

MINUTES
BELOIT LANDMARKS COMMISSION
Meeting of May 19, 2009

A Meeting of the Beloit Landmarks Commission was held on Tuesday, May 19, 2009 in the City Hall Forum.

Present: Marjorie Fizzell, John Dummer, Rick McGrath, Lynette Johnson, Jennifer Knezel, Daniel Shea

Absent: Sandra Williams, Charles Haynes

1. Roll Call

Commissioner Fizzell called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Community Planner Drew Pennington called the Roll.

2. Minutes of the April 21, 2009 Meeting

Minutes of the April 21, 2009 meeting were approved on a motion by Commissioner Shea, seconded by Commissioner Johnson. The motion carried (6-0).

3. Public Comments

None

4. Eliazar Martinez – Certificate of Appropriateness

COA-2009-08 Review and consideration of the design of a balcony enclosure in accordance with condition three of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the property located at 961 Bluff Street.

Mr. Pennington announced that he had not received a proposed design from the applicant by the specified deadline.

Mrs. Martinez stepped forward and distributed a sketch of the proposed balcony enclosure. Commissioner McGrath asked Mrs. Martinez for the window dimensions. Mrs. Martinez replied that she did not know the dimensions. Mr. Pennington noted the lack of information and reminded the Commission that the matter could be laid over until the June meeting. Commissioner McGrath stated that the compromise involves the installation of storm windows. Commissioner McGrath stated that the proposed enclosure is not acceptable and a revised proposal is needed. Mr. Pennington asked Mrs. Martinez to submit a proposed balcony enclosure that consists of storm windows and minimal siding for consideration during the regularly scheduled June meeting.

5. Lisa Anderson-Levy & Robert Levy – Certificate of Appropriateness

COA-2009-09 Review and consideration of a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace one window for the property located at 723 Church Street.

Mr. Pennington read the staff report.

Commissioner Fizzell stated that the proposed window is completely appropriate.

Following this discussion, Commissioner McGrath made a motion to approve the requested COA, subject to the conditions recommended by staff. Commissioner Dummer seconded the motion. The motion carried (6-0).

6. Jia-He Xiao & Anne Lessick-Xiao – Certificate of Appropriateness

COA-2009-10 Review and consideration of a Certificate of Appropriateness to cover concrete steps with treated wood and to construct a deck for the property located at 1015 Chapin Street.

Mr. Pennington read the staff report.

Ms. Lessick-Xiao approached the lectern and identified herself as the applicant. Commissioner McGrath asked the applicant if the concrete steps are failing. Ms. Lessick-Xiao stated that the steps have developed cracks and are uneven. Commissioner McGrath asked the applicant if there are gaps between the boards. Ms. Lessick-Xiao stated that there are small gaps between the boards. Commissioner McGrath asked the applicant if she was aware that her home is in a historic district. Ms. Lessick-Xiao stated that she is aware of the historic district but did not know that a COA is required before covering concrete steps with wood. Commissioner McGrath stated that concrete steps are typical in historic districts and that allowing concrete to be covered with wood would set a bad precedent. Commissioner Johnson stated that the steps should match the remainder of the staircase. Ms. Lessick-Xiao stated that the landing is made out of wood. Commissioner McGrath stated that the applicant should contact a mason and inquire about the repair of the existing concrete steps. Commissioner Johnson explained that a mason could add a coating to the existing concrete steps. Mr. Xiao approached the lectern and stated his belief that the covered steps are appropriate and compatible with the remainder of the house.

Following this discussion, Commissioner McGrath made a motion to approve the COA to cover concrete steps with treated wood. Commissioner Dummer seconded the motion. The motion failed to carry (0-6).

Commissioner McGrath made a motion to approve the COA to construct a deck, subject to the conditions recommended by staff. Commissioner Shea seconded the motion. The motion carried (6-0).

7. Nathan Richardson – Certificate of Appropriateness

COA-2009-12 Review and consideration of a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace concrete steps with treated wood steps for the property located at 743 Park Avenue.

Mr. Pennington read the staff report.

Mr. Richardson approached the lectern and identified himself as the applicant. Mr. Richardson stated that he recently purchased the house and received an order to repair or replace the steps from a City inspector. Mr. Richardson stated that there are several houses with wood steps in the neighborhood. Commissioner McGrath explained that there are several inappropriate examples that were constructed before the Historic Preservation Ordinance was adopted. Mr. Richardson explained that he was willing to comply with Mr. Pennington's recommended conditions. Mr. Richardson asked Commissioner McGrath if he could retain the treated wood steps, and Commissioner McGrath stated that he would need to ask a carpenter. Commissioner Knezel stated that wood railings are an important component of the project. Mr. Pennington noted that the Commission could lay the matter over to give the applicant some additional time. The Commission decided to grant Mr. Richardson's request for additional time and laid the matter over until the regularly scheduled June meeting. Mr. Pennington instructed Mr. Richardson to contact him regarding a revised proposal.

8. Report on Staff-Approved Certificates of Appropriateness & Activities Since Last Meeting

Mr. Pennington announced that the COA reminder letter and mailing list are ready and the letter will be sent in late May. Mr. Pennington announced that he recently issued several letters and citations for violations of the Historic Preservation Ordinance. Mr. Pennington announced that he had worked with the Housing Services Division to modify the language on violation notices dealing with historic properties. From this point forward, notices dealing with an order to repair, remove, or raze something on a historic property will instruct the violators to contact the Planning Division first in order to determine if a COA is necessary. Mr. Pennington announced that he had approved the following:

COA-2009-11 – 915 Chapin Street - roof replacement; COA-2009-13 – 731 Park Avenue - roof replacement and replacement of damaged soffitt & fascia boards; and COA-2009-15 – 843 Church Street - garage roof replacement.

9. Committee Reports

A. Awards & Plaque Committee: Nothing to report.

B. Program & Publicity Committee: Commissioner McGrath announced that he will be attending the CAMP conference in Madison on May 29th and 30th.

C. Education Committee: Nothing to report.

D. Outreach Committee: Commissioner Fizzell announced that she received a \$500 grant from Visit Beloit for the revised walking tour brochure project.

10. Adjournment

At 8:10 PM, Commissioner Dummer made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Commissioner Shea seconded the motion. The motion carried (6-0).

Drew Pennington
Community Planner