

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Time and Date: Wednesday, February 25, 2015, at 4:00 p.m. in the Birch Room of Wausau City Hall
Members Present: Gisselman (C), Burke, Forer, Grimm, Tryczak, Gidlund (arrived at 4:10 p.m.), Bahr (arrived at 4:15 p.m.)
Others Present: Lenz, Stratz, Bhandari

In compliance with Chapter 19, Wisconsin Statutes, notice of this meeting was posted and transmitted to the *Wausau Daily Herald* in the proper manner.

Chairperson Gisselman called the meeting to order at approximately 4:00 p.m. stating that a quorum was present.

Approve the minutes of the December 3, 2014 and December 31, 2014 meetings.

Grimm motioned to approve the minutes of the December 3, 2014 and December 31, 2014 meetings. Tryczak seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously 5-0.

407 North 3rd Avenue façade revocation, Commercial Rehabilitation Program.

Stratz said the proposed project is for the vacant station at 407 North 3rd Avenue. There are some great ideas and assistance is needed from the Commercial Rehabilitation Program. Stratz introduced Raj, Tim, and Wayne. Bhandara stated that he has turned a Citgo station to a Mobile station in Brokaw and has received great input from the community. The tanks have been removed from this location. This is 4 blocks away from the Clark Station, which is totally neglected and an eye sore. Bhandara predicted that the Clark Station would either shut down or will improve the property. Government funds are necessary as loans are not being obtained from a bank. Bhandara went over the costs of the project.

Gisselman asked if the tanks are present. Bhandara answered that the tanks have been removed and it is a large cost to reinstall them. Stratz said that the reason they may be gone is because a lot of gas stations with auto body shops have closed up. Bhandara said the money is made in the convenience stores and not in the gasoline sales, like it was done in the past. Nobody wants to go into a store that smells like oil and auto repair. There aren't any more auto repair shops with the gasoline sales. Gisselman said that they then had to depend on the repair aspect of the business. Bhandara said the bank is selling the property for less than half of what the owners had wanted for it. Burke asked if soil testing was done. Bhandara answered that it was done. Burke asked if there was residue from the fuel. Bhandara answered that there is not residue. Gisselman asked if the service bays would be the convenience store. Bhandara confirmed. Stratz stated that this would compete with Clark and force them to do something with their property. Bhandara said there will be no brand; it will just be called Fast Food Mart. Since it won't be branded, it can be economically priced. Lenz asked if the canopy would remain in the same spot. Bhandara answered yes and an additional canopy may be added at a later date. Burke asked about the number of dispensers. Bhandara said that there are 2 dispensers now and will need more room for additional dispensers.

Grimm motioned to recommend the façade renovation for 407 North 3rd Avenue. Forer seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously 5-0.

Discuss Historic Preservation in Wausau Comprehensive Plan.

Gidlund arrived at 4:10 p.m.

Gisselman explained that in the past, the commission assisted with a portion of the current Wausau Comprehensive Plan. At this time, the plan is being revised. There is a chapter called Cultural Resources

that speaks about the commission. Lenz said a portion of the 2nd part of the Comprehensive Plan is located in the packet. The second part of the plan goes over the goals, objectives and policies. The first part of the plan is general and sticks to goals, objectives and policies to guide the city as a whole and outlines any issues. This is just the starting process and the Plan Commission is the driving force. This commission is good committee to review the historic preservation part of the plan.

Bahr arrived at 4:15 p.m.

Gisselman said that this may take a couple months. Lenz said the entire plan overall will take 12-18 months. Gisselman said this is an opportunity to present goals, refresh the goals, and think about the policy and strategy of the commission. Gisselman went over the goal and objectives as listed in the packet. It was agreed that Objective 2 could be removed. It was decided that Objective 3 should be kept and Gisselman said that he would like to look and the Highland Park Neighborhood as a potentially historic district. Gisselman said that most of the properties on the National Register of Historic Places have been landmarked or already in a Local Historic District. Gisselman said the commission needs to do some additional work with directional information signage. Gisselman said that some things need to go out and others can go in. It is a time for the commission to dream a bit and think about what should be done in the next few years. Goal 1 is the meat of the commission. Tryczak added that before the goal is stated, the text needs to be changed from Historic Landmarks Commission to Historic Preservation Commission. Lenz said that he would work with Gary and the Regional Planning Commission to do some workshops for brainstorming. Gidlund asked if certain houses were designated. Gisselman said that some properties in the local historic districts stand alone and photos of these properties were presented. Gisselman said that the city does not have any say in the properties that are outside the city. Lenz said that it could be recommended in the plan, but wasn't sure if they could be explored since it would be outside the cities jurisdiction. Gisselman said the county could designate to give recognition. Burke said it would bring recognition to the properties at minimum. Gisselman said there are about 5 landmarks that are outside of Wausau in Marathon County. Burke said it would be a great goal, but if it can't be done, it can't.

Discuss and possible action regarding signs for the Federal Building – Plaque for Gerritt Sinclair mural.

Lenz said that there has been discussion about an exterior sign for the Federal Building, as it is in the agreement with the federal government. It had been decided to ask for state funding. Lenz passed around a metal plaque to the commission. The commission agreed that it should be put up near the mural. Gidlund asked where the mural is located. Lenz answered that it is located in the lobby of the Federal Building. Forer asked if it is open to the public. Lenz said it is not open to the public, but a tour could be scheduled with the property manager. Gisselman suggested a get-together for an unveiling. Bahr said it looks and nice and other members agreed. Lenz added that the courtroom should be accessible also. It was determined that the plaque should be put up in May for Historic Preservation Month at 3:00 with the monthly meeting scheduled afterward. Forer asked who the plaque came from. Lenz answered that it was from a professional curator who was retiring.

Discuss and possible action regarding signs for the Federal Building – Exterior historical marker.

Lenz said that at this time, there isn't any new information. Something should be done soon. Gisselman said that he hated to bring this up late last year due to financial constraints the city is in. Gisselman said that local foundations could assist and said that it could also be unveiled in May.

Presentation of historic structures in Wausau historic districts.

A slideshow of historic structures was presented to the commission to show what the work of the commission is about.

Future agenda items and next meeting date(s)

The next Historic Preservation Commission meeting will be on March 25, 2015 at 4:00 p.m. It was requested that the Wausau Comprehensive Plan and discussion about Historic Preservation Month be listed on the agenda.

Adjournment

Tryczak motioned to adjourn. Bahr seconded, and the motion carried unanimously 7-0. The meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Gary Gisselman, Chair