

MINUTES
Regular Meeting
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
October 21, 2020

The City of Wyoming Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) met on Wednesday, October 21, 2020 remotely via the Zoom online video conferencing platform. The meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM by Bobbie McTurner, Chair of the Historic Preservation Commission. Attendance was as follows:

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Bobbie McTurner, Chair
Gene Allison
Zach Green
Chris Magee
Cathy Ramstetter
David Sparks
Jim Walton

STAFF:

Tana Pyles, Community Development Specialist

MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION – REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

Ms. Pyles introduced the Master Plan implementation matrix to the new members, which is a way to capture and track the work that has been done to implement the objectives in the Master Plan. The implementation matrix is an organizational tool that is used to guide efforts for the upcoming year and ensure we are working toward the goals in the Master Plan.

Ms. Pyles started with the first objective pertaining to the HPC, which is to provide a variety of programs and services that enhance the quality of life of its residents. The strategy is to identify the positive aspects of the railway system, its history as it relates to the founding and development of the community, and explore opportunities to capitalize on these attributes. Ms. McTurner asked if any of the Members were interested in this topic and explained a former member wanted to focus on the railway history. She suggested Mr. Walton see if the Historical Society would be interested in leading the charge. Mr. Walton added that at one point they were considering rebuilding an old train station. Mr. Green stated there is a new commercial development proposed along Van Roberts Place abutting the railroad and there would not be space for a train station. However, the development would be created with shipping containers and could incorporate the history of the railroad.

Ms. Pyles moved on to Objective 5 – historic identification and designation: encourage the continued identification and designation of significant historic districts, landmarks, and landscapes. Ms. McTurner said that the Village Historic District is not expandable but they could explore creating a new district. There is a remarkable collection of mid-century

architecture that could become its own district. More historic properties outside of the Village Historic District could be added by getting residents interested in preservation and making information on the National Register process widely available. She then explained that the only way to truly preserve the existing District is to become a Certified Local Government (CLG) and the designation would increase funding opportunities. Mr. Green stated that he is open to learning more about CLGs and Council would likely pushback on becoming one. Ms. McTurner expressed disappointment in the City's preservation efforts.

Ms. Pyles discussed the Objective 5 action step of streamlining the review of alterations. She explained that we have seen more alteration/demolition applications since the threshold was changed. She asked the Members to consider eliminating City Council approval for most projects, and give the HPC and ARB decision making power. The process change would significantly reduce the amount of time it takes for an alteration/demolition application to be approved and would not change the essence of the review. Mr. Green said he previously expressed concern about the public hearing happening at City Council, where the recommendation is typically adopted. Ms. Pyles responded that she has been notifying neighbors about both the HPC/ARB and City Council meetings since Mr. Green brought up this concern, ensuring the public has the opportunity to participate. Mr. Green stated he thinks the suggested process change is reasonable.

Ms. Ramstetter commented that preliminary reviews or work sessions with an applicant is streamlining the review, and she supports changing the process so most project do not require City Council approval. Ms. Pyles said she recently added information on requesting preliminary reviews on the HPC webpage. Mr. Magee agreed with Ms. Ramstetter's comments and sees the value in preliminary reviews as a practicing architect. Ms. McTurner added that places like the City of Montgomery and the City of Cincinnati, their preservation board is the governing body that can make decisions on historic review, and the only time a request goes before City Council is for an appeal. Ms. Pyles said she would look into changing the historic review, and bring options before to HPC and ARB to consider.

Ms. Pyles shared Objective 6, which is to encourage and promote historically sensitive development or redevelopment. Mr. Sparks said it looks like in the past HPC had a Fall Festival booth. He suggested continuing education through a publication since we are not having many in-person events due to the pandemic. Ms. McTurner suggested referencing the survey from the previous booth that collected topics of interest from residents. She also suggested revisiting tax incentives. Ms. Ramstetter agreed with continuing education and utilizing technology reach the public.

The Commission moved onto Objective 7: to encourage the continued education of the history and culture of the City. Mr. Magee explained the purpose of CF3, which is to bring awareness to mid-century preservation. He said co-sponsoring a tour with this organization could be an achievable strategy once the pandemic is over. He suggested working towards the loftier goal of inventorying the significant mid-century houses to create a new district. Ms. McTurner said Jackie Barns was interested in putting together a house tour and she could be a good resource. She recommended beginning a mid-century database to see if creating

a new district is possible, and if there is resident support. She said they could seek students interning from the University of Cincinnati to work on the database.

Ms. Pyles recommended revisiting this implementation matrix at the beginning on 2021 and identifying which action steps Members want to focus on.

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Allison moved to approve the August 19, 2020 HPC-ARB joint meeting minutes as amended, seconded by Mr. Sparks. All HPC members voted yes. The motion passed.

MISCELLANEOUS

Ms. McTurner shared she is stepping down from HPC and this will serve as her last meeting.

Ms. Pyles gave an update on the project at 18 Wyoming Avenue. She said a new building program will come before the HPC and ARB for review in November.

Mr. Allison commented on the front porch at 242 Elm Avenue, which received HPC/ARB approval. He shared that the metal copper roof looks unfinished and the Commission should have looked at the proposed material in detail. Ms. Pyles confirmed the plans showed a metal roof and that the design was approved as proposed.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Ramstetter moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Allison. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Tana Pyles,
Community Development Specialist
Secretary of the August 19, 2020 HPC-ARB meeting

Bobbie McTurner,
Chair of the Historic Preservation Commission