

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Time and Date: Wednesday, May 30, 2018 at 4:00 p.m. in the Birch Room of Wausau City Hall
Members Present: Gary Gisselman (C), Blake Opal-Wahoske, Kevin Crooks, Patty Grimm, Mary Forer, David Oberbeck
Others Present: Brad Lenz, Bradley Sippel

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 April 25, 2018 meeting.

Crooks motioned to approve the minutes of the April 25, 2018 meeting. Grimm seconded, and the motion carried unanimously 6-0.

Discussion and possible action on the Mark's House, 813 North 2nd Street.

Lenz said that the YMCA is open for the City moving the structures and they are still in negotiations. The Marks House could be placed just north of the eye clinic and would be used for office space. The brick building is a residence and is in decent shape. Lenz said that they would like to try to reuse it as a house in a new location. Schuette Movers is familiar with this type of move. The YMCA is trying to find users for both of the buildings and the City is trying to find the total costs and potential users. Lenz said there is a federal block grant money that could be used for residential and commercial redevelopment.

Crooks asked if the YMCA is putting up anything for the cost of moving. Lenz answered that they may put the cost of razing the building towards the move. Right now the buildings are a liability to them from a monetary perspective. The rehab is going to cost quite a bit. Crooks asked if that is where the community development funds would come in, and if the building could be moved and put onto the foundation and made available to the private sector. Lenz said that is what is planned. In order to get the buildings to the site, power lines will need to be removed, the foundation will need to be poured and the site will need to be prepared. Lenz said that they looked at both buildings going on 1st Street, but the northern lot is tied up with the RiverLife development. Grimm said that the other properties have huge trees and power lines. It could be an easy move. Lenz said that one of the sites that was identified for the office building is near 3rd and Short Streets.

Oberbeck asked if it would make sense to put this out as a private bid as it sits. Lenz said that the YMCA is currently looking for users. Grimm said that the interior of the house is in very bad shape. The cost for renovations will be extensive and the YMCA is willing to offer \$13,600 to anyone that is willing to take it. The price quote to put in the foundation with a basement is \$20,000-\$25,000 and the cost to move the building is just under \$15,000. It could be a real good deal and it is a unique structure. Crooks asked if there is a significant risk to the YMCA to abandon the efforts and raze it. Lenz said that they have been pretty clear on their timeline, but don't think they will raze until the last minute. Grimm said that it will need to be down by the end of July. Oberbeck said the faster it is to the private sector, the better and suggested to get interest or it will not go anywhere. Lenz said that the YMCA is searching in the private sector. Oberbeck said that local contractors may be interested and a fact sheet could be gathered. Crooks said that developers like S.C. Swiderski, MetroPlains, or Larry Meyer may be interested. Crooks said that it could be a functional building for \$50,000. Oberbeck said that value could be added if the right people were found. Gisselman said that the committee could be alerted by Inspections Department when a demolition permit is applied for. Oberbeck asked if it would be possible to put together a fact sheet and get it out to contractors. Oberbeck asked if the YMCA is looking to release the building or if they have looked to the City for assistance. Lenz said that the buildings are owned by the Y and they were going to

do some outreach. Oberbeck said that it needs to be done quickly. Crooks said that a joint press release with the YMCA could spark some interest.

Gisselman asked if the funding is done in house on the staff level. Lenz said the Citizens Advisory Committee would need to approve any expenditures of CDBG. The committee has nine citizen members. There would be different committees for community rehab loans. Grimm asked if it would be loan money or if it is just available. Lenz said that it is just available and it would be structured so that most or all of it would be paid back. Oberbeck said that realtors could be notified in a blanket email.

These items will be brought back to the commission for the next meeting.

Discussion and possible action on 207 McIndoe Street.

This item was discussed under the previous item.

Discuss Lustron house at 311 Ethel Street.

Gisselman said that this house has risen to our attention and could be landmarked. Gisselman handed out information on the history of the house and the company. It is prominent in the historic survey. There are very few of these houses throughout the United States. In June, the committee can take action to have a public hearing. Gisselman said that he was just in contact with the realtor and will have a tour next Wednesday, June 6th at 4:00 p.m. at the property.

Crooks asked if it is vacant. Gisselman said that it was just sold, or will be closing soon. The owner will restore it and is very interested in it. She lives in Ohio and has interest in landmarking it. Oberbeck said that it still looks original, according to the photos. Gisselman said that he would have more information with the tour and anticipates moving forward with the landmarking status.

Update on Citywide Intensive Historic Survey.

Lenz said that he spoke with the consultant about the survey and they are done with the reconnaissance part. The State Historical Society will be up next week to review potentially eligible properties and the consultant will start putting together the final report, which should be done by the end of August. There are no concrete plans or rough drafts. A follow up meeting will be done in September to unveil the plan.

Oberbeck asked if they had indicated what the ages of homes are. Lenz said that the Lustron house was noted, so they are looking around that time frame. Gisselman asked if any districts were mentioned. Lenz said that there weren't any mentioned yet. Oberbeck said that the survey will change the way this commission does things. There are a lot of buildings. Gisselman said that there will be a lot of additions on the southeast side. Lenz said that there are criteria for historic nomination besides just the age of structures.

Discuss Watch List of Endangered Structures.

Lenz said that he looked inside the trapezoidal building at Great Lakes Cheese. Crooks said that the Stone building would look nice near there on the new riverfront and would be nice to keep a little bit of the old on the riverfront. Crooks said that the Stone building deserves to be on the riverfront. Lenz said that it would be difficult to move the trapezoidal building because it is in rough shape. Crooks said it may be an option to rehab it, as it would be the only warehouse on the east side of the river.

Crooks said that the building immediately north of Polack Inn is in really bad shape and may meet the wrecking ball soon. There are so many gems in that area. North of that building on the same side of the street, there is another brick building that has a porch on the front and seems to be in nice shape and asked if there is a plan for the building. Crooks said that he didn't know if it was privately owned. Lenz said that City owns one building in the area – most of the city-owned properties in the area are vacant lots. Gisselman said that the brick building used to be a hotel. Opal-Wahoske said that the fix-up loan can be used. Oberbeck said that part of the problem is that there isn't a total vision for the area. A vision needs to be created and would be a better sale for the neighborhood and new environment. The area has been an interest for a long time and houses are cheap enough. Gisselman said that this goes beyond the agenda, but will be placed on the next agenda. Oberbeck said that it is a unique area and we need to create enthusiasm and investment in that area to grow. Crooks said that there is a lot of foot traffic from Easthill area and the river development and will be interconnected at some time. There is still a fair amount of blight. Lenz said that there are three plans that cover the area. Oberbeck said the neighborhood taking interest will be a start. Opal-Wahoske said that part of the problem is that most of the properties are rentals instead of owner-occupied properties.

Next meeting date and future agenda items for consideration.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 27, 2018. A walking tour will be held on July 26, 2018 at 6:30 starting at Loppnow's.

Adjournment.

Grimm motioned to adjourn. Opal-Wahoske seconded, and the motion carried unanimously 6-0. The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.