

Historic District Commission  
Meeting Notes for November 5, 2014

In attendance: Mark Reile, Jim Ebert, Suzanne Nemeth, Russ Randall, Christine Broberg, Al Van Kampen, Amanda Croft (YAC), Erica Eklov, and citizen Renee Sibley.

Excused: Katie vanLonkhuyzen

Unexcused: Dorie Ehrig and Theresa Bunch

Meeting called to order.

September's and October's Special Meeting Minutes were approved with minor verbiage change on October's minutes.

Old Business:

1521 East Centre Avenue – In response to HDC approval of certificate of appropriateness regarding the barn demolition and replacement with stipulations, the home owner sent an email citing financial hardship with the expenses that would be incurred. After some preliminary discussion on what the HDC might make concessions such as size of barn, and a regular overhead door with barn style accents, Russ asked if the email response was even an actionable request. It was decided it was not, and a response from HDC will be sent to the owner explaining that they have permission to raze the barn, but need to submit a new certificate of appropriateness with their financial constraints outlined within the request for a new structure. It was also recommended by Suzanne that it be required that they save and store appropriately the wood siding from the demolition of the structure as HDC has not agreed to forgo reusing the original barn wood.

3221 West Milham

The owner has replaced the roof as allowed, but has not wrapped any of the windows as approved. Community Development has taken action through the court system for the remaining maintenance issues that stemmed from citizen complaint in the spring. There has not been any communication with the owner and no action needed at this time.

New Business:

Mark addressed the need for a strategy on how to address issues we are seeing more and more in regards to out buildings within the district as well as new commercial development encroaching on properties within the district. Everyone was in agreement that outbuildings are as significant part of our city's history and changing the ordinance to eliminate them was not an option. However, we have had an increase in barn issues regarding maintenance vs. restoring vs. replacement and how economics factor into the owners' willingness to keep as original as possible. We have also had communication with development companies requesting what needs to be done to remove a property from the district for possible development. It was decided to address City Council in a letter to bring them into discussion and make them aware of the conflicts we see coming up in the future. It was also discussed the need for the City to possibly add a line item to the budget to help with financing for outbuilding

repair/maintenance or look at some sort of tax credit incentives to help home owners within the district. It was also brought up about the laws that allow or don't allow for modifying the district. Erica was going to review and update at the next meeting. Mark will draft a communication for review at December's meeting.

Comments: Suzanne reminded everyone about the trading cards and how popular they were at Christmas time. Erica is going to do a press release on them again. They are currently available at the City Hall, Senior Center and Life Story Funeral Homes.

Citizen Comments: Renee attended to see what our committee was all about and may be interested in applying for a seat when there is a vacancy. She also commented on how she has several sets of the trading cards, and framed the set for her husband who travels a lot.

Meeting adjourned.