

Rockford Historic Preservation Commission

August 9, 2016 – 5:30 PM – City Hall Conference Room B

Present: Dave Coady, Gary Carlson, Matthew Wolff, Jeffrey Kirk, Vickie Krueger and Robert McCarthy
Absent: Alderman Karen Elyea
Staff: Scott Capovilla, Rudy Moreno, Jeremy Carter, Matt Vitner
Other: Chris Herold, Gary Anderson and residents of Haight Village

Meeting was called to order at 5:32 PM by Dave Coady

Roll Call and Determination of Quorum:

6 members present and one absent – Quorum.

Public Hearing:

N/A

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the July 12, 2016 meeting

A **MOTION** was made by Gary Carlson to **APPROVE** the July 12, 2016 meeting minutes. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Jeffrey Kirk and **CARRIED** by a vote of **6-0**

Unfinished Business:

None

New Business:

Request for Certificate of Appropriateness – 309 South Second Street

Contractor Chris Herold presented a plan to install an ADA ramp in the rear of the house for property located at 220 South Second Street. Dave Coady asked what material the handrail was made of on the existing porch. Mr. Herold said it may have been treated lumber but not sure since it was painted. Mr. Coady also asked if this was visible from the street. Mr. Herold said it was not. A couple of commission members stated that it was visible from the alley and perhaps could be seen from the side street through the neighboring property. Gary Carlson asked if it could be located next to the sidewalk that leads from the garage to the house. There was discussion between the commission members on whether or not the ramp should be located over or next to the sidewalk. Matthew Wolff stated he preferred it over the sidewalk and the others agreed. Further discussion took place regarding whether or not the ramp should be painted. It was agreed to allow the ramp as presented.

A **MOTION** was made by Vickie Krueger to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of an ADA ramp in the rear of the house. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Matthew Wolff and **CARRIED** by a vote of **6-0**

Item for Discussion – Haight Village Street Lighting

HPC Interim Secretary Scott Capovilla explained that this item is one for discussion purposes only. Mr. Capovilla was informed of some recent changes to a few street lights in Haight Village by one of the residents, Gary Anderson. Mr. Anderson requested if he could speak to the commission on the issue as he believed the changes warranted HPC approval and a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Mr. Anderson thanked the commission for allowing him to speak on this issue. He explained back when the Haight Village Historic District was formed around 1980, the neighborhood had the ugly ComEd poles with the cobra head mast arms for street lights. The residents worked with the City to find a replacement for those old street lights. The purpose was to find something that would match the period when this area was first developed. The street lights that now exist replicate the old gas lights that were common in the 1800's. Recently, some light heads were replaced and they don't match the existing lights. The glass is clear and the bulbs are now LED which distracts from the historic nature of the area. They would like the new lights replaced with low-pressure sodium lights or something similar to look like the old gas lights.

Joe Dailing stated the he wanted the white glass not the clear glass. He stated that details need to be followed as they are the key to the integrity of the neighborhood. Other residents that did not identify themselves also spoke out about signs that have been placed on the existing street lights that they feel should be removed. Specifically, they wanted the sign for the Sports Factory removed from the street light on First and Oak Streets and placed separately on its own pole. The residents also stated that they have a group of young professionals that have approached them about painting the street light poles so they would like these issues resolved very soon.

Jeremy Carter, Traffic Engineer for the City, spoke about the recent changes to the street lights. He said the light by the Sports Factory will be changed so that issue will be resolved. He discussed the changing technology for lighting and how low pressure sodium is being phased out. A few of the light fixtures needed to have the heads replaced and they matched up the design as close as possible. They deemed the changes as basic maintenance. He apologized for the clear glass and he will investigate finding frosted or white glass. However, he warned that the changing technologies will ultimately render the current light fixtures obsolete and there could be changes within 5 years. There was a discussion with the commission and Mr. Carter on the Calvin temperature of the lights, the color of the glass and the type of bulbs to be installed. Robert McCarthy asked Mr. Carter if we could use a colored glass with the LED lights and still provide the same effect. He said would look into it but Mr. Anderson said that technology is not available at this time.

Mr. Capovilla stated that the current HPC guidelines do not cover street lights, only lights on private property. However, the City has always taken major changes to street lighting to the HPC for approval. Most recently, the changes to the street lights at West State & Main Streets were brought to the commission for approval as well as 7th Street. He stated that the Public Works Department was doing what they thought was best and they had no malicious intent. Dave Coady stated they he felt they (Public Works) had the best intentions as well but he also felt that the existing street lights are one of the keys to the ambience of the Haight Village neighborhood. A few of the members of the commission wanted the City to apply for a certificate of appropriateness. Mr. Carter suggested his staff take a look at this issue and work with the neighborhood on a solution before bringing anything forward. He and his staff felt they were just making minor changes until he came here tonight. Mr. Capovilla said we can form an informal committee to develop some standards on street light replacement for Haight Village. Mr. Carter and Mr. Anderson were in agreement that it was best to work with the neighborhood and agreed to do so moving forward.

Communication and staff report:

Interim HPC Secretary Scott Capovilla introduced Rudy Moreno, Planner/Building Plans Examiner for the City, who will be assuming the role of HPC Secretary in the next couple of months.

Adjournment:

With no other business Gary Carlson made a **MOTION** to **ADJOURN**. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Vickie Krueger and **CARRIED** by a vote of **6-0**.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:23 P.M.

Submitted by Scott Capovilla – Historic Preservation Commission Interim Secretary