

REPORT OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION / DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

Wednesday February 6, 2013 – 4:30 p.m.

City Conference Room – County-City Building
1515 Strongs Avenue, Stevens Point, WI 54481

PRESENT: Lee Beveridge, Alderperson Mary Stroik, Tim Siebert and Kathy Kruthoff.

ALSO PRESENT: Director Michael Ostrowski, Economic Development Specialist Kyle Kearns, Alderperson Andrew Beveridge, Tom Helgeston, Cathy Dugan, and Brandi Makuski.

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Discussion and possible action on the following:

1. Approval of the report from the January 2, 2013 HPDRC meeting.
2. Request from Phil DeSalvo, representing Saint Stephen Parish, to raze the former convent building located at **1401 Clark Street (Parcel ID 2408-32-1007-09)**.
3. Request from Jerome Kawski for an amendment to façade improvement grant funds in the amount of \$340.00 additional dollars for work that received Historic Preservation / Design Review Commission approval at **1059 Main Street (Parcel ID 2408-32-2026-10)**.
4. Adjourn.

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1. Approval of the report from the January 2, 2013 HPDRC meeting.

Motion by Alderperson M. Stroik to approve the report from the January 2, 2013 HPDRC meeting; seconded by Commissioner Siebert. Motion carried 3-0.

Commissioner Kathy Kruthoff arrived.

2. Request from Phil DeSalvo, representing Saint Stephen Parish, to raze the former convent building located at **1401 Clark Street (Parcel ID 2408-32-1007-09)**.

Phil DeSalvo, Saint Stephens Parish, clarified that the building has not been used by the parish in quite some time, but other groups have met there. The plan for the space is to plant grass at this time and not immediately construct a parking lot. He continued stating that the building is a drain on the parish's finances and that they had considered selling the property, but once the investor saw the amount of repairs required to bring the structure up to code, they backed out. Mr. DeSalvo explained that the roof alone was \$40,000 to repair and replace. Furthermore, repairs or replacement of the air handlers and boiler are needed, as well as work to bring the electrical up to code. The structure was rented in the past, but the rent did not support the operating costs. He added that the windows leak and are deteriorated, the plumbing is drained, the heat is turned off, but power is on for lighting only, and the stain glass windows have been removed. The parish would be subject to the cost of refurbishing the building.

Commissioner Siebert expressed his disappointment of tearing down a historic building to put in a grassy area. He explained that there is money out there for refurbishing a historic building and that there are other options available such as selling the only the structure, and not the land.

Tom Helgeston, a representative from Saint Stephens, pointed out that no one wants to buy a convent, and with the condition, the parish would be responsible for asbestos and lead clean up to make it available for sale.

Phil DeSalvo said that the building is not historic from the standpoint that it was not an original building to the church campus. While the structure does have some architectural detail, it does not have much; it was built very plain and simple. He continued stating that the parish and Diocese had looked into other options besides demolition, but they were not in their best interest. Lastly, he stated that the stone and scrap metal in the building would be salvaged to offset the costs of the demolition.

Commission Kruthoff explained that as the Historic Preservation Commission they have a different view point. The lack of maintenance is likely the reason for the current condition of the structure. If the commission allows the razing of this building, it will set a precedent for other structures in the historic district. She stated that she understands the financial concerns, but the commission looks at other factors as well in reviewing the request.

Tom Helgeston stated that the roof is leaking and will continue to deteriorate on the structure. Phil DeSalvo added that the water for the building was originally shut off at the meter, and not the street, which will cause flooding in the spring if turned on. Phil DeSalvo commented that the issue has since been corrected and shut off at the street to prevent further damage but there will be a great cost in repairs.

Cathy Dugan, 615 Sommers Street, stated that there may be other monetary options for the maintaining of the structure. She feels that the parish needs to look beyond their needs to those of the community. She supports the recommendation of the staff report to deny the razing.

Director Ostrowski pointed out that in reviewing the standards of review regarding this request; the demolition does not meet the standards, and that a lack of maintenance does not give enough reason to demolish the structure. He said that the recent historical survey listed the Saint Stephen's Parish campus as a possible new historic district. Demolishing one of those buildings would significantly detract from the attractiveness of that campus. The district could be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Phil DeSalvo asked what happens if the property does get on the register, and then the parish closes, to which Commissioner Siebert stated that being on the register prevents public funds from being utilized to demolish the structure, but private funds can be used to demolish the structure.

Motion by Commissioner Siebert to deny the razing of the former convent building; seconded by Commissioner Kruthoff. Motion carried 4-0.

3. Request from Jerome Kowski for an amendment to façade improvement grant funds in the amount of \$340.00 additional dollars for work that received Historic Preservation / Design Review Commission approval at **1059 Main Street (Parcel ID 2408-32-2026-10)**.

Kyle Kearns Economic Development Specialist explained that in reviewing the invoices, there were a couple of discrepancies which included a front façade line item to be listed on the bid for the rear façade improvements, as well as the owner using a different option of window replacement on the second floor windows, which is preferred under the design guidelines. Director Ostrowski added that the proposal submitted by the applicant listed the approved line item in the wrong location on the proposal.

Motion by Commissioner Siebert to approve the request from Jerome Kowski for an amendment to the façade improvement grant funds in the amount of \$340.00 additional dollars for work that received Historic Preservation / Design Review Commission approval at 1059 Main Street (Parcel ID 2408-32-2026-10); seconded by Alderperson M. Stroik. Motion carried 4-0.

4. Adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.