

REPORT OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION / DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

Wednesday, November 6, 2013 –3:30 p.m.

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

PRESENT: Lee Beveridge, Alderperson Mary Stroik, Tim Siebert, George Hanson, and Tom Baldischwiler.

ALSO PRESENT: Director Michael Ostrowski, Economic Development Specialist Kyle Kearns, City Attorney Andrew Beveridge, Tawny Liebe, Cathy Dugan, Steven Tibbitts, and Jim Guzman (via phone).

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Discussion and possible action on the following:

1. Approval of the report from the September 4, 2013 HP/DRC meeting.
2. Request from James Guzman for façade improvement grant funds in the amount of \$14,830.00 and design review for exterior building work, including the installation of an E.I.F.S. system and metal roof cap at **1100 Centerpoint Drive (Parcel ID 2408-32-2002-07)**.
3. Request from Steve Tibbetts for design review for painting that has occurred to first floor commercial windows at **1201 Main Street (Parcel ID 2408-32-2027-06)**.
4. Façade Improvement Grant Program update.
5. Historic Preservation / Design Review Commission logo.
6. Review of the City of Stevens Point Historic Preservation / Design Review Commission – Design Guidelines.
7. Adjourn.

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1. Approval of the report from the September 4, 2013 HP/DRC meeting.

Motion by Commissioner Siebert to approve the report from the September 4, 2013 HP/DRC meeting; seconded by Commissioner Hanson. Motion carried 5-0.

2. Request from James Guzman for façade improvement grant funds in the amount of \$14,830.00 and design review for exterior building work, including the installation of an E.I.F.S. system and metal roof cap at **1100 Centerpoint Drive (Parcel ID 2408-32-2002-07)**.

Economic Development Specialist Kyle Kearns explained that staff has reviewed this request like all others, in terms of design review and adhering to the guidelines, as well as, the standards for the façade improvement grant funds. In looking at the design review guidelines, one of the requirements is that original materials should be retained or restored if possible, rather than the installation of new or synthetic materials. Staff would consider the current cedar board on the building as original due to the major transformation occurring in 1985-86 which combined, demolished, and added structures to create the current building. Therefore, the cedar board should be maintained and are preferred over synthetic E.I.F.S. Mr. Kearns then stated that based upon the above review, guidelines for design review are not met. When reviewing the façade grant

guidelines, Mr. Kearns continued stating that the applicant is requesting funding for all four sides of the building, which the guidelines state must face a public right-of-way. However, the structure has only two sides which face the public right-of-way. The grant guidelines also require the funding to be part of an overall building project, where this is just one improvement activity, the installment of an E.I.F.S system. Lastly, one of the bids for the work was via email and vague in a description of work and costs associated. Therefore, based on the overall review, staff recommends denial of façade grant request.

Jim Guzman, applicant, explained the repair or patching of the cedar boards will look poor and it would be hard to match the groove and cuts of the existing boards. It is his opinion that this project is harmonious with adjacent properties in the area such as Dunham's and MSTC, which also have E.F.I.S. proposed or stucco like material. He continued to explain the existing cedar boards are badly rotting and in need of replacement, any moisture that would develop with the E.F.I.S. system would drain and not deteriorate the appearance. He feels all four sides of the building are highly visible from the public right-of-way and the addition of the E.F.I.S. would not take away from the historic character of the building. Mr. Guzman pointed out the south and west sides of the building are the most deteriorated.

Commissioner Siebert agreed that the E.F.I.S. is similar to stucco, but is synthetic, and feels it will continue to deteriorate the boards underneath due to the E.I.F.S mounting system.

Mr. Guzman stated once the moisture is removed, it will not deteriorate, and he has had other buildings with E.F.I.S. systems that have lasted 20 years or more with no issues.

Commissioner Beveridge pointed out the issue is with the synthetic material, which is not allowable and would change the characteristic of the building. This structure is historic from the 1985 rehabilitation and adding more stucco over what is there is not allowable. Upon his review of the property from the ground, the cedar does not appear to be in that bad of shape, with a majority in good shape.

Mr. Guzman explained he would prefer not to paint, but to keep the cedar boards stained if restoration occurs. However, as adding or repairing boards would not match the existing look restoration of them would not be an option for him. Mr. Guzman went on to explain his primary concern for the top deterioration and moisture of the cedar boards which can cause the framing to deteriorate. Lastly, he asked if Dunham's or Mid-State Technical College (MSTC) have E.F.I.S., to which Director Ostrowski stated Dunham's does, however, MSTC he did not believe so. Director Ostrowski continued stating the request is not part of a major restoration, which is the main purpose of the grant.

Cathy Dugan, 615 Sommers Street, clarified E.F.I.S. is styrofoam covered with a less expensive version of stucco. She went on to state cedar can be purchased rough or planed to closely match.

Commissioner Siebert pointed out he feels this is a maintenance issue, and questioned whether the owner could use grant funds to rehabilitate and restore the existing cedar if they were in agreement. Mr. Kearns replied, stating the commission would make that decision which would

require new bids for the cost of cedar replacement. Mr. Guzman then stated he would not repair or patch the existing cedar as it would be extremely expensive, however would be willing to remove all of the cedar prior to installing the E.F.I.S. system.

Motion by Commissioner Siebert to deny façade improvement grant funds in the amount of \$14,830.00 for the installation of an E.I.F.S. system and metal roof cap at 1100 Centerpoint Drive (Parcel ID 2408-32-2002-07).

Economic Development Specialist Kyle Kearns clarified that there are two parts to the agenda item with the first being design review of the project's adherence to the design guidelines, and secondly, review of the façade improvement program standards and criteria. Furthermore, Mr. Kearns explained motions regarding the agenda item should include both parts.

Commissioner Hanson stated his agreement to deny façade improvement grant funds; however he supports the installation of an E.I.F.S. system, furthermore identifying cedar board as a constant maintenance issue.

Commissioner Siebert amended his motion to also deny the design review request for the installation of an E.I.F.S. system and metal roof cap at 1100 Centerpoint Drive (Parcel ID 2408-32-2002-07)

Seconded by Commissioner Beveridge. Motion carried 4-1 (Hanson voting in the negative).

3. Request from Steve Tibbetts for design review for painting that has occurred to first floor commercial windows at **1201 Main Street (Parcel ID 2408-32-2027-06)**.

Economic Development Specialist Kyle Kearns explained previously the upper and lower transoms on first floor commercial windows were painted an olive green color. Furthermore, the applicant recently painted the transoms the present colors (red and blue). Staff has reviewed the request and concluded that as it was previously painted, the applicant should maintain the windows. However, Mr. Kearns continued, the concern is the color scheme chosen which may not harmonize with properties in the vicinity.

Commissioner Siebert pointed out this is similar to the consignment store request on Main Street, with which staff, commission chairperson and business owner reached a compromise. Therefore, Mr. Siebert feels the commission should remain consistent. Commissioner Hanson asked if we could allow the red color but ask for a different color instead of the blue.

Stevens Tibbitts, applicant, explained he relocated to downtown from Park Ridge to obtain additional exposure. Furthermore, he painted the windows a year ago with a light blue color, and after receiving comments from the public, added a new color scheme. He stated he was aware the business was in a Historic District, but felt his communications with the city were not being addressed, therefore he applied the paint.

Commissioner Beveridge pointed out the commission can utilize a standard paint palette to determine appropriate colors.

Mr. Tibbitts stated he is prepared to change the color if required, but feels this location is an anchor on the corner for other tenants in the building which benefit as well. Mr. Tibbitts would not prefer colors to be muted and dull.

Commissioner Beveridge stated we would like to see the colors toned down and if the applicant is willing to repaint, the commission can assist in finding an appropriate color palette that would comply with the historic guidelines.

Motion by Commissioner Siebert to allow the commission chairperson and designated agent to work with the applicant and approve an appropriate paint scheme for the first floor commercial windows at 1201 Main Street (Parcel ID 2408-32-2027-06); seconded by Commissioner Baldischwiler. Motion carried 5-0.

4. Façade Improvement Grant Program update.

Director Ostrowski informed the commission that the recommendation to amend the façade improvement grant guidelines, allowing tax exempt properties to apply for funds did not pass the Finance Committee or the Common Council.

Commissioner Siebert asked if funds could be used for Mr. Tibbett's request above, to which Director Ostrowski stated yes, but would not be recommended due to the small project size. Director Ostrowski stated that with larger tax exempt properties such as the Fox Theater, funds may be available on a project by project basis through the tax increment finance district.

Director Ostrowski informed the commission that if they would want to be more selective and competitive, projects could be reviewed at two periods throughout the year with awards at that time for projects that best meet standards of review.

Commissioner Siebert asked if discussion has occurred to invest additional funds into the program, to which Director Ostrowski stated there is a possibility, but almost \$200,000 remains. Furthermore large projects can be used as successful examples to justify additional funds for the program.

Commissioner Beveridge asked how impacts and results from the program can be measured. Director Ostrowski replied, stating assessed value increases can be measured, however it is too early to get those results because the projects just occurred. Commissioner Beveridge asked what is going to happen when Mid-State Technical College opens and properties along Main Street begin to think about accessing funds. Director Ostrowski explained those are significant projects that could occur once the parking lot is installed south of the former Dunham's building, allowing the rear of those buildings to be eligible for funds.

5. Historic Preservation / Design Review Commission logo.

Economic Development Specialist Kyle Kearns explained that the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point design department was contacted to create a partnership in creating a Historic Preservation /

Design Review Commission logo. Mr. Kearns feels it is important to have something which distinguishes the commission itself versus just the City Logo, as several documents are produced for the Commission. Lastly, Mr. Kearns summarized that the university design department would potentially assist with a project for students during the following academic year.

Commissioner Beveridge stated he likes the idea of recognizing property owner's efforts in restoring buildings with a unique plaque. Commissioner Baldischwiler agreed and liked the idea and provided examples of other municipalities that have done similar things. Director Ostrowski stated it is important to inform the public of the Commission and to educate the public on proper techniques, programs, and guidelines.

Cathy Dugan, 615 Sommers Street, feels that history is important and there may be other ways to educate the building owners and tenants by doing some type of event at the library sponsored by the city.

6. Review of the City of Stevens Point Historic Preservation / Design Review Commission – Design Guidelines.

Economic Development Specialist Kyle Kearns explained that the Commission approved text within the design guidelines several months ago, and what is being presented is essentially the approved text with the addition of photographs and new formatting. Mr. Kearns encouraged feedback from the Commission and described a timetable for final approval early next year.

Commission Beveridge inquired about the potential to provide copies of the design guidelines to all property owners within the historic and design review districts, or potentially providing letters summarizing the guidelines. Director Ostrowski responded, adding that personal visits can potentially be made to inform property owners of the guidelines as well. Furthermore, Director Ostrowski clarified that minor grammatical errors identified by staff and any found by Commission members would be added, with a final document presented to the Commission at a future meeting

7. Adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.