approved draft of the plan.

Marc Tiritilli again stated his interpretation of the Uptown Renewal Plan upon obtaining consent to speak again from Mr. Warloe.

Minutes

Mr. Bugg moved to approve the minutes of the November 13th, 2018 regular meeting. Mr. Niebur seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0.

DP-19-01-01: Demolition, 104 E Beaufort Street

Mr. Warloe introduced the application for 104 E Beaufort Street's demolition and stated that discussion of the other two applications for 106 and 108 E Beaufort Street could be had at the same time.

Ms. Armstrong expressed her admiration for the changes to Normal and Uptown over the decades since settling in the community. Ms. Armstrong then offered her opinion that a community's unique, built environment is an importance asset developed over decades and that the three subject buildings on E Beaufort Street were a part of the unique character and aesthetics in Uptown. For those reasons, Ms. Armstrong stated that she would be in favor of preserving the three buildings and delivering a negative recommendation for their demolition to the Town Council. Ms. Christensen echoed Ms. Armstrong's reasons for denying the demolition permits and summarized the changes she had seen in Normal in her years as a resident and member of the commission. Both commissioners stated their long, sincere support for historic preservation.

Mr. Bugg expressed his sincere advocacy for historic preservation and his fears for what might happen if Uptown's development was stalled or abandoned. Mr. Bugg cited the example of the City of Galena and the past period of disinvestment and lag in development that only by chance helped preserve that community's historic homes and small commercial properties. Mr. Bugg stated his dismay in seeing most any older building razed but noted that the three buildings in question were not landmarks or part of a historic district and that the Town and/or property owners had not granted

them historic designation up to now. Mr. Bugg concluded that he would be in favor of the proposed demolitions for these reasons and because of the responsible nature of Uptown's development.

Mr. Niebur supported Mr. Bugg's position and explained his thought process with regards to the proposed demolitions. Mr. Niebur stated the new building could be built in a harmonious way to fit with both the newer and older structures in Uptown. Mr. Niebur then echoed Ms. Armstrong with his desire to see Uptown's current character not diminished and spoke to what an amenity the area has been for him and his family. Mr. Niebur stated his understanding for what the mural has come to mean as a façade enhancement to 104 E Beaufort and its use as a photo backdrop, but that it was not historic. Mr. Niebur offered his opinion that although the subject buildings did possess brick work and other features incorporated in older means of construction, they did not possess architectural details significant enough to warrant historic designation. Mr. Niebur concluded with the statement that it would be up to the Town Council and the Uptown Design Review Commission to ensure that the new building proposed for the Trail East site would not detract from Uptown.

Ms. Armstrong expressed support for Mr. Niebur's position, yet stated her view that part of her role as a member of the commission was to most often support preservation over demolition and serve as a check or balance in development or redevelopment discussions the Town takes part in.

Mr. Warloe expressed interest in the idea presented by Ms. Smith that the three E Beaufort Street properties' facades could be incorporated in the potential new building's exterior and recommended the Town Council and Town staff investigate the idea. Mr. Warloe noted his long tenure on the commission, passion for preservation of historic structures throughout the community, and his appreciation for the unique character of Uptown and its different periods of development. Mr. Warloe summarized the process by which the commission's recommendation of a demolition permit's denial is able to be supported or discounted by the Town Council. Mr. Warloe concluded by stating that he would not vote in support of the demolition permits.

Mr. Bugg moved to approve the application for the demolition of 104 E Beaufort Street. Ms. Christensen seconded the motion. The motion failed 3-2.

DP-19-01-02: Demolition, 106 E Beaufort Street

Mr. Bugg moved to approve the application for the demolition of 106 E Beaufort Street. Ms. Armstrong seconded the motion. The motion failed 3-2.

DP-19-01-03: Demolition, 108 E Beaufort Street

Mr. Bugg moved to approve the application for the demolition of 108 E Beaufort Street. Ms. Armstrong seconded the motion. The motion failed 3-2.

Ms. Davison explained that the commission's denial of the demolition permits meant that the Town Council had 30 days to start the process to designate the properties as historic landmarks. If the Town Council does not take such action, the demolitions could proceed after 30 days.

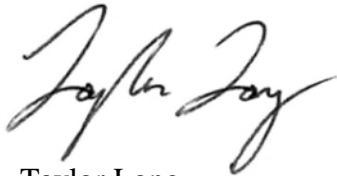
Other Business

None

Adjournment

Ms. Christensen moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Niebur seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 12:50 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, sweeping initial "T".

Taylor Long
Associate Planner