



MEETING MINUTES

PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Tuesday, December 6, 2022

7:00 P.M.

Members Present: Beth Bodan, Stuart Cohen, John Jacobs, Carl Klein, Sarah Dreller, Jamie Morris, Suzi Reinhold, Mark Simon, Aleca Sullivan, and Amanda Ziehm

Members Absent:

Staff Present: Carlos D. Ruiz, and Cade Sterling

Presiding Member: Suzi Reinhold, Chair

Notes Taken by: Carlos D. Ruiz

1. CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM

Chair S. Reinhold called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM with a quorum of nine Commissioners present. Commissioner C. Klein arrived shortly after.

2. NEW BUSINESS

A. Preserve 2040 - Long-Range Work Plan

Staff recommends adoption of the Preserve 2040 Long-Range Plan

The Preserve 2040 Long-Range Work Plan shall act as the Commission's principle policy document regarding the identification, documentation and stewardship of Evanston's significant heritage resources and as a guide for the oversight and administration of the community's historic preservation program principally facilitated through the City's Planning and Zoning Division with support from the Preservation Commission as well as other partner organizations. This document would supersede the previous 1981 Preservation Plan which has seen its goals and objectives substantially realized.

- C. Sterling said that the Plan has been with the sub-committee for about six (6) months. Commissioners A. Sullivan and A. Ziehm had provided comments. C. Sterling continued by saying that the 2040 long range work plan acts as the Commission's principal policy document regarding the identification,

documentation, and stewardship of Evanston's significant heritage resources. It is a guide for the oversight and administration of the community's historic preservation program, which is principally facilitated through the City's Planning and Zoning Division, with support from the Commission as well as other partner organizations.

The adoption of the Plan will supersede the 1981 Preservation Plan, which has seen its goals and objectives substantially realized.

- Commissioner Ziehm asked if the Plan includes landscaping or trees for the Commission's binding review.
 - C. Sterling said that the Preservation Ordinance does not give the Commission that purview. The option would be to revise the Ordinance to add that. Another option is that the Commission would advocate for a city-wide tree preservation plan.
- Commissioner Ziehm said she would like to incorporate more education tools in the Plan for homeowners, so that the preservation review process is not so intimidating and be able to submit applications without having to hire architects to make projects more affordable. Also, include some 'how to' or Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ).
 - C. Sterling said that the Plan mentions creating a pool of money specific for home owners who could not afford certain kind of projects for vernacular and modest homes, which are important for the City's build heritage.
 - Also, offer more one-on-one or subcommittee technical assistance, to look at certain preservation oriented projects for homeowners.
- Commissioner S. Cohen noted that more projects have been reviewed administratively.
 - C. Ruiz noted that architectural drawings are required for Zoning analysis, which is a step before preservation review, and also for building permits for code compliance. He also mentioned the Commission's Rules and Procedures that include a list of projects that could be reviewed administratively and those that should be reviewed by the Commission.
- Commissioner C. Klein mentioned that for the Pilsen historic district in Chicago, volunteer architects provide assistance to property owners.
- Commissioner Ziehm referred to deconstruction in the Plan. Her concern is related to leaded paint and identification of materials that can have adverse health issues.
 - C. Sterling said the actual deconstruction itself is more where the issue is than someone picking up construction material at a salvage yard and repurposing it. If a deconstruction ordinance were to move forward, those type of discussions could take place.
- Commissioner M. Simon said the Plan is an amazing collection of ideas, some of them more for the future or aspirational. He likes the matrix showing things that might be done soon. He said that Commissioners should get together each year, and pick out 2 or 3 items, otherwise, great ideal may get lost.
 - C. Sterling said that it make sense that each year there would be like annual work plans for things actually achievable. Considering the political will of the moment, circumstances, and the environment we live in, may not necessitate some of the things to be done immediately.

- Commissioner A. Sullivan noted that initiative 3.6 in the Plan, about deconstruction, mentions considering partnerships with the Evanston Rebuilding Exchange. It should be added “or similar organizations”. The educational aspect of the Plan should include people that don’t live in historic districts, but live in a home that could benefit from the Commission’s knowledge and the material it produces.
- A motion to adopt the Preserve 2040 Long Range Work Plan was seconded and carried on an unanimous voice vote.

B. 2023 Meeting Schedule

Staff recommends adoption of the 2023 meeting dates

All dates within the proposed 2023 schedule fall on the second Tuesday of each month with an August recess.

- A motion to adopt the 2023 meeting schedule for the Preservation Commission was seconded and carried on an unanimous voice vote.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Minutes of November 8, 2022

- Commissioner Jacobs amended the November 8, 2022, minutes deleting the word ‘eyebrow’ from the text ‘eyebrow canopy’ in the minutes, regarding the 2211 Sherman Avenue case.
- A motion to approved the November 8, 2022, minutes as amended passed on a vote of 8 ayes, 0 nays, and 2 abstentions (A. Ziehm and J. Morris).

4. STAFF REPORTS

A. Legacy Business Program

Staff will provide an update on the program to date, next steps, and anticipated launch.

- C. Sterling said that 3 out of 12 responses to the RFP were selected for interviews. The program may be launched in early spring. The RFP is for building and launching the web platform and content. Also, the design of plaques and other identification features. There is also a participatory process with the Legacy businesses and other stakeholders.
- The City’s Purchasing Division guidelines call for City staff receiving and selecting the responses to the RFP. Two members of the Economic Development Division, one from the Purchasing Division, and himself made that decision. Then the interview panel is composed by the same individuals and two members of the Preservation Commission (Chair S. Reinhold and Commissioner C. Klein).

B. Downtown Heritage Resource Survey

- C. Sterling said that three survey teams (3 Commissioners and 2 City staff) conducted the surveys in the summer and fall. Forty (40) supplemental resources were identified, in addition to the 143 that were identified by the Preservation Commission in 2007. Of those 40 supplemental resources surveyed, 11 or (27 percent) were identified as landmark eligible. Bringing the total to 31, and the downtown already has 29 landmarks. Also, of those 40 surveyed, 3 were identified as not contributing to the character of the downtown or (7 percent). Twenty one were identified as being in good condition, 9 in excellent condition, 10 in fair condition, and zero in poor condition.
 - Eighteen were identified as having good integrity, 10 having excellent integrity, 9 fair integrity, and 3 poor integrity. The next steps are doing background research, a survey report, apply character profiles to the three traditional zoning districts in the downtown. Also, recommendations to the Commission for non-bidding review. Some of the survey information has already been used by the Land Use Commission.
 - The survey information will be posted in the historic preservation webpage, which is accessible to the public. Also, a copy of the survey report will be sent to the building owners. The survey information is more valuable to the Land Use Commission for making decision on major variations, or alterations, or pla development applications, where they don't know the significance of these buildings, because they are not registered as landmarks.

C. Heritage Resource Design Manual

- C. Ruiz said that he received comments to the latest draft of the Manual. The Manual is meant for providing home owners, architects, and contractors with information on how to develop successful projects for historic preservation review. The text in the Manual is not too technical and is illustrated with photos of local buildings. He will incorporate those comments by January or February 2023.

D. Miscellaneous

- C. Sterling said that the nomination of Preservation Commission Officers is still open. Nominated individuals will be contacted and asked if they will accept that nomination. The election will happen at the January 2023 meeting.
- Chair Reinhold acknowledged Commissioner Mark Simon and said that this is his last meeting after six years of service (3 years as Chair). Commissioners and staff praised and thanked Commissioner M. Simon for his wonderful work with the Commission.

5. ADJOURMENT

Commissioner M. Simon made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 PM, Commissioner A. Sullivan seconded the motion. The motion carried on a unanimous vote.