

REPORT OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION / DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

Thursday, July 5, 2012 – 4:30 p.m.

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

PRESENT: Alderperson Mary Stroik, Commissioner Tim Siebert, Commissioner Kathy Kruthoff, and Alternate Commissioner Norm Myers.

ALSO PRESENT: Community Development Director Michael Ostrowski and Economic Development Specialist Kyle Kearns.

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Discussion and possible action on the following:

1. Request from Sentry Insurance for façade improvement grant funds in the amount of \$9,255 and design review for exterior building work, including the cleaning, tuckpointing, and sealing of their building at **1421 Strongs Avenue (Parcel ID 2408-32-2024-06)**.
2. Rewriting of the Historic Preservation / Design Review Guidelines.
3. Adjourn

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Director Ostrowski pointed out at the start of the meeting that there is no Chairperson in attendance, so the commission would need to nominate someone to run today's meeting.

**Commissioner Myers nominated Commissioner Siebert to be Chairperson for today's meeting; seconded by Commissioner Kruthoff. Nomination carried 4-0.**

1. Request from Sentry Insurance for façade improvement grant funds in the amount of \$9,255 and design review for exterior building work, including the cleaning, tuckpointing, and sealing of their building at **1421 Strongs Avenue (Parcel ID 2408-32-2024-06)**.

Director Ostrowski stated that they had contacted the State of Wisconsin Historic Preservation Office in regards to the anti-graffiti material that would be applied to the building. A representative from that office said they would not recommend it. This building is on the Historic Register and applying this coating could be detrimental to the building. If the stone is not dry when you put it on, the coating traps the moisture behind it and it can start degrading the stone behind it. Economic Development Specialist Kyle Kearns added that if they do put on the anti-graffiti coating, the state would prefer the brand Prosoco, which was mentioned in one of the bids submitted. Prosoco is a little bit friendlier product environmentally, but the preservation architect with the state said that they never in any case recommend it.

Commissioner Siebert questioned if the coating could also discolor over time.

Director Ostrowski stated that along with the anti-graffiti coating, Sentry wants to do some tuckpointing, caulking, and cleaning. He stated that cleaning is typically just a maintenance issue that may not warrant grant funding. In addition, since the preservation office does not recommend putting an anti-graffiti coating on a building, he is not sure if we should fund those

costs with grant funds. In looking at the request, he would recommend funding half of the cost of the lowest tuckpointing bid, which is \$2,440.

Commissioner Kruthoff questioned why a big corporation is asking for funds, as opposed to the little shop owners, but the fact is that this building is one of the most beautiful buildings. Director Ostrowski added that it is one of the most historic buildings in our downtown, and we do want to preserve it. Helping with the tuckpointing is going towards that. He continued that there are a number of buildings in the area that have recently been hit with graffiti and Sentry has installed cameras, but the graffiti is still hard to remove.

Commissioner Kruthoff questioned how detrimental the anti-graffiti coating is as opposed to the cleaning of the graffiti time after time, and would the cleaning wear more than adding the anti-graffiti coating. She stated that if we are looking at this as a wonderfully beautiful building that we do want to preserve and they continuously have to remove the graffiti, how do we weigh one against the other. Director Ostrowski stated that we are not saying that they can't do it, but for us to fund it with grant funds, we really don't want to go against what is historically accurate and what the state would recommend. Commissioner Siebert pointed out that the city uses a cleaning fluid, to which Director Ostrowski confirmed yes depending on what type of paint it is.

Commissioner Siebert stated that he feels to not allow the anti-graffiti coating, and he is not sure about the cleaning.

Commissioner Myers wanted clarification that staff recommendation is to not include the anti-graffiti coating, to which Director Ostrowski stated the amount of \$9,255 includes everything: the anti-graffiti coating, the tuckpointing, and the cleaning. He stated that he does not have a problem with the tuckpointing because it is important to the building, even though you can't always see the improvements, it is crucial to help sustain the building. We have a choice to fund some of them, all of them, or none of them based off of our design guidelines and our criteria within the grant program, keeping in mind that we do have a limited amount of funding available.

Commissioner Myers clarified that it seems like you have the graffiti control that is \$5,800 and what is preferred is to do the other requests without the coating. Director Ostrowski explained that we can allow them to do it, but wouldn't want to see the commission fund something that goes against the historical standards.

Commissioner Siebert stated that power washing the limestone is a problem because it will powder the limestone. He would rather see them use some sort of mild chemical that doesn't damage the limestone. Director Ostrowski also pointed out that the power washing at 2500 psi is way too strong of pressure. Mr. Kearns stated that the applicant also had concerns about the bids and the high psi for cleaning.

Aldersperson Stroik clarified that the anti-graffiti coating was not recommended, to which Mr. Kearns stated nothing is recommended, but if you were to have to use a coating it was the Prosoco brand that would be preferable.

Director Ostrowski recapped that staff recommends funding half of the lowest bid for tuckpointing (\$2,440), caulking only previously caulked areas or where two different materials that meet, and to not fund the anti-graffiti control because it is not historically accurate, but

allow Sentry to do it if they use the kind recommended by the state. In addition, staff would recommend not using power washing, but rather a mild chemical solution, or extremely low psi levels of power washing as to not damage the stone.

Commissioner Kruthoff pointed out that we are setting precedent to not fund the cleaning of buildings due to the limited funds available, and because it is more of a maintenance aspect, as opposed to a restoration project.

**Motion by Commissioner Myers to approve grant funds in the amount not to exceed \$2,440 solely for the tuckpointing, with the following conditions:**

- **Tuckpointing shall match to the greatest extent possible the original mortar and spacing on the building,**
- **Caulking shall only be performed on previously caulked joints, or where two different materials meet,**
- **Awarded grant funds shall not include funds for cleaning or the graffiti control, but if Sentry does decide to use the graffiti control that they use the Prosoco brand identified by the state preservation office,**
- **Cleaning shall be performed with the appropriate methods either a mild chemical wash or very low levels of power washing as to not damage the stone,**
- **Mortar shall be used over caulk where applicable,**
- **All work shall be completed within one year,**
- **Project must adhere to Façade Improvement Grant Program Guidelines, and**
- **No funds shall be disbursed until project is fully completed, and approved paid invoices along with receipts are submitted.**

Commissioner Siebert asked if the grant funds could be used for taking paint off of brick to get back to the original material, to which Director Ostrowski stated that would be appropriate as it would be restoring it to the original façade.

**seconded by Commissioner Kruthoff. Motion Carried 3-0, with Alderperson Stroik abstaining.**

Commissioner Myers left the meeting.

2. **Rewriting of the Historic Preservation / Design Review Guidelines.**

Director Ostrowski reviewed the previous meetings where the Commission examined Chapter 22: Historic Preservation / Design Review, stating that the next step is to review and rewrite the Historic Preservation Design Guidelines.

The Commission began discussing the template provided. Director Ostrowski gave an overview on each chapter and section, asking for any comments from the commission after each. Discussion stopped on Chapter 5: New Construction.

3. **Adjourn**

**Motion by Commissioner Siebert to adjourn; seconded by Commissioner Kruthoff. Motion carried 3-0. Meeting adjourned at 5:43 PM.**