

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE FOR THE CITY OF SUPERIOR

MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, February 9, 2022, 5:30 p.m.

The HPC meeting for the city of Superior was called to order by Tim Meyer at 5:35 p.m. The meeting was held at City Hall in room 270 and by web and phone conference.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Brian Finstad, Matt Osterlund, Tom Wondolkowski, Kathleen Laakso, Tim Meyer

Staff Present: Jeff Skrenes

Others Present: Mayor Jim Paine, Council Member Lindsey Graskey

There being a quorum present, the meeting was in order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Board Member Finstad, seconded by Osterlund, to approve the January 12, 2022 minutes, carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

1. State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) Presentation and Discussion

Mayor Paine gave an overview of the funds, made available via the American Rescue Plan. The City of Superior received \$17 million. Rules for eligible uses of the funds were developed as the City simultaneously developed such plans. Near the end of a budget process, the SLFRF program allowed for \$10 million to be much more flexible in its allocation. From that amount, \$4 million was set aside for historic redevelopment initiatives. The council approved \$3.5 million and set aside \$500,000, potentially to be allocated at a later date.

One priority being discussed is the renovation of the Princess Theater, under an ownership and operational model similar to other sites within the City of Superior. Notably, an animal shelter and some museums are owned by the City but operated independently. The theater has had feasibility studies. Other possible priorities include the Carnegie Library, the old city hall building, other museum site maintenance or upgrades, or restoration and preservation of historic homes and those identified as potentially historic through the 2019 intensive survey. The preference would be to place a lower priority on sites that are or would remain privately owned.

Board Chair Meyer stated that the theater model has worked in other cities, and agreed that saving the Carnegie is a priority. He also inquired about the restoration of an arch at Tower and Broadway. Mayor Paine responded that the arch is a possibility and it could be considered historic or art, in terms of where funds come from for such a project.

The committee discussed what a process would look like for determining priorities, funding amounts, and time frames. The Mayor explained how other capital projects use a scoring

system and he would share that model with staff and the Committee. Staff and the HPC could also schedule a work session with that scoring model and bring results back to the committee. Board Member Laakso asked if the priority was on quickly coming up with a list of initiatives. The priority from the Mayor and Council is to bring forward the right set of recommendations instead of quick ones.

Housing Planner Skrenes advised looking into the possibility of leveraging funds in order to keep one or two projects from using the entire budget. As part of the HPC's ongoing discussions on Certified Local Government Status, Skrenes advised that the HPC should review what kinds of projects might become eligible for other funding if we had CLG certification. This could help demonstrate CLG benefits and spread the use of SLFRF proceeds. This aspect was part of both old and new business.

OLD BUSINESS

1. **Update on application process Certified Local Government status** – Skrenes committed to checking with Jason Tish from the Wisconsin Historical Society regarding specific initiatives that could be combined with CLG and SLFRF funds.
2. **Update on Meteor and Fairlawn applications** – Skrenes will meet with museum staff and board to finalize applications and answer any questions. If SLFRF issues take up enough staff and committee time, these applications will be finished after higher priorities are addressed first.
3. **Continued Discussion on Vacant and Abandoned Building Responses** – The committee discussed what constituted an “abandoned” building instead of one that was only temporarily vacant or out of use, and what kinds of options would be short-term vs. long-term steps.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Jeff Skrenes