

# Rockford Historic Preservation Commission

September 9, 2008 - 6:00 PM

Conference Room B

Rockford City Hall

**Present:** Laura Bachelder, Mark McInnis, Sally Faber, Maureen Flanagan

**Absent :** Ald. Doug Mark, Thomas Graceffa, David Hagney

**Staff :** Ginny Gregory, Arianne Clarke, Reid Montgomery

**Others:** Jennifer McInnis

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## Approval of Minutes

Mark McInnis made a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the minutes for the meeting of August 5, 2008 as submitted. The motion was seconded by Sally Faber. The motion **CARRIED** by a vote of **4-0**.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

### Section 106 Review – telecommunications facility at 1922 – 7<sup>th</sup> Street (National Lock clock tower)

Ginny Gregory asked for another discussion of the proposed changes to the clock tower, located at 1922 – 7<sup>th</sup> Street, by Denali Spectrum Operations, LLC/Cricket Communications, Inc. This company is proposing installation of three panel antennas to the exterior side of the clock tower. The proposed antennas would be 6" in diameter and 48" long (4 feet). The antenna would be painted to match the exterior brick wall and would be placed on the clock tower wall, next to the clock face, on three of the four outside walls. She indicated the building is not currently a landmark, but the antennas would be federally licensed. Ginny also mentioned she drove by the building and noticed the clock tower itself was the only part of the building that looked original; the rest of the building had had major alterations made to it.

Mark McInnis asked if the clock face was on all four sides. Ginny indicated it was, and the proposed antennae would be on three sides. After some discussion, Sally Faber made a **MOTION** to **CONSIDER** 1922 – 7<sup>th</sup> Street an historic building as it has contributed to the fabric of the industry of the Rockford community. Mark McInnis seconded the motion. Motion **CARRIED** by a vote of **4-0**.

Mark wondered why the antenna could not be placed on top of the building. Ginny hypothesized the antenna would be less obtrusive on the side of the building rather than the top. Mark also suggested there could be a lower price for installing antennae on a wall rather than a rooftop. Mark believed the antennae would not be visible from the ground if it were placed on the roof. Laura Bachelder wondered if attaching the antennae to the wall would do long-term damage to the clock face, the most significant part of the building.

Sally Faber made a **MOTION** to **RECOMMEND** to the State that the antennas not be fastened to the brick front near the clock face, but that they have the antennas attached to the roof to preserve the historic focal point of the clock tower. Mark seconded the motion. Motion **CARRIED** by a vote of **4-0**.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Certificates of Appropriateness – 222 South First Street**

Jennifer McInnis was present to explain her application to replace an existing porch railing, brick masonry, deck and steps on her property. As part of the upgrades, she would like to remove the non-historic yellow masonry, but leave the historic pickets, the limestone base, and top of the porch in place. Jennifer indicated the construction plans are based on historic details from the era her home was built. She would also be replicating portions of another porch on their property for the appropriate historic look. The porch will be made out of cedar, but the color scheme hasn't been chosen yet as the repairs are urgent.

Jennifer discussed her plans for a porch light. The existing light is not original, and she would like to replace it with a pendant-type light that would be more fitting to the style of the house, but hasn't chosen one yet. She offered to send a picture of the light to this Committee once it's chosen. Ginny indicated another certificate for appropriateness would need to be completed and approved for the new light.

Next Jennifer discussed the four doorbells on her property. She would like to remove the doorbells and patch the walls. She mentioned her home has an old fashioned ringer-type doorbell.

Another improvement Jennifer explained was in regards to a short gutter in the front of her house. This gutter hides a lot of detail to the house. She would eventually want to cut or miter the gutter so you can see the detail in the front.

Ginny asked what happened to Jennifer's porch that constitutes an emergency. Jennifer replied the porch is sinking into the earth. It is settling and is just resting on a stone currently. She stated there was a limestone base that she will try to undershore and keep, even though it isn't visible.

Sally Faber made a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the certificate of appropriateness as written for the removal of the porch at 222 South First Street and replace it. Maureen Flanagan seconded the motion. The motion **CARRIED** by a vote of **3-0-1** with Mark McInnis abstaining.

### **Modification to the Certificate of Appropriateness - 946 North Second Street**

Ginny stated the only change the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois is requesting from the Certificate approved in August is the configuration of the walkway that leads from the terrace to the parking lot. The proposed change will make the walkway curved rather than square. This change will require the removal of a small pine tree with a diameter of 9 inches.

Maureen Flanagan made a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the modification to the certificate of appropriateness as submitted. Sally Faber seconded the motion. Motion **CARRIED** by a vote of **4-0**.

## **STAFF REPORT**

### **IHSAC reception and meeting (September 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>)**

Ginny stated she knew of three Commission members who were planning to attend the reception at the Community Foundation on September 11, 2008. The reception runs from 5pm to 7pm. There is no program as it's more of an open house so any members who can are invited to attend.

The meeting begins at 9a.m. in the library at Memorial Hall on Friday, September 12, 2008. Ginny indicated 13 applications were received, and the application for Oak Park, Illinois was 400 pages long. She explained Oak Park needed a description of every structure in the original district as well as text on every building in the area they want to add to in the Frank Lloyd Wright area.

### **Discussion of the grant project – economic impact of local designation**

Next Ginny discussed the grant project and the impact of the historic district designation on property values. She indicated the project still needed work and would include pictures and maps that showed where the districts were and the comparable areas. Ginny asked for feedback on the relevance of the document. Mark asked how she arrived at the Indian Terrace comparison. Ginny replied she found it difficult to compare Indian Terrace to anything as it was so unique. She started with the 1977 assessed value, then looked in GIS to find a nearby residential area that had a similar value. This was the process she used for all of the districts, it was just more difficult with Indian Terrace.

Ginny further stated the only area that didn't best its comparable value in terms of assessed valuation is one part of Brown's Hills that she separated out and compared to National Avenue in the document. However, she thought the portion of Brown's Hills still did quite well in comparison with a neighborhood of substantial estates that are directly on the river. This portion of the Brown's Hills area still had over 200% improvement. In comparing it to National Avenue, which had over 300% improvement though, the comparison fell short.

Finally, Ginny stated she hadn't included rate of owner occupancy in the report. Except for Haight Village, she does not have that information in 1977. The rate went from 35% in 1977 to 60% currently. She indicated she could include what the current rate is.

Ginny had discussed the data with Janyce Fadden of the Rockford Area Economic Development Council who is ecstatic over the information and has offered to have her staff do the layout of the final document.

Sally indicated this information could be distributed to the local real estate agencies and posted on websites. Ginny indicated this information will be posted on the City's website, and links can be made to it from other websites. Ginny mentioned there was money in the grant to print about 1,000 copies to distribute to the owners of all the properties included in the report. Sally requested a synopsis be included on the HPC website as well.

Sally thought brochures summarizing the information for the realtor association would be beneficial. Ginny stated after this report was printed, if there was any money left they could look

into printing brochures. Sally indicated she would bring in a copy of another brochure for a sample. Ginny thought she would have the final draft ready for approval at October's meeting.

**Other**

Ginny stated the Landmarks Illinois Annual Preservation Dinner will be held on Friday, October 17, 2008 at the Chicago Club. Anyone who is interested in attending can claim membership since HPC is a member.

**The meeting adjourned at 6:35 PM.**

**Respectfully submitted by,  
Arianne Clarke,  
Sr. Administrative Assistant  
Community Development Department**