

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ST. CLOUD HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION

A meeting of the St. Cloud Heritage Preservation Commission was held on July 26, 2011, at 3:30 p.m. in City Hall Conference Room 1. Members present were Bartlow, Berg, Chirhart, Lenaghan and Morgan. Ludwig was absent.

Approval of Minutes: Lenaghan noted that the June 28, 2011 minutes indicate that Morgan was both present and absent. He stated that they should be amended to show that Berg was present and Morgan was absent. Lenaghan moved to approve the minutes of June 28, 2011, as amended. The motion was seconded by Chirhart and carried by a vote of 4-0-1 (Bartlow abstained as she was not present at the June meeting).

Discussion on Cowboy Jack's: Carla Chapman, Senior Planner, stated that the owner of Cowboy Jack's, a Wild West themed restaurant and bar, is interested in locating the restaurant at 506 and 510 St. Germain St. (former Rox Nightclub and Tavern on Germain). Both are contributing structures in the Downtown Commercial Historic District. The survey files indicate that they are examples of turn of the century commercial architecture. Chapman stated that the Planning Department received the alteration permit application just an hour ago. The applicant is proposing front façade improvements on each building consistent in the thematic character of the restaurant. The plan distributed at the meeting was submitted with the alteration permit application. The item is on the agenda for informal discussion only. Chapman stated that the plan proposes full length sliding glass doors, a corrugated metal awning across both buildings, and reclaimed lumber as an exterior finish material. Also, the applicant proposes a number of decorative elements such as wagon wheels, and steer heads. Chapman stated the windows on the upper façade appear to remain as is with the exception of placement of half wagon wheel elements. Chirhart expressed concern about the corrugated metal awning and advertising signs on the awnings. Bartlow stated that if the sliding glass doors open onto the sidewalk, some kind of control mechanism could be needed so people do not

block the sidewalk. Lenaghan mentioned a possibility to increase the window size on the upper façade. Chapman said the Downtown Design Manual recommends replacing the downsized upper story windows with full size 1/1 double hung windows. Chapman explained that the restaurant will only occupy first floor of each building; therefore, business owners indicated limited improvements will be made to the upper façades. Chapman stated the applicant did express interest in restoring the original brick of upper façade of 506 St. Germain Street W. Bartlow stated that she would fully support restoring the brick on the upper façade. Berg asked for an explanation of the proposed “metal Montana gates” above the doorways. Chapman stated that it is a woven mesh. Bartlow asked if a special permit is required to infringe on the sidewalk area. Chirhart commented that the sidewalk is quite narrow in front of those buildings. Matt Glaesman, Planning Director, stated that the City code addresses encroachments in the C3, Central Business District. It allows for tables, benches and overhanging awnings. Awnings must meet an 8’ height minimum. Glaesman stated that the Mayor has indicated that he may be willing to revisit that provision as several downtown restaurants have been attempting to get creative outdoor seating. Chirhart questioned whether corrugated awnings will be an issue in the winter; Lenaghan said they should not cause a problem. Morgan noted that the awning extends continually across the separate buildings. He feels separate canvas awning sections would be more in keeping with the historic nature of downtown. Chapman asked the Commission if they had any suggestions toward a compromise between the historic character of downtown and the thematic character of restaurant. Morgan suggested eliminating the wagon wheel element from the upper façade windows. Berg agreed with applicant’s intention to remove the paint and restore the brick of the upper façade. In conjunction with the paint removal, Morgan suggested restoring the upper windows of to full size to make them historically correct. Lenaghan stated that the buildings will tie together much better after the paint is removed and the brick is restored. Bartlow commented that she feels it would be acceptable to remove the panels from the existing “L” shaped sign and put in new signage panels. She also would not object to the embellishment of that sign with a quarter wagon wheel as shown on applicant’s plan if in painted metal rather than unfinished wood. Bartlow

also suggested that the Cowboy Jack's Saloon sign could be centered on one of the buildings. Chirhart questioned the appropriateness of having cattle skulls hanging from the Cowboy Jack's sign. Morgan encouraged staff to work with the business owner to modify the plans to keep the buildings within the historic guidelines. Bartlow said she is in favor of the gooseneck lighting above the sign. Bartlow asked what the design guidelines say about metal lettering. Chapman quoted from the Downtown Design Guidelines: "Signs should be made of traditional materials such as wood or metal panels with painted or ornamental lettering." Bartlow did not think the silver aluminum letters would be very readable against the reclaimed wood. Bartlow asked the Commission's opinion of the reclaimed wood and if it is in keeping with the historic character. Morgan did not believe it was in keeping with the historic character of downtown. Chirhart commented that he does not think the reclaimed wood fits with the original brick. Bartlow pointed out that the design guidelines for this building indicate recessed doors. The plan appears to indicate that the entryways may be recessed, but the windows are not. Morgan emphasized the importance of meeting with the owners to discuss their plan and possible compromises. Chapman stated that she will share the Commission's suggestions with the applicant. The alteration permit will be on the August HPC Subcommittee agenda followed by consideration at the regular HPC meeting in August.

St. Cloud's Historic Preservation Month: Chapman stated that since 2006, one month a year has been designated as historic preservation month. Historically, the City's historic preservation month has been June; however, this year it has been moved to August to coincide with St. Cloud's Historic Downtown "History Hunt." The History Hunt is being coordinated with the Sizzling Summer Art Crawl on Saturday, August 20. Other preservation related events that will be held in August include presentation of the Century Home plaque and the 2011 Historic Preservation Award at the August 8 City Council meeting, distribution of the HPC newsletter, and the realtor seminar focusing on core neighborhoods to be held on August 25. Bartlow requested that "Historic Preservation Month" be renamed "Heritage Preservation Month" since the Commission is called the Heritage Preservation Commission. She stated that the definition of "heritage" refers to a legacy and tradition and a way of

life and culture passing from one generation to the next or inherited. "History" refers to what has happened in the past. Chapman said Staff will consider the change.

2011 Century Homes Recognition Program: Chapman stated that 61 homes have been accepted into the century homes recognition program to date. She stated that normally there is a public nomination process, but staff referred to the data base of interested property owners that were either not in a financial position to purchase a plaque or were still uncertain about whether they wanted to apply for acceptance into the program. Chapman stated a number of property owners were contacted; however only one property owner expressed interest in having their property accepted into the program. The program recognizes homeowners who have maintained their 100 year old or older historic homes with their original architectural character. Several criteria must be met to be accepted into the program, i.e., 1) the original structure must have been built for residential use; 2) it must be documented to be 100 years old and reflect the original character (alterations are acceptable as long as the original character is not compromised); 3) the house may not show signs of deferred maintenance; and, 4) the house should demonstrate how to care for older homes. The property under consideration this year is owned by Xakk and Elizabeth Asphodel and is located at 331 19 ½ Ave. No. The house was built in 1891. Staff is recommending acceptance of the home into the century homes program.

Chirhart moved to accept the home at 331 19 ½ Ave. No. into the century homes program. The motion was seconded by Lenaghan and carried unanimously.

2011 Historic Preservation Awards: Chapman explained that in past years, the HPC has undergone a public nomination process to honor individuals or organizations that devote time, energy and resources to ensure that our area is kept alive. Due to a decline in alteration permits, staff is recommending that the HPC consider one large project for the 2011 award. Staff is proposing the award be given to the St. Cloud Rotary Club for the Eastman Park/Lake George project. Some of the improvements include renovation of the municipal pool bath house, renovation of the warming house, installation of fishing and gathering piers, installation of brick paver walkways, installation of a granite

fountain. In 2011, a summer festival concert series was kicked off at Lake George with an average of 3,300 attending each concert. The highest number of attendees at a concert was 6,500.

Berg moved to approve the nomination of the St. Cloud Rotary Club for the 2011 Preservation Award for the Eastman Regional Park/Lake George Community Project. The motion was seconded by Lenaghan. Bartlow stated that last year the HPC discussed changing the categories for the Preservation Award and requested that the meeting minutes be reviewed in regard to this matter. Bartlow suggested that the award be called the Heritage Preservation Award as opposed to the Historic Preservation Award. She suggested documenting the historic part of the site and posting it somewhere on the site itself. Relative to heritage, the Park has been the center of the community and historically has been a center for recreation. Chapman said she will change the language to include the area being revitalized as a community gathering place. The motion to approve carried unanimously.

Administrative HAP Approvals: Chapman stated that there have been two alteration permit requests since the last HPC meeting. The application for 22 Highbanks Place was to remove and seal four basement windows and remove the window wells. The other application was from the Masonic Temple at 518 W St. Germain St. to clean the exterior brick and do tuckpoint repair on the upper façade only. In addition, they will install a parapet as recommended by the design guidelines.

Adjournment: Chirhart moved to adjourn the meeting, and Lenaghan seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

Bill Morgan, Secretary