

## Rock Island Board of Zoning Appeals Minutes

Council Chambers (3<sup>rd</sup> Floor), City Hall

1528 3rd Avenue

April 26, 2023

5:30 PM



<b>Voting Members Present</b>	Linda Anderson John Daly Diane Oestreich Mark Schwiebert Deb Kuntzi Robert Braun
<b>Voting Members Absent</b>	Addison Kimmel Bruce Peterson
<b>Associate Members Present</b>	Jeff Dimer
<b>Associate Members Absent</b>	None
<b>Staff Present</b>	Tanner Osing
<b>Guests</b>	None

### Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Braun called the meeting to order at 5:34 PM and read the roll call.

### Public Comment

Chair Braun called for any members of the public to make public comment.

Todd Linscott of Rock Island signed in for public comment and addressed the Commission. Linscott spoke about Fire Station No. 5 in Douglas Park that is slated for demolition. He discussed past efforts to rehabilitate the building and longstanding maintenance issues. Linscott also mentioned that the City owns a lot of other historic buildings and wishes that there could be a proactive effort to address maintenance concerns.

Oestreich noted that Linscott's points are well taken and that historic structures should, at very least, be stabilized. She also discussed the City's role in maintaining structures and that there could be higher standards in place.

Linscott also proposed the idea of creating a yearly list of historic properties that have maintenance concerns that would hopefully bring issues to the forefront.

Kuntzi commented on Fire Station No. 5's long term maintenance concerns and that the hole in the roof was a known problem. She also expressed concern about the stone building at Saukie Golf Course.

Osing stated that there are likely better ways that staff can identify maintenance issues with City-owned properties that are historic. Vice Chair Anderson added that the Preservation Society was considering adding endangered buildings as a meeting topic.

### **Approval of the Agenda**

Schwiebert moved to approve the written agenda for April 26, 2023. Kuntzi seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a vote of 6 to 0.

### **Approval of the Previous Meeting Minutes**

Vice Chair Anderson moved to approve the minutes for March 29, 2023. Schwiebert seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a vote of 6 to 0.

### **Old Business**

None

### **New Business**

#### Election of Commission Chair and Vice Chair for 2023

Osing noted that staff is recommending to postpone the election until the Mayor appoints new members.

Oestreich moved to postpone the election until the Mayor appoints new members to the Commission. Daly seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a vote of 6 to 0.

#### Case 2023-01: Certificate of Appropriateness for the Sharpe House at 1611 21<sup>st</sup> Street

The applicant, Estlin Feigley, presented the proposed changes to the Sharpe House. He noted past alterations that have been done and the desire to convert the enclosed porch in the back yard into an open porch.

Oestreich confirmed how many windows would be on the backside of the house. The applicant noted that three (3) windows will remain on the second story.

Schwiebert asked about the stairs on the northside of the porch. The applicant mentioned that the stairs are proposed to be removed on that side, but planned to be replaced as part of the open porch concept. Schwiebert also asked about staff's recommendation to keep the window openings on the southside of the porch.

Osing commented that staff recommends keeping the window openings since the property owner has already closed windows on the southside of the house and that the windows are visible from the street. Osing also noted that the keeping the openings will ensure that a good balance of windows remains on the house.

Oestreich asked if both windows went into the porch or if one of the windows was for another room. The applicant noted that both windows lead to the porch, although, it doesn't appear that way from the exterior.

Kuntzi additionally asked if the back porch is original. The applicant noted that it is original but has been altered over time.

Schwiebert made a motion to approve the Certification of Appropriateness for the work as described with the exception of the two window closures on the southside of the porch. Oestreich seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a vote of 6 to 0.

#### Discussion of 2023 CLG Grant Opportunities

Osing explained that a new round of CLG grant funding has opened up and staff is seeking input from the Commission on any projects that should be considered. He mentioned the idea of updating the Most Significant Unprotected Structures (MoSUS) list and a possibility of using it more as a guidebook to prioritize structures needing intervention.

Oestreich opposed the use of CLG grant funding for an update to MoSUS, and mentioned that the work should be done in-house. Oestreich also noted that the priority should not be placed on one single house, but rather keeping the historic fabric of a neighborhood intact. She cited an example of two houses recently destroyed by fire in the Broadway Neighborhood and how that left a gap.

Osing asked if there was a specific project the Commissioners were interested in pursuing funding for. Anderson proposed updating the residential design guidelines. Oestreich asked if there are existing documents that could be used as resources. Osing responded affirmatively.

Schwiebert proposed the idea of updating some of the walking tours or historic neighborhood brochures. Oestreich highlighted past walking tour efforts. Commissioners discussed how comprehensive walking tours should be in terms of including properties with historic value beyond local landmarks and properties listed on the National Register. Schwiebert also mentioned potential tourism opportunities associated with walking tours, and that Downtown, the Broadway Neighborhood, and the Highland Park Historic District would be a good place to start. Oestreich commented that CLG grant funding could primarily be used for printing costs since most of the research and writing is already done. Commissioners also discussed signage that could complement the walking tours.

Osing commented that the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has mentioned the desire for the City to pursue CLG funding for architectural surveys.

#### **Other Business**

Osing noted that the Preservation Month Proclamation will be on the agenda for the first City Council Meeting in May.

Osing also mentioned that the consultant for the Broadway Historic District Nomination update has responded to comments from Commission. He also noted that the consultant should have a draft nomination report ready for review in the coming weeks.

Osing additionally provided an update on sending out postcards to Landmark property owners.

Vice Chair Anderson commented on a project that is in the works for nominating the 1918 Government Hosing Collection to the National Register of Historic Places.

### **Adjournment**

Chair Braun asked for a motion to adjourn. Schwiebert moved to adjourn. Daly seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a vote of 6 to 0 at 6:32 PM.

Minutes submitted by Tanner Osing.