



APPROVED

MINUTES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
EDUCATION TASK FORCE
Thursday, June 6, 2013
Conference Room B, City Hall

Task Force Members Present: Chairperson David Klavitter, Task Force Members Bob McDonell, Julie Schlarman and Benjamin Beard.

Task Force Members Excused: None.

Staff Members Present: David Johnson.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Klavitter at 1:07 p.m.

AFFIDAVIT OF COMPLIANCE: Staff presented an Affidavit of Compliance verifying the meeting was being held in compliance with the Iowa Open Meetings Law.

MINUTES: Motion by McDonell, seconded by Schlarman, to approve the May 2, 2013 minutes as submitted. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Klavitter, Beard and McDonell; Nay – None.

ACTION ITEMS: None.

ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC: None.

ITEMS FROM THE TASK FORCE:

City of Dubuque Historic Preservation Webpage: Commissioner McDonell suggested including pictures of buildings for the Historic Preservation Tax Credit projects, Ken Kringle Award recipients, as well as the individually listed National Register of Historic Places properties on the website.

Citizen Support Center: Chairperson Klavitter reviewed the benefits of the Citizen Support Center for inquiring and registering concerns about problem properties.

Meeting Times: Committee Member Schlarman stated beginning in September 2013, she will begin teaching a class at Clarke University. She explained the class will not end until 1:45 p.m. and requested the Task Force consider changing the time of the Task Force meetings. The Task Force agreed to change the meeting time to 4:00 p.m.

ITEMS FROM STAFF:

National Register Nominations: Staff Member Johnson reviewed the benefits of National Register nominations. He explained a role of the Commission is to conduct surveys and register historically significant properties and districts. He noted the City of Dubuque has surveyed and evaluated many historically significant properties, which resulted in identification and nomination of numerous National Register districts. Staff Member Johnson reviewed the phased surveys completed since 2000 as well as the sixth phased survey area yet to be funded. He explained the architectural and historic surveys serve as the foundation for the City of Dubuque's Historic Preservation Program. He stated information from the surveys allow the Commission, staff and community partners to administer the City's Preservation Program. He noted the information also helps facilitate Housing programs and Historic Tax Credit projects.

He reviewed the impact of state and federal tax credit projects in the country, state, and city of Dubuque. He reviewed challenges to recent funding efforts to conduct survey and registration projects. He explained funding at the state level has been reduced. He noted State Historic Preservation Office staff has indicated what limited funds are available are being focused on start-up Certified Local Government programs or communities that have not undertaken survey work in the past. He explained the City of Dubuque is somewhat at a disadvantage because of past successes. He noted in the past, the state has been very generous in assisting the City of Dubuque in survey and registration work due in part to the City's vast historic resources, but also our proven track record in successfully completing meaningful projects. He explained that success has become a limiting consideration when competing against communities with less-developed preservation programs.

Staff Member Johnson explained State Historic Preservation Office staff has communicated frustration that survey projects throughout the state have not resulted in registration projects. He noted National Register of Historic Places nominations have become requirements of survey work being financed with any state funds. He noted that was not the case when Dubuque undertook its phased surveys. He explained the State Historic Preservation Office has recommended the City of Dubuque focus on updating outdated National Register of Historic Places nominations as well as list districts deemed eligible through past survey work. He explained this housekeeping approach for our preservation program should make the City of Dubuque more competitive for future grant funds.

Staff Member Johnson explained surveys and National Register of Historic Places nominations have the benefit of providing incentives and historic awareness and pride without added regulation. He noted they provide the information needed to make preservation decisions as well as defined logical and substantiated boundaries for future consideration of local registration.

Committee Member Schlarman noted the social benefits to National Register Districts. She explained the Dubuque community has focused many of its efforts in educating

and promoting grand and prominent structures, and some neighborhoods and their unique histories have been lost in the discussion. She noted what makes Dubuque amazing is the number and diversity of historic resources, but explained there are many working class neighborhoods that are architecturally and historically important, and worthy of registering and focusing preservation awareness and education.

Staff Member Johnson noted National Register nominations do support the community's social and cultural vibrancy goals. He noted residents have an increased sense of awareness and pride in their historic neighborhoods.

Staff and the Task Force reviewed the past surveys as well as the recommended priorities for registering and surveying historic resources in the city of Dubuque. Staff Member Johnson noted the list is based on the potential impact for registering a property in terms of neighborhood, recognition, development and investment as well as a sense of the work the State Historic Preservation Office would like to see the City of Dubuque do to solidify its Preservation Program.

Staff and the Task Force reviewed expanding and updating the Old Main National Register of Historic Places District as the No. 1 priority. Staff Member Johnson noted resources such as the Bishop Block and Old Main Hotel are in the expansion area and are logically associated with the Old Main District. Committee Member McDonell noted there are amazing buildings left out of the district that should be included. He noted those are buildings that could very well benefit from historic tax credits.

The Task Force discussed listing the Old Town National Register of Historic Places District. Staff Member Johnson explained this is a recommendation from a survey completed approximately 10 years ago. He noted the recommended district boundaries are located within the larger Washington Neighborhood, which is also a conservation district. He noted this would be a logical residential National Register Historic District, and is certainly worthy of nomination on a number of levels. He noted the National Register nomination could be another tool to help with redevelopment efforts and the National Register District will enhance neighborhood identity and pride without added regulation, which would be a concern for many of those residents. The Task Force agreed and supported the recommendation.

The Task Force questioned the role of the public in National Register nominations. Staff Member Johnson explained the public is directly involved in commenting on National Register nominations. He explained that as part of every nomination, each property within the proposed boundaries are provided notice of the application and given an opportunity to provide comment at a public hearing, which is typically held in conjunction with a Historic Preservation Commission meeting. He noted those invitations typically contain information about Nationally Registered Districts as well as how they are different from local Historic Preservation districts.

The Task Force discussed the recent nomination of the Upper Central Avenue Commercial Historic District to the National Register. The Task Force noted how perceptions of preservation changed in the room after learning the benefits of National Register districts.

The Task Force noted the Old Town Neighborhood has a rich history worth recognizing and registering.

Staff and the Task Force discussed listing the Fenelon and North Main National Register of Historic Places eligible districts. Staff Member Johnson explained the Phase V Survey evaluated properties in the Fenelon, North Main, and Broadway neighborhoods. He noted the survey identified potential National Register Districts in the North Main and Fenelon neighborhoods, however, Broadway did not have the historic fabric to support a district nomination. Staff and the Task Force noted that conditions do change over time, and perhaps as preservation support builds in the Broadway neighborhood, investments may be made which make the neighborhood eligible for listing in the future. Staff Member Johnson explained that is the very reason why the State Historic Preservation Office requests Certified Local Governments to update surveys. He explained as time passes, opportunities may arise to identify new districts or expand or strengthen existing districts. The Task Force noted that the Fenelon neighborhood would make an outstanding National Register District.

Staff Member Johnson reviewed the Phase VI Survey areas with the Task Force. He explained the boundaries for those areas are justified based on historical context as well as the degree of work occurring in those neighborhoods. He noted the areas are seeing significant investment and the City is aware of work that is happening in the area. He noted the Phase VI survey would provide City staff as well as the Commission with important information in making preservation decisions related to Section 106 review, housing investment, and general neighborhood development.

Staff and the Task Force discussed the Brunswick-Balke-Collender Company, noting it is located in the North End of the survey area. The Task Force felt there are many important historic resources in these neighborhoods that are worth identifying.

Staff and the Task Force discussed listing Eagle Point Park on the National Register of Historic Places. Staff Member Johnson explained the nomination is logical in that this park is one of the most significant parks and public places in the city of Dubuque. He noted an argument could be made for its significance state-wide. The Task Force noted the park has a tremendous history. Staff Member Johnson stated many of the buildings within the park were designed by noted landscape architect Alfred Caldwell.

Staff and the Task Force reviewed listing the 1100 block of Iowa Street on the National Register of Historic Places. Staff Member Johnson indicated this would be a smaller and less important district for consideration; however, the Aragon Tap or JJ Strayer

building is within this block. The Task Force noted this is an important extension of Main Street and certainly at least the half-block would be considered eligible.

Staff Member Johnson requested the Committee discuss the efforts to register more properties on the National Register of Historic Places. The Task Force discussed whether registering additional districts would detract from resources and recognition of other districts. Staff Member Johnson noted many of the current National Register Districts have used or have reserved tax credits already. He noted the additional registration efforts would bolster the City's Preservation Program while also making similar incentives available to those properties. The Task Force noted the resources are limited at the state level, and one of the many benefits of National Register nominations is that those property owners would have an edge in competing for tax credits against other communities. The Task Force felt the survey and registration work is consistent with the scope of the Education Task Force and Historic Preservation Commission.

The Task Force noted the social and economic benefits of these districts. The Task Force recognized the efforts are consistent with the Education and Outreach component of the Preservation Program. The Task Force felt the timing for these nominations is appropriate and they were supportive of the open and transparent process in the past. The Task Force suggested enlisting the help of Neighborhood Development Specialist Jerelyn O'Connor if deemed beneficial to the process.

The Task Force asked whether the projects are something City staff would undertake, or if they would require the help of a professional consultant. Staff Member Johnson explained the process for registering and updating districts and properties is very technical, complicated and time consuming. The process requires a person's undivided attention for extended periods which makes a consultant beneficial. He noted a recent update to the Cathedral National Register District took staff approximately 18 months to complete and much of the information had already been prepared. He explained primarily because of time constraints, most of the projects would likely need a professional consultant. The Task Force asked if funds would be available to do the work. Staff Member Johnson explained a budget request to create new funds or re-allocate existing funds may be necessary and something that should be discussed at the Historic Preservation Commission meeting.

Motion by Klavitter, seconded by Schlarman to support the registration and survey priorities outlined in the staff memo, and forward to the Historic Preservation Commission for discussion. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Klavitter, McDonell, Schlarman and Beard; Nay – None.

Design Guidelines Update: Staff Member Johnson noted this will be a standing item on future Task Force and Historic Preservation Commission agendas. He noted reports will be provided verbally. He explained the Steering Committee met last week. He noted the consultant was very pleased with the comments and suggestions made at the

meeting. He noted those comments are being incorporated into some draft outlines and concepts, which will be presented to the Technical Committee when ready. He noted the Technical Committee will consist of Planning Services staff, Education Task Force Member Benjamin Beard, and Historic Preservation Commission members Julie Schlarman and Christie Monk. He noted that R.R.S. Stewart will also be serving on the Design Guidelines Update Technical Committee. He reviewed her background and noted she will provide valuable perspective. He explained the Technical Committee will meet as needed, but will be given advance notice. In response to a question, Staff Member Johnson stated he hopes to have draft concepts in place for review in July.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

David Johnson, Assistant Planner

Adopted