

MINUTES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR SESSION
5:30 p.m.
Thursday, September 28, 2023
City Council Chambers, Historic Federal Building

Commissioners Present: Chairperson Melissa Daykin Cassill; Commissioners Thea Dement, Tim Gau, Christina Monk, Heidi Pettitt and Rick Stuter

Commissioners Excused: Janice Esser and Bill Doyle

Commissioners Unexcused: None

Staff Members Present: Wally Wernimont, Chris Happ Olson, Matt O'Brien, Renee Blossch

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Daykin Cassill at 5:30 p.m.

MINUTES: Motion by Dement, seconded by Tim Gau, to approve the minutes of the August 17, 2023 meeting as submitted. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Dement, Gau, Monk, Pettitt, Stuter and Daykin Cassill; Nay – none.

ACTION ITEMS:

DEMOLITION REVIEW

Applicant: Colton Widmeier
Owner: Barbara J. Varley
Address: 1080 Grove Terrace
Project: Demolition of detached garage
District: West 11th Street Historic District

Staff Member Chris Happ Olson excused herself from the meeting as she lives directly adjacent to Mrs. Varley.

Staff Member Matt O'Brien presented the staff report, noting applicant Colton Widmeier is not present. Doug Varley, 277 Oeth Court was present on behalf of his mother Barbara J. Varley, 1080 Grove Terrace.

Mr. Varley stated that Mrs. Varley is an 86-year-old woman who wants the garage removed, so her driveway is the center focus of the property. She does not feel that it is

aesthetically significant to the property and feels confident the loss of the garage will not significantly degrade the property value.

Several images of the garage were presented from the north, north-west and also of the garage and the alley/front roadway. Panoramic images of property, before the house was built, were also provided. A survey of the property is provided. The garage is assumed to be there at time of survey. The role is whether the garage is historically significant.

Commissioner Dement is questioning if it is off an alley or street. Mr. Varley said it is technically a street, but it is a zero-traffic street, save his mother's driveway traffic. Mr. Varley adds that it is not paved.

Commissioners Monk and Gau and Chairperson Daykin Cassill stated they concurred with the staff report. Commissioner Dement said she saw no problem with proceeding with demolition of the garage.

DEMOLITION PERMIT: Motion by Gau, seconded by Monk, to approve the application as submitted. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Dement, Gau, Monk, Pettitt, Stuter and Daykin Cassill; Nay – none.

Happ Olson rejoined the meeting and Wernimont left the meeting.

DESIGN REVIEW

Applicant: Sam Murley
Owner: River City Properties LLC
Address: 194 Alpine Street
Project: Modification of porch guard rail design
District: Langworthy Historic District

Staff Member Happ Olson presented the staff report for the applicant, for modification of the porch guard rail design. Sam Murley would like to repair the front porch guard rail as a modification of a Notice of Decision (NOD) approval at the August 18, 2022 Historic Preservation Public Meeting. The previous NOD was to make modifications to the front and rear porches. The commission granted a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) as required by Title 16, Chapter 10 of the Unified Development Code.

Happ Olson said the applicant is now seeking permission to change the design of the first floor primary façade porch guardrail. Previously the plan was to save the railing and modify it to meet existing code height. However the applicant states they discovered a need to rebuild the railing entirely due to its condition. They would like to rebuild the presently 28" height railing to a height of 36" to adhere to present housing codes. A variety of recent and historic images, maps and documents are included in the staff report and the attached case file from August 18, 2022, along with the original

Notice of Decision. Staff's analysis of the current project in relation to the guidelines is included in the current staff report.

Property owner Sam Murley, River City Property Management, LLC who resides at 14157 Deerfield Court stated spoke to the Commission. He stated that he would like the opportunity to make the railing look the way that it should. He stated he rather would build one sturdy railing that meets the code height and follows the design of the original railing.

Monk asked Mr. Murley if he could retain 28-inch height and then just add to the railing to the 36-inch height, to add more detail. Happ Olson said the Commission treated the previous project as a pilot project, with different treatments at different locations, in order to meet the code requirements. The applicant currently shows two modifications on front and rear two-story porches. Happ Olson noted that staff does not have permission to modify the August 18, 2022 COA, which in this case stated that the metal railing medication must be on the front porch, and a wood rail modification on the rear.

Commissioner Pettit asked staff if there is anything within what treatment would be preferable according to guidelines. Happ Olson stated she is not sure one treatment is more appropriate than the other, because the rail needed to be replaced anyway. The 36-inch railing changes the look. Happ Olson stated the different options are a different approach to the project, and that either meet the code.

Monk stated her preference would be if the first floor matched the second floor treatment and questioned what the other commissioners think.

Commission Dement expressed concern that a new 36" high wooden rail in the same design would not match the other three railings.

Mr. Murley said attaching metal piping columns was a challenge because of the plates. He stated it would be easier to work with wood. Happ Olson noted that the pipe fitting that was chosen for the second floor has a flat meeting at the smaller rounded column. Commissioner Stuter asked if Mr. Murley thought a circular plate might be a challenge based on the curvature.

Commissioner Monk questioned whether the wood treatment at the rear would be easier to install. And Mr. Murley agreed, but preferred one 36" high wooden railing. Monk stated her preference would be that the height match between the two porches.

Happ Olson stated in order to meet code, they would have to put up multiple barriers to meet the 8" differential, if they do not build a 36" solid wood railing.

Commissioner Monk stated her preference is to go with original design that is in the previous COA. Further discussion about options ensued.

Motion by Monk and seconded by Gau, to approve application as submitted. Motion fails 0-6 by the following vote: Aye – None; Nay - Gau, Daykin Cassill, Dement, Stuter, Monk, and Pettitt.

Following the motion, Mr. Murley requested direction for the project. Happ Olson stated that the motion failed, which leaves in place the Notice of Decision from the August 18, 2022 meeting, including the approved first floor porch treatment: preservation and repair of the existing railing, and adding two metal guardrails, painted and supported for stability. This treatment would be identical to the 2nd floor primary porch treatment.

Mr. Murley suggested that he attempt to secure the metal railing to the new fiberglass columns, but that the metal fitting is hard to attach due to it being flat and the column being round. He asked whether he could, if having trouble with the metal fitting, instead match the first floor primary porch treatment to the modification made at the 1st and 2nd floor rear porch railings.

Commission asked staff as to whether they could make a new motion. Happ Olson replied that the different treatments the applicant has suggested were all things that had been previously approved for this property. The original Notice of Decision was still in effect and the Commission could entertain to expand the applicant's options for meeting code in this particular situation.

Motion to provide additional options to the previous Historic Preservation Commission Notice of Decision from August 18, 2022; where preference is given for what was originally approved with metal guardrail extensions, but if it is not possible, to allow for a wood guardrail extension mimicking details at the rear porches, and that the applicant can work with staff to ensure code is met in a way that is appropriate for the structure and situation.

Motion by Monk and seconded by Gau, to expand the options for the applicant to meet the code needs by either using the painted metal or painted wood barrier treatment, with the Commission's preference for the metal barrier. Motion carries 6-0 by the following vote: Aye – Gau, Daykin Cassill, Dement, Stuter, Monk, and Pettitt; Nay – None.

DESIGN REVIEW

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| Applicant: | Jeff Morton for Four Mounds Foundation |
| Owner: | City of Dubuque |
| Address: | 4900 Peru Road; Four Mounds Dubuque Landmark Site |
| Project: | Addition of new visitor station to grounds |
| District: | Four Mounds Estate National Register Historic District |

Staff Member Happ Olson presented the staff report noting the applicant, Four Mounds Foundation, proposes to construct a free-standing, handicap accessible visitor's station with toilet facilities and storage for public use. The proposed project is located within the Four Mounds Dubuque Landmark Site and the Four Mounds Estate National

Register Historic District. According to Happ Olson, the project, as a new intrusion to the site, is reviewed by the Commission under the City's Landmark Site status. She stated that the property is owned by the City of Dubuque and managed by Four Mounds.

Happ Olson provided a detailed description of the history and layout of the overall site. Also provided by Happ Olson were Pictometry, aerial, and contemporary images of the property. She said that the proposed project would mimic the site's historic woodshop to the east and be tucked away close to the south property line behind a cluster of Austrian pines. Happ Olson said that the project's location, in conjunction with its coloring and material, would cause it to not be easily viewable from the lane located on the site.

Jeff Morton, project architect speaking for applicant Four Mounds Foundation, stated that the proposed project has been in development since 2008. He intends to provide an amenity to visitors in a way that has little impact to the Four Mounds site. Morton said that the view framed by the pines will be maintained and he took cues from the wood shop. He also said that the publicly accessible project would support numerous events at Four Mounds.

Commissioner Dement said that she is concerned about the project impacting trees on the site. Morton stated that trees will not be removed. Chair Daykin Cassil asked for additional details on the path located on site. Morton stated that the path extends from the parking space. Dement asked where the woodshop in relation to other structures. Morton explained the woodshop's location using the site layout. Commissioner Monk asked for clarification on utilizing brick. Happ Olson confirmed brick would not be appropriate as there is no brick utilized at Four Mounds and that the brick refers to an earlier design for the structure. There was a general consensus among Commissioners that the project was an appropriate design in an appropriate location.

DESIGN REVIEW: Motion by Dement, seconded by Gau, to approve the application as submitted. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Dement, Gau, Monk, Pettitt, Stuter and Daykin Cassill; Nay – none.

ITEMS FROM PUBLIC: None

ITEMS FROM COMMISSION: None

ITEMS FROM STAFF:

- Staff Member Happ Olson provided an update to the Commission on the Dubuque Brewing and Malting Building. She stated that the City of Dubuque's Inspection and Construction Services is working with the developer on an accepted plan.
- Happ Olson provided an update on the Jefferson Park retaining wall, which is not located in a historic district, but adjacent to the West 11th Street Historic District. She stated that Leisure Services leads the project and she has been included on the Request for Proposal review team.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion by Monk, seconded by Pettit to adjourn the September 28, 2023 Commission meeting. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Dement, Gau, Monk, Pettitt, Stuter and Daykin Cassill; Nay – none.

The meeting adjourned at 6:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Chris Happ Olson, Assistant Planner

October 19, 2023

Adopted