

REPORT OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION / DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

Wednesday December 7, 2016 – 4:00 PM

City Conference Room
1515 Strongs Avenue, Stevens Point, WI 54481

PRESENT: Chairperson Beveridge, Alderperson Ryan, Commissioner Scripps, Commissioner Baldischwiler, Commissioner Debauche, and Commissioner Woehr.

ABSENT: Commissioner Siebert.

ALSO PRESENT: Associate Planner Kearns, Director Ostrowski, and Eric Skrenes.

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1. Approval of the report of the November 2, 2016 HP/DRC meeting.
2. Request from Eric and Alicia Skrenes for design review to move and perform restoration activities to the existing garage, as well as widen the driveway at 1408 Clark Street (Parcel ID 2408-32-1006-16).
3. Conceptual review of building improvements, including windows and exterior facades at Edgewater Manor, 1450 Water Street (Parcel ID 2408-32-2019-33). *This item is for discussion purposes only.*
4. Historic preservation enforcement, violations, and education. *This item is for discussion purposes only.*
5. Staff Update
6. Adjourn.

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1. Approval of the report of the November 2, 2016 HP/DRC meeting.

Motion by Commissioner Scripps to approve the report of the November 2, 2016 HP/DRC meeting; seconded by Alderperson Ryan.

Motion carried 5-0.

2. Request from Eric and Alicia Skrenes for design review to move and perform restoration activities to the existing garage, as well as widen the driveway at 1408 Clark Street (Parcel ID 2408-32-1006-16).

Associate Planner Kearns summarized the request from Eric and Alicia Skrenes, reminding the commission that they had been before them the prior month to replace a door on their home which they had approved. For this request, he explained, they were looking to move and perform restoration work on their existing garage. Mr. Kearns further explained that the applicant would be moving the garage back approximately 25 feet to the rear property line in order to meet the current zoning code guidelines, and install a new roof, garage door, perform minor repairs and paint. Lastly the driveway is proposed to be widened. Mr. Kearns recommended approval of the request with the conditions outlined in the staff report.

Commissioner Woehr asked the applicant if they had chosen a contractor yet. Eric Skrenes explained that not all contractors had been finalized.

Commissioner Woehr recommended that they attempt to work with Associated Bank in order to better access their property from the bank's parking lot rather than attempting to do all the work within their own yard, to which Mr. Skrenes stated that the contractor may be doing that.

Motion by Alderperson Ryan to approve the request from Eric and Alicia Skrenes to move and perform restoration activities to the existing garage, as well as widen the driveway at 1408 Clark Street (Parcel ID 2408-32-1006-16) subject to the following conditions:

- 1. All applicable building permits shall be obtained.**

seconded by Commissioner Baldischwiler.

Motion Carried 5-0.

3. Conceptual review of building improvements, including windows and exterior facades at Edgewater Manor, 1450 Water Street (Parcel ID 2408-32-2019-33). *This item is for discussion purposes only.*

Director Ostrowski explained that Edgewater Manor, an 81-unit senior housing building on Water Street under city ownership, had repairs authorized. He also explained that the building's separating façade had been a great concern and they had ultimately decided to replace the façade and windows, add air conditioning and heating units for individual rooms, and perform additional improvements to the building. The city has authorized moving forward with the funding for the replacement of the façade as it is currently screwed into the supports with silver washers to prevent it from separating any further. Staff has been working with Architects Group Limited out of Green Bay to plan a new façade on the building and to hopefully perform exterior changes to the façade to remove the 1978 façade. Furthermore, Director Ostrowski explained the architects are trying to make the facade look more inviting and energetic, and as such were looking to completely remove the red brick façade and redo the siding with several different types of materials. Director Ostrowski went into further detail about material use, placement, and some complications regarding the proposed heating and cooling units while reviewing several renderings. He stated that this request has been brought forward as a conceptual project review and that they were looking for comments from the Historic Preservation Commission that they could bring forward to the architect prior to getting too far into the design. He reviewed additional details of the façade and overall building, and stated that the architect would be providing sample materials for review in the future.

Commissioner Woehr stated that it would provide more architectural interest than it currently had, and asked if the metal panels were going to be plain aluminum or anodized aluminum.

Director Ostrowski stated that while he had not received any samples, they would most likely be anodized aluminum. He explained that they wanted to get textured metal in order to avoid the buckling and glare that happened with the metal panels installed on the County Annex building. He briefly detailed the potential signage.

Commissioner Baldischwiler asked for confirmation on the proposed brick areas, to which Director Ostrowski confirmed that the dark areas on the renderings indicated the proposed brick areas.

Chairperson Beveridge expressed concern with changing the siding completely as it would change the character of the structure, potential causing issues with the historic commission.

Director Ostrowski stated that they could replace it with a plain brick veneer or full brick as it was currently, but that it wouldn't add any interest to the building, especially for one on the main

thoroughfare and riverfront. He noted that similar buildings were not of the highest quality and that they had been mass produced with plain construction.

Chairperson Beveridge stated that he was not in disagreement, just concerned.

Commissioner Woehr asked that they consider the potential complications with previous applicants whom they had denied façade replacements.

Director Ostrowski stated that the difference between McDonald Title and Edgewater were that they greatly differed in size, features, and history, and that they were looking to accentuate existing features and were more than willing to consider alternatives. He added that staff was looking to collect comments in order to provide them to the architect for changes that may need to be made.

Commissioner Debauche added that Edgewater was a complete project, whereas the other project had been for only one side.

Director Ostrowski confirmed that the replacement of the entire façade, windows, and the improvement of overall building efficiency were part of the project. He noted that the remodel was one of the main recommendations from the 2012 Public Housing Study in order to separate Edgewater Manor from the public housing element as, as Edgewater Manor is not public housing.

Commissioner Scripps asked whether parts of the brick façade had to be removed in order to make the updates discussed, and whether they had spoken with the architect in regards to not damaging the brick.

Director Ostrowski clarified that the whole façade would be replaced due to the current brick separating from the façade which had lead them to pin the brick against the structure due to it being a safety concern. Had the brick not been separating from the building, there would have not been any reason to entertain the costly remodeling project. Due to that being the case, the Common Council had approved a \$1.5 million loan to improve the building, with Edgewater also having funds to pay for the project. Lastly, he explained the benefits of moving forward with the heating and cooling units as there were current issues with airflow throughout the building. Overall they were looking to alleviate maintenance issues, improve the aesthetics of the building, and increase the comfort for the individuals residing in the units.

Chairperson Beveridge asked why the brick was separating, to which Director Ostrowski stated that it may be due to a lack of maintenance, poor construction, and a freezing-thawing cycle caused by water penetration. While they had already sealed the windows and bolted the façade to the studs of the building, a long-term fix recommendation was to replace the whole façade as there were several issues in varying locations on all sides of the building.

Commissioner Scripps asked whether historic was defined by a certain date within the guidelines.

Associate Planner Kearns briefly explained that historic significance did not have a cutoff point from a date perspective, but that significance could come from several things such as, but not limited to, architectural integrity of the building, a person that may have resided at a residence, or an event that may have occurred on the property. He explained that the argument could be made that Edgewater was a noncontributing building in the district, and that it did not necessarily need pertain

to all of the guidelines given its age and simple construction. He also noted that while it was of simple construction, it did represent an era and style of construction.

Chairperson Beveridge added that it had the distinction of being built in a year where new gas connections had been outlawed in new structures.

Director Ostrowski stated that one of the challenges with the building was that it was solid concrete which made running new ventilation very expensive, so if venting or piping needed to be replaced, it would be very costly.

Chairperson Beveridge explained that they were able to have large chases put in during the construction of the Hi-Rise Manor in order to run all utilities, noting that they had spent several million on the project.

Director Ostrowski stated that it had been around a \$5-7 million remodel which had received a lot of tax credit assistance, with Chairperson Beveridge adding that they had sold the building and were no longer owners.

Director Ostrowski also stated that if Edgewater continued to make a profit, they would be able to reinvest those funds to improving the individual living units, but that taking care of the external façade was a priority due to its safety concern. He added that they could look into doing a different type of masonry instead of metal panels, noting that their goal was to provide a different architectural look to the building.

Chairperson Beveridge inquired on a timeline, to which Director Ostrowski stated that they were looking to bid it out over the winter and start construction in the spring.

Chairperson Beveridge asked whether the availability of investment funds were subject to change under new administration.

Director Ostrowski stated that the Common Council had made a point to instill a certainty regarding the ownership and improvement of Edgewater Manor, noting an overall previous 35% vacancy. He also explained that as time went on, they would be able to take the building's profits to pay back any debt service and project costs. Lastly, he stated Candlewood management and the residents had played a large role in filling the building, and ensuring others that Edgewater was a good place to live.

Chairperson Beveridge stated that the Hi-Rise Manor had been an investment which they had made attractive to the developer, and that they would soon be able to buy back the building for a minor amount as they had maintained management during a 15 year period. He asked for assistance in figuring out how to move forward without people coming forward with disapproval on the proposed changes and design.

Director Ostrowski reiterated his point that there were quite a few differences between the current and past projects just based on location, size, and intent, stating again that the goal was to get the identify of Edgewater Manor away from typical Housing and Urban Development (HUD) housing.

Commissioner Scripps agreed with Chairperson Lee that they were not looking to set a precedent in allowing city members to do what they want.

Associate Planner Kearns explained that the proposal would come forward to the commission within the next two months and at that time they would have a full staff report outlining what they had already discussed, significances, and comparisons to other projects. He advised the commission to submit any additional comments to himself or Director Ostrowski in the meantime. He reiterated the need to get initial thoughts and comments to the architect in order to avoid putting effort into final designs only to have it rejected by the Historic Preservation Commission.

Commissioner Woehr recommended that staff provide alderpersons with the information regarding the remodeling to get their feedback as well. He also noted concern for potential political issues that may arise from applicants they have denied.

Director Ostrowski stated that Common Council would still have to approve it, and if they don't like the design, they won't want to fund the project. That being the case, staff didn't want to go to council with a negative recommendation coming out of Historic Preservation, especially for a city owned property. He stated that due to the differences between projects, they wouldn't be setting a precedent, but stressed the importance of the project meeting the wants and desires of the Historic Commission.

Chairperson Beveridge agreed that Edgewater Manor and other past denied projects were completely different.

Director Ostrowski noted that while Edgewater was on the outskirts of the Design Review District, he understood the importance of showing different types of buildings to show how a community had progressed and aged during different eras of construction

Chairperson Beveridge asked whether the design could be linked to similar construction elsewhere within the time period that it was originally built.

Director Ostrowski stated that he would look into 1970s construction, and also mentioned that he would also look into alternative masonry elements for the design instead of using metal panels.

Commissioner Baldischwiler agreed that staff should look into additional stone materials instead of using metal.

Chairperson Beveridge suggested that the design be looked at again as it appeared to be imbalanced, to which Director Ostrowski added that perhaps adding a stone element or textured metal panel would also reduce bowing and glare.

Chairperson Beveridge asked on the possibility of a stucco system, to which Director Ostrowski stated that maintenance would be difficult and that they would prefer to stick with a masonry or metal element.

Chairperson Beveridge asked how insulation they were hoping to put in.

Director Ostrowski stated that specific details had not been provided at that time, but that all metal panels would indeed be insulated. He explained the existing condensation problem due to the lack of insulation and the challenges they may face or find when removing the brick, which in turn may cause additional interior work. They wanted to minimize the disruption to tenants as much as

possible as they do not have the ability to move residents to different units on account of Edgewater being full.

Chairperson Beveridge briefly explained the condensation process.

Director Ostrowski stated that he would look into what different masonry elements were available from the architect, noting the updated architectural stone elements on the Mid-State Technical building downtown which had originally been constructed in the mid-80s.

Chairperson Beveridge asked a clarifying question regarding a side of the façade.

Director Ostrowski stated that the whole façade would be taken down and replaced, and that they would not be keeping any of the brick. It would be replaced with new brick, stone, or different type of material with the addition of signage on the right side of the front façade. He asked that further comments or concerns be forwarded so they could be addressed with the architect.

Commissioner Woehr stated that they would support a formal request to move forward if they are a voting member at that time, to which Associate Planner Kearns stated that there would be a lot more information outlined within the staff report in regards to examples, material, and background at that time.

Commissioner Woehr noted that a main concern was due to requiring material being replaced with the same material on a structure, in this case brick should be replacing brick.

Director Ostrowski noted the concern and stated that he would look into additional stone elements that might compliment brick rather than using metal panels.

Commissioner Woehr stated that textured panels would be better, to which Director Ostrowski agreed.

4. Historic preservation enforcement, violations, and education. *This item is for discussion purposes only.*

Associate Planner Kearns stated that in response to previous discussion regarding the enforcement of Chapter 22 in the Design Guidelines, he had put together a brief memo outlining the penalty provisions within Chapter 22, as well as additional penalties for permits, violations, and citations, as well as summarizing education initiatives. He explained that the enforcement of penalties had been lenient in the past due to potentially giving a negative image to the Community Development Department and Historic Preservation Committee. Typically when an individual is notified of a violation, whether in the Historic District or not, leniency is granted in regards to fines knowing that they are pursuing the proper avenues and approvals. However, he stated that it would be appropriate for the commission to apply the penalty provisions in a situation where they had acted on a request, such as reversing of a project done without approval, and the applicant then delayed in reversing said project. Lastly, he summarized the ways in which they had taken steps to educate the public about the historic districts and their guidelines through the Façade Improvement Grant, public workshops, and working with other avenues such as realtors. Going forward, they could look at pursuing other means to educate property owners that they are within a historic district through mailers or continue to work with realtors.

Director Ostrowski asked Chairperson Beveridge if he had seen a recording of a deed where it stated a property was within the Historic District or a Locally Designated District in his previous line of work.

Chairperson Beveridge stated that while he wasn't looking for that information, it would be a good thing to have. He further stated that the item being on the agenda was in part due by the approval of the Clark Street appeal, explaining that it had been a complicated and frustrating situation due to the lack of communication and procedure.

Commissioner Debauche asked whether it was the responsibility of the contractor to pull permits, to which Chairperson Beveridge stated that the contractors typically did, but that anyone could pull the permit.

Commissioner Debauche noted a similar situation where the excavator had not gotten a permit for the Yonke property, to which Chairperson Beveridge expanded on the lack of cooperation by adding that they had continued work regardless of being told to cease.

Director Ostrowski stated that in regards to Clark Street, he wasn't sure that CAP Services would have done a title search at that time of the loan. Had they looked into the deed, they may have been notified that the property was in a Historic District, if the City recorded it.

Chairperson Beveridge asked if they would have been notified had they pulled a permit, to which Director Ostrowski confirmed that there were flags in place to notify the department if a permit was pulled for a historic property. The issue here he noted, was that the permit was pulled after the removal of siding had begun.

Chairperson Beveridge stated that due to the contractor not initially pulling a permit, they were not notified about the historic status of the property, but even after being notified, they continued to clear material from the property. Overall, he expressed frustration with the property and the events that transpired, noting that no one was comfortable making the decision they made in regards to denying the owner's initial request.

Director Ostrowski suggested that they may be able to show historic status on a property deed, noting the possibility of a cost for every single property.

Chairperson Beveridge stated that the buyer and seller would generally only see the deed, and that if disposed, they could easily pull another.

Director Ostrowski stated that the information would come up were a financial institution doing a title search, with Chairperson Beveridge noting that he was not aware of the procedure.

Director Ostrowski stated that financial institutions were likely to perform a title search, making it more likely that they would become aware of the historic nature, and that changes to the property would require historic district approval. He also noted that it would be an ideal time to identify people since repairs were usually done when moving into a new home.

Associate Planner Kearns suggested that they could potentially flag historic properties within the Assessor's database as they were made aware of all sales. In a situation like this, the Community Development department could work with the Assessor's in drafting and sending out a letter to the

new owner notifying them of being in a Historic District, as well as the requirements, reviews, and procedures needed for certain projects. He noted that there were close to 375 historic properties, and that there may not be a lot of turnover every year, so becoming aware of a sale would not be too difficult.

Chairperson Beveridge stated that it would not be difficult to discover sales with the databases available. He also noted the frustration of having decisions reversed, questioning the weight they carried as a commission.

Associate Planner Kearns stated that they could use the penalty provisions, adding that perhaps it could have prevented the contractor from continuing the project at Clark Street, and that it may have saved the porch for the commission's review. However, he wasn't sure how that would have changed the outcome had he been fined throughout the whole process.

Chairperson Beveridge asked whether the contractor was notified of the historic status on the first day of the job, to which Associate Planner Kearns stated that he had been notified a few days prior to working on the porch.

Chairperson Beveridge asked what the penalty was for not getting a permit, to which Director Ostrowski confirmed the penalty was double fees.

Chairperson Beveridge noted that in northern Wisconsin, people around lakes would often build under the law and pay fines as it was easier to just pay rather than go through the proper process.

Aldersperson Ryan asked whether they could attach a letter to an inspection notice so they could be notified of the violation and historic status at the same time, noting that the Clark Street property had received a violation notice.

Director Ostrowski asked for clarification on the violation, to which Aldersperson Ryan stated that it was for repainting or residing the home and that the process had begun there.

Director Ostrowski stated that he would look into it, noting that if an order was issued for a property in a historic district, it would have provided a clause stating that they were in a historic district and any work would require additional review.

Commissioner Woehr added that they had had a similar situation on College Avenue where they had torn down a garage and only received a double permit fee, which then resulted in them approving a parking lot for the home.

Chairperson Beveridge suggested that perhaps double permit fees weren't enough in a historic district, noting that unlike new homes, certain things in a historic district could not be replaced no matter how much money was put into it, with Director Ostrowski added that education was an important component.

Chairperson Beveridge asked whether the owner on Clark Street was cited by the City due to lack of maintenance, to which Director Ostrowski stated that he would check, but a clause should have been included within the violation notice about the historic district status.

Commissioner Woehr asked who had written Chapter 22 as the format seemed completely different in relation to all other chapters, to which Director Ostrowski stated that they had written the chapter, noting that the Code of Ordinances had been put together and changed over time.

Commissioner Woehr expressed concern with part 12 of Chapter 22, noting that the wording was too lenient, to which Director Ostrowski clarified that the wording in question was reference to the second section, not the fines.

Commissioner Woehr stated that there needed to be consistency within the Code of Ordinances as the Community Development Department described different charges within Chapter 30 of the Building Code.

Aldersperson Ryan asked whether they could do a tiered fining system, noting that the contractor had continued work even after being notified of the historic status and requirements.

Director Ostrowski stated that they could look into issuing a citation, noting that there were other communities who had taken advantage of tiered fining systems.

Aldersperson Ryan stated that they were dealing with two kinds of people, those who were actively doing work on their property and paying fines, and those that were just completely unaware of the requirements and entrusting contractors with the process, adding that both parties should not be equally punished and that staff should have the decision making power.

Chairperson Beveridge asked whether they could use funds to somehow identify the historic districts so they could easily be identified by residents and contractors. Additionally, if contractors could sign a statement saying that they shall investigate if a property is within a historic district, to which Commissioner Woehr stated that contractors didn't require licensing within the city.

Director Ostrowski added that as long as contractors were licensed with the state, they could actively do work within the City, noting that if permits are pulled properly, historic properties are easily caught. He stated that they perhaps needed to look at issuing citations rather than charging double permit fees as the penalty was relatively minor. He agreed that including some type of signage could aid in education.

Aldersperson Ryan suggested doing something with the street signs as there was already districts with a lot of signage, Director Ostrowski stated that they could look into doing something with the street signs and added that they needed to remove excess signage.

Commissioner Scripps expressed approval for street signage, noting that it provoked a sense of pride.

Chairperson Beveridge noted that for several years they talked about doing plaques on the downtown buildings.

Director Ostrowski stated that there were still funds within the façade grant, and while not a lot, they could request additional funds for the next year. Lastly, he added that they had not requested the funds due to other projects, and only being able to fund one.

Chairperson Beveridge stated that they used to have a budget, to which Director Ostrowski stated that they still did within the department, but that unused funds went away every year.

5. Staff Update

Director Ostrowski explained that Jerry's Auto would most likely be demolished within the month or early January after a fire, to which Chairperson Beveridge asked if there had been any additional findings.

Director Ostrowski stated that the insurance company would be handling the demolition with possible asbestos removal.

Associate Planner Kearns informed the commission that they had applied for the Certified Local Government Grant for the additional five historic districts, and that they would hopefully hear back in the spring of 2017. Lastly, 1117 Smith Street, whose request had been before them the prior month, had had their existing garage inspected by a mason who would now be doing temporary interior improvements using interior bracing of the walls to maintain the structure throughout the winter. The applicant would be providing a formal submission in the spring for potential approval of the garage demolition, reconstruction, or rehabilitation.

6. Adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 5:10 PM.